Fugitive Fancies.

I.

THE IDEAL.

In mid-ocean sails a vessel
With a golden freightage laden:
Poets set to matchless measures,
And a most delightful maiden.

But upon its spotless pennant
In this sad inscription, "Never;"
And though countless ports it passes,
It sails on forever, ever!

II.

A PAIR.

All silent her needle and thread;
On the tips of her delicate fingers
She musingly poses her head,
And thinks of the days that are dead.

She's with her first fond lover now,
By the moon-varnished river she lingers,
And listens again to his vow;
See! pity steals over her brow!

III.

FOR A CYNIC.

Near dark and stagnant pool
Where the air is deathly cool;

There his coffin hewn shall be
From the poison upas tree.

Snakes and lizards shall surround
His foul weed-encompassed mound.

And a shaft of greenish tint,
Chiselled from the hardest flint,

Shall above that mound appear,
Fashioned like a stony sneer.

IV.

DEFINITION.

What is the soul, my learned love?
Indeed, I cannot say,
Perhaps 'tis like the fragment of
The distant milky Way.

Or something like a perfect tune,
Or sweetly scented air,
The pale beam of the Northern moon,
Or breath of virgin fair.

But what is it? Alas, my dear,
I am not over wise;
I cannot make the matter clear
As your pellucid eyes.

But many a grave philosopher,
Filling his solemn scroll
With dusty lore of varnished years,
Says that the soul's—the soul.

ONLY A WOMAN'S HAIR.

By the Author of "A Strange Friendship," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

How long I remained hidden there I never knew. As the time glided by, all my terror gradually passed away, and I felt calm and confident once more. My conviction grew and strengthened that Cyril would not succeed in discovering my hiding-place.

The moon rose; but her light did not penetrate the deep obscurity of the refuge Mr. Beresford had selected for me; and, though I could see the house perfectly well, and the lights in its windows, no one could have discerned me, even if standing within a few yards of me, so deep was the shadow in which I lay concealed. Ths long ferns almost closed over my head; the branches of the trees hung low and deepened the obscurity.

Everything was very still and peaceful on that cold clear winter's night, with the stars sparkling down from their lofty heights above me.

"Yon orbed maiden,
With white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,"

looked down upon me with calm serenity as I lay hidden.

At last I heard voices on the carriage drive quite close to me, and I discerned two figures approaching through the gloom. Cyril—how well I knew his voice!—said—

"Then you'll meet me this day week in town, Beresford, and we'll square up re the sheep."

To this Noel answered

"All right. I will not fail. Cold, isn't it?" he added. And Cyril said—

"Rather."

Then one of them struck a match, and they lighted their pipes. Presently I heard Cyril say—

"What was that? Something moved over there."

I could discern the dark outline of his figure from where I lay, scarcely daring to breathe; and I felt sure that he was looking full at my hiding-place as he spoke.

"Probably a rabbit or a pheasant. I have both in my plantations," Noel answered.

I waited anxiously for Cyril's next words; but they did not come. The two men had walked on together towards the stables. I hoped that Cyril was about to get his horse; and by-and-by the dull thud of a horse's hoof on the drive led me to believe that he was at last riding away; and, when once more Noel Beresford's step crushed the fern and dead leaves near me, I knew that I was not mistaken.

Mr. Beresford did not touch me this time; he only beckoned to me to follow him; and in silence we crossed the lawn and re-entered the house by the large dining-room window, in the same manner that we had left it.

I ran at once to the fire, and, crouching down by it, began to warm my hands. Noel followed me to the fireplace, and stood looking down at me as I knelt there. Everything in the room was just the same; the tea-things still stood on the table.

"You do not ask me any questions," said Mr. Beresford. I suppose you heard him ride past you, and you know that he has gone at last. He asked me no questions about you, as I had expected that he would; but he noticed your slippers; you had left them lying by the fire."

Sure enough there they lay—little blue slippers, with bright steel buckles and blue satin bows.

"I saw him looking at them," continued Noel. "And he had a sneer on his face; so I said—'Perhaps you are not aware that this house is let. I have only the use of this room occasionally for business purposes, as to-night.'

"'Your tenant is a lady then,' he said, with his eyes still on the slippers.

"'Yes,' I answered; for I was not going to lie to him if I could help it.

"'She has very pretty little feet,' he said, with another sneer."

There was a pause after this. I could not have spoken to save my life; something in Mr. Beresford's manner had set my heart beating fast. He took up one of the little slippers and laid it for a moment on his large strong brown hand.

"'Such pretty little things!' he said. 'I wonder who could have helped noticing them! I know I couldn't."

He laid the slipper down again, and I felt as if I dared not look at him. I fixed my eyes upon the glowing wood embers on the hearth instead.

When I at last ventured to glance up to him he was speaking rapidly, with his gray eyes dark and deep, looking down into mine.

"I see it all now," he was saying. "This will not do any longer. I must go away. I ought to have known better from the first. You are not to blame in the least. You are only a girl; but I am a man, ten years older than you, with all that knowledge of the world which you have not, and I ought to have seen from the first that it would not do."

His voice broke for a moment; but he mastered himself by a strong effort and went on.

"I admired you when I saw you first; but I fancied I was not rich enough to marry. I am only a younger son; and I let you slip through my fingers. Oh, fool that I was! And now it is too late!"

There was a whole world of passion, regret, and tenderness in his voice and in his words. I was standing before him by this time; but I could not have spoken, however hard I had tried.

Quite suddenly, and when I was not expecting it in the least, Noel caught me in his arms. He held me so for one moment, tightly clasped, with a strength that made me feel as powerless as a child. Then just as suddenly he released me again.

"No," he said; "I won't soil your whiteness even for a moment Cathie—my little white snowdrop!"

He turned away and dropped down upon a chair by the table; his crossed arms were resting upon it, and his face was hidden; for a moment or two I heard nothing but his hard breathing. Then, without raising his head, he said in a whisper—

"Oh Cathie, remember me sometimes in your prayers!"

The pathetic appeal of those words almost broke my heart. There was despair in his whole attitude. I could bear it no longer; I stepped up to him, and I laid my hand upon his shoulder.

"You may go away for one week," I said. "When you come back I shall not be here any longer. I see it all now, and that I ought never to have come here, even for a day. Hush!"—for he had raised his head and seemed about to speak. "Don't try to defend me. I must do all I can now to repair the mischief I have caused. You must come back here, for you have to manage your property, and you cannot stay away; it is I who ought to go. Don't try to prevent me, and do not fancy that I can ever forget all that you have done for me, and"—here a sob nearly choked my voice—"Heaven be with you always!"

With the last words I fairly ran out of the room; and, before dawn next morning, Noel Beresford had left Ravelston.

How well I remember my miserable awakening to all my troubles in the morning!

During the early part of the night I slept from sheer exhaustion after all I had gone through during the last few hours; but in the gray dawn I awoke, and my first recollection was that Noel Beresford had gone, and that I should never, never see him any more! I hid my face in the pillow and cried many bitter tears. I felt as if I had come at last to the very darkest hour of all my life. If I had only known it, I might have taken courage; the darkest hour was the one before the dawn.

In the course of the day which followed, I made such plans as I was able for the future which lay before me.

I meant to leave Ravelston at once; on this point my mind was perfectly clear and resolved; all other projects still remained vague and half formed in my mind.

I had determined that I would be driven to the railway station the next morning, and that I would leave by the first train for town, where I meant to take lodgings for the present. I had still a little money left, and I hoped before that was finished to have procured a situation as governess. I think I had grown very reckless and very indifferent as to what further became of me.

It happened on this same day that Mrs. Holland received a letter from a friend of hers who lived in the neighbourhood of my old home; and I found, from a casual mention of myself in this letter, that people knew as yet absolutely nothing of my disappearance from my husband's roof. It was supposed that Cyril and I were still absent upon our wedding tour; we had originally intended to be away for two or three months.

From this I inferred that Cyril had not been living on his own estate since my departure. Probably he had been trying every means he could think of to seek me out without bringing his family affairs too prominently before the public.

The same evening I was alone in the dining room at Ravelston. I was feeling unspeakably lonely; I had packed up the few possessions I had with me, and there was nothing to prevent me leaving Ravelston the next morning. Had I not fully determined upon going away at once? But I loved the place so much, I had been so happy there, that it half broke my heart to leave it and to give up all hope of seeing it or its master again.

I had thrown myself down upon the couch at one side of the fireplace, and was crying bitterly, with my face buried in the cushions, when suddenly, through a pause in my sobs, I felt instinctively that I was no longer alone in the room.

I brushed away my tears, and raised my head sharply, and the next moment I started to my feet, for I saw, standing in the recess of the large window, my husband Cyril Vane.

The window was not fastened, and he had entered quite noiselessly while I had been too much absorbed in my own thoughts to notice his approach. Probably he had found out the day before that I was in the house, and his pretended departure had been only a blind in order to throw me off my guard. However this may have been, there he certainly was. He was intensely pale, and his eyes were very bright and fierce. As they met mine, I recoiled a step or two, and glanced involuntarily towards the door. He laughed—a little cruel laugh.

"Don't try to go," he said; "it would be of no use. You see, Cathie, you are hunted down at last!"

CHAPTER X.

A feeling of deadly terror crept over me, and, for a few moments, I quailed before him. I cannot tell if he knew how frightened I was.

We were now standing opposite to each other in the rug before the fire, and we eyed each other steadily, each waiting for the other to make the first move. Frightened as I was, I think I could scarcely have looked as pale as Cyril; the pallor of his face struck me as exceedingly ghastly and terrible.

The silence between us lasted unbroken for many minutes. It became unnatural, awful, and oppressive.

At last I said, very slowly, each word clear and sharp in the utter stillness of the room—

"You—murderel—my sister!"

"Yes," he said coolly, "I did. You knew that long ago."

I made no answer. The boldness of his confession and the cold cruel glance with which it was accomplished deprived me of all words. After a moment, he went on—

"You found me out from the first—I felt sure of it. I saw you watching me in the mirror one day when you thought I did not observe you, and I determined from that moment to marry you and to get you in my power." After a moment he added with another sneering laugh, "How do you know I have not come here to murder you as well?"

My terror had now reached its climax. I was shivering and trembling from head to foot.

I felt persuaded that he had really come to do as he threatened, to put an end to my life, as he had done to my sister's; yet I still managed to confront him steadily.

Some instinct taught me that the least sign of fear would be fatal, and I contrived to show none; yet, in my secret heart, I had given myself up for lost.

In that most terrible moment however a door slammed in the distance, and immediately afterwards came a step in the hall without that I knew—a firm, strong, steady tread, which brought hope and comfort with it to my sinking heart.

"Do you think I am afraid?" I cried bravely now. "Not I! You are only wasting your time if you have come here to threaten me!"

Almost as I uttered the words the door of the dining-room opened, and Noel Beresford made a third at our interview.

Noel came in quietly and closed the door behind him. He must already have learned who was there, for he expressed no surprise at the sight of his unexpected visitor. I remember that he had in one hand a large square envelope with a deep black border.

Noel put the letter into the breast-pocket of his coat as he came forward; but he did not offer to shake hands with Cyril; he did not wish him "good evening."

The two men stood and eyed each other with an intense deadly aversion in their glances. Instinctively I moved forward a few steps, so as to place myself between them.

Cyril was the first to speak. He took no notice of Mr. Beresford; he did no even look towards him. He addressed himself pointedly at me.

"Yes, it is quite true that I murdered Rose Belham," he said, with a second ostentatious confession of his guilt; "but she deserved her fate. She led me on and encouraged me all the time I was staying in town, till I was half mad about her. She asked me to come down and see her in the country, and, when I came, she laughed in my face; and she told me she was going to be married in a month. She turned away, and left me lying face downwards amongst the fern in the plantation, a broken-hearted man; but I had my gun in my hand, for I had been shooting; and, before she had gone twenty yards, I sprang up and shot her down like a dog. Strange that no one saw me there that day."

He was gradually working himself up, as he uttered his confession, into a fierce fit of passion.

Looking at him as he stood there, with his black eyes wild and savage as a wolf's and his lips compressed, I could quite realise how it all happened, and how Rose's foolish trick of flirting had come that summer afternoon to so terrible and tragic a conclusion.

I stood and looked at Cyril in mute horror while he spoke, wondering what new form this strange audacity of guilt would assume, and what fresh crime he would next confess to. Noel too was silent; he was watching intently every look and movement of the man before him. His eyes never wavered for a moment; his straight brows were contracted with the keeness of his gaze.

Suddenly Cyril put one hand to the breast-pocket of his coat, and Noel's scrutiny of his every gesture became, if possible, even more intense and vigilant.

"When I came here to-day," Cyril resumed, speaking somewhat dreamily now, and in a softer tone than he had used before, "I said to myself that I would send Cathie after her sister; but I have changed my mind. Cathie does not deserve such a fate; she would never have treated me as Rose did, she is a girl of a different sort; but instead of that, I will—"

The sentence was never finished. In that same moment Noel, with one movement of his strong arm, had flung me behind him. There was a loud report, and Cyril dropped upon the rug before us, the revolver he had taken from his pocket slipping from his fingers as he sank down prone at Noel Beresford's feet.

The first thing I was conscious of was that Noel was trying to lead me from the room; but I resisted, with a great resolution, to which he gave way.

"Oh, no, no!" I said. "I must do all I can for him now. Do you think that he is dead?"

"I am not sure," he answered; "I must see."

Cyril was not dead; and one of Mr. Beresford's men was despatched at once on the fleetest horse in the stables to fetch the nearest doctor.

Mrs. Holland, who was an excellent nurse, was summoned to assist in this emergency.

We lifted him on to the couch by the fire, and Noel examined his injuries. Cyril was quite unconscious, and was bleeding from a wound in the chest.

"I thought it would have been you Cathie," Noel said, looking up suddenly, with a sigh of intense relief. "That was why I put you behind me. I knew he had that thing in his pocket all the time: I saw the muzzle of it quite plainly, and he raised his hand to it several times. I was watching for the right moment to get in front of you; if I had asked you to leave the room, he would have shot you down on your way to the door; I could see it in his eyes."

At last Cyril recovered consciousness; the remedies we had tried brought him slowly back to life once more. He looked round him, at first vaguely, then with some anxiety in his eyes.

"Is it you that he wants, Cathie?" said Noel, drawing back a step or two.

I came closer to Cyril's side, and he made an effort to speak.

"Kneel down," he said at last.

I did so, and he appeared satisfied. All through the long hours of that terrible night I knelt by his side; he would not let me leave him for a moment.

If I moved even so slightly, the feeble pressure of his hand brought me back again to my old position. Noel fetched a warm cloak lined with fur and wrapped me in it, for I became very cold as the hours dragged by slowly.

"Put *'mea culpa'* over my grave," he said, "and nothing else, save my name; mine has been a wasted life."

A little after he added, speaking slowly and with difficulty—

"I have taken the greatest care of your horse, Cathie; he is eating his head off in my stables; and all your little possessions are quite safe. I have looked after them all for your sake."

"His face was growing very pale, and the shadows deepened under his eyes.

"Cyril," I said, with sorrowful earnestness, trying to rouse his attention, "I am praying for you."

A faint flicker of a smile passed over his face.

"No one, save you, would do that for me, Cathie," he whispered.

"Oh, Cyril," I said once more, "try to follow what I am saying; try to pray for yourself."

But he did not respond to my appeal; he lay quite still, with his eyes closed.

The room seemed to have grown very chilly. Noel heaped wood upon the fire, and Mrs. Holland made some hot coffee and brought a cup of it to me. But I could not raise my head to take it; the dying man's hand still held me firmly to my place. At last he opened his eyes once more.

"Kiss me, Cathie," he whispered, "as a proof that you forgive me all the injury I have done you."

All through the days of his courtship I had never given Cyril one kiss; now, in the presence of Noel and Mrs. Holland, I pressed my lips for the first and last time on his forehead.

When I raised my head, I saw that the look of pain had passed from his face, and there was now an expression of peace. Very slowly, very reluctantly his hand relaxed its grasp on mine; his eyes seemed to seek for my face once more, but they did not see me; and, when Noel lifted me up and placed me in an easy-chair by the fire, I knew that the guilty soul of Cyril Vane had passed away.

CHAPTER XI., AND LAST.

I was obliged to remain at Ravelston until after Cyril's funeral had taken place.

It was supposed by all our acquaintances that we had stopped for a day or two at Mr. Beresford's house on our return from our wedding tour, and that Cyril in a fit of depression, had put an end to his life. He was known to have lived a very wild and unsteady life for some years past, and no one was surprised at his sudden tragic end.

"Do you know what I came back for Cathie?" said Noel to me the day after Cyril's death. "I suddenly remembered that perhaps you had no money, and I came back to give you this cheque. Was it not a lucky thing that I did so?"

It was indeed for me, at any rate; but for Noel's return I truly believe that I should not have lived to write this story.

I have mentioned before that when Noel came into the room on that most memorable evening he held in one hand a letter with a black-bordered envelope.

He had heard, he told me afterwards, by the English mail that his elder brother was just dead, and that he had come into possession of one of the handsomest estates and largest fortunes in Blankshire.

"I beg that you will remain my tenant, Mrs. Vane," said Mr. Beresford to me with extreme formality. "Not here, of course. I see in the paper that your father's estate is to be put up for sale next week; I intend to secure it if possible, and I trust that you will consent to return again to your old home."

I gladly agreed to this arrangement; but, shocking to relate, I have never paid my landlord one farthing of rent to this day.

After I had been back for some little time in the house where Rose and I had lived ever since we were children, I received a letter from Mr. Beresford.

"I must go back to England soon," he wrote. "The property at home wants looking after. May I come and see you before I go?"

I wrote back at once—

"No, no, no; you are not to come at present."

He waited a little while; then he wrote again—

"Don't you think this has now gone on long enough? My patience is getting worn out. Don't be cruel, Cathie, but let me come."

To this letter I vouchsafed no reply. Of course after this I was not very much surprised when, a few days afterwards, on coming in from a long ride on Gladiator, I found Noel standing waiting for me before the fire. I took off my gauntlet gloves, and we shook hands with extreme formality and decorum.

"You have come about the rent?" I said, with a saucy toss of my head. "It is of no use. I haven't got it, and I can't pay you."

Whereupon he first laughed, and then suddenly caught me in his arms and covered my face with kisses.

"I have missed you dreadfully, Cathie," he whispered. "And now I can't have enough of you. Of course you know what I came for?"

He wanted me to marry him and go home to England with him at once; but I stipulated for another month's delay, and at last I carried my point.

He had brought me a present, and he made me take it out of the breast-pocket of his coat with my own hands.

I found a jeweller's case, containing a brooch and locket to match of gold, with a snowdrop on each of pearls and emeralds.

"Do you remember that evening," asked Noel, still holding me as if he would never let me go, "and how infamously I behaved? How I admired you for your innocence and fearlessness of all evil! It was marvellous to me. I have always thought of you as a little white snowdrop, Cathie; and, when I saw these things in a shop window, I took a fancy to them at once for your sake."

* * * * * *

I have not mentioned that Cyril Vane had made a will just before I married him, and had left all he possessed to me. But I could not bear to touch his money, nor would Noel have allowed me to do so.

We found out that he had a sister, a widow with a large family, in very poor circumstances, and I made over the property to her. It was heavily mortgaged, and not nearly of so much value as my father had supposed; but it was sufficient to place her in a more comfortable position for the rest of her life.

* * * * * *

Once before I wrote that never was there a more forlorn and miserable bride than the one who went through the ceremony of marriage with Cyril Vane; so now I add that the sun never shone upon a happier girl than the one who is at last Noel Beresford's wife.

We are living on his beautiful estate in Blankshire, and we are both exceedingly happy.

The long lovely look of Rose's golden hair lies before me on the table as I write. In the days to come, when I too have followed my sister to the better land, it will be found among my papers, and then I hope that those who discover it will say to one another—

"The eyes that loved it once no longer wake,
So lay it by with reverent care;
Touching it tenderly for sorrow's sake,
Only a woman's hair."

"Stolen Waters."

There is an old proverb of which the above are the opening words. They are familiar to all, for they have their *raison d'etre*, deep down in the nature of our common humanity, and therefore, commend themselves to us all as *true*. Indeed this is the ultimate test of all truth, the acceptance of a statement by that mysterious inner consciousness which is before and above, as it is the test of, all experience.

It can hardly have failed to strike most of us who have used our reflective faculties in any measure as they were intended to be used that we have had in this world of ours a great many philosophers whose names do not figure on the honour-roll of the world, but who, nevertheless, have deserved well of their race. We mean those who have contributed to the wonderfully rich storehouse of our proverbial philosophy. Those "mute, inglorious"—Tuppers have not left their names to us, but they have left us "the concentrated essence of common sense embalmed in the common sayings of the common people, and we venture to say that a great deal of the so-called philosophy will die and be forgotten when the philosophy of common sense—a greater and higher and deeper than that of Reid and his school—will have melted into Tindall's "infinite azure of the past."

"Stolen waters are sweet." Not *waters*, but *stolen* waters. There is a charm that we cannot define, but which is nevertheless real "in forbidden fruit." That pippin in Eden might have hung until it became a windfall and never tempted Eve had it not been surrounded by the attractive halo of a prohibition, and therefore coveted. "The commandment came and I died," says Paul. That is exactly where the trouble is. Had the fence not been there I would never have over-leaped it.

Is there to be no law then? Let us see.

There can be no question that the mere fact of *prohibition* increases the tendency to *smuggle*. And there is no doubt that human nature has a direct and natural tendency to smuggling. This too, whatever the law may be to the contrary. What then is the best method for legislation to tackle the difficulty, and virtually to rob smuggling of its attraction? Not by more stringent repressive law-making can this be done, that is, as we shall show, to use a vulgar phrase, "played out." It has had its day and failed.

For it has been tried, notably, in the way of closing saloons on Saturdays at seven o'clock p.m. and for the whole day Sunday, and what has been the result? It has been two-fold. In the first place and chiefly there has appeared on the social system an eruption which takes the shape of "shebeens." In the more obscure and (so-called) *low* parts of the city we find any number of "amateur" grog shops, which, during the forbidden hours, drive *a roaring*, and scarce concealed trade in "distilled damnation." This is a notorious fact. And it is well known that crowds flock to those places, not so much because of the "thirst" that is so persistent in their natures, as because of the fact that the "scarce mitigated blue stone" that is vended in those dens is *"forbidden."*

The other result is that, in regularly licensed houses, where decent or "Macdonelled" liquor is sold, some privileged persons who are "known" get their modicum of more drinkable stuff, and in their case also the element of the "forbidden waters" has its weight. They drink far more frequently and more deeply than if they could get it, and knew they could get it, *ad libitum*. The same objection, and we hold it to be a radical one holds good with the Scott and Dunkin Acts. They are rather inducements than hindrances to the drinking evil. Repression must, in other words, be perfect and absolute, or else utterly futile. There is no middle course. If you make it penal servitude for a year to allow a man to sell liquor during certain hours, you make it worth his while to refrain; if you only fine him a certain sum, he knows that he can easily make it good in the future, if he has not already done so in the past, and he, naturally enough, cares nothing about it.

And the other alternative is, what? Simply, as it seems to us, to make the penal law more stringent in the case of inebriates. For a man to get drunk is for that man to be a criminal against all the laws of society, religion and humanity. Let the crime be punished accordingly. Let the offender be subjected to such a punishment as shall teach him, effectually, the estimate right thinking men have of his offence. Then he may come, when in his right mind, to regard the crime in a proper light. It is the merest folly to establish asylums for inebriates, unless we place them and the offence for which they are intended to be the remedy on the same level with the crimes for the extinction of which we establish reformatories. But let us not, in the name of common sense erect a quasi-repressive system which has only the effect of making the sin more attractive by the alluring effect of the principle embodied in the proverb, "stolen waters are sweet."

The Gymnasium at Athens.

I had heard much of the national institution, and was glad to see it under good escort. We turned our steps toward the Lyceum, our slaves, of course, in attendance. I need not describe the building, as we all read Vitruvius. But I wish I could so describe the scene within that my readers might see it as distinctly as I can recall it. We Englishmen can understand well enough the interest of watching games in which we once excelled, and of looking on at feats of strength or skill which we used to practice. It comes natural, therefore, to us to imagine the middle aged and elders of Athens often looking into see their youngsters trained to manly vigor and activity. Up to 18 years of age they themselves had wrestled, and run, and boxed, and leaped, and thrown quoits, with as much energy, I suppose, as we give to cricket, and rackets, and foot-ball. We do not all of us care to watch the feats of the gymnasium, for there son that some of us were born in the pre-gymnastic age in England, and so cannot truly criticise them or enter into their spirit. Indeed, we do not all set a high value on them; and many of us would prefer to see our sons handle a bat or an oar well, or ride well to hounds, or excel in skating, shooting, or any of our own sports. But given that we had all been trained in a regular course of athletics, and that our lives called them "thoroughly English," and that we were accustomed to think our national superiority due to our pre eminence in such training, I suppose we might if time had to be killed—as it always had to be at Athens in the afternoon—frequent a gymnasium daily, even when there was no match on. I was not surprised, therefore, to see groups of men all over the grounds, eagerly watching the jumpers or the quoit play, or the spear-hurling. Here and there two or three youngsters were practicing by themselves apart, under no instructor. Where a crowd was, you knew that a contest of more than usual interest was going on. That the lads were stripped for their exercise seemed suitable with the conditions, but the sight of them all oiled and sanded made a strange impression, as of animated terra-cotta statues. Colonnades for the accommodation of spectators were an obvious necessity when few gentlemen wore hats of any kind and the sun was strong. Stone or marble seats were ranged about, in the open air or under cover, in one of the many rooms, large and small, which opened out of these colonnades. Some of these benches were of the semi-circular form with a talkative people would naturally hit upon, and which we see among ourselves in village inns, survivals of a time when the villagers met to talk, and "news much older than the ale went round," before men had invented the sociable custom of retiring apart each behind his newspaper. I was certainly surprised at first to find so many people assembled there, and thought it must be a field day or a festival. But I soon found that all Athens men turned out in the afternoon as regularly as Oxford or Cambridge men. Indeed, the most striking feature of Athenian life was its leisure.

It seems possible to have a good many acres in County Kerry without much income for them. Lord Lansdowne's 94,544 acres are valued at £8,543 a year, Lord Ventry's 91,505 at £15,283, Mr. Bland's 32,540 at £2,638, the O'Donoghue's 10,405 at £887.

The trotting horse St. Julien has made a profit of $28,000 for his owner this season.

A Night in the Sun Office.

THE SYSTEM THAT STRUCK AN OUTSIDE NEWSPAPER MAN AS VERY INTERESTING.

(From the Louisville Post.)

The *Sun* newspaper is a small affair in square inches, but every inch is an institution. The sheet is not as large as the Louisville *Post*, but a comparison of the paper on any day with either of its great New York contemporaries will prove that it contains every item of valuable current news, local, national, or foreign, and hardly a line of trash. Notwithstanding the condensation necessary to secure such results, the paper is written with singular clearness, and is deservedly noted for literary grace. And further, along with all the news, it finds room for pointed editorials—pebbles of hard English well flung—and as much of miscellaneous and interesting matter as any reasonable reader would care to have. In short, the *Sun* is the most complete newspaper in America, supplying everything in such a shape that everything can be read.

With such characteristics it is no wonder that it is the most widely read paper in New York, where nearly everybody is busy; and so long as it is conducted with the present liberality, energy, and care, its continued growth is assured; 127,000 copies are now sold daily, which is one paper to every ten people in New York city, a proportion that is likely to hold in the future, if, indeed, it is not improved with the increase of the proportion of busy people.

A majority of the newspaper men who are familiar with the *Sun* as an exchange, and who know of its great prosperity, have long ago resolved that, if they ever start a paper of their own, the *Sun* shall be their model. Many such attempts have been made and have failed. The Cincinnati *Sun*, a mechanical imitation, a perfect counterfeit, when too far off to read, was the most notable instance. The trouble with all such attempts was that the projectors did not know the New York *Sun* and its system. They imagined that by imitating its size and outward appearance they would save white paper and type setting and still make a bright and successful journal, when in fact the size of the *Sun* is fixed, not to save white paper and type setting, though it does this incidentally, but because it is the smallest size into which all the news can be put and still preserve a clear and pleasant shape. The *Sun* is really run on very expensive principles. The cost of its news, coming through men who are able to condense, is as great as that of any of the monster papers which employ diffuse, ill-paid fellows, and meet their heaviest expense in telegraph bills, paper bills, and the wages of their able-bodied compositors. The *Sun* pays as much for editors to cut out words and leave tangible facts and ideas as the blunderbuss papers pay for writers to coin sentences.

It is only after some study that one can realize what an enormous amount of news a great metropolitan paper must handle before it can be said to "have it all," and it is a matter of real wonder that a little paper like the *Sun* contrives to hold so much. It is a case of the learned man's small head; it is the result of a complete system carried out daily under able management, by the hard work of many bright minds. Just think of the materials that come to the office every day. Though the hundreds of men who gather the news know that their positions depend on their being as brief as is consistent with completeness, they still furnish, at a small estimate, more than ten times as much copy as can possibly be printed. The issue daily of reading matter averages about twenty-two columns; it contains all of value in the two hundred columns of copy sent in, from which it has to be extracted and set up within the short space of eleven hours, the greater portion within half that time. I spent yesterday and last night in the *Sun* office to observe the process.

Outside of the editoral work of condensation, the capacity of the paper is enhanced by several mechanical devices. For instance: The type, while clear, is compact and small, being mostly nonpareil and agate; then the headlines, while nicely gauged to suggest the importance of the matter to follow, will be found on measurement, in any case, to occupy very small room. There are other ways in which the types are compressed, but I will proceed now to give an outline sketch of what I saw of the work of the editors and reporters.

Mr. Dana maintains the closest personal supervision of the whole establishment. In the editorial department, which comes perfected from his hands, he is assisted by seven writers. When he goes home, Mr. John Swinton is left in charge.

The city editor has immediate command of forty-two reporters, and his territory embraces New York and the surrounding cities, and a half day's journey into the country in any direction. All the reporters and many of the other writers come to the editoral rooms (a small suite for Mr. Dana and a large hall for all the rest) at 11 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Dana learns the plans of the others for the day, and makes his suggestions or gives his orders, writes a leader and a paragraph or two and assigns specified subjects to be discussed by members of his staff. Before he leaves he reads a revised proof of all the chief editorials.

Distant correspondents are at liberty to send at first only a short message by telegraph, stating the character of the news they have and asking instructions, which are promptly returned to them by telegraph, unless the news comes late at night and is of great importance, when the matter if left to their discretion. The selection and control of correspondents is a vital matter in the *Sun* system.

The city editor and his four assistants keep a very complete assignment book, in which are entered memoranda of every point that ought to be worked on each day, entries being frequently made three months in advance. Besides this book, reporters are kept on duty constantly at the police headquarters in New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City, and neighbouring towns, and immediately on the receipt of a piece of news from any police station it is telephoned to the city editor. Using the book of assignments, the papers of the day, and any hints he may have had from other sources, the city editor directs each reporter as to what he must do, exercising his best care in selecting the men with reference to their peculiar talents for the particular style or kind of work he desires.

About 5 o'clock Mr. Dana steps from his rooms to go home, first stopping to consult with Mr. Swinton and to leave with him a schedule of the editorial matter he wishes to have appear. A calculation is now made to determine how much space Mr. Dana has left, and then the managing and city editors make up their schedules. On a comparison of these it is generally found that each has been too liberal with himself, and both schedules have to be cut to leave a sufficient margin for the certain and probable news, local and telegraphic, that is to come. When the schedule matter is finally made up, it is given to the compositors, who are now all at work. Once on the printers' hooks the schedules, in their outlines of space, not in their contents, are absolute. They must contain what the paper will hold, and on the receipt of any unexpected matter, either the articles embraced in the schedules or the later news, or both, must suffer condensation or slaughter. It happens occasionally that, piece by piece, the whole of the schedule lists is set aside to make room for more important news, and sometimes a hundred columns of copy very late is reduced to two columns before it reaches the printers. A few weeks ago fifty columns of Washington matter was boiled down to one, and not an important fact was lost.

Before the conference as to the schedules, the city editor has received returns from most of the morning assignments, and has started many of the reporters on new errands. At 6 o'clock the night city editor arrives, who, assisted by the three other city editors, from this time forward directs the reporters and edits their copy, the managing editor keeping him informed as to the necessary condensation.

It matters not how great the rush of matter and the consequent condensation may have been, nor how much of type may have been set aside. The *Sun* forms are locked up at the stroke of a certain hour every morning, and at 3 o'clock the paper may be brought anywhere in New York city. This is one hour ahead of any other New York morning daily, and a second edition is rarely needed to maintain the *Sun's* reputation for printing all the news.

It will be seen, I think, that while the *Sun* is extremely economical of space, and therefore of the time of its busy readers, and though it pays as seldom as possible for redundant words, it is exceedingly liberal in getting the absolute news. Ambitious newspaper men with small capital should not undertake to run a paper on the *Sun's* system, but such a paper is needed in all of our large, busy cities, and the day is not far distant, probably, when the *Sun* will no longer stand unique and alone.

THE cultured way to speak of a burlesque actress' dress is to say that the skirts are very decollete at the bottom.

A Russian Explorer in Tibet.

THE SUCCESSFUL PROGRESS OF THE INTREPID PREJEVALSKY AND HIS COMPANIONS.

(From the London Academy.)

Important news has just been received from Col. Prejevalsky, who, having finished his business at Sining-fu, at the end of March started for the Hwang-Ho, which he struck at the small valley of Gomi, the furthest inhabited district on the river. The Hwang-Ho, which there has a breadth of about 150 yards and a rapid current, at this point makes a sudden bend from northeast to east, flowing at an elevation of 8,000 feet between fairly well wooded bands. After spending ten days in the Gomi valley, the expedition proceeded up the river, but found its progress much impeded by ravines, running down to the river bank, which, from the precipitous nature of their sides, were crossed with difficulty.

In one of these vast crevasses, some eighty-seven miles beyond Gomi, there were forests abounding with birds, among which were numerous blue pheasants. Of these Col Prejevalsky secured several specimens for his collections. Rhubarb was also met with here in large quantities, and it was noted that the old roots were extraordinarily large. After crossing a number of the ravines and a sandy plain beside it, the party arrived at the confluence of the Churmysh, three about a hundred yards broad. This proved to be the furthest limit to which they could push their explorations. For having no means of constructing a raft, they found it impossible to cross the Churmysh, and, had they been able to do so, Col. Prejevalsky, after careful and extended reconnoissances, reluctantly came to the conclusion that he would be unable to get his camels, mules, and horses over the huge mount in range which stretches along the course of the Hwang Ho. He therefore returned to the Gomi valley, from which, after a march of forty miles, he reached a place on the Hwang-Ho called in his letter Hui-de. Here he intended to spend part of July and August in natural history investigations, and then to go northward to Cheibsen to finish his former explorations there

Col. Prejevalsky is of the opinion that the sources of the Hwang-Ho can only be reached through Tibetan territory. He expresses strong doubt whether the river makes such a decided curve in its upper course as has commonly been assigned to it by cartographers. He is able, however, to affirm positively that such a curved line does not exist in the 170 miles which he has lately explored. At the end of his letter he announces his intention of reaching Alashan about Sept. 1.

The Empress' New House.

SHE AND THE QUEEN TO BE NEIGHBOURS—WHY SHE REMAINS IN ENGLAND.

I hear that it was the Queen who prevailed upon the Empress Eugenie to give up her intention of going to Arenenberg and taking with her the mortal remains of the late Emperor and of the Prince Imperial. One of the chief reasons for leaving Chislehurst, but not the only one, was the impossibility of erecting a mausoleum there to those whom the Empress had loved and lost. The prime difficulty was getting a site. There is, it is true, to the westward of the little Church of St. Mary a field which would have done; but it is the property of a rich city firm, who, for some reason or another, would not, or could not, listen to any terms of purchase. It was then suggested that the Memorial Chapel might be built on the north side of the church, but here a difficulty of another kind arose. It is a superstition among the Roman Catholics of some countries that the sun never shines upon graves placed to the north of a church. The plan had, therefore, to be abandoned, and it was then that the Empress' solicitor bethought himself of Farnborough Hill, the estate of the late Mr. Longman. One of the great attractions of the place for the Empress is naturally its proximity to Windsor, of which it is within an easy drive. It is a cross between a French chateau and an English country house, picturesque and comfortable. The gardens are extensive, with graperies, ternery, greenhouse and orchidhouses. The ornamental grounds, which cover about eighty acres, have artificial lakes, with small, wooded islands. The estate comprises, besides, nine cottages and a farm, which is at present unlet—a hint to those who wish to have an Empress for the landlady. The Empress will take possession in the early part of next year, the tenancy of Camden House expiring in March. I hear the owner will not be sorry to return to his home again. When he let it to the fugitive Emperor ten years ago, he certainly did not think that he would have been kept out of it so long.

The Music of Ireland.

Moore, in his essay on the music of Ireland, says: "It has often been remarked and oftener felt, that our music is the truest of all commentaries upon our history. The tone of defiance, succeeded by the languor of despondency (a burst of turbulence dying away into softness) the sorrows of one moment lost in the levity of the next, and all that romantic mixture of mirth and sadness which is naturally produced by the efforts of a lively temperament to shake off or forget the wrongs which lie upon it. Such are the features and character, which we find strongly and faithfully reflected in our music; and there are many airs which I think it is difficult to listen to without recalling some period or event to which their expression seems peculiarly applicable. The plaintive melodies of Carolan take us back to the times in which he lived, when our poor countrymen were driven to worship their God in caves, or to quit for ever the land of their birth (like the bird that abandons the nest which human touch has violated); and in many a song do we hear the last farewell of the exile mingling regrets for the ties he leaves at home."

After all, those two men that at present lead the people of England, are though of very different types, tough and tried old fellows both. The world will very likely go crazy over this new novel of Beaconsfield's, and if Gladstone does not get in its pages a good many digs in the ribs, or wherever his tenderest parts are supposed to be, it will be a wonder. Ten thousand pounds for a novel,—fifty thousand dollars—and 20,000 copies sold before the book is published! Is that not something for a man of 75? And he'll be as biting and spiteful as ever, of course. What would the whole thing be worth, if it had neither the wormwood nor the gall? It will be fun if that man is again Prime Minister of England. But why not? He is the most magnificent charlatan that this century has produced, and, after all the average Englishman dearly loves fanfarade and cheap jewellery to say nothing of sounding periods, bitter invective and unadulterated Jingoism. It was not with Jingoism in itself, that they were disgusted and scandalized, but at