SUPPLEMENT TO

The Free Press.

PUNIGRAMS.

When the angry passion gathering in my mother's face I see,
And she leads me to the bedroom—gently sits me on her knee;
Then I know that I will catch it, and my flesh in fancy itches,
And I listen to the patter of the shingle on my breeches.

Every tingle of the shingle has an echo and sting,
And a thousand burning fancies into active being spring,
And a thousand bees and hornets heath my coat tail seem to swarm
As I listen to the patter of the shingle—oh! so warm!

In a splutter comes my father, whom I supposed had gone,
To survey the situation and tell her to lay it on;
To see her bending o'er me as I listen to the strain
Played by her and by the shingle in a wild and weird refrain.

In a sudden intermission, which appears my only chance,
I say: "Strike gently mother, or you'll split my Sunday pants."
She stops a moment, draws her breath, the shingle holds aloft,
And says: "I had not thought of that—my son, just take them off."

Holy Moses! and the angels, cast thy pitying glances down!
And thou, oh family doctor, put a good soft poultice on!
And teach fools and dunces everlastingly
If ever I say another word when my mother holds the shingle.

When a man owes you, be polite and as often as possible send him his little billy due.
You can't make a horse drink; but if he will not eat you can put a bit in his mouth.

We regret to announce that the old Eton jokes of last year are about to be returned and without interest.

"The men of to-day are too high strung," says a Chicago paper. Some of them are not strung high enough."

A boy recently hung himself because "somebody found fault with him." That boy was certainly not born to be a country editor.

It is, perhaps, natural to conclude that Father Time is married, not because he is called Father, but because he is so often taken by the forelock.

It is said that no fat men ever commit murder. If they ever commit crime it is nothing above stealing a barrel of pork to present to some orphan asylum.

An intimacy that had existed between two ladies for years was rudely broken by one of them cautioning her friend, who was going out shopping, to keep her eye open for good bargains. Her friend had but one eye.

Remarks by a Texas maiden to her perfidious lover: "I ain't got no brother, and dad's too old to fight, but if you will just take one of those here pistols and step off a few paces, I'll jine in the duet and misses a stringer."

A lad passenger, whose baby had kept up a dismal and incessant bawling to the sore distress of everybody in the car, apologetically observed to a gentleman in the next seat, "I hope you like children, sir?" "I do indeed," was the reply, "but I like 'em corked up."

"Thunder!" was the remark of Ferguson, as he formed a crescent over the slippery coalhod cover. "Yes," replied a sober-faced citizen in the doorway; "more than twenty have fallen on that cover this morning, and every one of them expressed the same opinion."

How depraved is the literary taste of youth. Take a hundred boys, aged about fourteen each, and it may be safely wagered that ninty-nine of them would rather read a story called "Red-Headed Jim, the Assassin of Cabbage Alley," than to peruse Prof. Goldwin Smith's "Moral Interregnum."

London Truth has an article on fashions for little dogs. The only exception we take, is to the style of walking dress for small ball pups. Instead of a scarlet velvet poke bonnet and close-fitting ulster, we think a blue felt coronet-shaped hat and fur-lined circular would be much more becoming and appropriate.

The following message, intended to break bad news gently, was sent to the widow of a man who had just been killed by a railroad accident: "Dear Madam,—Your husband has been unavoidably detained for the present. To-morrow an undertaker will call upon you with the full particulars."

We think it quite time a stop was put to the use of tuneless refrains in the Songs of the Sanctuary (we mean no disrespect to the excellent hymnal of that name!). Take, for example, one which is very commonly heard, and which is chorused with great unction in social religious meetings, where the singers are supposed to be thinking of heaven:

To be there, to be there!
O! what must it be to be there;
To be there! to be there!
O! what must it be to be there!

It is hardly to be wondered at that this sort of parrot poetry, so popular in public assemblies, provoke the parodist to perpetrate this parallel to it:

To be sure, to be sure!
O! yes indeed, to be sure!
To be sure! to be sure!
O! what must it be to be sure!

Grub-Staking.

One can acquire an interest in mining property in many ways. He can find a mine himself; he can supply another man with food and tools, and give him a share in what he may find (and this is grub-staking"); he may buy a mine when found, or a share of it, bearing in mind that Western saying, that "a prospect hole is not a mine;" or he can invest in stocks. Grub-staking a good man, and, if possible, accompanying him on his search, may be called the best way, for, said an old hand, "you make your loss at the start." Buying a claim or claims is not infrequently satisfactory; but said, with quaint gravity, another "old-timer," "If I was a capitalist, and I'd see a mine worth half a million, I'd want to buy it for twenty-five thousand dollars, and have some advantage on my side. A man can't see very far into the ground."

It is stated that no geologist ever yet found a valuable mine—the humble prospector being always at the front—and even then owing much to accident. With his burro laden with a little bacon and flour, perhaps a little coffee and sugar, a frying-pan and a coffee-pot, and with his pick and shovel this hard-working pioneer traverses the length and breadth of the mineral region, undergoing many and great hardships, often facing danger, often, indeed, laying his bones on some desolate hill-side or in some lonely canon; and then—only to think of it—one in five hundred finds fortune! We hear of late years that mining has become as regular and legitimate an occupation as manufacturing; and it is undoubtedly true that method and system have been largely introduced, and that the strong owners of paying mines and successful smelting works may rightly claim that they are engaged in sober and industrial pursuits; but with the great bulk of modern Argonauts, from our poor, sanguine pick-user and burro-driver to the New-Yorker who, without the slightest real knowledge of what he is doing, "takes a flyer" in Wall Street, it is as certain as the sun rises and sets that the gambling and not the commercial instinct predominates. A bank was pointed out to the writer in a large mining town which, with a capital of $50,000, had deposits of from $700,000 to $800,000, and which had made $42,000 net profits in nine months.

"But they say that there is no money in banking," was added—"I mean, no money as compared with what some of them can make in mining. When a fellow can go and make a forty or fifty thousand dollar strike, *banking seems pretty slow.*" Could anything better illustrate what has just been said?—A. A. Hayes, Jr., in *Harper's Magazine.*

In His Clerical Capacity.

They settled Parson Posey in the quiet country town;
He seemed exactly suited to their need.
But on the second Sunday he remarked to Mrs. Brown:
"Your social life is very dull, indeed!"
And so the gentle, eloquent, and gentle Parson Posey
Who thought to give the parish more vivacity,
Just started "Copenhagen" and "ring-around-a-rosey."
And played them in his clerical capacity.

Quite brotherly and sisterly they soon began to be;
And when he saw the social parties thrive,
He said: "Now this is spirited, and it appears to me
Much more as if the parish was alive!"
He introduced the forfeit games, instructed how to play them,
And followed up the fun with portinacity.
But when they gathered forfeits, and wondered how to pay them,
He showed them—in his clerical capacity.

"We ought to do to others as we'd have them do to us,"
He said with earnest emphasis; but then
Whenever he performed the solemn duty of a buss,
He skipped the ancient maidens and the men.
"I do discriminate; it is not surprising, is it?"
He asked. "They might exhibit some pugnacity;
And so when I encounter them upon my weekly visit,
I skip them in my clerical capacity."

And so the faithful Posey, of the species latitudinarian,
Revolving his parishioners among,
Remarks to the trustees: "It is good to recreate;
To preserve, we must interest the young;"
And if a man observes to him: "You do exhibit feeling,"
He winks his eye and whispers with sagacity,
"I sacrifice myself to keep the parish from complaining—
I suffer in my clerical capacity."

CARRIED BY STORM.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF "A MAD MARRIAGE," "A LITTLE QUEEN," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—(CONTINUED)

THE STORY.

"He took a night, and thought it all over before he showed himself. Abbott was in his power he knew, but he did not dislike Abbott, and he made up his mind not to be too hard on him, to be a good living out of him, and let him off at that. He didn't bear no malice, he didn't want to show Abbott up, there was nothing to be gained by that—there was everything to be gained by holding his tongue. Dad didn't want to be a gentleman, and rob Abbott outright; he only wanted to be flush in his own way. As to deserting his crazy wife, and taking up with this handsome lady, dad didn't blame him for that either. It is only what he would have done himself. As to you, he made up his mind to say you were dead. He didn't quite know why, but he thought that if Abbott guessed who you were he might try to spirit you away. Then, when he had thought it well out and settled his plans, he waylaid Abbott in company with Colonel Ventnor, and I heard him laugh as he told Lamar that night—ay, dying as he was, he laughed, when he thought how struck of a heap John Abbott was when he first saw his face. After that I needn't tell you what followed. He got the Red Farm give to him, and sent for us home, and settled us all down. You know the life we led, jolly for us, but deuced hard for you, I must say. Dad proved he fairly hated you after that—why, he didn't know, but he did. All the hate he might have bestowed on your father, he gave to you; so you were illtreated morning, noon, and night. And I'm ashamed to say by me as well as the rest. I ask your pardon now, Joanna."

"The young fellow says it with real feeling; he is honestly sorry, and she sees it. She gives him her hand, and he starts to find how cold it is.

"You need not," she says. "You alone never were cruel to me, Alfred. But, oh, my childhood! what a youth has been mine!"

"Ah!" Alf says, with a hard breath of sympathy. "Well, then, the next was the coming of Geoffrey Lamar, and the sudden interest he took in you. Perhaps John Abbott expected—nobody knows—he refused to let you come to Abbott Wood. You remember the evening Lamar came and told you so? Bad took the matter in hand, through pure contrariness and cussedness, as he owned; he went to the big house, and he made Abbott let you come. His wife should look after you, and nobody else; his daughter should be your companion; his high-toned step-son your friend. And no bad his way. And now, whether Mrs. Abbott suspected or not, I don't know—that's what I'm puzzled over many a time since. Did she suspect, and did she do all that kindness to you to quiet her conscience, knowing she was wronging you all the time? I can't make it out. Them fine ladies will do a great deal sooner than lose their money and position. Was she one of them, or not? As to Lamar, I do believe it was all news to him. I tell you he looked like a corpse. And no wonder. Then the way! Her mother was not that man's wife—a fellow like that, that at his best was like the dirt under her feet, his little sister was a—illegitimate; and they were prouder than Lucifer! You can guess how Geoffrey Lamar felt as he sat and listened to the story of his mother's disgrace, told by the lips of a dying man."

Joanna has covered her face with her hands. Oh! she can guess it—the shame, the horror, the appalling force of that most horrible blow! Oh, Geoffrey! true, tender friend! noblest heart that ever beat! and this was his reward for saving her!"

"When you ran away with Blake," goes on Alf, "dad suspected foul play on the part of Abbott, thought he had a hand in the business, and went there at once. That night they had it out. Dad had the certificate of your mother's marriage and your baptism, and swore to expose Abbott. There was a struggle. Abbott strove to master dad, and got the worst of it. Dad pulled out a knife, and would have stabbed Abbott without doubt, but that he slipped forward, fell on his own weapon, and stabbed himself. Then Abbott fled. At first dad did not realize how badly he was hurt, and had strength enough left to replace the papers in their hiding-place before he called for help. But the girl was frightened and wouldn't come. He tried to crawl from the room, but fainted it seems from loss of blood. There he lay, wounded and bleeding, until morning—if he had been cared for in time he could have lived, not a doubt about it. And that was the story he had to tell Geoffrey Lamar. He gave him the papers, told him where to find your mother, and so sent him away. I saw young Lamar as he left the house—I never want to see a face like that again.

"That night dad died, but first of all he cleared John Abbott of any share in his death. I suppose he thought he had revenge enough. And so he had.

"Well, we buried poor old dad. I never said a word to anybody—it was no good. I had no proofs. Lamar had them, and I guess you were gone, Abbott carried things with a high hand with Dan, turned us out as fast as we could bundle. And I don't wonder. For my part I was ready to go. I was tired of life on the farm. Love married, life came to town. Dan went to sea, and I drifted up after, I picked up a paper, and the first thing I saw was the suicide of the rich man of Brightbrook—nobody knew why. But I knew. I wrote to Lora, and heard how Mrs. Abbott and her son and daughter had left the place, and that Abbott Wood was shut up. It has been shut up ever since. It stands there to-day, and you are its mistress, and heiress by right of every penny John Abbott—or Bennett—has left."

Her hands drop, she is deadly pale, her eyes burn in the fixed pallor of her face.

"As for Lamar, it is strange," Alf continues, slowly, "and yet, perhaps it is not strange either. He promised dad, on his word of honour, he would hunt you up, and see you restored to your rights, and he has not done it. You see, to do it, all the world would have known of his disgrace, and his mother's, and Leo's, and they all are so infernally proud. Still Lamar seems the sort of fellow to do right at any price, and not stop to count the cost. He hasn't this time, it seems. It must have been a tremendous blow to Mrs. Abbott. I wonder where they are? In Europe, somewhere, I suppose, flourishing on your money. It ain't fair, by Jove, and I'd hunt them up if I was you, and have my rights. Your mother's living, or was then—you can find and bring her forward, and I'll swear to all I've told you. Possession is nine points of the law, they say, and they have that and the money; still—"

"I must find them," Joanna cries; "but, oh! not for that—not for that! I must find my mother—my mother! mine! that I—I, Gleaford's Joanna, should have a mother! Oh, Alfred, help me—I must find my mother at once, at once, at once!"

"And the fortune?" says Alfred, looking at her curiously.

"The fortune! Ah, dear Heaven, what is fortune, a thousand fortunes, to that? To find my mother! my poor, lonely imprisoned mother! And I must find Mrs. Abbott and Geoffrey Lamar. What they must have suffered! Ah, what they must have suffered!"

"And what they have kept—don't forget that. They have the fortune all this time. And they never looked for you."

"They have—they must; I will not believe it. "Oh! if they were not good, not noble, not unselfish, then there is no goodness, no nobility, no unselfishness on earth. I will not believe it. Mrs. Abbott never knew. I would stake my life on that. Geoffrey has looked for me—I believe it as I believe in Heaven. To doubt them would be for me ruin. I could no more have faith in honesty or truth on earth. Oh! I shall find them; I shall know no rest until I have found and comforted them, as much as I can comfort—until in ever so little I have returned to them what they so freely, so generously gave to me. The bread they cast upon the waters shall return to them; the waif they tried to rescue shall prove her gratitude and love. And Leo is my sister—dear, dear, dearest little Leo. Oh, my God! what a grateful heart I ought to have this day—what a happy girl I ought to be! And I am. I will find them—I will comfort them. I will find my mother—I will devote my life to her. Help me, Alf—help me in this, and thank you, thank you a hundred times for what you have told me to-day!"

Her face is transfigured; it is, young Gleaford thinks in wonder and awe, like the face of an angel—lit with love not with passion, more than beautiful—with the beauty of a noble, a grand, unselfish soul.

"I will do all I can," he says, rising. "I didn't think you would take it like this. I will hunt the world over, if you say so. Joanna, you're a trump, and no mistake!"

"Come this evening," she says; "give me until then to think."

She sinks down and once more covers her face. And so Alfred leaves her with hushed breath and hushed footfall, and solemn—feeling a sensation upon him as though he were going out of church.

But in the parish sunshine, in the bustling, busy outer world, his old self returns as he sets his hat rakishly on his mop of blue-black hair.

"I'm blessed if I ever see any one so changed," he thinks, in wonder; "she's no more like that Joanna than—than I'm like an archbishop. We did our best to spoil her, and a little more might a done it, only there's some sort oon't be out and out spoiled, do what you will, and she's one. She's a stunner—she's a brick—she's fit to be an angel, and with the angels stand. But for all that, I'm uneasy and his mother will wish her at the dickens the day she hunts him up. It's nature—I would myself, in their place."

CHAPTER XII.

A DOUBTFUL VICTORY.

Meanwhile life passes pleasantly enough at Dr. Lamar's villa. Freed as he now is from the money cares which have weighed him down, and with the society of his old friend, Frank Livingston, who seems in no hurry to depart from his side, and who is constantly urging the young doctor to recreate, Geoffrey seems almost another being.

There is an elasticity in his step, a ring in his laugh, and a healthy glow on his cheek, which he has not possessed for many a long day, and his mother, who attributes it as much as anything to the presence of Frank, endeavours to persuade that rather fickle young man to make a good long stay, to which he gives no decided answer, but thinks to himself that little does he care for the twenty-four hours' journey after all, or to reveal his great secret, Geoffrey seems almost another being.

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"Simply this, Mr. Blandford. I have heard you patiently to the end—now hear me. I do not know what your game is, but it has failed, and honesty or truth on earth. Oh! I shall find them; I shall know no rest until I have found and comforted them, as much as I can comfort—until in ever so little I have returned to them what they so freely, so generously gave to me. The bread they cast upon the waters shall return to them; the waif they tried to rescue shall prove her gratitude and love. And Leo is my sister—dear, dear, dearest little Leo. Oh, my God! what a grateful heart I ought to have this day—what a happy girl I ought to be! And I am. I will find them—I will comfort them. I will find my mother—I will devote my life to her. Help me, Alf—help me in this, and thank you, thank you a hundred times for what you have told me to-day!"

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"Simply this, Mr. Blandford. I have heard you patiently to the end—now hear me. I do not know what your game is, but it has failed, and failed egregiously. I came here for the express purpose of meeting my liability to you, and that I shall make it my particular care to hold no further converse with you on this side of the grave, or the other, if I can help it."

The features of the old man contract as he listens to those bitter words, spoken with a calm, business-like air, but he makes no retort. He sees plainly that Geoff is not to be trapped, and therefore changes his tactics at once. He opens the parcel which he has held lovingly in his hand during the whole of the colloquy, and takes from it some papers, which he hands to the lawyer. The latter puts on his handsome gold-rimmed spectacles and goes through them methodically, "These are the bills, Dr. Lamar, and also our note of costs in the matter," he says. "See that they are correct, and that you have them all."

Geoff takes them and subjects them to a very close examination, as he has no very great faith, as may well be imagined, in the integrity of either the two men.

Apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, he hands over to the lawyer a number of bank-notes, which the latter counts carefully, and then, merely muttering "Quite right," proceeds to write out a formal receipt, in which is the charge for costs, which is about treble what he ought to have charged, but which Geoff has not objected to, as he does not wish to haggle over the matter, and is beginning to grow rather weary of the interview.

As he hands over the last document, the lawyer holds but his hand, which Geoffrey, not affecting to see, simply bows, takes up his hat, and is striding towards the door when he is arrested by the voice of the moneylender, which is harsh and menacing, and very unlike his usual persuasive accents.

"I have failed to-day, Dr. Lamar," he says, "but I am not conquered. We shall meet again."

"When and where you please. I fear the result as little as I care either for your favour or your hate."

As the last words leave his lips the door closes behind him; he jumps into his carriage, and is driven rapidly away, having placed the important documents he has received from the lawyer carefully in his pocket-book.

During the day his mind is on very different matters to his professional duties, though he goes through them in a mechanically correct manner. Even Mr. De Vere is carrying out his promise in good earnest to help the young doctor by recommending him to all his friends, and extolling his professional ability to the skies.

Generally Geoffrey is only too ready to respond to his cheery greeting, but on this day he seems so absent, and his answers are so short, that Mr. De Vere questions him seriously after the first good-natured banter.

"I hope you have no trouble at home, Doctor Lamar," he says, kindly, laying his hand on the young surgeon's shoulder. "If I can be of any assistance to you, command me in any way. I do not believe in being a friend by halves."

Geoffrey smiles, and assures him that there is nothing particular troubling him, and that should he ever stand in need of a friend, he will not fail to call first upon him who has already behaved so handsomely to him.

The old gentleman is not quite satisfied, but is obliged to be content with the explanation. The fact is, Geoffrey is beginning to be haunted with a fear that he will find himself in a very difficult position as regards his half pledge to Marie de Lorme.

Now that his money difficulty was over, and he felt quite at rest with regard to the security of his home, he becomes more and more convinced that he has no feeling deeper than passing admiration for Marie.

Geoffrey has probed his heart to its innermost depths, and finds in it no response to the affection he knows that she bears for him, and now that it is too late almost to withdraw with honour, he cannot reproach himself too strongly for the part he has acted towards her.

It is evident that she has been building on his words as on a rock of adamant, and he can tell from the pleased expression in her eyes, and the manner in which her whole nature seems to brighten in his presence, not only that she has learned to love him with her whole soul, but that she has taught herself that he is in love with her as well.

What shall he do? How shall he escape from the entanglement into which his own want of firmness has led him, as it were, his mother—that mother whom he loves more than life itself—and "little Leo" are under the same delusion, and it is clear from some remarks that Frank Livingston has let drop during his brief stay, that he is of the same implexion, too. In fact, Frank has given him, on the strength of his fancied discovery, one or two sage bits of advice culled from his own experience of the sex.

"She is a lovely girl, old fellow," he has said one evening after Geoff has seen her home, and they are smoking a quiet cigar in the surgery, "and awfully fond of you; but she will want to have her own way, I can tell you. She may be very quiet and demure just now, but there is a look in her eyes which augurs ill for those who should venture the little demon which every woman is said to possess more or less deep down in her heart of hearts."

In vain Geoff protests and deprecates the necessity for any such lectures. Frank waves his hand impatiently.

"All right, old fellow," he says, with a laugh; "you are a very clever doctor, no doubt, and can see maladies in everyone else with half an eye, but, as usual, are quite blind to your own. You can't deceive us quite so easily. Old birds are not caught with a little bit of chaff. She is a fine girl, and you ought to be proud of her. When is the day? I hope you'll give me an invite."

It is the thought of all this, and how he is to break through the illusion under which they are all labouring, that makes Geoff so thoughtful and reserved throughout the day on which he has achieved his doubtful victory over Mr. Blandford.

When he reaches home in the afternoon, he goes at once into his study, and, taking his bills out of his pocket-book, proceeds to burn them slowly one by one by means of a little taper. As the last one is consumed, he says, slowly—

"There closes, I hope, my connection with that old scoundrel and all his tribe. Would the other affair were as near the end. But something must be done, and done at once. Marry her I will not, but how to avoid it with honour to myself and make the blow as light as possible to her? I cannot see my way out of it, turn whichever way I will."

He little thinks how near the problem is of solution, and in a way as startling as it is unforeseen.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WOMAN SCORNED.

The evening is so calm, bright, and pleasant that it seems, Geoffrey says, a sin to stay indoors; but Frank is writing some very important letters; Mrs. Lamar has gone out on a charitable errand, and Leo has gone for a long walk across the neighbouring common by herself. So Geoffrey, being left wholly to his own devices, decides to light up a cigar and stroll out to meet his little sister. A long walk is a favourite time for thinking over matters as well as clearing away the cobwebs of the brain, which hard and unremitting labour or mental anxiety have collected, and Geoffrey feels at the present moment much in need of quiet self-communing, so he sallies forth, soon gets beyond the houses, and finds himself in a leafy lane which leads to the common before mentioned.

As he strides along, swinging his cane as he goes, he cudgels his brain in vain to find a way out of his difficulty.

At first he thinks he will take his mother into his confidence, but her sense of duty is so lofty, and her pride so intense, that he is pretty well certain that he will get neither help nor consolation in that quarter.

Then there is Leo, and he dwells long and favourably on the thought of making her his confidant. Since the time they were obliged to leave Abbott Wood in so sudden, and so unexpected, and so humiliating a manner, he has learned to love her dearly. She has been so bright, so lovable, so cheerful, so ready to do everything to smooth away care, to help her mother, and, above all, so attentive to him, and so proud of his ability, that she has thoroughly wound herself round the tendrils of his heart; and in those bitter moments when he has been doubtful how long he could struggle with fate, how long the battle would last, and if ever he should emerge victorious—it has been the thought that she, so fragile and tender a flower, would be exposed to the terrible vicissitudes of poverty, that has nerved him many a time to conquer when failure seemed to be ready to overwhelm him.

Yes, he will tell everything to Leo. Women understand these things so much better than men. She is Marie's best friend—she will smooth matters over for him—break the news gently that Marie can never be more to him than a sister—loved and honoured, but still a sister only.

While this train of thought is passing through his mind, and just as he has arrived at the satisfactory conclusion that all will come right by the aid of little Leo, he is roused from his abstraction by the sound of voices, distant, but evidently in altercation. One of them is that of a woman, and evidently in supplication. Geoff quickens his pace, and as he draws nearer the voices grow more distinct, and he fancies he recognizes the woman's. He redoubles his exertions, as some loud shrieks for help break the stillness of the evening air, and traverses several windings of the lane, which seems interminable to his excited imagination.

As he nears the scene of action, the conviction grows upon him that it is Leo's voice—Leo's, and that she is being insulted and perhaps murdered. One or two more turns of the lane and he comes upon the scene. His quick eye takes in the situation at a glance. It is Leo, sure enough, and Leo in the clutches of a man who looks half navigator, half seaman, and who has hold of one of her arms with one hand, while with the other he is endeavouring to make her leave hold of a rail of the fence which here runs along each side of the lane. In the excitement of the struggle neither has heard the approach of Geoff, who, however, loses not a moment. In less time than it takes to describe the action, he has flung away his light cane, and seizing the ruffian by the collar of the sort of carter's frock which serves him for coat and waistcoat, and by his wrist, he, by a violent effort, wrenches him away from the girl, and flings him heavily to the ground.

The suddenness of his attack has prevented resistance for the moment, and at the same time bewildered Leo, who can hardly realize her unexpected deliverance. But as she feels his arm round her waist, and hears his voice, she utters an hysterical cry, and murmurs, "Geoffrey—saved—saved!" and falls senseless into his arms. It is not a time for hesitation or delay. The tramp, dazed by the blow, is recovering, and Geoffrey turns his head to see him getting on to his foot, and evidently, from the malicious scowl on his features, not prepared to give up his intention of possessing himself of the girl's jewellery without another struggle. Geoffrey therefore places the insensible form of Leo down upon the turf by the hedge side, and prepares to meet his antagonist, who is a stalwart, muscular villain with a swarthy skin and a diabolical expression of countenance.

Geoffrey feels it is no use to call for help, as the spot is a very lonely one, and there is not likely to be even a solitary wayfarer, as the lane only leads to a deserted part of the common.

The tramp is evidently quite aware of this fact, for he seems to be in no sort of trepidation or fear of being interrupted. He has picked up a heavy stick, and in reply to Geoffrey's loudly expressed intimation that he had better be off about his business, he only grins.

"Give me what I asked the lady for, and I'll go right enough," he says. "I must live—I want money, and money I'll have, or money's worth."

He swings upon Geoffrey as he speaks, and aims a murderous blow at his head. The young doctor, however, is by no means unprepared, and stepping lightly on one side, with the rapidity of lightning, managed to deal the fellow a scientifically planted blow in the neighbourhood of the ear, which not only sets a thousand bells ringing in his head, but sends him headlong to the ground a second time. There is no need to mince matters, Geoffrey thinks, and the man is hardly on the ground before he is down by his side, and has pulled the cudgel from his nerveless grasp.

At the same time there is the sound of rapid footsteps coming along the lane in the same direction, which the tramp evidently hears, for, with an agility which one would hardly have expected from his bulky appearance, he rolls himself over, and, springing on to his legs, dashes off down the lane.

The footsteps prove to be those of a labourer on a neighbouring farm, and he promises to stand by and keep watch while Geoffrey attends to his sister, who now shows signs of rapidly returning animation. Geoffrey lifts her to her feet, and in a few soothing words tells her that all the danger is over.

She clings convulsively to his arm.

"That horrible wretch," she cries. "I believe he meant to murder me."

And in answer to Geoffrey's questions she explains that she had called upon Marie, who, she heard, had gone for a walk on the common. She herself had followed, thinking to meet her coming back. She had reached the end of the lane, and had wandered about on the commons for a while, enjoying the breeze, but not seeing Marie, had turned to come back home. She had hardly got into the lane before she was met by the man who at first in whining tones had begged alms, and afterwards began to bully her.

But there is much of the Lamar spirit in little Leo, and a tinge of John Abbott's dogged determination, so she refuses at once to comply with the man's demands. Finding there is no one about, the brute, who is half-maddened with drink, threatens to "do for her" if she does not hand out her purse at once. This she refuses to do, and gives utterance to the screams which first caused Geoffrey to hurry on.

The man had not really struck her, but had only threatened to do so with the heavy stick he had, and had laid hold of her arms in order to be able rob her of the trinkets she wore.

This explanation is given bit by bit as they slowly walk down the lane. The labourer having promised to keep a good lookout for the tramp, Geoffrey tips him half a crown, which he is by no means loth to receive, judging from the grin of satisfaction on his countenance, and gives it that peculiarly open and childlike expression, which is so eminently characteristic of the simple and happy peasant.

When her story is finished Leo remains silent for some time, and Geoffrey, thinking that probably she still feels faint after the terrible exertion she has passed through, suggests that they shall stay for a few minutes by a rustic stile, which divides the lane nearly in half.

He assists her to sit down on the stile itself, and stands silently by her side, revolving the one absorbing theme over and over in his mind, and thinking how he shall begin to break the news to Leo when the time comes, or how to turn the conversation on another subject by asking abruptly, in her old lively tones—

"And what was Master Frank doing that he could not exert himself to come with you? The pair of you might have dragged the villain down to the police station."

"Frank was writing love-letters, I suppose, to the Princess Olga's eyebrow, as the bard has it, sister mine. In matters of love, you know, girls are very dragons of exaction."

"Are they? I wish I was a man, pray? I don't believe Frank cares for Olga so much as he used to do, or she doesn't care for him. I never see any letters in her handwriting, and he must have told her where he is—and, besides, she might have written to mamma or me—I cannot make it out at all. I can't see what any girl wants better than Frank Livingston. He is splendid!" she adds, enthusiastically; "look in what style he brought me home. Any girl could love him, I am sure—but there, it's all cut and dried long ago, as I suppose he'll have to be led like a lamb to the sacrifice."

"And if Olga is anything like such a pretty girl as she used to be, I should say he would take it like a lamb," laughs Geoff, though he wishes that Frank were free, as there is no one who would better wish for a husband for his little Leo, and it is by no means difficult to see that Leo herself would not be averse to setting her cap at him if he were not already captured.

Indeed, they are very good friends now, rather too good friends, Mrs. Abbott thinks, considering Frank is engaged, as she sees them bending over some new book of prints with their heads extremely close together, or listens to their fresh voices as they blend sweetly in the latest duet from the latest opera-bouffe.

Leo does not at all agree with Geoff's last remark.

"She may be pretty, but she's too much of a wax doll for my taste, and I think she is too stuck up for Frank. Poor fellow, I pity him. And I, for myself, think it would not suit you either—besides, you are gone, too. There'll be Marie looking upon you as her own property directly, and I shall be left like the withered leaf on the tree—I believe I'm cut out to die an old maid—but I won't if I can help it, I'm positively bald in it—there!"

Geoff lets her rattle on without interruption. Here is his opportunity, he thinks. At all events there is no harm in sounding her a little on the subject.

"Do you think Marie very hasty, sister mine," he says, "like most of your sex, at jumping to a conclusion, especially if it has no foundation in fact. What has led you to think Marie and I are engaged?"

"Why, of course you are. Only you're too much of a stylboots to own it. Everyone knows it, so it's no use trying to hide it any longer. Mamma was only speaking about it yesterday, and as for Frank—

"Like all the rest of you, knows everybody's business better than his own. I had to take him to task about it last night. I wish to goodness people would think for themselves, and allow other people to do the same."

"Well, but Geoff, dear, you are engaged to her, or, if not, you are going to be. She loves you dearly, and thinks you are immensely clever, and you know you are fond of her. Come, now, tell me, isn't it all arranged?"

"No, it isn't; and, as far as I am concerned, not at all likely to be."

Leo opens her blue eyes to their widest extent in utter amazement. "If there is one faith more than another that she has clung to with the tenacity of the ivy to the oak for the last fortnight it is that her beloved brother is going to marry Marie. She is going to pour forth a torrent of questions, but she stops short as she sees the serious expression on Geoffrey's face, and waits for him to go on.

"I esteem Miss De Lorme very much," he continues, in a nervous, quick kind of way, as if he were half ashamed of the words; "but it is a very different thing to like a girl as a friend, or even as a sister, and to love her enough to ask her to be your wife."

"But, Geoff, dear, I cannot make you out at all. You certainly have always acted as if you were very fond of her, and paid her no end of attention. If you do not care for her, why have you gone on and led her to believe just the reverse?"

"Because he has not the courage to behave like a man."

The voice quivers with suppressed emotion but they recognize it for that of Marie herself, as she steps from behind a little clump of bushes that juts out from the side of the stile. An exclamation bursts from Geoffrey's lips as he starts back, while Leo remains perfectly still from sheer fright.

"Yes," continues the girl, in tones in which bitterness and passion are mingled, "I was told you both were in the lane here, and came up to meet you. I heard my own name, and stopped aside a moment to surprise you, little dreaming what an avowal of treachery would meet my ears."

"Miss De Lorme!"

"Oh, no doubt, it has been a pleasant and congenial task for you to load me on with your smooth phrases and hypocritical attentions until it has suited you to throw me off like an old glove. And you would have gone on, and I should have believed you, had I not, by the merest chance, overheard your cool confession. I am only too happy that the warning has come now. You may, perhaps, find another simple fool to be deceived by your treacherous tongue, but if you knew how utterly I despise you—the contempt I feel for your mean-spirited cowardice, you would not be quite so proud of yourself."

Geoffrey springs forward, and attempts to detain her, but she flings his hand from her with a gesture of scorn.

"Miss De Lorme—Marie—hear me! The most vile malefactor is never condemned unheard."

"I have already heard too much! From this hour we meet as strangers."

She turns on her heel, and hurries swiftly down the lane. Leo has leaped down from the stile and crossed over to where Geoffrey stands, pale as marble. She throws her arms around his neck.

"Poor Maria," she says, tearfully. "You did not mean it, Geoff, but you have broken her heart."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

India's Deadly Snakes.

Where there are 1,000 Cobras to the Square Mile—A Remedy worse than the Bite.

(From the Times of India.)

The statistics show that during the last year the amount of rewards paid for the destruction of wild beasts and venomous snakes in British India was 99,189 rupees. As far as regards the destruction of wild beasts, the money was, no doubt, well spent, though the rewards are sometimes too easily earned. We have, for instance, heard of a young wolf, which had been brought up domestically until it was as tame as a lady's lap dog, falling a victim to a greedy servant in the cook room for the take of the head money. But, after all, wolves are not very pleasant pets, and there can be little doubt that the offer of rewards for the destruction of really dangerous animals is in the main useful. Tempted by this, the village shikaree, though he may have no baby of his own, will sit up for the wolf that prowls about the precincts of the village at night thirsting for infant's blood.

In reality, only three species of snakes dangerous to human life are to be met with in the Bombay Presidency, viz., the cobra, the chain viper, and a small black snake, banded with white, which is known to naturalists as *Bungarus arenatus*. There is another prettily-marked little viper, which is common enough, but, as it is barely a foot in length, its bite is very rarely fatal. To these popular Anglo-Indian tradition adds several most deadly species, the carpet snake, the whip snake, the eye snake, &c. The last owes its name, according to Dr. Nicholson, to an idea prevalent among otherwise sane Englishmen that it is in the habit of hanging by the tail from a branch of a tree for the purpose of hitting passers by in the eye. Of the three species mentioned above the *Bungarus* is very inoffensive, and not common, while the chain viper is extremely lazy, and generally gives warning of its presence by hissing furiously when any one approaches, so that accidents from these two species are probably rare.

The cobra, on the other hand, is one of the commonest snakes in India, as it is one of the most fatal in the world. Dr. Nicholson, who was appointed in 1873 to superintend the distribution of the rewards in Bangalore, estimates the cobra population of that region at one thousand per square mile. This calculation, if correct, will perhaps serve equally for any station in the Deccan, as, for instance, Poona, where the cobra finds both board and lodging on easy terms in the holes of the field rats, and probably does man more service in a year than all the mischief it does him in a century. Throughout Bombay itself the cobra swarms, especially on places like Malabar Hill, Cumballa Hill and Parel. That the cobra is to rarely seen is only another proof of its