What if the little feet [illegible] the clean floor, and little [illegible] tens or stemless flowers [illegible] sometimes, it scarcely [illegible] words mothers so often [illegible] hand forgets an errand [illegible] score, he may be as likely [illegible] another time if gently reminded [illegible] harshly reproached with "[illegible] bering anything!" Too many times [illegible] first lessons in deceit and falsehood [illegible] learned at the mother's side; fathers [illegible] their practice, teach their boys to [illegible] scant weight and short measure.

I know a mother who opened her [illegible] to receive some unwelcome visitors [illegible] day, telling them she was so glad to see them, when her little daughter of five spoke up in utter astonishment, "Why, mother, you said you did hope they were not coming here!" We may think that if we teach them the decalogue it is enough, but our children will be very likely to pay more attention to our practice than to our precepts; and "if father or mother does so, we can."

LIFE BECAME A BURDEN.

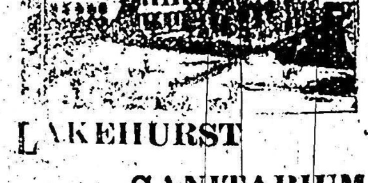
THE WONDERFUL NARRATIVE OF A PATIENT SUFFERER.

The After Effects of La Grippe Developed into Inflammation of the Lungs and Chronic Bronchitis—After Four Years of Suffering Health is Almost Miraculously Restored.

From Le Monde, Montreal.

Mrs. Sarah Cloutier, who resides at No. [illegible] Montcalm street, Montreal, has passed through an experience which is worthy of wide-spread publication for the benefit it may prove to others. Up to four years ago Mrs. Cloutier's health had been good, but at that time she was attacked by that dread scourge, la grippe. Every [illegible] since, notwithstanding all her care, [illegible] inflammation of the lungs, which would bring her to the very verge of death. This was followed by bronchia for the [illegible] of the year. Her bronchial tubes [illegible] to such an extent that it [illegible] with difficulty she could breathe, and [illegible] of outside air would make her [illegible] in the most distressing manner. "[illegible] was," said Mrs. Cloutier to the reporter, "a constant rattling sound in my throat, and in the state I was in death would have been a relief. I could not attend to my affairs nor to my house, and had it not been for my niece, on whom I relied, I cannot say what would have become of me. It was in vain that I tried the numerous remedies given me by various doctors, and when I think of all the money they cost me I cannot but regret. I [illegible] tried them. I had read frequently of the cures effected by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I felt that they [illegible] contain the truth, for if they were [illegible] none would dare to give the names and addresses of the persons said to be cured in the public manner in which these are given in the newspapers. I decided to try Pink Pills, and none but those who were acquainted with my former condition can understand the good I derived from their use, which I continued until I felt that I was completely cured. As a proof that I am cured I may tell you that on the first day of my going out after my recovery I walked for two miles on an up hill road without feeling the least fatigue, and since I have enjoyed the best of health. Last fall I was afraid that the inflammation of the lungs to which I had been subject at that period of former years might return, but I had not the slightest symptom of it, and never felt better in my life. You can imagine the gratitude I feel for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I recommend them to all who will take my advice, and I do not think it possible for me to say too much in favor of this wonderful remedy, the use of which in other cases as well as mine has been invaluable."

A depraved or watery condition of the blood, or shattered nerves, are the two fruitful sources of almost every disease that afflicts humanity, and to all sufferers Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are offered with the confidence that they are the only perfect and unfailing blood builder and nerve restorer, and that where given a fair trial disease and suffering must vanish. Pink Pills are sold by all dealers or sent by mail, post paid, on receipt of 50 cents a box, or six boxes for $2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., or Schenectady, N. Y. Beware of imitations and always refuse trashy substitutes alleged to be "just as good."



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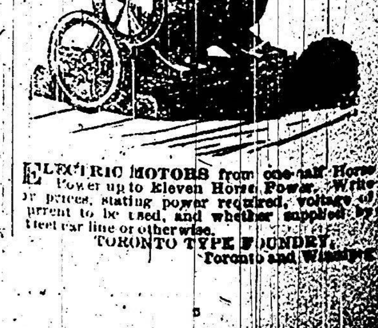

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A Woman's Crime.

BY AN EX-DETECTIVE.

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(CONTINUED.)

Mrs. Arteveldt went home, and for three days waged incessant warfare upon her son. She commanded, she implored, but her wrath and her tears were alike unavailing. On the third day Clarence said:

"It's no use, mother; I can't stand this sort of thing. I shall leave the house to-night, and for good. If you can't accept my wife, you can't care much for me. Lenore is not a girl to be ashamed of. There is not another such in all the city. I shall have a beautiful wife, with the manners of a princess. You might well be proud of such a daughter. But if you won't you won't. Only let me tell you this, if you don't accept her now, she will not recognize you once she is my wife."

Then he went away and left her to think.

Mrs. Arteveldt was a vain old woman; she idolized her son; but she loved society, and she knew that her reign was well-nigh over; she had counted on a handsome, fashionable daughter-in-law, with whom he might still attend opera and ball, and who would attract to her drawing-rooms the society which, without the magnet of some younger beauty, would gradually fall away from her and them. If she alienated herself from her son and the wife he had chosen, she must abandon all this. And after all Lenore Armyn was beautiful—she would grace any drawing-room. And Mrs. Arteveldt did not feel at all sure as to her ability to keep so fine and haughty a bride from becoming the fashion. Her own fortune rendered them independent of her. And after all, Lenore did love her son—what else could her strange words mean?

When Clarence Arteveldt came down stairs, after packing his effects, his mother met him and put a note in his hand.

"Read it," she said in a subdued tone, "and then take it to Miss Armyn."

With a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes he perused it. Thus it ran:

MISS ARMYN:

If you can overlook the fact of our last meeting, I can do the same. I came to you prejudiced. I think I understand you better now. Let us be the friends we should be, considering how soon you will be my son's wife. He will give you this, and when next he visits you I shall hope to come with him.

Sincerely, ELLEN ARTEVELDT.

"Mother, you're a trump," said the gratified Clarence. "Now then things will be more comfortable," and he hastened to deliver the note to Lenore.

After that Mrs. Arteveldt and Miss Armyn drove regularly together. Together they shopped, and lunched at aristocratic, down-town restaurants. So the time wore on, and there was only a week now intervening before the wedding-day. Mrs. Arteveldt has chosen the trousseau, and the proud Lenore Armyn had made no resistance. The new house was ready for its occupants. Such a beautifully furnished house! It was the talk of the Arteveldt set. It was one of two double houses, as they are called. They were recently-built structures, and had never had a tenant.

A short time after the one had been secured by the expectant bridegroom, the other had been taken, a little to the annoyance of the first renter. The second house was still uninhabited, the lessee being tardy in taking possession. But there was plenty of evidence that the new tenant would soon be settled on the premises. Every day loads of costly furniture were landed at the door, and Clarence Arteveldt learned that it was to be used for a genteel boarding house. He was a little dissatisfied at this, but it was too late to complain, and in the city one cannot choose his neighbors.

It was a dreary, drizzling November day, just one week before the time fixed upon for the wedding; Lenore had kept her room all day, only appearing at meal times. Dusk was coming on and a strong wind whistled about the corners.

Just a block away from the Ruthven abode, the street-cars jogged drearily by, and one of them pausing, deposited a single female passenger, who hastened on through the wind and rain, heavily cloaked and closely vailed. Before the door bearing the name, Ruthven, in silver letters on a black plate, she paused for a moment, then hurried up the steps and rang the bell.

"I wish to see Miss Armyn," she said, when the door was opened. "Is she at home?"

Miss Armyn was at home, and the stranger was ushered into the parlor.

Lenore Armyn came down, wondering a little who her visitor could be. At the same moment the maid of all work came in, lighted the gas, drew the curtains, and withdrew herself. Then the visitor came forward and gazed eagerly at the face of Lenore Armyn, without removing the vail. Finally she said, as if to herself:

"She is beautiful—very."

"Who are you?" asked Lenore, "and what is your business with me?"

"You are about to marry Mr. Arteveldt," said the stranger, in a low, sweet voice.

"Yes."

"It is of him I wish to speak."

"Then proceed."

"Miss Armyn, Clarence Arteveldt is the lover, the promised husband of another woman."

"Well?"

"He is bound to her by every tie of honor."

Lenore Armyn laughed. "Such bonds are frail," she said.

"Frail, indeed!" retorted the vailed one, bitterly. "I have come to you as the ambassador of that other woman. She loves him to madness, and begs you to renounce him."

"She must indeed love him to madness."

"Miss Armyn, you surely cannot wish to marry this man, knowing the truth. I swear to you he is false, unfaithful. He has deceived you, and will again."

"You mistake. He never will."

"I say he will," excitedly; "he is by nature inconstant. Send him from you, Miss Armyn; send him back to the woman he has wronged. You are said to be as generous as you are beautiful—"

"Then I have been misrepresented. There is no generosity in me."

"What! you do not pity this other one?"

"No; why should I? Has she not been loved by Clarence Arteveldt?"

"Ah! And you hate her for this; you are so jealous?"

Again that odd laugh from the lips of Lenore.

"Yes," she replied, "I am terribly jealous."

The vailed woman moved a step nearer, saying eagerly:

"Miss Armyn, listen. If you marry him innocent blood will be upon your head; you will drive this poor girl to her death."

Lenore started.

"Is it so bad as that?"

"So bad!" The voice became almost a wail. "My God! it is worse than I can tell you; it is bitter as death."

"Ah!" this one syllable with a queer intonation.

"It is the wreck of a life!"—the voice growing more tragic—"it is the blackest of despair! And you—you, so beautiful—you do not love him as—she does."

Suddenly Lenore Armyn came to her side, and laid a hand upon her arm, saying peremptorily:

"Please remove that vail!"

The visitor drew back suddenly.

"What! why?" she almost gasped.

"Because I want to see your face. Because you are pleading for yourself."

"I am not."

"I know better. I do not choose to be theatrical. If you wish to talk to me remove your vail and tell me who you are."

[illegible] would like to laugh with him over my humiliation."

Lenore turned upon her fiercely.

"What are you that you can impute such motives to me? Clarence Arteveldt will never hear of your visit from my lips. If you want me to hear you and believe you, throw aside this mystery."

The stranger hesitated.

"Will you swear to me never to speak of me to him—never to tell any one, under any circumstances, of my visit to you?"

"If you wish it."

"I do wish it."

"Then I swear."

The stranger moved nearer again.

"Have you ever heard him speak of any lady friend?"

"Yes; one."

"Who?"

"A Miss Durand."

"And I am Aura Durand."

She threw back the vail, and Lenore saw the fair blonde face for the first time. For a full minute they gazed at each other in silence, then Lenore said:

"Sit down, Miss Durand. Can it be possible you have come to me on such an errand?"

"Yes. I have the first, best right to Clarence Arteveldt's love; you must give him back to me."

"I cannot."

"But wait; you do not know all—I must humble myself still more—I must tell you——"

"Tell me nothing. It can make no difference."

"It must. It shall. Listen——"

"No!" lifting her hand in admonition; "listen I cannot. You would only humble yourself uselessly."

"You will not hear me?"

"It would be worse than useless. You are not the first who has tried to make me renounce Clarence Arteveldt. I reply to you as I did to that other one: I would not listen if you knelt before me. Gold cannot buy me; threats are of no avail. I will marry Clarence Arteveldt; nothing save death can prevent it."

For a moment Aura Durand stood like a statue before her. For a moment she looked as if about to spring upon Lenore and clutch her throat with those clinched baby hands. Then her form drooped suddenly, her hands fell at her side; she reeled as if about to faint.

"So be it," she murmured, in a broken voice. "May heaven forgive you. All I can ask then is that you keep my secret."

"I will keep your secret. Have no fear."

With drooping head and unsteady steps, Aura Durand went out into the storm.

CHAPTER XVI.—A STRANGE BRIDAL BANQUET.

Neil Bathurst bounded up the stairs which led to his rooms in the big commercial building, three steps at a time. It was the evening of Clarence Arteveldt's wedding, and the detective, who had been "piping" all day, had barely time to prepare for the ceremony. Plunging through the great hall he ran upon a half-grown lad who was pounding lustily at his own door.

"Hello, youngster," he cried. "Don't batter my door down. What's the row?"

"Oh! it's you, be it?" ejaculated the gamin, taking a close survey of him by the light from various transoms. "I thought you never would wake up."

"Well, it's me or not, according to who you take me for," replied Neil, at the same time putting a key in the door.

"I takes you for the chap as belongs to this 'ere room—ain't your name Bathurst?"

"That's me, sonny," pushing open the door.

"Well, then, this is fer you," presenting a crumpled note, and turning to go.

"Who sent it?"

"Dunno, so 'ere from the hall without. "Good-by, Cap'n." And Neil heard him clattering down the stairs.

Having closed his door, Neil opened the envelope hurriedly. It contained a half sheet of paper covered with scrawled hieroglyphics, quite incomprehensible to any save him for whom it was intended. Neil understood it at a glance. It was a letter in cypher, the key of which was held by himself and Robert Jocelyn. Translated the cypher read thus:

OLD PARD:

Be at Mike's to-night from 7 until further notice. I am up to some "queer shoving" games, and can't work alone. See you later.

Neil uttered a low whistle. "Rob in town again," he muttered. "Where will he turn up next? At Mike's at 7. Why, that's the wedding hour. By Jove, fate is against my seeing the fair bride. Arteveldt will be hurt, I suppose, at my non-appearance, but business is business. I can't desert Rob, even for a wedding." And he began a queer sort of toilet, one not at all in keeping for a wedding guest.

"What an odd fish Rob is," he mused, as he prepared himself. "Turning up in all sorts of places, and after all manner of game. Who supposed him in the city now. But then—as I had not heard of him for a week, I might have expected it."

Not long after a flashily-dressed young man came cautiously out from Neil Bathurst room, hurried down the lesser stairway and turned his face toward the famous gambling house, familiarly known as "Mike's." For a second time Rob Jocelyn had, by putting in a sudden appearance, prevented a meeting between his friend Neil and the fair Lenore. The fair Lenore! How fair she was, on this, her bridal eve.

There was to be a brilliant ceremony at a stately church, and, later, a reception, not at the residence of Mrs. Arteveldt the elder, but at the new home of the bride and groom. This was the wish—the whim, Mrs. Arteveldt called it—of Lenore. And Lenore's wishes were equivalent to commands. She was not to be argued out of this "whim." She would have no reception at the house of her mother-in-law; she would receive her own wedding guests. Mrs. Arteveldt mere among the rest.

Clarence had not ventured an objection to this arrangement; in truth he saw none. "What if it is a trifle unusual," he had said to his mother, "we must receive in our own house, and why not on our bridal night? I am not afraid for Lenore. She may be ignorant in some respects regarding society, but she lacks nothing that a lady should know. I tell you what, her mother must have been not only a lady, but a most extraordinary woman. Lenore never mentions her, but it is plain she has had no common training. What our city belles must acquire by education is second nature to Lenore. I believe that Mrs. Armyn was a travelled woman, an educated woman, and that she has been in the society of the best."

Finding all opposition useless, Mrs. Arteveldt had set about the task of making others think that this new departure was entirely to her liking; and she had done one thing more. Feeling convinced that her prospective daughter-in-law would not prove very flexible in her hands, and relieved of the fear that had hitherto haunted her, and prevented her supplying herself with a pleasant, youthful companion, she had asked Kate Seaton to come to her in that capacity. She had been pleased and attracted by Kate's pretty face and bright, cheery ways. The girl had a sweet soprano voice, and was also an excellent reader. Mrs. Arteveldt felt that having once extended her patronage to Lenore, it would not answer to let any barriers spring up between them. Lenore was fond of Kate, it would put them upon a pleasanter footing to have the girl in the house. Then, too, it would render Mrs. Arteveldt a trifle more independent. A young lady who was patronized by her must become popular, and Kate, when she had acquired a little more dignity, would become an ornament to society; she would soon acquire this needful dignity under the Arteveldt influence.

Kate had accepted the lady's offer gladly, the Ruthvens were far from being rich, and she had more than once tried to [illegible] a situation as bookkeeper or clerk in one of the many stores where young ladies were employed, but Mrs. Ruthven would not consent to this. Mrs. Arteveldt's offer was something quite different. Here was an opportunity for Kate to better herself. The argument that was most to the liking of Kate's sister, was contained in a speech made by Mrs. Arteveldt when settling the matter of wages, or, as she termed it, "compensation."

"You see, Mrs. Ruthven," she had said, "the money I offer her is not much. I named so small a sum because I wish to reserve the privilege of furnishing her wardrobe myself. She will, of course, go out with me, as well as see much of society in my own house. I want her to dress in accordance with the society in which she will be thrown."

The arrangements had all been completed before Lenore was made aware of the change in store for Kate. She had not displayed as much enthusiasm over the new arrangement as Kate had hoped for, and expected. But then, Lenore was engrossed with her own affairs.

After all, Jess Warren did not feel elated over the success of her plot. She had not anticipated anything like the present state of affairs. She had not dreamed that Clarence Arteveldt's haughty mother would, under any circumstances, consent to receive Lenore.

"Our turn will come," Jess had said at last, to her confederate. "When she is married and holds the purse strings, we can unloose them; she won't want facts to leak out when she has begun to taste the sweets of society. And if she won't 'come down' the old lady will. Besides, we shall have the advantage of appearing in their drawingrooms. They won't dare slight us." They were destined to appear once, at least, for they were among the first to receive beautifully engraved cards of invitation; first, to attend the ceremony of marriage, and after to attend at the reception.

There was one other odd feature at that wedding. Lenore would have no bridesmaids.

Alone they stood at the altar, two splendid specimens of physical beauty. Lenore Armyn was the fairest of fair brides; stately as a duchess, and cold as the north star. Clarence Arteveldt had never looked handsomer, his cheeks burned with excitement, his eyes flashed triumphantly. More than one fair belle envied Lenore Armyn that evening; more than one of his malefriends declared Arteveldt "a lucky dog."

Two fully expected guests were absent from the ceremony, Neil Bathurst and Aura Durand.

It was a brilliant assembly that which gathered under the roof of Clarence Arteveldt's fine new house; not too large, just the cream of the Arteveldt set. The bride's friends being represented by Mrs. and Mr. Ruthven, Kate Seaton and—heaven save us!—Jess Warren and Carrie VanBuren.

Reader, let us mingle with the groups of bright-robed ladies, and clerical looking men, who are gathered in those elegant rooms. Lenore Arteveldt, surrounded by a group of admiring new acquaintances, stands at the upper end of the large drawing-room, her words are very few, and her face somewhat graver than a bride's face should be, but she bears herself with perfect grace, and is a good listener.

"Mrs. Arteveldt seems one of your handsome, silent sort," says a gentleman, to Jess Warren, who is arrayed in a wonderful garment of rose color—bought with the price of Lenore's wrong.

"Yes," replied the widow. "Dear Lenore is always silent—of late." The last two words sotto voce.

At almost the same moment Mrs. and Mr. Durand are turning away, after having proffered late congratulations to the bride and groom. But Miss Annin lingers near Lenore and Clarence.

"Aura was so disappointed at finding herself unable to come," she says, looking up at Clarence Arteveldt.

"I am sorry that she is sick," replies he. "Hope it's not serious."

"Serious! dear me, no!" laughing prettily. "Didn't you understand her father? Aura is not sick. She has sprained her ankle."

"Oh! a sprain! How did that happen, and when?"

"Last evening. Miss Durand was returning from the theater. She slipped in getting from the carriage. They had to carry her in."

Others move nearer, and Miss Annin turns away. As she passes Lenore the latter puts out her hand.

"I have not the honor of Miss Durand's acquaintance," she says, looking Miss Annin straight in the eye; "nevertheless tell her that I trust she will find her injury can be amended—in time."

Miss Annin bows and then moves away, wearing a queer look upon her face.

"Ah, Miss Aura," she thinks, "there is a peculiar meaning in those words, or I am not good at guessing."

"Miss Durand is not here," said a lady to Clarence, "how is this, Mr. Arteveldt?"

"Miss Durand has sprained her ankle," replied the bridegroom. "I am sorry not to see her here; that makes to two disappointments for me to-night. My friend, Bathurst, is absent, too. You remember him, Lenore," turning toward her and speaking in a lower voice—"the detective."

Carrie Van Buren has approached, and, unnoticed by either, stands close at the bride's elbow. She hears the low spoken words, and she sees Lenore Arteveldt start suddenly. At once her thoughts fly back to the sunny afternoon when the young man had been pointed out to Lenore while crossing Dearborn street. Without making her proximity known she silently turns away and seeks out Jess Warren.

"Clarence," says the bride, a moment later, leaning toward him, and speaking in a low tone, "will you arrange that Mr. Fordham shall escort Jess Warren and Miss Van Buren to the supper room? I want them to sit next us."

"But, Lenore——"

"Don't argue, please. You are in your own house. You have only to speak to Mr. Fordham; and I insist upon it."

"Then, of course, it shall be so. But I thought you would prefer Kate——"

"I don't prefer Kate; she is best off with your mother. Go now and find Mr. Fordham."

Obediently, yet reluctantly, he leaves her side to do her bidding.

The guests are merry; the bride is fair; the groom triumphant. The moments speed by on golden wings.

At last comes the summons to the bridal feast. The table is laden with delicate and costly viands, rare exotics charm the senses and perfume the air; fruits of every clime are heaped about, a profusion of gorgeous color. There is the glitter of rare and costly plate; the sparkle of clearest crystal; wines glowing with golden and ruby fire are flowing freely as water. The guests are very merry—they are feasting, jesting, laughing, quaffing the glowing wine. From the lower end of the table a gentleman rises up, wine-glass in hand, it is Mr. Hale, the lawyer and friendly adviser of the elder Mrs. Arteveldt.

"Ladies and gentlemen, a toast," he says. "Let us fill our glasses to the health, long life and future happiness of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Arteveldt."

There is a rustling, a murmur of approbation, and the gurgling of wine flowing into many glasses—then—a sudden hush—and startled eyes are turned toward the upper end of the table. The bride has risen to her feet; her head is thrown back defiantly; her face is as colorless as the whitest ivory. In one hand she holds a wine-glass full to the brim—the other she extends in a commanding gesture. "Before you drink that toast hear me," she says in full, firm tones. "Hear how Clarence Arteveldt won his wife. Before you drink to him know of what he is capable—know that I, who stand before you to-night with a heart filled with loathing for the man whose wife I am—was entrapped into this marriage. All unfamiliar with the city and its wickedness, I was led by that man," pointing to the bridegroom, "and these, his confederates," [illegible] into a gambler's den. Then I was told the one way to save myself was by becoming the wife of the wretch who had thus entrapped me. Otherwise my friends should know that I had been a gambler's guest, and my honor would thus be blackened. Unknown to myself, I stood that day where no good woman ever stood before. But there behold two women who lured me into that place, with their own eyes open! Two women who were not there for the first time, nor for the second. On them let the shame fall! Thus far their scheme has been successful. Clarence Arteveldt will hardly slander the woman who bears his name and has been the chosen friend of his mother. He has won me for his wife—but his wife in name only. His roof shall never shelter me! I would die sooner than receive aught from his hand. He won me by fraud—but he can hold me by neither fraud nor force! Before God, I swear that never shall his hand touch mine! Never will I hear his lips call me wife! Never shall his eyes look upon me after this hour! Clarence Arteveldt, this evening has been your triumph—this night and all the future shall witness mine. When to-morrow comes let then your friends and guests say, whether or no, your wife has avenged herself."

The words rush from her lips like living fire. So sudden, so unexpected are they, that they strike every listener dumb. Clarence Arteveldt sits like a man of stone, but his face tells his own guilt. Not one who looks upon him there doubts that Lenore has spoken the shameful truth. And the faces of Jess and her confederate, and of George Fordham, corroborate her story. Already Lenore is avenged, for the four evil ones stand before their fellow-mortals as targets for derision and scorn. For a moment the stillness is death-like; then the mother of Clarence Arteveldt falls forward in a swoon. This breaks the spell of silence and stupification. They turn toward Lenore, but the place where she stood is vacant. The bride has disappeared. They raise the lifeless form of Mrs. Arteveldt, and remove it from the scene of confusion; they talk in low, horror-stricken tones. Clarence Arteveldt is the last to come out of his trance; blinded, stunned by a rush of strong emotions—fear, rage, baffled passion, despair—he reels like a drunken man. He stands alone, this wretched bridegroom. The numerous friends who a moment since sat at his board and quaffed his wine, stand aloof now, and favor him with glances of curiosity or aversion; they are all against him to-night, to-morrow,—when it will be too late,—they will talk pityingly of him, and try to endow him with the virtues that he had not. All around the board see the full glasses—filled for the toast destined never to be honored. Clarence Arteveldt starts forward and drains his glass, refills it, then fills it again. As he drinks, a hand falls on his arm; he turns. It is his mother's lawyer, Mr. Hale.

"What is to be done, Arteveldt?" he asks, in a dry, unfeeling voice, as if he were acting from a sense of duty, not sympathy. "Your mother is in a swoon; shall I act for you?"

"Yes, act, for God's sake."

"Then go to your own room and leave that wine alone."

The bridegroom turns away with an angry gesture, and fills and drains another glass.

"Stop, man," cries the lawyer, sternly. "Don't you see that you are damaging yourself still more in the eyes of all these people? Come out of that frenzy and tell where your wife has gone. If you can explain this thing to your own credit, for mercy's sake do so."

Down goes the wine glass with a crash, it lies at the feet of the deserted bridegroom, shivered to atoms.

"Did you not hear her?" he cries, throwing out his hands wildly, "why look for her? Neither you nor I will ever find her. I might have known it, I might have understood her better! I was a blind fool; she has ruined me, body and soul—I have lost her; that is all that I care for! She is gone, GONE, GONE!"

The last word ends in a despairing shriek, he reels backward and falls, striking his head against the carved leg of his own dining-room chair. Then Mr. Hale assumes command of everything. Presently the house is quiet, the guests are gone. A physician has been summoned, and in obedience to his command, Mrs. Arteveldt is removed to her own house; she is borne to her carriage, accompanied by the terrified Kate Seaton.

Clarence Arteveldt is compelled to retire to his own room, yes, compelled—the darling of the drawing-room, the handsome, the wealthy, the weak-headed traitor-hearted husband of an hour, is half mad. Rage, disappointment and wine, have mastered his reason; for the time, at least, he is a maniac and requires a keeper.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Women Advancing.

There are between three hundred and four hundred women in the United States who have received their degree in pharmacy, the majority of whom have charge of the drug rooms of various hospitals or are engaged as dispensing clerks.

A few have drug stores of their own, and, to their credit be it said, none of them has as yet been held responsible for errors in compounding prescriptions, which has so often happened to apothecaries who have had inefficient or careless assistants.

Women are generally more thorough in whatever they undertake than the opposite persuasion, and are endowed with tact and a faculty for calculating results with wonderful rapidity. It is these things which help to make women druggists so successful.

The salaries of dispensing clerks are graded according to the place they fill; they average from $40 to 75 per month. Women occupying the position of chief pharmacists in large hospitals are paid anywhere from $600 to $900 per annum.

As yet the demand for women druggists, particularly as dispensing clerks in either drug stores or institutions, is far in excess of the supply. A large wholesale drug house has in its employ a woman buyer.

She travels in Europe in their interest, and is reported to be one of the shrewdest buyers in the foreign trade. She is the first and as yet the only woman to fill such a position. Several manufacturing chemists employ women pharmacists in different capacities.

How They Got a Light.

What a prosperous world this would be if young men would apply their wits as industriously to affairs of business as they do in emergencies where the fair sex is concerned! This thought was suggested by the story of a young insurance man who went out for a moonlight drive one evening last week. At his side in the conveyance was a handsome young woman. They drove through the western part of the city, and concluded to go through the beautiful avenues of Western park. But when they reached the gate the guard stopped them with the command that they must stay out or have lights in the lamps on their conveyance. There was no store near, and they were about to give up the idea of a delightful drive under the shady trees, when in utter desperation the young man drew forth a silk handkerchief, coiled it up and [illegible] one end, after putting it in the lamp. The guard did not notice the trick, and they passed through the gate. The handkerchief quickly burned out, leaving them in the dark in the park.

Somewhat Confused.

"Things is gettin' mighty mixed, Mandy," said Farmer Corntossel, "mighty mixed."

"What's the matter?"

"The politicians air all tryin' ter tell the farmers about farmin' an' the farmers air tryin' ter tell the politicians about politics."

"The most easily digested meals are cold mutton, mutton chops, venison, tenderloins, sirloins, steak, lamb chops, roast beef, rabbit and chicken."

AT HEROD'S BANQUET.

SALOME, THE DANCER, AND HER DISTINGUISHED VICTIM.

A Sermon on Amusements by Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is now on his tour around the World.

Rev. Dr. Talmage, who is still absent on his round-the-world tour, has selected as the subject of to-day's sermon, through the press: "The Quick Feet," the text chosen being Matthew xiv, 6: "When Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod."

It is the anniversary of Herod's birthday. The palace is lighted. The highways leading thereto are all ablaze with the pomp of invited guests. Lords, captains, merchant princes, the mighty men of the land, are coming to mingle in the festivities. The table is spread with all the luxuries that royal purveyors can gather. The guests, white-robed and anointed and perfumed, come in and sit at the table. Music! The jests evoke roars of laughter. Riddles are propounded. Repartee is indulged. Toasts are drank. The brain is befogged. The wit rolls on into uproar and blasphemy. They are not satisfied yet. Turn on more light. Pour out more wine. Music! Sound all the trumpets. Clear the floor for a dance. Bring in Salome, the beautiful and accomplished princess. The door opens, and in bounds the dancer. The lords are enchanted. Stand back and make room for the brilliant gyrations. These men never saw such "poetry of motion." Their soul whirls in the reel and bounds with the bounding feet. Herod forgets crown and throne and everything but the fascinations of Salome. All the magnificence of his realm is as nothing now compared with the splendor that whirls on tiptoe before him. His body sways from side to side, corresponding with the motions of the enchantress. His soul is thrilled with the pulsations of the feet and bewitched with the taking postures and attitudes more and more amazing. After a while he sits in enchanted silence looking at the flashing, leaping, bounding beauty, and as the dance closes and the tinkling cymbals cease to clap and the thunders of applause that shook the place begin to abate, the enchanted monarch swears to the princely performer, "Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me I will give it thee, to the half of my kingdom." Now, there was in prison at that time a minister of the Gospel by the name of John the Baptist, and he had been making a great deal of trouble by preaching some very plain and honest sermons. He had denounced the sins of the king and brought down upon him the wrath of the females of the royal household. At the instigation of her mother, Salome takes advantage of the extravagant promise of the king and says, "Bring me the head of John the Baptist on a dinner plate."

Hark to the sound of feet outside the door and the clatter of swords. The executioners are returning from their awful errand. Open the door. They enter, and they present the platter to Salome. What is on this platter? A new glass of wine to continue the uproarious merriment? No. Something redder and costlier—the ghastly, bleeding head of John the Baptist, the death glare still in the eye, the locks dabbled with the gore, the features still distracted with the last agony. This woman, who had whirled so gracefully in the dance, bends over the awful burden without a shudder. She gloats over the blood, and with as much indifference as a waiting-maid might take a tray of empty glassware out of the room after an entertainment, Salome carries the dissevered head of John the Baptist, while all the banqueters shout with laughter, and think it a good joke that in so easy and quick a way they have got rid of an earnest and out-spoken minister of the Gospel.

Well, there is no harm in a birthday festival. All the kings from Pharaoh's time had celebrated such occasions, and why not Herod? No harm in kindling the lights. No harm in spreading the banquet. No harm in arousing music. But from the riot and wassail that closed the scene of that day every pure nature revolts. I am not at this time to discuss the old question, is dancing right or wrong? but I am to discuss the question, Does dancing take too much place and occupy too much time in modern society? and in my remarks I hope to carry with me the earnest conviction of all thoughtful persons, and I believe I will.

You will all admit, whatever you think of that style of amusement and exercise, that from many circles it has crowded out all intelligent conversation. You will also admit that it has made the condition of those who do not dance, either because they do not know how, or because they have not the health to endure it, or because through conscientious scruples they must decline the exercise, very uncomfortable. You will also admit, all of you, that it has passed in many cases from an amusement to a dissipation, and you are easily able to understand the bewilderment of the educated Chinaman, who, standing in the brilliant circle where there was dancing going on four or five hours, and the guests seemed exhausted, turned to the proprietor of the house and said, "Why don't you allow your servants to do this for you?"

You are also willing to admit, whatever be your idea in regard to the amusement I am speaking of, and whatever be your idea of the old-fashioned square dance and of many of the processional romps in which I can see no evil, the round dance is administrative of evil and ought to be driven out of all respectable circles. I am by natural temperament and religious theory opposed to the position taken by all those who are horrified at playfulness on the part of the young, and who think that all questions are decided—questions of decency and morals—by the position of the feet, while on the other hand, I can see nothing but ruin, temporal and eternal, for those who go into the dissipations of social life, dissipations which have already despoiled thousands of young men and young women of all that is noble in character and useful in life.

Dancing is the graceful motion of the body adjusted by art to the sounds and measures of musical instruments or of the human voice. All nations have danced. The ancients thought that Castor and Pollux taught the art to the Lacedæmonians. But whoever started it, all climes have adopted it. In ancient times they had the festal dance, the military dance, the mediatorial dance, the bacchanalian dance, the queens and lords swayed to and fro in the gardens, and the rough backwoodsman with this exercise awakened the echo of the forest. There is something in the sound of lively music to evoke the movement of the hand and foot, whether cultured or uncultured. Passing down the street we unconsciously keep step to the brass band, while the Christian in church with his foot beats time while his soul rises upon some great harmony. While this is so in civilized lands, the red men of the forest have their scalp dances, their green corn dances, their war dances. In ancient times the exercise was so utterly and completely depraved that the church anathematized it. The old Christian fathers expressed themselves most vehemently against it. St. Chrysostom says: "The feet were not given for dancing but to walk modestly, not to leap impudently like camels." One of the dogmas of the ancient church reads: "A dance is the devil's possession, and he that entereth into a dance entereth into his possession. As many paces as a man makes in dancing, so many paces does he make to hell." Elsewhere the old dogmas declared this, "The woman that singeth in the dance is the princess of the devil, and those that answer are her clerks, and the beholders are his friends, and the music is his bellows, and the fiddles are the ministers of the devil. For as when hogs are strayed, if the hogsherd call one all assemble together, so when the devil calleth one woman to sing in the dance, or to play on some musical instruments, presently all the dancers gather together." This indiscriminate and universal denunciation of the exercise came from the fact that it was utterly and completely depraved.

But we are not to discuss the customs of the olden times, but customs now. We are not to take the evidence of the ancient fathers, but our own conscience, enlightened by the Word of God, is to be the standard. Oh, bring no harsh criticism upon the young. I would not drive out from their young souls the hilarities of life. I do not believe that the inhabitants of ancient Wales, when they stepped to the sound of the rustic harp, went down to ruin. I believe God intended the young people to laugh and romp and play. I do not believe God would have put exuberance in the soul and exuberance in the body if he had not intended they should in some wise exercise it and demonstrate it. If a mother joins hands with her children and cross the floor to the sound of music, I see no harm. If a group of friends cross and recross the room to the sound of a piano well played, I see no harm. If a company, all of whom are known to the host and hostess as reputable, cross and recross the room to the sound of musical instruments, I see no harm. I tried for a long time to see harm in it. I never shall see any harm in it. Our men need to be kept young, young for many years longer than they are kept young. Never since my boyhood days have I had more sympathy with the innocent hilarities of life than I have now. What though we have felt heavy burdens! What though we have had to endure hard knocks! Is that any reason why we should stand in the way of those who, unstrung of life's misfortune, are full of exhilaration and glee? God bless the young! They will have to wait many a long year before they hear me say anything that would depress their ardor or clip their wings or make them believe that life is hard and cold and repulsive. It is not. I tell them, judging from my own experience, that they will be treated a great deal better than they deserve. We have no right to grudge the innocent hilarities to the young.

As we go on in years let us remember that we had our gleeful times, let us be able to say, "We had our good times, let others have their good times." Let us willingly resign our place to those who are coming after us. I will cheerfully give them everything—my house, my books, my position in society, my heritage. After twenty, forty, fifty years we have been drinking out of the cup of this life, do not let us begrudge the passing of it that others may take a drink. But while all this is so, we can have no sympathy with sinful indulgence, and I am going to speak in regard to some of them, though I should tread on the long train of some popular vanities.

What are the dissipations of social life to-day, and what are the dissipations of the ball-room? In some cities and in some places reaching all the year round, in other places only in the summer time and at the watering places. There are dissipations of social life that are cutting a very wide swath with the sickle of death, and hundreds and thousands are going down under these influences, and my subject in application is as wide as Christendom. The whirlpool of social dissipation is drawing down some of the brightest craft that ever sailed the sea—thousands and tens of thousands of the bodies and souls annually consumed in the conflagration of ribbons.

Social dissipation is the abettor of pride, it is the instigator of jealousy, it is the sacrificial altar of health, it is the defiler of the soul, it is the avenue of lust and it is the curse of every town on both sides of the sea. Social dissipation. It may be hard to draw the line and say that this is right on the one side and that is wrong on the other side. It is not necessary that we do that, for God has put a throne in every man's soul, and I appeal to that throne to-day. When a does wrong he knows he does wrong and when he does right he knows he does right, and to that throne which Almighty God lifted in the heart of every man and woman, I appeal.

As to the physical ruin wrought by the dissipations of social life there can be no doubt. What may we expect of people who work all day and dance all night? After awhile they will be thrown on society nervous, exhausted imbeciles. These people who indulge in the suppers and the midnight revels and then go home in the cold unwrapped of limbs, will after a while be found to have been written down in God's eternal records of suicides, as much suicides as if they had taken their own life with a pistol, or knife, or strychnine.

How many people have stepped from the ball-room into the graveyard? Consumptions and swift neuralgias are close on their track. Amid many of the glittering scenes of social life, diseases stand right and left and balance and chain. The breath of the sepulchre floats up through the perfume and the froth of Death's lips bubbles up in the champagne. I am told that in some of the cities there are parents who have actually given up housekeeping and gone to boarding that they may give their time illimitably to social dissipations. I have known such cases. I have known family after family blasted in that way in one of the other cities where I preached. Father and mother turning their back upon all quiet culture and all the amenities of home, leading forth their entire family in the wrong direction. Annihilated, worse than annihilated—for there are some things worse than annihilation. I give you the history of more than one family when I say they went on in the dissipations of social life until the father dropped into a lower style of dissipation, and after a while the son was tossed out into society a nonentity, and after a while the daughter eloped with a French dancing-master, and after a while the mother, getting on further and further in years, tries to hide the wrinkles but fails in the attempt, trying all the arts of the belle, an old flirt, a poor miserable butterfly without any wings.

If there is anything on earth beautiful to me, it is an aged woman, her white locks flowing back over the wrinkled brow—locks not white with frost as the poets say, but white with the blossoms of the tree of life, in her voice the tenderness of gracious memories, her face a benediction. As grandmother passes through the room the grandchildren pull at her dress, and she almost falls in her weakness; but she has nothing but candy or cake or a kind word for the little darlings. When she gets out of the wagon in front of the house the whole family rush out and cry, "Grandma's come!" and when she goes away from us never to return, there is a shadow on the table, and a shadow on the hearth, and a shadow on the heart. There is no more touching scene on earth than when grandmother sleeps the last slumber and the little child is lifted up to the casket to give the last kiss, and she says, "Good-by, grandma." Oh, there is beauty in old age. God says so. "The hoary head is a crown of glory." Why should people decline to get old? The best things, the greatest things I know of, are aged. Old mountains, old seas, old stars, and old eternity. But if there is anything distressful, it is to see an old woman ashamed of the fact that she is old. What with all the artificial appliances, she is too much for my gravity. I laugh even in church when I see her coming. The worst looking bird on earth is a peacock when it has lost its feathers. I would not give one lock of my old mother's gray hair for fifty thousand such caricatures of humanity. And if the life of a worldling, if the life of a disciple given to the world is sad, the close of such a life is simply a tragedy.

Let me tell you that the dissipations of social life are despoiling the usefulness of a vast multitude of people. What do those people care about the fact that there are whole nations in sorrow and suffering and agony, when they have for consideration the more important question about the size of a glove or the tie of a cravat? Which one of them ever bound up the wounds of the hospital? Which one of them do you find in the haunts of sin distributing tracts? They live on themselves, and it is very poor pasture.

Sybaris was a great city, and it once sent out three hundred horsemen in battle. They had a minstrel who taught the horses of the army a great trick, and when the old minstrel played a certain tune the horses would rear and with their front feet seem to beat time to the music. Well, the old minstrel was offended with his country, and he went over to the enemy, and he said to the enemy, "You [illegible] the mastership of this army and I will destroy those horsemen from Sybaris." So they gave the arrangement, and he taught all the other minstrels a certain tune. Then when the cavalry troop came up the old minstrel and all the other minstrels played a certain tune, and at the most critical point in the battle, when the horsemen wanted to rush to the conflict, the horses reared and beat time to the music with their fore-feet, and in disgrace [illegible] rout the enemy fled. Ah! my friends, I have seen it again and again—the minstrels of pleasure, the minstrels of dissipation, the minstrels of godless association have defeated people in the hardest fight of life. Frivolity has lost the battle for ten thousand folks. Oh, what a belittling prospect to the human mind this everlasting question about dress, this discussion of fashionable infinitesimals, this group looking askance at the glass, wondering with an infinity of earnestness how that geranium leaf does look—this shrivelling of a man's moral dignity until it is not observable to the naked eye, this Spanish inquisition of a tight shoe, this binding up of an immortal soul in a ruffle, this pitching off of an immortal nature over the rocks when God intended it for great and everlasting uplifting.

You know as well as I do that the dissipations of social life are destroying thousands and tens of thousands of people, and it is time that the pulpits lift their voice against them. For I now prophesy the eternal misfortune of all those who enter the rivalry. When did the white, glistening boards of a dissipated ball-room ever become a road to heaven? When was a torch for eternity ever lighted at the chandelier of a dissipated scene? From all the spread [illegible] such an excited and desecrated scene who ever went home to pray?

In my parish at Philadelphia there was a young woman brilliant as a spring morning. She gave her life to the world. She would come to religious meetings and under conviction would for a little while begin to pray, and then would rush off again into the discipleship of the world. She had all the world could offer of brilliant social position. One day a flushed and excited messenger asked me to hasten to her house, for she was dying. I entered the room. There were the physicians, there was the mother: there lay this disciple of the world. I asked her some questions in regard to her soul. I rose again, and, desiring to get some expression in regard to her eternal interests, I said, "Have you any hope?" and then for the first time her lips moved in a whisper as she said, "No hope!" Then she died. The world, she served it, and the world helped her not in the last. And I tell the hundreds and thousands of young people who may read this sermon the world will laugh with you when you laugh, and romp with you when you romp, but they will not weep with you when you die. I wish from my heart that I could marshal all the young people in this land to an appreciation of the fact that you have an earnest work in life and your amusements and recreations are only to help you along in that work. At the time of a religious awakening a Christian young woman spoke to a man in regard to his soul's salvation. [illegible] out into the world. After awhile she became worldly in her Christian profession. The man said one day, "Well, I am as safe as she is. I was a Christian. She said she was a Christian. She talked with me about my soul; if she is safe I am safe." Then a sudden accident took him off without an opportunity to utter one word of prayer. Do you not realize, have you not noticed, young and old—have you not noticed that the dissipations of social life are blasting and destroying a vast multitude? With many life is a masquerade ball, and as at such entertainments gentlemen and ladies put on the garb of kings and queens or mountebanks or clowns and at the close put off the disguise, so a great many pass their whole life in a mask, taking off the mask at death. While the masquerade ball of life goes on, they trip merrily over the floor; gemmed hand is stretched to gemmed hand, and gleaming brow bends to gleaming brow. On with the dance! Flush and rustle and laughter of immeasurable merry-making. But after awhile the languor of death comes on the limbs and blurs the eyesight. Lights lower. Floor hollow with sepulchral echo. Music saddens into a wail. Lights lower. Now the masks are only seen in the dim light. Now the fragrance of the flowers is like the smothering odor that comes from garlands that have lain in the vaults of cemeteries. Lights lower. Mists gather in the room. Glasses shake as though quaked by sullen thunder. Sigh caught in the curtains. Scarf drops from the shoulder of beauty a shroud. Lights lower. Over the slippery boards in dance of death glide jealousies, envies, revenges, lust, despair and death. Stench the lamp-wicks almost extinguished. Torn garlands will not half cover the ulcerated feet. Choking damps. Chilliness. Feet still. Hands closed. Voices hushed. Eyes shut. Lights out!

Oh, how many of you have floated far away from God through social dissipations, and it is time you turned. For I remember that there were two vessels on the sea and in a storm. It was very, very dark and the two vessels were going straight for each other and the captains knew it not. But after a while the man on the lookout saw the approaching ship, and he shouted, "Hard a-larboard!" and from the other vessel the cry went up, "Hard a-larboard!" and they turned just enough to glance by, and passed in safety to their harbors. Some of you are in the storm of temptation, and you are driving on and coming toward fearful collisions unless you change your course. Hard a-larboard! Turn ye, turn ye, for "why will ye die, oh, house of Israel?"

The Bishop's Triumph.

The late Bishop S[illegible] delighted to tell the following [illegible] incident in his varied experience: While Bishop of Litchfield he was walking one day in the black country, and observing a group of colliers seated by the roadside in a semi-circle, with a brass kettle in front of them, inquired what was going on.

"Why, yer honor," replied a grave-looking member, "it's a sort of wager. Yon kettle is a prize for the fellow who can tell the biggest lie, and I am the umpire."

Amazed and shocked, the good bishop said reprovingly, "Why, my friends, I have never told a lie [illegible] since I was born." There was a dead silence, only broken by the voice of the umpire, who said in a deliberate tone, "Gie the bishop the kettle."

What the Trouble Was.

The deaf old gentleman with his trumpet hanging around his neck, met an acquaintance who had enough drinks ahead to make him talk back. The full man began talking without the trumpet and the old gentleman couldn't catch what he said.

"Here," said the [illegible], reaching for the trumpet, "you must talk through the horn."

"That won't help any," responded the old gentleman [illegible], "You're talking through too many horns already," and the conversation was not pursued further.

New Proverbs.

Soft soap helps to [illegible] hard times.

In diplomacy lying becomes a fine art.

Value depends upon quality, not price.

Truth and falsehood are seldom twins.

Study does not necessarily imply observation.

Theory without practice is always left handed.

It is easier to make a congregation yawn than yearn.

Men will abandon [illegible] simply to die for a sentiment.

The biggest fools do not commit the greatest blunders.

Scientific cleanliness is to be promoted in French schools by boiled drinking water, damp cloths instead of dry dusters and brooms, and antiseptic cleaning once a week.

The Influence of Home.

The influence of home molds the character of men and women. This influence imparts impetus to the qualities of moral and social nature. Its wholesome surroundings develop the elements of character of those who are preparing for the battle of life. The character of a nation invariably depends on the nature of its homes. Virtues that are nourished and cherished in the home become in after days the virtues of a nation. On the other hand, if wilful and selfish disposition prevails, sin and rebellion is the inevitable result. The manners and customs of the fireside is perfected in the state. The further we advance in civilization the more important it is to attach to the home culture and refinement. A man's energy, success and happiness depend a great deal on the character of his home. In the true sense of the word home is the centre of all that is pleasant and lovely; the seat of those influences which are calculated to bring out the best there is in them and the spot around which in after years shall be twined around with the sweetest thoughts and most sacred memories. We are to-day living in a fast age. The energies of men are all bent toward something just a little ahead of them—something that would bring them more comfort and pleasure than they already realize. To keep up with the times, as we say, it is necessary that we should have an ambitious business spirit. This is all right as long as it benefits the home and tends to make it an ideal household. Let not the importance of instilling into your home the influence of the true and noble be discarded in your efforts to gain notoriety, acquire riches or something that will decay perhaps before you do; but let the "silent scepter" which you hold exert on those around with whom you associate the need of a higher plane of social life that the germs of the good and beautiful within may develop in truth and beauty for the great world without. In the home everything has its influence. Even the pictures which adorn the walls have more effect upon the youthful mind than we think. Their tender hearts receive impressions which in after life will cling to them. Everyone is born with the love of the beautiful, which is the ennobling feeling of the mind. Human nature is shaped, purified and exalted by this acquisition of divine origin.

Everything in nature is capable of conveying impressions of beauty. As this love can be educated by right guidance, we should fill our homes with the beautiful to aid in training the youth to think most of the best, enjoy the accomplishments of education influences, and to ever wend his moral nature in the path of right living.

To make the right kind of impression the tool must be perfect, and to teach the right way or elevate the minds of those in the homes the occupants must live blameless. And when gazing out into the gloomy shades with the dusky twilight of death gathering over all and wrapping the universe in silent repose while ever and anon a gleam of light from the "other shore" flits through the darkening shadows and is reflected in the faces of the bedside watchers, the dying one lisps, "My influence has been good." The Divine One says "well done," and the angelic hosts catch up the words; men get the news and the home-maker's influence never dies, though ages roll and generations pass.

A DUEL WITH DRINKS.

Each Had a Reputation to Sustain and Each Sustained It.

Two men sat down to a small table in a downtown club a few evenings since for a purpose. It was to decide which possessed the greatest capacity for white wine. Each had the reputation, which he studiously sustained, of being able to stand more fermented juice of the grape than the other, and their criticisms of each other had become so unbearable that interested persons determined by opposing the boasters to end or mend their talk. So a grand match was arranged.

On the evening before the test a friend of the elder contestant, who was a practical joker, approached one wine drinker, and, laying one hand confidingly on his shoulder, spoke thus:

"Look here, old man, I speak as a friend. You've got a reputation to sustain to-morrow evening and the other fellow hasn't. Now, as a friend, let me insist that you accept the bottles of wine I, as judge of the contest, shall prepare. They will be filled with water."

A sad look of hopeless despair passed over his face. To drink water even though he won was inglorious; but to drink wine, and perchance lose, that was infinitely worse. This decision resulted in an argument that lasted half an hour, and the wine drinker was then convinced.

On the eventful night the two men sat down to the table, six bottles before them. The younger man was quick to the fray; the older despaired when he tasted the pure unadulterated water. But he mastered his tastes and drank with a conquering smile.

When the sixth cork was drawn each contestant stared at the other. This was wonderfully conducive to cheerful feeling, and so they promptly glared at one another. That made them rampantly joyous. Down came one ponderous fist on the table, and its owner, the elder man, roared out, "Fool, how can you win? I'm drinking water!"

A wan, sweet smile passed over the face of the younger man, as he faintly murmured. "So am I."

A Sensible Woman.

Who dares to assert that the millennium is far away? A mistress of a household was listening to the plaintive wails of some of her neighbors anent the troubles that shadowed their lives in the shape of wayward, exasperating and untrustworthy "hired girls."

"My girl has been with me four years," said Mistress Lucky, "and I do think she is just too lovely for anything—a very jewel of a girl."

All the listeners opened wide their eyes and looked hugely incredulous.

"Yes, indeed," continued the happy woman, "but you see, it is just this way: I pay my girl well and I pay her regularly and promptly. If she wants to send her money home she can do so at a given date. She is no more uncertain about her salary than my husband is. Her room is pleasant. It isn't elaborate, but it is as comfortable and home-like as I can make it; I tell her exactly what I want done and let her do it in her own way. The children are not allowed to give her orders and they are obliged to treat her respectfully. I myself am as polite as I know how to be with her. I never reprimand her in public. I don't mind letting her see that I like her, and even telling her so. I praise her when she deserves praise. She has company a couple of times a week, and she never abuses her privilege in that respect. I try to give her as much freedom as if she were employed in some other capacity. I think my success with her is an advertisement for my method."

A Quick Thought.

"I think that you would only blacken yourself by electing a professed gambler for your champion; that would only be to link your name with his," replied the young man, doggedly.

For the first time she faltered. She reeled as if about to fall.

"Say one word," he urged. "Say that I may straightway announce our engagement. Think how I must love you to have done this. Should I not have some reward for such devotion?"

Strange that such words should restore her courage, her outward calm. One moment she seemed to ponder, then she said, as if thinking aloud: "Yes. Such devotion shall be rewarded—amply rewarded. Such debts of gratitude should be paid to the uttermost."

"Then say yes," he urged, blindly. "Say you will be my wife."

Slowly she makes answer. "I am at your mercy—now. You can blast my honor—or save it. I realize my peril and your power. I choose to save my honor, even if to do it I must wed dishonor. Clarence Arteveldt, you shall be rewarded! I will marry you."