Ballad of the Wicked Nephew.

It was a wicked nephew bold
Who uprose in the night,
And ground upon a huge grindstone
His penknife, sharp and bright.

And while the sparks were flying wild
The cellar floor upon,
Quoth he unto himself, "I will
Dispatch my Uncle John.

"His property is large, and, if
He dies and leaves a will,
His loving nephew (that's myself)
Won't get a dollar bill.

"I'll hie unto my uncle's bed,
His chamber well I know,
And there I'll find his pocketbook
Safe under his pillow.

"With this bright steel I'll slay him first
Because that is the way
They do such things, I understand,
In Indicaicult's new play."

By this the anxious moon retired
(For all the stars were in);
"Tis very dark, the nephew cried,
"But I can find my kin.

"Come forth, my trusty weapon, now!"
(Or words to that effect)
He shouted to his little blade,
Whose power he did suspect.

Then out he starts. His uncle's door
Is thirteen doors from his;
He gains the latch, which upward flies,
And straight inside he is!

One pause upon the entry stair,
And one upon the mat—
How still the house at such an hour!
How mewless lies the cat!

"O nephew! nephew! be not rash;
Turn back, and then 'turn in;'
Your uncle still is sound asleep,
And you devoid of sin;

"The gallows tree was never built
For handsome lads like you—
Get thee to bed! (as kind Macbeth
Wished *his* young man to do)."

He will not be advised—he stands
Beside the sleeping form—
The hell begins to beat outside
A tattoo for the storm.

"Tis not too late—repent, repent,
And all may yet be well."
"Repent yourself," the nephew sneers,
And as it goes pellmell.

To right and left he carves his way,—
At least, thus did it seem;
And, after he had done the deed,
Woke up from his bad dream.

And swift to Uncle John he ran,
When daylight climbed the hill,
And told him all—and Uncle John
Put nephew in his will.

James T. Field.

AT THE TWELFTH HOUR.

BY R. F. FRANCILLON.

CHAPTER II—CONTINUED.

"I knew Derwent well; but I have seen nothing of him for some years—some time, I should say. I hope he is well"—

"He is dead, Mr. Hildreth. He died last November, in town. And his little girl"—

"Dick Derwent dead! Well. . . But a little girl? Well, he was just the man to get married before he died."

"She has no mother. She died, you know, when the child was born. Well, Mr. Hildreth, to make a long story short, Mr. Derwent had two ideas—perhaps more, but certainly two. One was an unbounded trust and confidence in your prudence and honour, as his will testifies. The other was an overwhelming dread lest his little girl should grow up a prey to fortune-hunters, or be contaminated by the companionship of other girls. He believed that every girl ought to grow up alone, with no knowledge of, or communication with, the world. He had had experiences of the other sort of thing, you see, when he was a young man. So, Mr Hildreth, knowing your prudence, your honour, your friendship for him, and your hermit-like mode of living, he leaves you a legacy of ten thousand pounds on condition that you will, as joint guardian with myself, undertake the sole and entire charge and education of the child (she living here with you) until she attains the age of twenty-four, at which age Mr. Derwent believed that a girl, properly brought up according to his views, ought to be able to run alone. She is now in the charge of an aunt, Mrs. Joy. You accept the charge of course"—

"What, I? No. No, Mr. Dimond. Without hesitation, and most decidedly, No. Few years bring, and shall bring, no new things to me. What should I, a student, who live alone with my books, do with a girl—a child"—

"The orphan of your friend——"

"Whom I do not need, and who does not need me. No. I closed my door last night, and I close it still. I will have nothing new in my life"—

"Not—ten thousand pounds"—

"No. No, once for all." He bowed Mr. Dimond out, and went back to his work, without giving another thought of the New-Year's evening but vain attempt to creep within his doors in the shape of a child.

It was all very well for the lawyer of fifty to speak of a grown girl of three-and-twenty as if she were no more than a child in arms. Equally reasonable was it for Rupert to argue that, since Dick Derwent was unmarried some six years ago, his orphan daughter could hardly be five years old. But there is nobody so good at keeping a secret, when he likes, as your blunt, frank, hearty, talkative, open-mannered man. Mr. Dimond knew, and thought his client's intimate friends knew also, that the Squire of Combe Bassett had married once upon a time and had been left a father and a widower within a year: not only so, but that, surrounded as he was by society of which he was unwilling to deprive himself as he was anxious that his daughter should not share it, he had taken extraordinary precautions against the discovery of her existence till she was fully grown. His friends were mostly good fellows with no money to spend, who would swoop down on an heiress after the genial manner of their kind.

One bright, cold morning, when, in midwinter, her own heart was overflowing with spring and joy, the old nurse who served and guarded her was suddenly dismissed; she was carried, by road and rail, many miles away from her old home, and presently her father came and took her to travel with him abroad. She could not speak to him of the dream which he had doubtlessly discovered, and had thus answered. It is to be hoped she was satisfied. She was docile and gentle, and her father was always kind—kind now, even in keeping her to himself; for she had seen all the human beings she needed to see in seeing one whom she saw no more. He cared not much for the adventurers and fortune-hunters whom he knew, and ruled by a craze, spent his whole time in avoiding. He need not even have made that will when he died, so that his hand, though dead, might still guard her from lovelessness in marriage and all lesser harm. Mr. Dimond must have been terribly right when suggesting that the Squire's own experiences of the world must have been before he settled down at Combe Bassett with the soul of a girl in his hands.

She mourned, honestly, when he died. Perhaps not the less because he had made her life so dull and empty. But presently she had to mourn for her living self, even more. She was an heiress—she had learned to hate the very sound of the word. And she was left in charge of another guardian: a hard, stern man, named Hildreth, so she heard; a recluse, who had been chosen by her father for the office because of his being the only man in the world who could be trusted to carry out, consistently and thoroughly, her father's views. Hitherto, her life had been slavery, but love therewith. Henceforth it must be double slavery, and therewith what must needs become hate, at least on her side.

And yet it was with a strange feeling, very far indeed from pleasure or relief, that she heard from Mr. Dimond of Mr. Hildreth's decisive, almost scornful and angry, refusal of the charge that had been left to him. She had somehow expected that he would have received her for money's sake, and then, for duty's, have made her life hardly to be borne. But here was clearly a man who would neither do a kindness nor accept a duty, if they were inconvenient to him, even for ten thousand pounds. If there were to be refusals and rebellions, they ought to have come from her.

"It seems to me you have had a lucky escape, Miss Derwent," said the lawyer, when his holiday was over and he came in person to bring her news. "There is something about that fellow Hildreth that I neither like nor understand; he's not like other people at all. He refused a legacy of ten thousand pounds. That is being far too imprudent to have the charge of a young girl."

"At any rate, *he* is no fortune-hunter," said she. "Perhaps my poor father knew that, and that was why——. And what am I to do now?"

"That's just the point, you see. The terms of the will are perfectly clear. In the event of Mr. Hildreth's refusal to undertake the charge of you—why, then, as you say, he will have proved himself very much of a fool. But, as he will also have proved that he doesn't care about money, I am—I am sorry to say—instructed to make him the offer of your hand."

"Of my hand? Of *Me?*"

"Even so. And it must be done. For, if I do not, I shall lose my own legacy; and it is too much to lose. If he refuses *that*—But he can't be such a fool as to refuse the heiress of Combe Bassett, you may be sure. Your honoured father did know men."

"But there is something else to be said, it seems to me! How if *I* refuse?"

"Then he is to have Combe Bassett *without* you. You are to have enough to live in comfort while you are single; but under no circumstances will you have anything more if you marry anybody but him. It is a cruel will, Miss Derwent; but it is a clever one for its purpose, I must say. Whatever happens, the man who marries you must marry you for love and for fortune, you see; and"——

She heard no more. No wonder, thought she, that her father had done his utmost, alive and dead, to keep her from a world where men, as a matter of course, assumed only the meanest and most sordid motives in one another—judging, no doubt, from their own experience of their own. *She* marry! Why, if her heart and soul had not been married and widowed long ago, she would return with joy to her old prison in the wood rather than give herself to any man as an uncomfortable condition attaching to her lands and her gold. Let him who had refused to be paid for the care of her ask her for herself with her lands a hundred times—she would refuse him a hundred and one. Let him take Combe Bassett and welcome, so long as he left her free.

And then the pittance that was to be hers in case she refused—even that, according to what she had been taught of the world, would be all too much; even that might be enough to attract some man who was poorer still. Was she to be a slave to the world's meanness all her days? Her heart went back to him who had loved her wholly for herself, if there was any truth in all those magical signs of love that cannot lie. What had become of him? Where was he now? Had he forgotten her all in these years? Had he sold himself to some other woman, for gold? Like enough, being a man; and men being what she had been taught they were. But, had they never been parted, he would have loved her well enough, she knew.

Since Love had been lost, better now, even than Love, was Liberty, for that had become her all. Passionately she felt, "He shall have everything but Me; I will not keep for myself one smallest coin that may make my No less full and whole." After all, there was under the skies another world, where men made no wills, hunted no heiresses, laid no plots or counterplots, never talked of love when they meant money, and, above all, were free. It is the world where we live without Love, without Gold, and Alone. It was the world wherein she herself had lived for her first sixteen years, where men were not, and where she had been tended as are the lilies of the field. It was where she had had the dream of her life, and where she might—she fancied in her heart—go back, and live alone with her dream and be Free. Never, since she left her hermitage, had she been happy for an hour. She had been, as it were, a wild flower transplanted into a garden, where it can only feel itself a weed, and dread the scents and hues around that others find beautiful. She had once longed for the world, as the wild flowers may for the gardens while they are unknown and far away; and now——Well, if she could not find her field again, any place would be better than the garden of the world; even the wayside.

She could not think or feel as those can who have grown up in the garden all their days. So little, or so much, had she learned that, when she heard such an everyday thing merely named and spoken as the sale, by a woman, of her hand and heart, for the sake of keeping her land, she was struck with unspeakable horror as if she had turned over the soil of a bed of roses and laid open the entrance of a charnel, black and foul. We, with our sensible bringing up, our well-regulated minds, and still better regulated hearts, may think her view of such everyday trifles a little overstrained. But then we have seen such things with our eyes; she had never seen much as heard of one of them till now. Such a world was not to be lived in; there was nothing to be done but spread one's wings, and fly from it with all speed.

CHAPTER III.

It was the 12th of January, and Rupert Hildreth had not yet heard another word worth mentioning concerning his friend's orphan and her affairs. It is true he had received a letter from Mr. Dimond containing some rubbish or other about something that was to happen if he married the child when she became of age; but, as that could not happen for nearly twenty years, and as it could not possibly concern him in any way, he had naturally thrown the letter, half read, into his waste-basket, and, being deep in an all-absorbing investigation, had forgotten to send a word of answer. He worked on, without giving a real thought to such impertinent nonsense; and if another girl's form would sometimes come between him and his labour, or between his paper and his eyes, he had become used to that ghost, and would even have missed it if it ever ceased wholly to come.

So far, therefore, he had made himself secure for another course of an old year which had so consistently proved good to him, bringing him no evil, and, on the other hand, increasing satisfaction with himself and indifference to all the rest of mankind. Every day he had risen at the same hour and worked on till his brain was heartily tired. Every night he insured himself a long sleep, too deep for dreams. The man, day by day, was turning into a machine; and so he willed.

On this night of the 12 he was working, as usual, and I was even more than usually absorbed. It was a lonely old house in which he lived, near the town, but yet with no close neighbours. These dark winter nights were as long and as noiseless as the heart of a student could desire, even though, now and then, he might hear the rush and scream of the night mail that passed Rainham without stopping, and, every hour, the chiming of the church tower. It was more to keep out these than the rush of the train that Rupert Hildreth had double windows to all his rooms, and kept them close even in summer time;—one of his principal eccentricities was a morbid antipathy to the sound of church clocks, especially when they struck twelve.

He made his servants go to bed punctually at ten, for he liked, during his night work, to feel absolutely alone. And never, since he had settled at Rainham, had he been disturbed after that hour. At first, therefore, he could hardly believe his own ears when, late in the evening, and long after his servants were out of the way, he heard a bell ring through the house—no sound of a church clock, but within the house itself, as if such an impossible thing were happening as that somebody was pulling the bell of *his* front door.

It could not be fancy—such things often happen to minds so absorbed in thought that outward things often become confused and obscured, and when the senses, cut off from real sights and sounds, are compelled to find their own food. He had almost forgotten the matter, when the bell rang once more.

It must be real, then, thought Rupert, angrily. If it happened again it would wake the servants, throw the house into a tumult, and rob him of a whole night's work—and that must never be. If only to say No to somebody, he must go down himself and stop the ringing, otherwise nothing would have moved him from his desk had all Rainham been on fire.

He opened the door just in time to save himself from another ring. By the bright light of the moon, then at her full, he saw a young girl well wrapped in a cloak with her hand upon the bell.

"What does this mean?" asked Rupert, sternly. "Who are you? What do you want here?"

"I—I'm afraid," said the girl, looking round her doubtfully, "I'm afraid I've lost my way—I saw a light here, and no other house near—I came by the train—is it very far?"

"No. It is straight along the road," said Rupert, rather roughly. It was something more than annoying to be disturbed in full work, and to be rung up at such an hour for such a trifle as a lost way.

"But—is it very far?"

"There was little to even his cultivated listening to a machine. There seemed something strange about the girl, he thought, as she spoke thus doubtfully and wearily. She did not look like one to be rambling about alone at midnight; and though nothing concerning a stranger could possibly mean anything to him, he had not as yet wholly ceased to be a man. "I suppose," he said, "you have friends at Rainham and are on your way to them? It is not very far, but I am afraid it is both very far and very late—for you."

"No; I have no friends. I suppose there is an inn?"

"You have business, then? Nobody ever comes to Rainham without business or friends." He thought again; for it began to seem to him that there was something about her not wholly strange. "Yes," he said, "of course there is an inn; but"——

"I have to see a Mr. Hildreth to-morrow, who lives here. That is all."

"You have to see Mr. Hildreth? And what possible reason——You have to see *Me?*"

"*You* are Mr. Hildreth?"

"That is my name. And yours?" All his sternness had returned. Had his well trained Old Year gone crazed?

"You will know who *I* am," said she, sadly and proudly, "when I tell you why I am here. It is to tell you with my own lips, before I leave such a world as this, where men buy love, and let hearts starve, that Combe Bassett is yours, every blade of grass, every stick and stone, without your having to be put to the shame of asking for the hand of one whom you refused even to look at when she could be nothing more to you than the orphan of your friend. That is all. . . ."

"He looked, almost in amaze, certainly bewildered, from her into the dark entrance through which the night wind had followed her, as little welcome as she. "Pardon me," said he, "but this is a matter which I have absolutely nothing to do. Do you mean to tell me, whoever you are, that you are in league with those who seek to bring into my house and life the child whom I am bidden to make my wife in my old age?"

"What child?"

"What else? Are you playing me some trick"——He turned aside to light the lamp: partly to think, partly to see. "I remember—only eleven days ago some lawyer fellow wanted me to let in the New Year in the shape of a child. I refused him at the right time: it's too late now! What have I to do with Dick Derwent's child? There is an early train to-morrow: take it, and go back again. And tell those who sent you here that if wealth, and power, and glory, and wisdom, and love, came knocking altogether at my door, I would say, as I say to you—I want none of you: Go!"

"I tell you that I, Bertha Derwent, refuse"——

The lamp was lighted. ONE! struck Rainham clock. And never since Rupert had lived there had he heard so loud a stroke. For it made no muffled thud through double windows, but a full, heavy boom through the open door, which Rupert had thrown open at the second ring and had neglected to close—on *Old* New Year's Eve!

The lamplight was on both their faces: in the ears of both boomed the bell. No chimes heralded the birth of this New-Year of theirr, though that twelfth day of January is as surely New Year's Eve for those who will as Twelfth-Day is Old Christmas Day. For those who will? well, maybe any day in the year will so as well. Only it did so happen that, when Rupert left the door ajar for a young girl to enter, he had forgotten that, where evil is to be let out, and good let in, Time is good enough to give us at least Two New-Years Days—and Old as well as a New: or rather a New as well as an Old.

"Rupert!"

"Bertha!"

"And *I* refused *you?*"

And *I* barred out *you* when I barred out the New Years—but how could I tell? And what else have I barred out? Harm, yes—but what else? Heaven knows. One blessing—how many more?"

"Do you bar me out still?"

He looked at her—then far away, as if round the world. "Neither you, nor whatever Time may bring," said he. "This is New Year's Eve for me. Good and Ill—Ill and Good, let all come: they all come from the same place by the same road. Let them all come together, so they come, at last, with you . . . God will bless the new, and God speed the old!"

Rainham clock took a long time to strike: all this, and more had been told, when it boomed—TWELVE!

[THE END.]

De Lesseps' Luck.

ON WHAT TRIFLES OFTEN DEPEND GREAT ACTIONS.

The empress was the Isabella the Catholic of the Suez scheme. But for the Spanish ardor wi which she sustained it, the Isthmus would still divide the Red from the Mediterranean sea. "Your head," she said (speaking of a course in figure) to Counte Walewski, "depends on the skill you show in helping my cousin to cut his canal." M. de Lesseps' father, who was descended from the architect of the Cathedral of Edinburgh, was sent with Lucien Bonaparte to Madrid, because he had been brought up at Bay nne and could talk Spanish as well as French. Lucien was the first ambassador named to the court of Charles IV. by Napoleon. His mission was to obtain the retrocession of Louisiania, which Louis XV. had allowed to slip from his hands. M. de Lesseps the elder went about always with him, and was the soul of his diplomacy. The New Orleans affair brought him into relations with the United States consuls, the most intelligent of whom was Mr. Kirkpatrick, who, was in business at Malaga. M. de Lesseps proceeded to that town, and, assisted by Kirkpatrick, who, like himself, was of Scotch origin—but less remotely—studied the resources of Andlusia and the political condition of the south of Spain. They were drawn closer together by a romantic affair which sprang up. A notable of the province, Senor Greviglera, had two very pretty daughters, with one of whom the consul fell in love. The French diplomat became enamored of the youngest, and as Lucien Bonaparte was in high favour at the court of Madrid her father allowed her to marry M. de Lesseps, with whom she went to reside in Paris, where, in 1804, she gave birth to Ferdinand. Her eldest sister became Mrs. Kirkpatrick, and the mother of the comtesse de Montilo, who was drawn by her De Lesseps kindred to winter in Paris when her daughters had grown up. "Thus, you see," observed M. de Lesseps, "what a number of great events have in *l'enchainement des choses* depended upon my fathers early knowledge of the Spanish tongue."

Another "hinge event," which led to the execution of the Suez canal scheme, was the elder Lesseps having divined in a poor and unlettered Turkish officer, Mehemet Ali, a vast genius, and the man who was to break down the power of the Mamelukes. The French diplomat reported in this sense to his government and was instructed to be guided by his own judgment in bringing the officer forward. M. de Lesseps invited the Turk to his house, and showed himself in various ways his friend. But suddenly the officer withdrew from his company, and kept out of the way. When Mehemet was a great man he said to M. Ferdinand de Lesseps: "Your father must have been puzzled to think what my reason was for keeping aloof from him after I had accepted so much kindness. It was this: A silver knife and fork I heard the servants say, had been stolen from his table at a dinner to which I went. I was so poor that I fancied I would pass in his eyes for being the thief, and never dared after to return." Soon after Mehemet had related this anecdote he asked M. Ferdinand de Lesseps to allow Prince Said, his son, to pass his afternoons at the French consulate, in order that he might pick up the French that was spoken there. The boy grew fondly attached to the intelligent and very kind-hearted diplomat. When he was viceroy and the Suez concession was asked for, he gave M. de Lesseps a carte blanche.

The Utilizing of the Tides.

A Philadelphia engineer has invented, it is claimed, a machine by which the power of the tides can be utilized. Numerous plans have been proposed for the accomplishment of this most desirable end, but only under exceptional conditions have they been practical or economical. If the new device can harness the tide in an open channel, so as to convert any considerable portion of the vast power into working force, the inventor will rank among the great benefactors of humanity. Emerson says somewhere: Hitch your wagon to a star. A device for utilizing mechanically the free tides, as they sweep along our shores, would come next to that, since it would enable us, through converters and carriers of electricity, to hitch our wagons to the sun and moon.

Matters European.

The calling together of the English Parliament a month earlier than the date to which it had been prorogued is undoubtedly caused by the Irish disturbances. Mr. Gladstone's circular, summoning the M.Ps. to meet on Jan. 6, announces that important business will be entered upon as soon as they assemble. The session promises to be the most momentous one since that which saw the repeal of the corn laws. The Government will at once grapple with the Irish question, and will unavoidably get into stormy waters. It is certain that nothing it can do will placate the Land League, and it is not probable that any measure the Ministry may propose will receive the hearty support of the Conservatives, unless, indeed, it be in the direction of coercion. Mr. Bright has expressed his opinion that "force is no remedy." It may be no remedy for bad harvests and discontent, but it is a most effective remedy for assassination and "Boycotting." Moreover, it seems to be the only practicable remedy.

Another and not less difficult problem will be forced upon the attention of the Government. There can be no doubt that

PARNELLISM IS SPREADING IN ENGLAND.

The hard times have forced farmers to seriously consider their position, and their ideas on this subject have been freely expressed at the agricultural meetings, which take place all over the country early in December. It is plain that both landlord and tenant are in a quandary. In the midland, western, and southern counties there are thousands of acres which cannot be rented on any terms. In the county of Essex alone fifty thousand acres are left untilled; the farmers have gone to London and hired out as helpers in the stables of London horse-owners at $5 a week. In view of these facts, it is not surprising to hear that, at the recent meeting of the Farmers' Alliance, a delegate was for adopting some of the principles of the Land League. There seems to be no probability of any "let up" for these tillers of the soil.

The committee who have been revising the English version of the

NEW TESTAMENT

have at length finished their work. That this has been no light task is shown by the fact that it was begun in 1870, and that for four days in every month since that time the committee have met to proceed with their duties. This makes one year and seven weeks of actual working days of seven hours each. The private study that the members have performed to prepare themselves for the monthly meetings cannot be estimated. The movement for the revision of the New Testament was initiated by the Convocation of Canterbury, Bishops Ellicott and Thirlwall and Dean Alford and Stanley being its chief instigators. An extraordinary opposition to the whole scheme was raised by the Convocation of York, headed by Archbishop Thompson; he didn't like the idea of the Bible "being laid on the table of the anatomist and subjected to this rude process;" and he "begged for breathing time before they sent their beloved Bible to the crucible to be melted down and recast." This feeling was largely shared by the older lay members of the Episcopal Church, who considered that what had been good enough for them was good enough for their children. It was explained to them that, although the New Testament might have been originally inspired, its translators clearly were not, and that numerous and important additions and errors had crept into the text; that the faults, in the light of modern scholarship, were easily eradicable; that millions of copies of the Bible are being scattered yearly through the world, and that it was an absolute sin to mislead the people into whose hands these erroneous books are put. These arguments were of no avail with the Exeter Hall class of religionists, and their "boss," Lord Shaftsbury, avowed an unconquerable hostility to the notion of having the Bible "diluted and Frenchified." The Convocation of Canterbury, however, was not to be deterred by his lordship's fears, and a working committee was chosen with power to appoint the members of the Revising Committe, who were to be "eminent for scholarship, no matter to whatever nation or religious body they might belong." The men selected were Dr. Augus, Archbishop Trench, Dr. Eadie, Prof. Hort, the Rev. W. G. Humphry, Prof. Kennedy (of Cambridge), Archdeacon Lee, Dr. Lightfoot (now Bishop of Durham), Prof. Milligan, Prof. Moulton, Dr. J. H. Newman (now Cardinal), Prof. Newth, Dr. A. Roberts, Dr. Vance Smith, Dr. Scott (Dean of Rochester), Dr. Scrivener, Dr. Tregelles, Dr. J. C. Vaughan (now Dean of Llandaff), and Prof. Westcott. A little later some additions were made to the number, including Bishop Wordsworth (of St. Andrew's), Dr. D. Brown of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, and Dean Blunt. Churchman and Dissenter, Prelatist and Presbyterian, Independent and Methodist, Baptist and Pedobaptist, the Anglican, the Lutheran, and the Reformed, they who emphasize divine sovereignty and they who put the stress on human freedom, they who see only unity in the godhead and who recognize plurality as well as unity, appear alike in the lists of the men employed.

Cardinal Newman declined to assist, and death and other causes brought down the average attendance during the ten years to sixteen. The proceedings of this committee have been kept as secret as possible, but inkings of some of the changes have got abroad, and it is whispered that the verses in the ninth chapter of St. Mark, on which is founded the idea of the good old-fashioned fire-and-brimstone hell, are to be omitted as spurious, and that the last twelve verses of the same gospel are also to be omitted or materially altered.

Probably the alteration that will cause most controversy will be the alteration of the wording of the Lord's Prayer, in which the words "from the evil one" will be substituted for the words "from evil." This will at once give new life to

THE DOCTRINE OF A PERSONAL DEVIL,

which has so languished of late. Scoffers think, however, that it will be very unfair to encourage the devil in his depredations on the human race, and at the same time to deny him a place in which to incarcerate and torment his captives.

THE FAMOUS MIDDLE PARK STUD,

founded by Mr. Blenkiron, is now dispersed, the founder's sons having determined to give up their business. When Mr. Blenkiron died nine years ago, a grand sale took place, at which 105 yearlings brought about $111,000; 129 mares and foals and 70 mares without foals brought about $340,000, and 12 sires were disposed of for about $175,000. The first day of the present sale showed little difference in the average prices between then and now. It was remarked that the buyers this year were nearly all colonists or foreigners, Australia, the Cape and Good Hope, France, Germany, Spain and Denmark being represented. One of the mares put up was the dam of the unfortunate Blue Gown—Bas Bleu, by Stockwell out of Vexation—but, on account of her great age, she did not find a purchaser. The highest price, $7,500, was paid by Mr. Malapert, a Frenchman, for Czarina, a King Tom mare. Rosette, the cheapest mare, but by no means the lowest priced, was bought for the Cape of Good Hope. She boasts three Derby winners in her pedigree—Lord Lyon, Thormanby, and Pensipotentiary—and she is half sister to Bend Or.

Some of the English sportsmen have been having a good season. At Duppiin,

A WEEK'S BAG OF HARES ALONE WEIGHED THREE TONS.

There must have been a great many times that weight of hares left on the estate; the damage done by them to the crops in the neighbourhood must have been enormous. It is hard to conceive a tamer kind of sport than a battue of hares. One might as well fire at a lot of hay ricks. Lord Sefton, with a party of six guns, killed 7,800 head of game in five days, and in Kent, the Duke of Edinburgh and his party bagged 2,700 head in a week.

To the great delight of Paris, Victorien Sardou has given up his attempts to convert the stage into a lecture platform, and gone back to the composition of comedies.

"DIVORCONS,

which he wrote in collaboration with M. Najac, has been welcomed with an effusion that must more than make amends for the dismal failure of "Daniel Rochat." The play is genuinely witty, intensely amusing, and altogether free from even a suspicion of the didactic vein in which Sardou has conceived most of his later pieces.

Another new play has not been so fortunate. At the Gymnase,

"LES BRAVES GENS,"

by Edmund Gondinet and M. Koning, failed unmistakably on its first production. The critics, with every desire to extenuate the disaster, accuse M. Gondinet of writing obscurely and with a turgidity improper in dramatic composition. They find his story old, and protest that the monotone of misfortune running through the piece grows at last insufferable. The characters, however, are sketched with a good deal of distinctness, and no one denies that, at times, the situations are poignantly interesting. The piece was by no means well played, and two of the principal actors were positively discomposed on account of the utter indifference of the characters assigned to them. The partial success of the first performance was achieved by the three management footlights of Mlle. Marie Magnier which enchanted even Paris.

THE LION OF THE HOUR

in Paris is the Marquis of San Malato, the Sicilian nobleman, who, after running through his patrimony, took to teaching the young gentlemen of Florence how to run each other through. He is said to be the best fencing master in Europe, and the most fabulous stories are told of his skill and courage. He is an Italian d'Artagnan, and carries the scars of twenty-two wounds received in actual warfare. He has fought no less than forty duels in his time. One of them was with a young kinsman who had insulted him grossly, and whose mother interceded in her son's behalf. San Malato kept his engagement with the rash youngster, but fought him with averted face so as to give him every chance. To learn the exquisite art of fencing of this great master costs fifty francs a lesson, and the fee for permission to try an assault of arms on him is twice that amount.

Tito Mattei's new opera,

"MARIA DE GAND,"

produced at Her Majesty's, is a contemptible melange of old ideas. It is essentially conventional and commonplace; coming after such a masterpiece of originality as Boito's "Mefistofele," it was received by the London critics with an impatience that perilously bordered on disgust. Mattei is a flippant and tinselly composer who has written a number of songs of a sort sure to be popular in drawing-rooms, but who is utterly incapable of operatic composition. The melody to which he owes his fictitious fame is the "Non e ver," which so long divided the affections of amateur singers with the "Maiden's Prayer" and other sentimental nonsense. Mattei wrote it at Hombourg after he had been cleaned out at the gaming table, and sold it for 200 francs. His publishers have already made £6,000 to £8,000 by its sale. It was their subvention of £500 which induced Mr. Armilt to produce his opera at Her Majesty's.

Around Our Streets.

(From the Toronto Truth.)

'Ere you see another line of my views of things in print, a new Mayor will be elected for the "Queen City of the West," and a new Council likewise. With regard to the mayoralty, I have a few words to offer. In the first place, Mr. Ald. Close is not the idol of my heart for two or three very good reasons. I don't like his connection with the Woodside property at all—no more than I like his evidence before the Railway Commission. In the second place, he is guilty of an attempt to bull-doze the Conservative electors of Toronto, by first getting up a convention for the purpose of openly introducing party politics into our municipal elections, and in the second place manipulating the Ward "bosses" and wire pullers, in such a way as to give himself the nomination. If he is elected the case will stand thus:—Nomination for Mayor. Ald. Close nominated by—Ald. Close—seconded by Ald. Close—A convention consisting of Ald. Close, comes to the conclusion that the best man to rule the City Council for 1881, is Ald. Close. Carried unanimously, amidst the wildest cheering by Ald. Close.

Of

MR. M'MURRICH

I have but little to say, and that little is like the business end of a bee—very much to the point. This gentleman poses before the electors of Toronto as an independent candidate, and why? Because he knows to a dot how many chances a Grit has in Toronto as a Grit pure and simple. Because he knows that as 1:100:: a Grits chance against a Tory—even if that Tory is as fossilized as the Onondaga. Giant and so poor that he can't stand alone So what does this charmingly ingenuous Ward politician of the Grit persuasion do? He comes out as an Independent; forsooth never entertaining of carrying his own party vote straight. *Oh, no.* He would never be guilty of such a wicked thought as that. No more would he dream of carrying the "loose fish" by denouncing Tory conventions and party candidature, or would he think that the said loose fish held the balance of power between the parties! I should say not. But these are tick tac, I mean tactics, and I mean to say that in the dirty trade of politics anything is fair that "scores one" for you and pulls a nail in the other man's political coffin. The third in the field is

MR. JAMES BRITTON.

"Britons never shall be slaves," and Mr. B. evidently acts on that principle, for in spite of two or three previous defeats, he comes up smiling again, and announces his determination to strike another blow at the partizan spirit which is sapping all the vim from the health of our civic institutions, and is leaving his fellow citizens at the mercy of a band of brigands (metaphorically speaking), whose only thought is of squandering the city's money on useless water works, and whose only dreams are of champagne lunches at the public expense. Mr. Britton's integrity as a private individual is well known and his probity as a public man stands untarnished. As the Chairman of the Markets' Committee he was the projector of the Cattle Market Scheme, which scheme he carried to a successful termination, with credit to himself, and profit to his fellow-citizens. As a party man he has always given an independent support to Sir John A. and the Conservative party, but he is too liberal a man, not only in politics but in religion, not to see some good in everybody, no matter how much his opinions may differ as a whole. He has always been one of the foremost in charity, without the least regard for creed. That a good work was to be done has always been enough for him, no matter whether the hungry one was Catholic or Protestant. He is not a brilliant speaker, but he is a good business man, and Toronto has had far worse Mayors than he would make.

THE ALDERMANIC

nominations have given the best exhibit of the right class of men we have had out for some years, and if the people do not do their duty and throw out some of the useless ones (and I could name them if would, but wouldn't) I for one will be awfully disgusted. There are some ex-Aldermen offering, and among them are some who ought to go in with "whooping" majorities, among them

MR. TOM DAVIES

the brewer, who in the council is the right man in the right place. He is not one of those who are very subject to "labial explosions" or in other words talking a great deal, but when he was there before he proved himself to be a great worker, both in council and committee.

HARRY PIPER

will be a great loss to the community mentally speaking, in his mind; no more will that massive intellect make itself felt within those sacred walls on Front st. No more will that musical voice, be raised in ardent defense of the coloured population of St. John's. No more will those eloquent gestures, more expressive than words, be used to signal a friend, that the man with the dog has arrived and is out side waiting to see him. I feel that I am breaking down as I think over it, and reader I have cause for my regrets. I never loved him as I ought to have, and now he is retiring from the council, I feel that we "may never look upon his like again," *et hinc illæ lachrymæ.*

So Christmas is gone and

NEW YEAR'S DAY

is coming. The custom of visiting is this year revived, and everybody announces his intention of turning himself for the nonce, into a combined walking coffee-pot and cake basket. The young ladies will of course look beautiful as they always do on such occasions and with their bewitching *smiles*, will be almost enough to tempt a hermit to take a drink. But girls, don't do it. Banish wine from your tables entirely, for all young men are not strong, all young men are not sensible, and above all most young men in the presence of a pretty girl, (like yourself for instance) are absolutely compelled by some mysterious feeling, of chivalry, to do pretty much as they are told. Have you got a brother? Or a lover? If you have how would you like to see him coming home to you, with unsteady step and flushed face? And mind you, my dear, this may be entirely accidental on his part. I have known a good many young fellows to get under the weather, without having had even the slightest intention of taking more than they should have. You would feel awfully cut up, wouldn't you? And now suppose you give some other girl's lover or brother a glass of wine at noon. Suppose it is his first, and before night he has got into a condition, which makes him an object of pity to some and contempt to others.

YOUR FIRST GLASS STARTED HIM, AND HOW

DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?

No my dear, don't do it. It may help to set off a table, but there is altogether too much danger of your also falling under intoxication.

A WORD TO THE WISE.

I am she if you, and understand you like a book, you can't feel me, for I have been everywhere. I have a few words to say to you on a serious subject. Do you know that you can be more pretty, make yourselves more agreeable, be better looking, and have the girls think more of you if you put your foot down on it and say

NO!

I will drink no wine this New Year. I am not one of the goody goody description—not by a large majority, as Judge Sifter says, and I occasionally drink a glass of beer myself, but I wouldn't be paid to drink anything on New Year's day—stronger than coffee. Not if it was offered to me by the prettiest girl in Toronto. But I needn't say that, for the prettiest girl is also the best, and I am quite sure she will have no wine on her table. Who is she? But what an old person I have become, preaching away on the temperance question. Did I hear you say shut up? Allright. Happy New Year.

PAUL PRY, JR.

George Eliot.

HER LIFE, HER WORKS, AND HER STATUS AS A NOVELIST.

No one will dispute the rank of George Eliot among the novelists of her sex. In England there have been but two women who novels have gained a place in English literature, but "Evelina" and "Pride and Prejudice" will bear no comparison with the best work of George Eliot. Years ago it was the fashion to speak of George Eliot as the worthy rival of George Sand, but time has modified the estimation in which the clever and audacious Frenchwoman was once held, and though the charm of her style can never be underrated, it is evident that her reputation as a novelist has greatly declined during the past twenty years, and no cool critic would now think of comparing the crude colouring of "Indiana" with the broad and masterly canvas of "Middlemarch." George Eliot is not only recognized universally as the first among female novelists, but she is ranked with the masters of English fiction, and is held by many to be the peer of Thackeray and even of Scott.

It has long been the fashion to say of George Eliot that her genius was essentially masculine, and it is said, that her publisher, to whom she was personally unknown, firmly believed that the "Scenes of Clerical Life" was written by a man. In the attribute of strength George Eliot's novels may be loosely said to be masculine, though this implies, and without sufficient reason, that strength is exclusively a characteristic of masculine genius. Unquestionably she had this quality. She was not confined, as are many novelists, men as well as women, to a canvas large enough only for three or four figures, and her creative powers not exhausted in drawing those. In her more important works she introduced us to a grand gallery of portraits, every one of which had its own and striking merits. In "Middlemarch," which in some respects is her greatest work, there are a dozen people, any one of whom is a distinct creation, and all of whom are painted with a power and fidelity which only a master of fiction could display. To pass from such a book to even so finished a study as Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," is to compare the grand canvases of Tintoretto with the cabinet work of Meissonier. No other English novelist has been thus lavish of power. The teeming brain of Dickens gave us countless caricatures; but even in "David Copperfield," the possible people, those who seem capable of self-sustained life, are very few. Sir Walter Scott lavished his best efforts on a few central figures in each one of his novels, and filled in the background with a host of lay figures, and a working committee was chosen with power to appoint the members of the Revising Committe, who were to be "eminent for scholarship, no matter to whatever nation or religious body they might belong." The men selected were Dr. Augus, Archbishop Trench, Dr. Eadie, Prof. Hort, the Rev. W. G. Humphry, Prof. Kennedy (of Cambridge), Archdeacon Lee, Dr. Lightfoot (now Bishop of Durham), Prof. Milligan, Prof. Moulton, Dr. J. H. Newman (now Cardinal), Prof. Newth, Dr. A. Roberts, Dr. Vance Smith, Dr. Scott (Dean of Rochester), Dr. Scrivener, Dr. Tregelles, Dr. J. C. Vaughan (now Dean of Llandaff), and Prof. Westcott. A little later some additions were made to the number, including Bishop Wordsworth (of St. Andrew's), Dr. D. Brown of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, and Dean Blunt. Churchman and Dissenter, Prelatist and Presbyterian, Independent and Methodist, Baptist and Pedobaptist, the Anglican, the Lutheran, and the Reformed, they who emphasize divine sovereignty and they who put the stress on human freedom, they who see only unity in the godhead and who recognize plurality as well as unity, appear alike in the lists of the men employed.

Cardinal Newman declined to assist, and death and other causes brought down the average attendance during the ten years to sixteen. The proceedings of this committee have been kept as secret as possible, but inkings of some of the changes have got abroad, and it is whispered that the verses in the ninth chapter of St. Mark, on which is founded