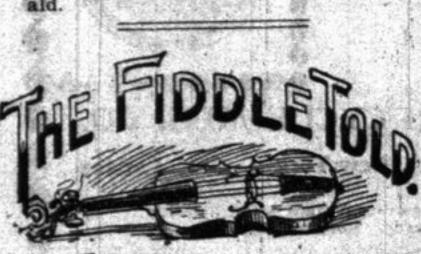
Hath seldom met friendly gale; The haven where our longings bide Is still upon the farther side. But, thank the Lord! time's wisdom

The ship whereon or

hopes set sail

turned Its glow upon us when we learned That bare rooms bloom beneath the touc Of love that makes the little much.

Christmas again; our babes at play Bring back the vanished years this day Yea, glad am I that fate's decrees Denied us gold to give us these, And you, whose patient love hath lent A tender grace to banishment-The realm we missed hath naught so dea To me as your fair presence here. So do I bless the seasons urned, Wherein two hearts the lesson learned That bare rooms bloom beneath the touch Of love that makes the little much. -Frank Putnam, in Chicago Times-Her-



day in the early part of December. The governor sat alone in his private office. His lerk had just left The Christmas

season was a busy and responsible one with him, for he chose that time to investigate thoroughly the criminal records of the state and pardon such prisoners as good conduct or extenuating circumstances placed within the pale of executive clemency.

If questioned as to his selection of the holiday season for the exercise of the "benign prerogative" he was wont to answer: "Oh, I may be helping to turn the tide in the soul of some Paul, and I have a fancy to do it when peace and good will are most likely to be at the flood; that is all."

Whether this were all, and it were not n response to some deeper sentiment those who knew him best alone could

To-night, as he looked at the piles of mail matter on his desk yet to be disposed of, he pushed back his chair with a smothered groan and started to the door, moved by a wild impulse to get outside and turn the key on it all.

An obstruction in his path caused him to stumble, and he saw a curious-looking bundle in brown paper, clumsily tied with a coarse twine string, lying on the floor at his feet.

He remembered the clerk's having mentioned a package from the state prison-this must be it-and pushed it impatiently to one side; but as he did so something in the coffin-shaped outlines made him stoop and tear away a part of the cover.

He found, to his amazement, a violin. and appended to it a soiled pencil-written note, evidently an appeal of some kind.

Curiosity conquered fatigue. He had handled many and various petitions, but never one in shape like this.

Detaching the note from its fastenings, he crossed the room to the window, and by the waning light of the winter's day deciphered the following illiterate text:

"To the Guvner: They tel me thet yes Hart gits tender to Prisners at chrismus time and you listens to what they has to that issued from the throat of the violin say. Ive ben Hear 20 years fer killin a man and Ive ben Sorry evry day sence I done it. I was a hot headed Boy uv 22 and the man called pap a Liar and sed things agin mam. I couldnt noways stand thet and I nocked him down. he was a pale sickly complected tender foot and he never got up agin. I never ment to kill him but my fist was hevy and sum mad thing inside uv me sicked me on. they never give me no sort uv a Trial but jes put me in Hear fer Life. his folks was rich and mine was pore and couldn't pay no lawyer. pap is gone blind and mam is old and they aint got nobody to look after em but Joseel. Joseel is the gal thet was goin to marry me. she left her home when they sent me Hear and went to look after the old Folks sames they was hern. ef I could git back to Joseel and the old folks and the mountins Ide never lif my han agin no man agen ceptin twas to help him so help me God.

"They tel me as how you kin make a Fiddle talk til the childern puts down their Playthings and follers yer. Guvner I sends you mine along uv this what I made when I was a Boy back in the mountins, the long ag'in his heart." sames I koted my gal with and played fer mam and pap round the fire sunday evnins. shes aged along with me but she kep her voice sweet and stiddy yit.

"Take her Guvner and set down by your- coldest ear must open to greet it. self in the still uv the evnin and let her talk to you fer me. I aint afeerd shell fergit nuthin, the old Home on the side uv tears of wives, the sobs of little chilthe mountin and mam and pap and Joseel dren-all of unlanguaged pain, all of a settin than and waitin these 20 years fer unlanguaged love the Boy they wouldnt let go their holt uv nor quit luvin no matter what he did. No shell not fergit nuthin. she's too much like them Wimmen shell be tellin you about. seems like she knows things as well as I do. praps cause shes ben lyin agin my Hart so long, and if she cant tell you nuthin Guyner let her talk to yer Wife. Its about Wimmen shell tel you mostly. Wimmen hands and his head sinks upon his and Sorrer. And Wimmen is quickern men to understan them things.

"That's all: its tuk me 3 weeks to rite this letter. Goodby. God go with the old Fiddle and help her tel it strate. ABNER HILL.

When the governor turned away from the window there was a look on his face that few had ever seen there except oner, and jail wardens certified to 20

the floor, tore away its wrappings and ner Hill to be brought to his private looked at it long and curiously. It was office. roughly made of native pine and maple and varnished with the homemade varnish of the mountains, but the strings gave back the true viol tone, clear and

he placed the instrument in position drew the bow, and there "in the still of the evening let her talk to him."

He was a mountain boy himself, and as the first soft notes fell on the air, plaintive and piercing like the cry of sin and its after-writing on the brai the whippoorwill in early spring, he felt the youth stir in him and heard again the far call of the hills.

He saw the log cabin high up against the side of the mountain, where the laurel and the sumac grew and the ash made bright the scene with its dark fruit; where the breeze came laden with the odor of pine from the forest, and the birds touched the highest notes in their shrill treble.

He saw the boy with his sturdy limbs, his bold blue eyes and his waving hair, barefoot and scantily clad, searching he whispered, hoarsely: for the earliest berries in summer and the first nuts in the fall-free, joyous, me? What did my old fiddle tell you?" innocent, happy.

thoughts" of a lad across the distant ing both hands on the shoulders of the crest of the "Devil's Backbone" and other, his eyes reading with a father's wove with him mystic dramas amid the | tenderness the piteous, expectant face, shades of the haunted ravine.

mountain lass and listened while he | -that you can go back to the mounpoured the crude poetry of his awak- tains. And, my man, may God go with ened soul into the sensitive instrument | you!"

straight."

When witnesses were found who corroborated the statements of the prisyears of exemplary behavior inside the He lifted the violin carefully from prison walls, the governor sent for Ab-

> The day he expected him he placed the violin in a conspicuous position on

There was ushered into his presence a tail, angular man with the work Bringing his chair closer to the grate; face and stooping shoulders of threescore years; hair scanty, muscles flabby, eyes dull; nothing to bespeak youth but the faint red that crept into his sunken cheek when the servant announced his name. A single stroke of had done the work of twice 20 years,

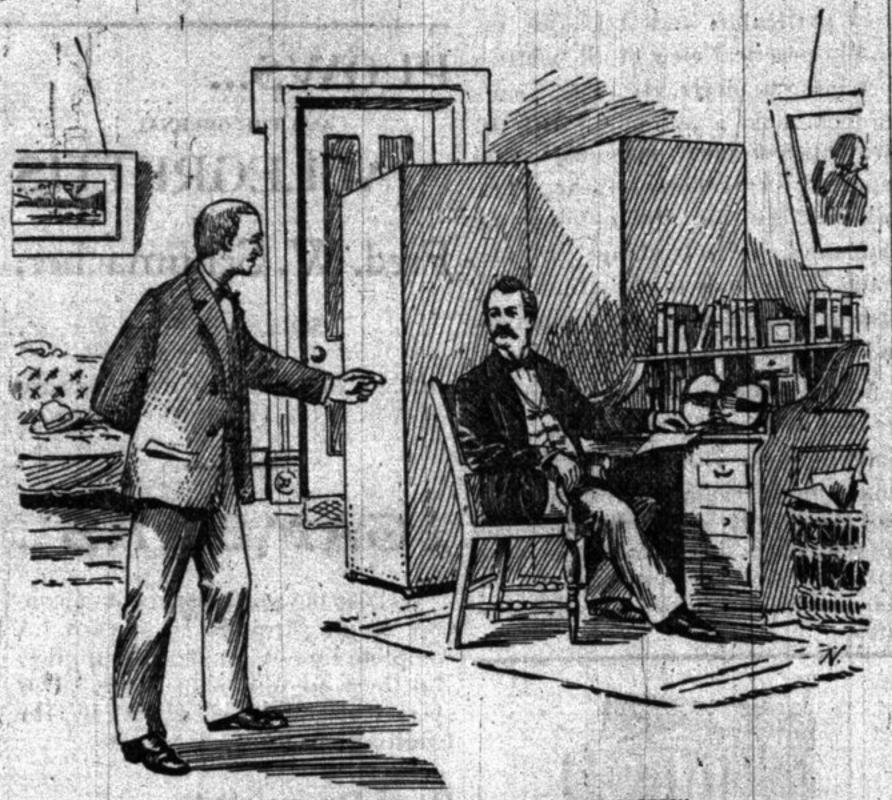
He stood inside the door with downeast eyes and nervous, fluttering hands. The governor called his name, and something in the kindly accents gave

him courage to look up. Something else in the homely, humorous face that no man ever looked into without loving gave him courage to speak, and his eye caught sight of the violin.

Reaching a trembling hand out to his dumb friend as though for confidence,

"Guvner, what did she tell you fer The governor waited for a moment, He followed him in the "long, long perhaps to steady his voice; then, lay-

He sat with him at the feet of the "Abner, she says-the old fiddle says



"WHAT DID MY OLD FIDDLE TELL YOU?"

which alone could interpret the mys- The convict stood for a moment like tery within him.

blazing pine knots roar up the cabin cry which his listener never forgot, he chimney, while the old folks in the cor- threw his arms around his liberator and ner looked at each other across the boy with that surreptitious tenderness of the eyes which takes place in those admit that something tightened in his grown gray, and sure of each other, of throat and broke out at his eyes, too .the more open demonstration.

He saw the whole 22 years of clean, | zine, humble living; the unaspiring, pastoral life of the southern mountaineer, companioned of nature; simple, fearless, brave; scornful of the false, reverent of the true; tender to weakness, fierce to wrong; and, alas! uncontrolled as the elements around him; crushing, in some ,mad output of strength, the obstacle in his way, to stand afterwards in awful recoil before the unknown potentialities of his own organism.

Full and swelling were the strains as it told this idyl of the hills; passionate harmonies pulsating like the overcharged heart; long, tender, yearning notes; sweet, caressing adantes; the very spirit of love in the guise of sound.

But now the music changes. Youth's glad symphony is lost in the wild major chords of passion. Note dashes against note like hail against a pane. All the How touching the gift of the wife to her tumult of the mountains, the forest, the roaring stream when storms rive the heavens, is sounded in that mad chromatic ascending to its climax.

All of nature's after-pennance breathes in the sighing minor of the descending scale. Surely that was a human sob that rang through the room; a fellow mortal's burst of sympathy. No, it was just the old fiddle, who "knew things 'cause she'd been lyin' so

And now from out her quivering |-Chicago Standard. strings she sends forth a melody so divinely pure, so immeasurably sweet, the

In it are the prayers of mothers, the

It is the echo of that song which beats forever against the throne of God, in tender, tireless cadence-the united voices of many women pleading for the er. souls of men.

The violin slips from the governor's

one struck dumb, a womanish pallor He stood beside him and watched the overspreading his cheek; then, with a sobbed like a heartbroken child.

And the governor was not ashamed to Nora C. Franklin, in Lippincott's Maga-

A Christmas Trath.

If you the merriest Christmas would enjoy · If you the deepest happiness would feel, A genuine jollity without alloy, A happiness continuous and real,

Though paradoxical, I will agree, 'Tis yet a truth that no one can gainsay The greater will your own enjoyment be The more the happiness you give away. -Boston Courier.

Out of Season. She does not interest us now, The woman with a past; We care not why, nor when nor how She got herself thus classed. But in the merry Christmas days, When all the world is pleasant, We're looking for, with anxious gaze, The woman with a present.

-Chicago Record.

The Extent of It. How touching the practice of giving, The pledge of peace, good will! He'll know when he gets the bill.
-Detroit Journal.

The Bachelor's Socks. I will not hang my stocking up-I really can't, consarn 'em! They wouldn't hold a present, and It takes too long to darn 'em!

-Cleveland Plain Dealer.

That Beautiful Star. Bethlehem's star lingers yet over childhood, which it dignifies; womanhood, which it ennobles, and manhood, which it gladdens.

A Barbarian's Observation. Oh, Santa Claus, there's some mistake About your wondrous skill; Though fine the present that you make You don't receipt the bill. -Washington Star.

A Way He Had. "John, dear, you are growing handsomer every day." "It's a way I have, dear, just before Christmas."-Cleveland Plain Deal-

A Good Time to Begin. Ef yew still don't love yewer enermy now is the generous, heart-glad time uv yewr life killed. killed.

The old fiddle has "told her story THE PARTITION OF CHINA

Ancient Empire of the East Is Thought to Be Near Its Fall.

ussia Follows Example of German -England and France Watch the Situation-May Involve the United States.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 20,-It is an nounced that a Russian squadron under Rear Admiral Recunow has entered Port Arthur, on the Chinese coast, with the entire acquiescence of the Chinese government. The squadron intends to remain at Port Arthur throughout the winter. This is due solely to the need of a temporary winter station and involves no question of forcible occupation or hostile demonstration, or any intention against China, Germany Japan or any other power.

China Approves. London, Dec. 20 .- The corresponder of the Times at Peking says: China approves of the Russian fleet wintering at Port Arthur, being persuaded that this action is taken in the interest of China and necessitated by the Germa occupation of Kiao-Chou.

Reply to Germany's Action. Telegrams from all the continental capitals show that Russia's step at Port Arthur is regarded as tantamount to a permanent occupation and a reply to Germany's action. A well-informed was no agreement between Russia and would soon follow the example of Ger-Germany and that the latter simply many and Russia, now that the parti-

nine cruisers and 18 smaller men-of ing that they were not warranted by

England to Take a Hand.

London, Deg. 21.-An unconfirmed British eastern squadron will be stationed at Wei-Hai-Wei this winter. If true, this indicates that Great Britain is working in harmony with Japan. The latter power still occupies Wei-Hai-Well, pending payment of the Chinese war indemnity.

disturbed over the situation. "What men killed and that, in addition, the do we get?" is the burden of their com- Spanish troops have captured 17 prisonnecessity for immediate action.

The Pall Mall Gazette echoes the Standard's inquiry as to America's attitude, and says:

"Of course the partition of the coast, which is bound to come, will not be confined to Russia and Germany. Every naval state in the world is actively concerned in the disturbance of the equilibrium in the far east, Great Britain, France and Japan especially. But the United States cannot be taken as a quantity to be ignored. The tame acquiescence with which the seizures are made is not worthy our report and is fatal to our future. We may remark that we shall not be without sympathizers, as the Japanese will most joyfully back any scheme to redress the bitter humiliation they have suffered at the hands of

France Will Follow Suit. Advices received here from Paris

forthwith follow suit. the cooperation of Germany with Russia in eastern Asia.

The officers of the Chinese embassy here do not conceal the belief that the powers intend to seize Chinese ports. They discredit the report that Great Britain has been requested to assume a protectorate over the Yan Tse valley and the West river.

Cause of Russia's Grab. Ting Fang, the diplomatic representative of China in this country, expressed the belief that the reported occupancy would prove to be but a temporary convenience to the czar's fleet granted by the Peking government.

The minister also stated that it was his opinion that the Germans would eventually withdraw from Kiao-Chou. So far as known in Washington, there is no intention on the part of the Chinese government to seek the exercise of the good offices of this government with a view to securing the withdrawal of Germany. Minister Wu is extremely anxious that American interests shall be extended in China.

Revenue Collections.

Washington, Dec. 21 .- The monthly statement of the collections of internal revenue shows that for the month of November last receipts amounted to \$13,-959,296, an increase as compared with November last year of \$1,257,927. For the last five months, however, there is shown to have been a decrease of \$5,912.

Alphonse Daudet Dead. Paris, Dec. 17,-M. Alphonse Daudet expired at eight o'clock Thursday he died almost immediately.

Sunday Sport in Mexico.

City of Mexico, Dec. 20,-The bull fight Sunday afternoon was largely at tended. Ten horses and six bulls were GREAT BRITAIN OBJECTS

Will Oppose the Division of China Without First Being Consulted. London, Dec. 22 .- According to a speeial dispatch from Shanghai the British squadron will make a demonstration at Che-Foo, on the north coast of the Shan-Tung promontory, as a warning, it is supposed, that Great Britain intends to oppose the division of China without consulting her. It is reported

there that Russia has offered China a

loan to pay off the indemnity of the

war with Japan, and it is believed, says

the dispatch, that Japan and England

are acting in concert to preserve China

from disintegration, favoring the idea

of a protectorate over central China, with a capitol at Nanking. A German-Chinese commission has been arranged, according to a dispatch from Shanghai to the Daily Mail, to settle the boundaries of the occupied district at Kiao-Chou, and it is evident, therefore, that the occupation will be permanent. The same dispatch says it is rumored in Shanghai that the British intend to occupy Talien-Wan, south of Port Arthur in order to guard the Gulf of Po-Chi-Li. The Daily Mail's correspondent at Tokio says there is no excitement there over the news from Port Arthur. The press is calm and the public is indifferent. It is rumored also,

the dispatch alleges, that a large Rus-

sian military force is coming overland

from Siberia. Berlin, Dec. 22.-The Cologne Gazette embarrassed the government Tuesday St. Petersburg correspondent says there by declaring that the other powers warned Russia when the occupation of tion of China had actually commenced. Kiao-Chou was already decided upon. Other papers have expressed opinions The Paris papers, without pretending in a similar vein. It has been hinted to be deceived by Russia's innocent ex- that Prince Henry's destination is anplanations, are pleased with the actions other point than Kiao-Chou, and that of the ally of France. The burden of he will receive the supreme command Viennese comment is: What will Eng- in the China seas. The Nord Deutsche land do? The British fleet now in Chi- Allegemine Zeitung hastened to issue nese waters consists of one ironelad, a denial of these assumptions, declar-

London, Dec. 22.-A special dispatch from Brest says the French cruiser report is current here that part of the Jean Bart has been ordered to proceed immediately to China.

the facts.

THE CUBAN WAR.

Insurgents Lose Heavily in Recent Engagements.

Havana, Dec. 22 .- It is announced from the palace that during the past The evening newspapers are much ten days the insurgents have lost 303 plaint, and they all insist upon the ers and 69 armed insurgents have surrendered. The troops, it is further announced have captured 96 stands of firearms during this time. Among the killed, the statement continues, are three insurgent leaders and three officers of the insurgent forces. The Spanish troops, during the same period, according to the official statistics, lost three officers and 33 soldiers killed and had 13 officers and 213 soldiers wound-

New York, Dec. 22 .- It has developed that the most desperate battle of the Cuban rebellion was fought December 14 last. The action took place, at Yacta ford, on the Canto river. The Oubans' loss were 100 killed and 300 wounded, while the Spanish fatalities reached fully 200, a like number having show that France is awaiting Great been wounded. The details of the bat-Britain's action. If Great Britain fol- the have been received through the lows the lead of Russia and Germany mails by Capt. Alfredo Rodriguez, a and occupies a seaport France will Cuban insurgent officer, who is invalided in this city. It tells of a crush-The Cologne Gazette regards the oc- ing defeat inflicted upon the Spanish cupation as merely a continuance of Gen. Pando. Pando has reported to Gen. Blanco that 100,000 men are needed to break the backbone of the insurgent opposition in the east.

FORGOT HIS ORDERS.

Freight Engineer Causes a Serious Wreck in Michigan.

Marshall, Mich., Dec. 22.-An extra freight train of ten empty coal cars and a caboose collided with a west-Washington, Dec. 21 .- Minister Wu bound passenger train on the Detroit. Toledo & Milwaukee railway Monday near Wilderville. Both locomotives were literally ruined by the impact. of Port Arthur by a Russian squadron | The freight cars were piled high in a mass of ruins. The baggage car was badly wrecked and Albert Arner, baggageman, was seriously injured. His head is cut, arm sprained and hips bruised. Line Repairer McNiff, of Tecumseh, had his back badly injured. The force of the collision drove L. B. Williams, a passenger brakeman, head foremost through a door panel. His scalp is badly torn and back injured. Webb Lott, engineer of the passenger train, had a leg broken and his fireman sprained his ankle in jumping from their engine. Engineer Ben Coonfer, of the freight locomotive, admits that he forgot his orders. He and his fireman jumped and escaped injury.

WILL NOT BE RECONSIDERED. President Likely to Press Appointment of Charles Page Bryan.

Washington, Dec. 22.-Senators who have seen President McKinley regarding the appointment of Charles Page Bryan as minister of China find that the president has no present intention of reconsidering the appointment. Some night. He was dining with his family suggestions have been made that Mr. when he was seized with a sudden syn- Bryan be sent to some other mission cope. Physicians were summoned, but and a more trained diplomat be sent to China, but they have not met with indorsement at the white house. The president made it clear that he preferred Mr. Bryan for the place and was not contemplating any change in the selections he had made for foreign ministers.

Ex-Secretary Herbe Leila Commit

fortunate Young W from a Third-Sto and Is K

Washington, Dec. Herbert, daughter of the Navy Herbert, at her home in this cit a fall from the third-s on New Hampshire av fashionable part of Dupont Circle. The s tragic features surro great shock to the friends she had made her life in Washington of a popular represent from the south and I cabinet circle of ladie sided over her father ing the four years he the navy under the l ninistration.

Her death was trac an accident while hor Virginia last Septembe been enthusiastically f while paying a visit t home on a liorse the broken. It stumbled thrown violently to taining severe injuri but recovery was exec it was not until last was able to go eut o that day she went dr time since the accide Johnston, the attend Talesday afternoon

thorized statement w

tleman familiar with

"Miss Herbert, at the he final result of inju ng thrown from her l At the same a this type of disease. ferbert made an atte window, but was two nurses alteri times rational, quiet o treatment. Early 1 rse on duty noticed on the bed covering. meant, but the invalid side Miss Herbert le of her head on th his injury alone wa ansed death from con

her Miss Herbert was died about an bour al The coroner return cide during tempora facts in the case wel the inquest was uni

indicated that the skul

severing of the artery

suited fatally. When the

Ex-Secretary Herb ington at ten o'clos having been on his to spend the Christm when the news of h met him on the train

GOOD FOR TH The Armour-Leiter Helped the Chicago, Dec. 22,-

tween Phil Armour son of L. Z. Leiter, o one of the biggest character that has tory of the Chicag Shrewd operators e has contracted for and that as only 6,00 livered and only 2, more are in sight, pyrotechnic display that the big deal, w or natural means, ceptional prosperit In order to meet th agents of Armour country, cash in hi armers millions of thus bought has ec age price of 90 cents KANSAS CITY

Magnificent Audit Reduced to a

Kansas City, Mo. Auditorlum, the lar house west of Chica; um hotel, one of th family bostelries in Holmes and Ninth by fire that started shortly after one o ing. The 106 guest although many wer the building in their loss on the entire owned by Alex Fra man, will aggregat gregate insurance 900. Owing to a h great deal of the in lowed to lapse.