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FREE PRESS
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Free Press Building,
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ACTON.

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QUEBEC ST., GUELPH.
BRANCH OFFICE—In Mr. Matthew's Buildings, Mill St., Acton.
☞ OFFICE OPEN EVERY FRIDAY. ☜

WM. HEMSTREET,
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For the Counties of Wellington and Halton. Orders left at the FREE PRESS Office, Acton, or at my residence in Rockwood, will be promptly attended to.
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E. CLARK, Proprietor.

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I am prepared to pay the highest cash price for all classes of Lamb and Sheep Skins, delivered at my tannery. Lace Leather constantly on hand.
JAMES MOORE.
41-ly.

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CARDS, Billheads and Circulars of every description executed neatly at the ACTON FREE PRESS office, the best local paper of Halton Co.

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ELEGANT WRITING!
A COMPLETE SELF-INSTRUCTOR IN PLAIN AND ORNAMENTAL
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Young people wishing to acquire a rapid, easy, and beautiful handwriting, without a teacher, will find the GUIDE a perfect instructor. Hundreds are becoming beautiful writers throughout the Dominion, in the United States, by using it.

It consists of a series of COPY SLIPS of convenient size for practising, which contain copies beginning with the first principles and gradually progressing to the most elegant, plain, and ornamental writing; an ORNAMENTAL SHEET, containing German Text, Old English, and Ornamental Lettering, Off-hand Flourishing of Birds, &c.; A BOOK OF FIFTY PAGES with full analysis and instruction, and a beautifully engraved case to contain the whole.

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S. G. BEATTY & CO.,
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Acton Free Press.

VOLUME IV. No. 43.—WHOLE No. 200. ACTON, ONT., APRIL 24, 1879. $1.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

BAKERY
AND
CONFECTIONERY.

MESSRS. B. & E. NICKLIN would inform that they have opened up their
NEW BAKE SHOP
ON THE
Corner of MILL and MAIN Sts.
ACTON,
And that they will always be supplied with A 1. Bread, besides Buns, Cakes, Pastry, &c., &c., &c.

A LARGE STOCK OF CHOICE
Confectionery
will be found on hand, which is all new and fresh—
OATMEAL,
CORNMEAL,
BUCKWHEAT FLOUR,
CRACKED WHEAT, &c.,
always in stock.

This will be found to be the place where the best goods will be kept at the lowest prices.
☞ TERMS: CASH.
B. & E. NICKLIN.

ACTON
SHINGLE MILLS
EDWARD MOORE,
Wishes to announce to those who intend building or repairing, that he is about to commence the manufacture of all c'asses of
PINE AND CEDAR
Shingles,
Which will be sold
CHEAP FOR CASH.
Elm and Oak Staves,
and Basswood Heading
of the best quality, also manufactured and delivered F. O. B. the G. T. R. cars here at the lowest possible prices.
FIRST-CLASS LATH ALWAYS ON HAND.
Custom Logs cut to order on the shortest notice and at reasonable rates.
Satisfaction guaranteed. Orders Solicited.
EDWARD MOORE.
Acton, April 2nd, 1879.

HARNESS,
HARNESS.
Any person in want of a good sett of Harness, either
SINGLE OR DOUBLE;
Should call at
Creech's Saddlery,
ACTON,
Where they can get better value for their money than any place in the County.
A good assortment of
TRUNKS AND VALISES
On hand, all of which will be sold cheap for cash.
☞ Repairing promptly attended to.
R. CREECH.
Acton, Feb. 26, 1879.

ONTARIO
BUSINESS COLLEGE
S. G. BEATTY & CO.,
BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO.
THE design of the above institution, and the work it is most successfully accomplishing, as shown in the great success of its graduates throughout the country, is to prepare boys, and young and middle aged men for Commercial Pursuits by giving them a THOROUGH and PRACTICAL Education in Book-Keeping in all its forms. Penmanship, Arithmetic, Correspondence, Grammar and Spelling; Banking methods; how to deal with notes, drafts; bills of exchange, checks, and all kinds of business paper.
GRADUATES OF THE COLLEGE
who have four months course and taken their diplomas, are each week stepping into good positions, in which, owing to the completeness of their knowledge they speedily attain promotion.
Among our students are those who have been through the grammar schools and universities, as well as those whose education in early life has been neglected. The former come to receive a practical education, such as is needed in every day life, the latter to remedy past neglect, and all to secure that knowledge which will help them to success in the world.
☞ The College Journal, containing full particulars and specimens of penmanship are sent on application.
Address,
S. G. BEATTY & CO.,
Belleville, Ont.
Sept. 1st, 1878.

MANHOOD,
HOW LOST, HOW RESTORED.
WE have recently published a new edition of Dr. Culverwell's Celebrated Essay on the RADICAL AND PERMANENT CURE (without medicine) of Nervous Debility, Mental and Physical Incapacity, Impediments to Marriage, etc., resulting from excesses.
☞ Price, in a sealed envelope, only six cents, or two postage stamps.
The Celebrated author, in this admirable Essay, clearly demonstrates, from thirty years' successful practice, that alarming consequences may be radically cured without the dangerous use of internal medicine or the application of the knife; pointing out a mode of cure at once simple, certain and effectual, by means of which every sufferer, no matter what his condition may be, may cure himself cheaply, privately and radically.
This Lecture should be in the hands of every youth and every man in the land.
Address,
The Culverwell Medical Co.,
47 Ann St., New York.
Post Office Box 4586.

To a Young Girl.

Keep pure thy heart's affection, till thou meet
With one whose spirit is from dross refined—
Above the giddy crowd: and he shall greet
With strength thy weakness, till at last thy mind,
As a young ivy clinging to a rock,
Shall fix itself to his, and beautify
A fabric that can stand the tempest's shock,
With leaves which shall not in the Winter die,
And hearkill be to thee a resting-place,
A friend in joy, a refuge in distress;
So keep for him thy love in all its grace,
And Heaven shall bless thee with true happiness.

But should it never be thy lot to taste
Such gladness—if thy Maker hath designed
Thee for some other end, yet do not waste
Thy love, but give it largely to mankind.
On poverty, on loneliness, or shame
Pour forth thy tenderness with all its power,
And many blessings, shower'd upon thy name,
Shall cheer thee in the last, most trying hour;
Because, when thou hast labour'd all thy life,
Meeting with no reward that man can see, (strife
God's hand shall guide thee through the last short
And great in Heaven thy recompense shall be.

AN INSURANCE TALE.

I am a solicitor of considerable standing and practice in a large provincial town in Ireland, the name of which it is here unnecessary to mention. On the evening of the 31st of December, some twenty-five years ago, I was in the aforesaid town sitting in my study. The day had been one of unusual inclemency; rain had alternated with sleet and snow, and the cold and cutting wind had blown with a rude strength which made its chilly touch at once incisive. As the shades of night had begun to fall, the storm, instead of abating, had increased in turbulence and height, and at the hour of which I am about to speak the spasmodic energy of the elements seemed like the last convulsions of the dying year. I had been reading some legal documents during the evening; but perceiving from a glance at my watch that it was fast approaching twelve o'clock, I laid my paper aside and drew my chair nearer to the fire. The hail beat violently against the windows, the wind sighed among the trees outside, and the keyhole of my study door expressed its feelings in tones, if possible, more melancholy.

The feeling of which I was conscious as I sat thus gazing into the blazing comfort before me was one of selfish satisfaction that I was not at the mercy of the tempest outside. Forms of various human sufferers presented themselves to my mental vision, and seemed to take the shape of the red coals in the fire, while the wind and my sorrowing keyhole seemed vocal with the burden of their woe. I was soon plunged in a deep moralizing on the misery which we see around us—on that strange, invisible line between sorrow and sin; and the last moments of the passing year were just landing me in one of those good resolutions which we are told form such excellent paving-stones, when I was aroused from my moral reverie by a knock at my study door. Pushing my chair back a little distance from the fire, and assuming a more professional air, I articulated the well-known "Come in;" and this mandate was duly obeyed by a servant, who informed me that a gentleman outside was particularly anxious to see me.

A moment afterward a figure, which in all but size resembled our old friend the "drowned rat," entered my study, and, making a courteous bow, said: "I fear this is a very unseasonable hour to intrude upon you, sir." My visitor was tall, had a pale thoughtful face, and when he unbuttoned his coat, which covered him from head to foot, I perceived that he was a clergyman.

"Won't you take a seat by the fire?" I said, "for you must be very cold and wet such a night as this."

"Thank you, sir," he replied; "I am too wet to sit down. I had better tell you at once the cause of this unseasonable visit. I have been attending, in my capacity as a Christian minister, a young lady who has been very ill, and is now, I believe, dying. She sent for me to-night about ten o'clock, and, when I went to her, she entreated me to go for a solicitor. I had heard of you, sir, as a gentleman of standing in that profession, and I have accordingly come to ask you to drive over with me to her."

I suggested that the lady very probably wanted to make her will, and wished for professional assistance.

"I cannot tell," he replied. "I asked her if no one but a solicitor would do, and she said not. She said she must see a solicitor before she died. She seemed terribly distressed, and pressed her request so earnestly upon me that I dare not neglect it."

"How far is the young lady's residence from this?" I asked, wishing to bring the matter to a practical issue.

"About ten miles," was the clergyman's reply.

"Ten miles on a night such as this is no joke."

"It is, sir, a long drive, and I know that the night is very severe; but I would take it as a great favour if you would come with me. I know not where to go, or what to do, if you decline. I will drive you there, and send my car with you; and you will, of course, hold me responsible for your fees."

The last sentence decided my wavering resolution and gained the clergyman's object; for what attorney ever remained inactive where he had a good mark for costs? So, shrugging my shoulders, I said:—"Well, I suppose I had better go with you, though I should much prefer going to bed."

"Thank you," he replied, "it is very good of you to consent."

Having provided myself with the writing materials necessary to draft a will, and having wrapped myself from head to foot in a waterproof, I accompanied the clergyman to the hall-door. There we ascended to the conveyance which was to take us to our destination, and soon we were cutting our way through the driving sleet and snow. Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, I thought it would be wise to elicit some little information from the clergyman about the young lady whose will I thought I was about to draw; and with that view I began to examine him. I, however, found that he could tell me very little. He only knew that she was a Miss Marlett; that she had been staying with an aunt of hers who lived in his parish; that she had become dangerously ill some four or five days previously; that he believed she was an only daughter, that her mother was dead, and that her father had been telegraphed for, and that he was expected to arrive in the morning. He added earnestly, "He will never see his daughter alive poor man!"

While we were speaking, the joy-bells had begun to ring out their merry peals, welcoming in the new year. In a few minutes, however, after the clergyman's last remark, they ceased, and a dead silence ensued.

"How ironical was the tone of those bells!" said the clergyman with a sigh, as the last peal was dying away. I answered half unconsciously, "Yes;" but I little knew how fully I would comprehend his meaning before many hours had passed away.

After a long and bitter drive, the conveyance at last drew up at a small, old fashioned house, with the appearance of which I was well acquainted, and which I knew to be the residence of an old lady of property, though I had never been inside of it. The clergyman on alighting brought me around to a side door, at which he knocked very gently. After he had knocked two or three times, the door was at length opened to us by an elderly woman, whom I afterward learned to be the nurse, and who conducted us by the aid of a lantern, up an old winding stair into a long corridor. Stopping before a door at the end of it, she motioned to us to wait while she entered the room. She had been only a few seconds inside when I heard a low moan, and a female voice exclaim, almost in a cry: "Oh, has the time come?" A moment afterward the clergyman and myself had entered the room, and lying on a bed in the middle of it I saw the form of a young girl apparently about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. As we approached the bedside, the clergyman said to her: "I have brought the solicitor with me; but she did not answer him, and gently waved her hand for the nurse and himself to leave the room.

After they had left she looked at me earnestly for a minute, and then said in a faint voice: "Are you a solicitor, sir?"

I answered; "I am," and added: "I suppose you wish me to draw your will for you."

"My will!" she said with evident surprise. "Ah, no! I have nothing to leave, except perhaps my heart." She remained for some time after without speaking, her silence being only broken by moans. After a little while I heard her murmur: "Oh, my father, my poor dear father, must it be!" Then clasping her two almost fleshless hands, she closed her eyes for a few moments. At last, with evident effort, she turned round on her pillow, and, looking straight at me, said in a voice tremulous with weakness and emotion: "I want, sir, to make a statement to you which I feel it to be my duty to make before I die. It has tortured me for months and I dare not meet my Maker if I did not tell all, though it breaks my very heart to do it."

Fearing that she was going to confess to some crime, or make some other important criminal declaration, I said to her: "If you are about to make any statement which may be of importance afterward, I had better go for a magistrate and you can make it before him."

"Oh, no, sir; no magistrate," she cried out earnestly. "What I have to tell concerns my poor father, and I dare not state it to a magistrate, for it might ruin him. If you will not hear me, and try to save my poor father, I shall die with sealed lips. O my father! my good, kind father! it is too cruel that I must tell of your sin!" The last words were pronounced almost in a cry, tears filled her eyes, and she began to sob piteously. Her racking cough soon followed; and I feared that she must indeed die "with sealed lips," as she had said; for to me it seemed as if every succeeding cough must be her last. After a little while, however, a respite came, and she tried to resume her statement. She gasped out: "The insurance—the blank insurance" (mentioning the name of a well-known company); "it's not my——" But before she could get any further, the cough again seized her, and this time with such terrible power that the poor creature fell back utterly exhausted.

Fearing that her life was now really waning, I went to the door of the room for the nurse, who at once came in. When she had settled the sufferer in a more easy position, she turned to me and whispered: "Very little longer, sir." I, however, remained in the room, in the hope that in a little time she might have strength to resume her statement; but when nearly half an hour had elapsed without bringing with it any sign of returning strength, I saw that the statement must remain in its unfinished condition. I therefore wrote down carefully all that had occurred, put it in an envelope, sealed it, placed it in my pocket, and prepared to go away. Before doing so I took one look at the form that lay on the bed before me. To describe her face I cannot, though I seem to see it as distinctly to-day as I saw it then—one of those strangely exquisite flowers, whose tender growth so often kindles the selfish craving of the old reaper Death. I had stood by many a death bed; my profession had insured me to scenes of anguish and pain; but as I looked on that pale, beautiful woman, and read on her features the impression which told me only too plainly of a conflict of racking reality within, my cold heart softened, and my whole nature went forth in one great yearning to comfort and sooth her. I breathed a prayer for the soul that was passing—earnest as I had never known earnestness before; and with feelings sad to portray, but too real to be forgotten, I left the room and the house.

Two days after this eventful night, my friend the clergyman (whom I subsequently discovered to be the newly appointed rector of a neighbouring parish) again entered my study. He told me that the poor young girl was dead, that she had passed away about half an hour after I had left the room, never having spoken a word after that terrible fit of coughing to which I had been a witness.

The question then came to be decided as to the meaning of the broken statement made by the girl, and what was my duty with regard to it. I have since frequently questioned the wisdom and propriety of the course I then pursued; but, whether right or wrong, my action was the result of much deliberation. I wrote in the first instance to the insurance company, asking them if they would kindly inform me, as solicitor for the late Miss Marlett, whether any insurance had been effected on her life with that company; and if so, when and by whom it was effected, what was the amount of it, and to whom it had become payable by the fall of Miss Marlett's life. I received a letter in reply from the secretary of the company informing me that my young friend had herself about a year previously, effected an insurance on her own life, in two policies of £5,000 each, and that if she had not otherwise assigned the policies in her lifetime, the sum of £10,000 was payable to her executors or administrators, as the case might be.

The receipt of this information led me to believe what I had suspected before, that there was something wrong about this insurance, though I could not exactly tell the nature of that something. I therefore wrote a second time to the company, stating that I had reason to believe it would be wise for the company to make careful inquiries with reference to the policy, before surrendering its value. The secretary at once wrote back to me, asking me to state the information which led me to form this belief; but I replied that I was not in possession of any information whatever bearing on the matter, but that from what took place at an interview which I had had with the late Miss Marlett a short time before her death, I had been led to suspect that there was something wrong about the insurance.

I heard no more of the matter until one morning some two or three months afterward, when I was honoured with a visit from the secretary and solicitor of the insurance company. They told me that the father of my poor young friend had threatened them with legal proceedings if they did not pay the amount of the insurance at once, and asked me to tell them exactly what had passed at the interview to which I had alluded in my letter. At first I hesitated as to whether I ought to do so or not, but ultimately I gave them the true account of all that had taken place on that fatal 31st of December. They thanked me warmly, said they thought I had only done my duty in disclosing the matter to them, and went away.

What use the company made of this information, or what means they adopted to probe the mystery to its source, I do not know; but about six months after my interview with the secretary and solicitor, when I was beginning to hope that I should never hear of the case again, I received a summons to attend at an assizes to be shortly holden in the county town of a northern shire. I was no means of refusing this command, though I would have given a good deal to have been able to evade it. I therefore found myself, about a fortnight after its receipt, quietly sitting in the crowded court house of the aforesaid town, a witness in the case of "Marlett vs. the Blank Insurance Company."

I had but little difficulty as I looked round the court in identifying the plaintiff, for my eyes soon rested on a manly form, bearing an unmistakable resemblance to the young girl by whose death-bed I had stood about a year before. The beauty of her face was there moulded in lines of masculine firmness and power; and though her father's expression was far from pleasing, there was nothing about him at all indicative of the character subsequently exhibited to the court. He appeared to be a gentleman of good birth and position; and as I looked at him before the case begun, I was very curious to know what was his real position with reference to the insurance, and how far it would be disclosed on the evidence.

His counsel, in opening the plaintiff's case, said that it was one of the simplest cases ever ushered into a court of justice. The facts, he said, were simply these; "Two years previously the late Miss Marlett insured her life with the defendants, the Blank Insurance Company, in two policies of £5,000 each. A year after she had effected these policies, Miss Marlett had died without having assigned or disposed of the policies in any way. Her father, the plaintiff, was her only next of kin and her administrator, and was now entitled absolutely to the £10,000, which the company, however, had refused to pay." To an uninitiated spectator, the evidence for the plaintiff seemed to bear out the counsel's statement; but when the plaintiff's case had closed, the counsel on behalf of the company rose and said that they were in a position to prove by a connected chain of evidence that every word of the plaintiff's case was valueless, and that this insurance had been effected under circumstances of the grossest fraud and crime.

I myself was the first witness called on behalf of the company; and, after much objection was allowed to give a plain and unvarnished description of the scene which I have already depicted on that sad night. You could have heard a pin drop while I was speaking, and the sensation which was produced in court was manifest. I was, of course, severely cross-examined, and, as I had nothing to conceal, my testimony was not shaken.

The next witness for the company was an eminent London physician, who stated that in the beginning of March two years previously, Mr. Marlett had come to him in London, and brought with him a young lady, who he said was his daughter, to have her examined by him. He then made a careful examination of the young lady, and found her to be in rapid consumption, of which result he told Mr. Marlett, and added at the same time that she could not, in his opinion, live for six months. The company's own doctor was next called, and stated, at the end of the same month of March, Mr. Marlett had come to him in London, and told him that his daughter was anxious to effect an insurance on her life with the Blank company, and asked him to appoint a day to examine her. He had known Mr. Marlett for many years, but had never seen his daughter. Mr. Marlett, however, told him that she was a healthy country girl, and that he would have no difficulty in passing her for the company. It was then agreed that he should call upon Mr. Marlett the next day at the hotel at which they were staying and examine his daughter. He did so; and Mr. Marlett then introduced to him as his daughter a handsome, healthy-looking girl, with all the appearance of having lived in the country. The girl looked so very healthy that he did not think it necessary to make any minute examination of her, and merely questioned her as to what disease—if any—she had. She seemed very much confused, but this he attributed to her natural shyness. He recommended the company to insure her life at the ordinary rate for her age, which was then 24. The doctor was told to look round the court and say if he saw any one like the young girl whom on that occasion he had examined; and after a while pointed to a young girl and said he believed she was the person whom he then examined.

The excitement in court at this announcement can scarcely be imagined. Every eye was turned on the young girl, who a few minutes afterwards ascended the witness-table. As I gazed at her I was painfully reminded of the poor young creature whom I had seen lying in such trouble less than a year before; for the likeness of her was strangely great. There was, however, a robustness, a glow of health about the young girl whom I now saw for the first time, which was sadly wanting in my young friend, and which served to conceal a resemblance otherwise manifest. She said that she lived in the south of England with her father, who was a well-to-do farmer. Two years and a half previously Mr. Marlett and his daughter had come to lodge at their farm for the benefit of Miss Marlett's health, as she was then very delicate. Every one noticed a very strong likeness between herself and Miss Marlett, and a firm friendship arose between them. Mr. and Miss Marlett stayed about six months at the farm; and when they were about to go away to London Mr. Marlett proposed to her that she should go up with them as a companion to his daughter, which she did. On the day before they left London Miss Marlett went out with her father to pay a visit, and she was left to herself in the hotel. She was sitting alone in their private room reading, when suddenly Mr. Marlett returned alone, rushed into the room, and said in a threatening manner: "You must say you are my daughter! There is a gentleman coming in now; and mind you must say you are my daughter! If you don't we'll all be ruined. Remember!" He hastened back, and in less than a minute re-entered with the company's doctor, the last witness. She was so completely taken by surprise and overcome with alarm that she did not know what she was doing, but nevertheless felt completely under the influence of Mr. Marlett. He introduced her to the doctor as his daughter; the doctor shook hands with her, and said he was glad to see her looking so strong and well. He asked her whether she had lived much in the country, and said he thought it would be a mere farce to go through the form of examining any one who looked so completely the essence of health as she did. He mentioned a great number of diseases, and asked her if she ever had any of them; and after some other remarks he concluded with: "Well, I think I may now tell them that you are not going to die yet awhile." He then began to talk to Mr. Marlett; they had wine together, he bade adieu to her, and the two gentlemen quitted the house. All was mystery to her. She now began to entertain a confused sort of dread of Mr. Marlett. When his daughter came home, she told her all about it, and asked her what it meant, but Miss Marlett said that she did not know—that perhaps it was a joke of her father's. She, however, forced Miss Marlett to promise never to say anything about it.

What the effect of this evidence was on the occupants of the court I can hardly say, for I was too much absorbed in my own thoughts to notice any manifestation of feeling in others. The truth was now only too plain. The father of my young friend, knowing that his daughter's health was failing, had resolved to profit by her death, and with that intent had secured a simple country girl, and brought her up to London to be the unwitting means of accomplishing his unfeeling design. In London he had learned on the best authority that his daughter could not live six months, and within a month he had insured her life in her own name, without her knowledge, for a large sum of money, which he knew must be paid to him at her death; and to ensure the insurance for which he craved, he had passed off for his poor dying daughter a healthy country girl, he had lied to his old friend, and caused an innocent girl to perpetrate a fraud. As these facts came home to my mind in their horrid reality, I gazed across the court to see the man who had conceived this mighty inhumanity. The coil of truth, as it had been gradually unravelled by the witnesses, seemed to have wound itself serpent-like around the frame of its foe; for the form which a little while before had been erect and defiant was now humbly prone; the eye which had glanced restlessly round the court was now fixed on the ground, and a death-like pallor lay on his countenance.

The jury without leaving their box pronounced their verdict for the company, and the judge thereupon solemnly announced that he would direct a criminal prosecution to be instituted against the plaintiff for the crimes disclosed in that most painful case. At this announcement I rose and entreated the judge not to adopt that course. I reminded him of the dying anxiety of the poor daughter to have her father saved, and urged that the plaintiff would be sufficiently punished by the loss of position which must be consequent on the verdict. But my solicitations were all in vain. The judge said that he sat there to protect society, and that if such crimes as had been that day disclosed were allowed to pass unpunished, he would fail in the duty which he sat there to discharge. A few minutes after Mr. Marlett left the court in custody; and as I saw him thus committed to the pitiless mercy of the law, compassion—which can look on the wicked as well as the good—seemed to rise within me, and I almost regretted that I had put the insurance company on the track, which they had followed with such fatal accuracy.

The law, however, though very powerful, is not omnipotent, and in this case its power was destined to be futile. It was found not to be convenient to try Mr. Marlett at the same assizes; and his trial was therefore postponed till the following one, and he himself allowed out on bail. The next assizes came round, and everything was ready for the trial; but the prisoner was nowhere to be found. They called him in the court, and they called him outside, but in vain. It was soon found that the prisoner had absconded—vanished, no one knew where; and the individuals who had been kind enough to stake a portion of their worldly goods on his reappearance were asked to show their affection for him by paying the penalty which the law so properly attaches to such misplaced philanthropy. The following comment on the case appeared a day or two afterward in the local newspaper: "We can only say that justice has been defeated, and a very bad type of criminal has escaped unpunished. The inscrutable wisdom of Providence has reserved his punishment for another world."

More than twenty years after the events above narrated, the course of my professional business led me to cross the Atlantic, and visit the city of New York. It happened in the course of that visit, as I was returning to my hotel at a late hour one night, that I became conscious that a human form was following me. I at once looked round and saw within a yard of me an old man with a long white beard and weather-beaten face, dressed in ragged attire, shoeless and stockingless. Something in the face caught my attention, and, on looking at it more closely, I recognized it as one I had seen before, though I could not tell where. When I turned round, the old man muttered in an earnest, almost savage tone: "Give me some money; I want it badly—very badly;" but as I did not feel quite easy at finding so questionable a creature so close to me at such an hour of the night and in a strange city, I made no reply to his request, but hastened my steps. He, however, followed me, and again craved for money; and this time I answered him in our stereotyped English form: "I have nothing for you, my good man."

I suppose, however, that he did not catch my reply, for he added sharply, "What do you say?" To which I answered: "I say that I have no money for you."

"Do you indeed?" he said with fury. "Then keep it, and perish with it. I hope it may drag you down as it did me." With those words he turned away, and I heard his steps behind me no more; but I had not gone far when I recollected on what former occasion I had seen the old man's face. I remembered that it was the same face which twenty years before I had seen in that northern court-house—the face that had shown a death-like pallor when the heavy chain of truth clanked forth its tale of hidden guilt. I at once stopped and turned round; but I could only distinguish faintly the outline of his figure in the distance; and as I gazed at that ragged form, retreating I knew not whither, there flashed with vivid reality through my mind the events which I have endeavored here to relate, and I remembered the words of a thoughtful modern writer; "The secrets of men's lives are rarely held inviolate till eternity—there is a reckoning here without the aid of eternal books."

Bad Grammar.

If the London *World* is to be believed, this is the way in which things are done in that city: A young lady was sitting with a gallant captain, in a charmingly decorated recess. On her knee was a diminutive niece, placed there to play propriety. In the adjoining room, with the door open, were the rest of the company. Says the little niece, in a jealous and very audible voice: "Auntie, kiss me too." We leave you to imagine what had just happened. "You should say twice, Ethel dear; two is not grammar," was the immediate rejoinder.

I THINK 'twas in September, if I rightly now remember, that I heard a knocking, knocking at my door; yes, I know 'twas in September, for quite well I now remember, he had been there about fifty times before; had been there knocking at my door. But I opened not, nor wondered, as upon the door he thundered, for he yelled, "Say now will you settle this 'ere bill I bring you?" as he battered on the door; and I answered, calmly answered, "Nevermore."

"What's to Keridge?"

Mr. Berry's Overnight in Trying to Take a Young Lady to a Ball.

From the Virginia City Chronicle.

He was a new bootblack, but already seemed quite at home at the old stand so long a familiar object on the line of our daily peregrinations.

"Startin' home, ahlese 'em up in less'n no time," said he, and we mournfully left the luxurious dusk of his place of business.

"Well, yes, boss, not big here long, but I'se gettin' straight 'mazin' de ways mighty fast. De ways here, sah, is different to what dey is down in ole Mississip. Big Mississip, sah? Fine ole State, sah."

"The coloured people here appear to be quite as happy as in any part of the world," we ventured to remark.

"No, sah; beg leave to diffah; you's not on de inside, sah; dar's too much elewation; dat's what's de matter. Give you an instance? Las' week, you know, sah, de bullies had a ball; quite a high-toned affair, sah. Well, I engaged a young lady for de party, sir: one dat I at dat time looked on as de pride ob de county, sah. I am not indifferent to dress, and I put on clothes, sah—clothes dat don't every day see de light ob de sun—and went to de residence ob de gal.

"I 'rived at de 'pinted time. De gal was in de bes' room an' in her bes' clothes, waitin' my arrival on de scene. De ole man was dar an' de ole woman also figgered in de tableaux, wid a few juvenile supernumerary members ob de family.

"Mistah Berry, does you pretend to tell me dat you've come to take me to de ball widout a kerridge?" and she became of a still greater height.

"'Why, of course,' says I. 'I thought we could walk. Down in ole Mississip de gals think nuffin of goin' miles an' miles.'

"'So you expects me to hoof it, Mistah Berry! You tell me 'bout de gals in Mississip. Mistah Berry: do de gals in Mississip know anything 'bout proper attire, Mistah Berry!' An' the guv a sort of a kick an' a saling of her body an' trailed out about four yards of train.

"De ole man an' de ole woman an' all de rest now put in dar 'pearance, an' says de ole man, 'What's all dis confusion of tongues?'

"'Mistah Berry doesn't consider de hoosh sufficient to warrant him in de outlay necessary for de furnishing of propah transposition,' said Miss Augusta.

"'Sah!' said de ole man; 'Sah!' said de ole woman; 'Sah!' said all de little members.

"'I said nuffin'."

"'Does de niggah 'spect he's gwine to lead our darter off on de hoof like she was a cow?' said de ole woman.

"'Who you call niggah, ole woman?' says I. 'Why, I'se drove better lookin' heifers nor yours to de plough in ole Mississip!'

"De gal shrieked!

"'Dar you talk to me an' my darter in dat bituminous manner,' said de ole man, an' he guv me a lift wid his ole stogas dat raised me off de stoop an' followed it up wid numerous of de same dat was much assistance to me in gittin' out de gate.

"'Dar's too much elewation, sah, creepin' into cullud society. I turns my back to it, sah!'

The Plague in Yunan.

Terrible Ravages of the Disease Among the Chinese—Its Spread.

At the last meeting of the French Geographical society, M. de Sonrac, formerly an officer in the French navy but now in the service of the Chinese government, read a very interesting paper on this terrible epidemic. He mentioned a number of facts which seemed to prove that the disease is originated by certain emanations from the earth to which the rats are the first to fall victims. The Chinese medical men whose pharmacopœia is generally so complicated, do not appear to possess any remedy against this scourge, rendered more terrible by the superstitious practices of the people. The credulous populations of this remote province imagine that the unfortunate victims who succumb to this frightful affection are possessed of an evil spirit, and they leave the bodies exposed to the sun in order that the infernal occupant may be obliged to leave it. That custom produces a horribly pestiferous state of the atmosphere, sufficient alone to cause an epidemic in the plague-stricken villages, and to render the prevailing disease a hundred times more deadly than it might otherwise be if proper sanitary measures were adopted. The first symptoms of infection are manifested by a violent fever accompanied by an inextinguishable thirst; then follows the appearance of reddish tumors on all parts of the body, but particulary under the armpits, and they rapidly attain the size of a hen's egg, while the pain they cause is so intense that the patient speedily loses consciousness. By the time he recovers his senses the development of the swelling is complete. If they have remained hard and firm the sufferer has some chance of surviving, but, if the contrary is the case, death is inevitable. The progress of the disease from village to village has been traced over a distance of more than a thousand miles, so that the fact of the material communication or the contagious principle is incontestable. From Yunan the epidemic was transmitted to Mesopotamia, and thence to the regions in which it is now raging, but in all cases the infection was unquestionably communicated by means of contact.

THE last pen sketch of Madame Grevy describes her as "a sad, common-place, elderly lady. She talks fluently, but there is little in what she says. Her face is not one easy to remember, for apart from an expression of weariness and melancholy, it has little character. She tells her friends that she does not feel at home in the sumptuous palace in which the nation has lodged her. Mlle. Grevy has almost too much character. She puts on her clothes with admirable taste and knows exactly what becomes her. Bright colours suit her jet-black hair and eyes and olive complexion, and she wears them. She is in the habit of making her dresses with the assistance of a *femme de chambre*."

TIME levels everything except a man's back. He humps that up. And I don't see why either. It doesn't appear to make the back any stronger, and it certainly doesn't make it any prettier. But I suppose Time knows his business.

QUEEN VICTORIA last year received $220,000 from her duchy of Lancaster. At the beginning of her reign the revenue didn't exceed a fourth of this.

A WESTERN editor, in response to a subscriber who grumbles that his paper is intolerably damp, says it is "because there is so much due on it."