IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD, Author of East Lynne, The Channings, Reland Yorke, etc., etc.

Yorke, etc., etc.,

"Now is our time," said Tom to Lionel as soon as the man had left the room. "We may not have such an opportunity usain."

It was close upon midnight when Pierre Janvard, alighting from a fly at the door of his hotel, found his two lodgers standing on the steps saw king a cigar before turning in for the night In this there was nothing unusual—nothing to excite suspicion.

xcite suspicion.

"Hallo! Janyard, is that you?" cried Tom, "Hallo! Janvard, is that you?" cried Tom, assuming the tone and manner of one who has taken a little too much wins. "I was just wondering what had become of you. This is my bithday; so you must come upstairs with us, and drink my health in some of your own wins."

me."
"Another time, sir, I shall be most happy; but to-night—"
"But me no buts," cried Tom Till have
no excuses—none. Come along Dering, and
we'll crack another bottle of Janvar's Ma
diere, We'll poison mine host with his own

diera. We'll poison mine host with his own tipple."

He seized Janvard by the arm and dragged him upstairs, trolling out the last popular air as he did so. Lionel followed leisurely.

"You're a good sort, Janvard—very good sort," said Tom.

"You're a good sort, Janvard—very good sort," said Tom.

"Monsieur is very kind," said Janvard, with a smile and a shrug; and then in obedience to a waive from Tom's hand. He sat down at the table. Tum now began to fumble with a bottle and a corkscrew.

"Allow me, monsieur," said Janvard politely, as he relieved Tom of the articles in question and proceedes to open the bottle with the case of long practice.

long practice.

"That's a sweet thing in rings you've got on your finger," said Tom admiringly.

"Yes, it is rather a fine stone," said Janvard

"Yes, it is rather a fine stone, same valued drily.

"May I be allowed to examine it?" said Tom as he poured out the wine with a hand that was slightly unsteady.

"I should be most happy to oblige monsieur," said Janvard nastily, "but the ring fits me so tightly that I am afraid I should have some difficulty in getting it off my fluger."

"Hang it all, man, the least you can do is to trv." said Tom.

"Hang it all, man, the least you can do is to try," said Tom.

The Frenchman flushed slightly, drew off the ring with some listle difficulty, and passed it across the table to Tom. Tom's lingers clutched it like a vice. Janvard saw the movement and half rose as if to reclaim the ring; but it was too late, and he sat down without speaking.

Tom pushed the ring carelessly over one of his fingers and turned it towards the light. "A very pretty gem indeed!" he said. "And worth something considerable in soveroigns, I should say."

something considerable in sovereigns, I should say."

Will you allow me to examine it for a moment?" asked Lionel gravely, as he held out his hand. For the second time I harvard half rosfrom his seat, and for the second time he sat down without a word. Tom handed the ring across to Lionel.

"A magnificent stone indeed," said the latter, "but somewhat old-fashioned in the setting. But that only makes it the more volumble in my eyes. A family heirloom, without doubt And see! inside the hoop are three initials; somewhat difficult to deciper, but if read them aright thay are M K L."

"Yes, yes, monsieur," said Janvard uneasily. "As you say, M K L. The initials of the friend who gave me the ring." He head out his hand as if expecting that the ringshould at once be given back to him, but Lionel took no notice of the action."

back to him, but Lionel took no notice or the action.

"Three very curious initials, indeed," said Lionel, musiciply. "One could not readily fit them to many names. M K L. They put me in mind of a curious coincidence—of a very romarkable coincidence indeed. I once had a friend who had a ruby ring very similar t this one, and inside the hoop of my friend's ring were three initials. The three initials in question were M K L. Precisely the same as the letters engraved on y ur ring, Monsieur Janvard. Curious, is it not?"

Mille diables! I a n*betrayed!" cried Janvard

"Mille diables! I a n'hetrayed!" oried Janvard, as he started from his seat and made a snatch at the ring. The ring had disappeared, but Janvard had it not,

He turned with a snarl like that of a wild animal brought to buy, and looked towards the door. But between him and the door now stood Ton Bristow, no longer with any signs of inebriety about him, but as cold, quiet, and collected asever he had looked in his life. Tom's right hand was hidden in the bosom of his vest, and Janvard's car-were smi ten by the ominous chek of of a revolver. His eyes wandered ack to the stern face of Luonel. There was no hope for him there. The palor of his face deepened His wonderful nerve forome was beginning to desert him. He was trembling visibly.

"Sit down, sir," said Lionel, sternly, "and refresh yourself with another glass of wine. I have something of much importance to say to you."

The Frenchman hostated for a moment. Then he shrugged his shoulders and sat down. His sang-froid was coming back to him. He drank two glasses of wine rupidly one after another.

"I am ready, monsieur," he said quietly, as he wiped his shin lips and made a glasstly effort to smile "At your service."

"What I want from you, and what you must

"I am ready, nonsieur," he said quietly, as he wiped his thin lips and made a ghastly effort to smile "At your service."

"What I want from you, and what you must give me, said Lionel, is a full and particulur account of how this ring came into your possession. It belonged to Percy Osmond and it was on his finger the night he was murdered."

"At ciel how do you kn w that?"

"It is enough that what I say is true, and that you cannot g n say it. But this ring was not on the finger of the murdered man when he was found noxt morning. Tell me how it came into your po session."

For a moment or two Janvard did not speak Then he said, sulkily: "Who are you that come here under false pretences and question me and threaten ne in this way?"

"I am not here to answer your questions. You are here to answer mine."

"What if i refuse to answer them?,
"In that case the four walls of a , rison will hold you in less than half an hour. In your possession I find a ring which was on the finger of Mr. Osmond the night he was murdered. Less than that has brought many a better man than you to the gallows; be careful that it does not land you there."

"I you know anything of the affair at all, you

If you know anything of the affair at all, you

"If you know anything of the attair at all, you must know that the nunderor of Mr Osmond was tried and found guilty long ago."
"Whut proof have you—what proof was there adduced at the trial, that Lhonel Dering was the murd-rer of Percyl Osmond? (Did your eyes or those of anyone else, see him do the bloody deed? Wretch! You knew from the first that he was in

Wretch: You knew from the first blittle whish in nocent! If you yourself are not the murderer, you, know the man who is."

Again Janward was silent for a little while. His eyes were bent on the floor. He was considering deeply within himself. At length he spoke, but it was in the same sullen tone that he had used ore. What guarantee have I that when I have told

you anything that I may know, the informa-tion will n t be used against me to my own

"You have no guarantee whatever. I could not give you any such promise. For aught I know to the scontrary, you, and you a one, may be the murderer of Percy Osmond."

Janvard shuddered slightly. "I am not the murdorer of Percy Osmond," he said quietly.

Janvard shudder-d slightly. "I am not the murdorer of Percy Osmond," he said quietly. "Who, then, was the murdorer?" "My late master—Mr Kester St George." There was a pause which no one seemed inclined to break. Although Janvard's words were but a confirmation of the suspicions which Lionel and Tom had all along extertained, they seemed to fall on their ears with all the force of a startling re velation. Of the three men there, Janvard was the one who seemed the least cencerned.

Lionel was the first to speak. "This is a serious charge to make against a gentleman like Mr

Lionel was the ...

Steeper to make against a general Steeper, he said.

Thay made no charge against Mr St George, "I have made no charge against Mr St George, "I have made no charge against Mr St George, "I have made no charge against Mr St George,"

The man against Mr St George, "I have made no charge against Mr St George,"

The man against Mr St George, "I have made no charge against Mr St George,"

The man against a general statement of the said of the s

said Janvard. "It is you who have kneed to confession from me."

"You are doubtless prepared to substantiate your statement—to prove your words?"

"I do not want to prove any.hing. I want to hold my tongue, but you will not let

all I want from you is the simple truth, and thatyou must tell me."
"But monsieur——" began Janvard appeal-

"But, mousieur—" began Janvard appeal-ingly, and then he stopped.
"You a e afraid, and justly se. You are in my power, and I can use that power in any way that I may deem best. At the the same time, power, and I can use that power in any way that I may deem best. At the the same time, understand me. I am no constable —no officer of the law—I am simply the broth r of Lionel Dering, and knowing, as I do, that he was accused and found guilty of a crime of which he was as innocent as I am, I nave vowed that I will not rest night or day til. I have discovered the murderer and brought him to justice. Such being the case, I tell y u plainly that the best thing you can do is to make a full and frank confession of all that you know respecting this terrible business, leaving it for me afterwards to decide as to the use which I may find it requisite to make of your confession. Are you prepared to do what I ask of you?"

Janvard's shoulders rose and fell again. "I cannot help myself," he said. "I have no choice but to comply with the wishes of monsieur."

"Sensibly spoken. Try another glass of wine

sieur."

"Sensibly spoken. Try another glass of wine. It may help to refersh your memory."

"Alas! monsiour, my memory needs no refreshing. The incidents of that night are far too terrible to be forgotten." With a hand that still shook slightly he poured himself out another glass of wine and drank it off at a draught. Then he companyed: "On the night of the quarrel in shook signtly he poired inhieral his knowler glass of wine and drank it off at a draught. Then he consumed: "On the night of the quarrel in the billiard room at Park kewton I twas siting up for my master, Mr St George. About midnight the bell rang for me, and on answering it, my master put Mr Osmond into my hands, he being somewhat the worse for wine, wi hinstructions to see him safely to bed. This I did, and then I left him. As it has pened, I had taken a violent fancy to Mr Osmond's splendid ruby ring—the very ring monsieur has now in his possession—and that night I detormined to make it my own. There were several new servants in the house, and nobody would suspect me of having taken it. Mr Osmond had drawn it off his finger, and thrown it excelessly into his dressing bag and locked it up before getting into bed, afterwards putting his keys under his pillow.

"When the house was quiet I put on a pair

"When the house was quiet I put on a pair of list slippers and made my way to Mr Os moud's bed room. The dcor whs unlocked and I went in. A night lamp was burning on the dressing table. The full moon shoue in through the quourtained win low, and its rays slantering that constitution is sleeping the sleep of the drunken, with one sleeping the sleep of the drunken, with one hard cleuched, and a frown on his face as if he were still threatening Mr Dering. It was hardly the work of a minute to possess myself of the llow.
"When the house was quiet I put on a pair
"When the house was quiet I put on a pair

eys. In another minute the dressing case has opened and the ring my own. Mr Os-naud's portmanteau stood inviti gly open; that more natural than that I should desire to

was opened and the ring my own. Mr Osmund's portmantenu stood inviti gly open; what more natural than that I should desire to turn over its contents lightly and delicately? In such cases I am possessed by the simple curiosity of a child I was down on my kneer before the portmanteau admiring this, that and the other, when to my horror I heard the noise of coming footsteps. No conceptment was possible save that afforded by the long curtains which shaded one of the windows. Next moment I was sately hidden behindthem.

"The footsteps came nearer and nearer, and then someone entered the room. The sleeping mas still breathed heavily. Now and then he moaned in his sleep. All my fear of being found out could not keep me from peeping out of my hiding-place. What I saw was my master, Mr Kester St George, standing over the sleeping man, with a look on his face that I had never seen there before, He stood thus for a full minute, and then he came round to the near side of the bed, and seemed to be looking for Mr Osmond's kays. In a little while he saw them in the drossing-bag where I had left them. Then he crossed to the other side of the room and proceeded one by one, till; he; had found the right one, in the lock of Mr Osmond's writing cas He opened the case, took out of it Mr Osmond's cheque book, and from that he tore either one or two blank cheques. He had just relocked the writing-rase when Mr Osmond suddenly awoke and started up in bed. 'Villain! what are you doing there?' he cried, as he flung back the bed. others. But before he could set foot to the floor, Mr St George sprang at his throat and inned him down almost as easily as if he had been a boy. What happened during the next minute I hardly know how to describe. It would seem that Mr Osmond was in the habit of sleeping with a dagger under his pillow. At all events there was one there on this particular night. As soon as he found himself pinned down in bed, is band sought for and found this dagger, and

hardly know how to describe. It would seem that Mr Osmond was in the habit of sleeping with a dager under his pillow. At all events there was one there on this particular night. As soon as he found himself pinned down in bed, his hand sought for and found this dagger, and noxtmoment he made a sudden stab with it at the breast of Mr 8t George. But my master was too quick for him. The re was an instant's scruggle—at flash—a cry—and—you may guess the rest. 'A murmur of horror escaped my lis. In another moment my master had sprung across the room and had torn away the curtains from before me. 'You here!' he said. And for a few seconds I thought my fate would be the same as that of Mr Oumond. But at last his hand dropped. 'Janvard, you and I must be friends,' he said. 'From this night your interests are mine, and mine see yours' Then we left the room together. A terrible night, monsieur, as you may well believe!"

"You have accounted clearly enough for the murder, but you have not yet told us how it happened that Lionel Dering came to be accused of the crime,"

"That is the worst part of the story, sir. Whose thought is was first, whether Mr St George's or name, to lay the murder at the door of Mr Dering, I could not now tell you I to as a thought that se-med to come into the heads of both of us at the same moment. As monsieur knows, my master had no cause to love his cousin. He had eveny reason to hate him. Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been Mr St George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been Mr St George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been Mr St George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been Mr St George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been Mr St George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that ought to ha e been mr st George's. But if Mr Dering had got all the estates and property that oug

Si Go rgs was my master. Thised him, and I was besides, to have a large sum of money given to me to keep sience. Mr Dering was a stranger to me to keep sience. Mr Dering was a stranger to me with the sign of the wilest wretches that ever disgraced the name of man!"

"Annuard, you are one of the vilest wretches that ever disgraced the name of man!"

"Monsieur s'amuse."

"I shall at once proceed to put down in writing the heads of the confession which you have just made You will sign the writing in question in the presence of Bristow as witness. You need be under no apprehension that any immediate harm will happen to you. As for Mr St Geore, I will deal with him in my own time, and in my own way. There are, however, two points that I wish you to bear particularly in mind. Firstly, if even by the vaguest hint, you dure to let Mr St George know that you have told me what you have told me to night, it will be at your own proor peril, and you must be prepared to take the consequences that will immediately ensue. Secondly, you must hold yourself entirely at my service, and must come to me without delay whenever I may send for you, and wherever I may be. Do you clearly understand?"

"Year the measent, then I have done with you.

tand?"
"Yes, sir. I understand."
"Yes, sir. I understand."
"For the present, then. I have done with you.
"Wo hours later I will send for you again,
n order that you may sign a certain paper
which will be ready by that time. You may

go."
"But, monsieur—"
"Not a word. Go."
Tom held the door for him, and Janvard passed out without another word.
"At last, Dering! At last everything is made clear!" said Tom, as he crossed the room and sli his hand affectionately on Lionel's shudder.
"At last you can proclaim your innocence to the world."

"At last you can proclaim your innocence to the world."

"Yes, my task is nearly done," sait Lionel sadly "And I thank heaven in all sincerity thatitis so. But the duty I have still to perorm is a errible one. I almos, feel as it now, at this, the eleventh hour, I could go no further. I shrink in horror from the last and most terrible step of all. Hark! Whose voice was that?

"I hear nothing save the moaning of the wind, and the low muttering of thunder far away among the hills."

"It seemed to me that I heard the voice of Percy Osmond calling to me from the grove—the same voice that I have heard so often in my dreams."

How your hand burns, Lionel. Shake "now your hand burns, Lionel. Shake off these wild fancies, I implore you," said Tom. "What a blinding finsh was that?" "They are no wild fancies to me, but most dread realities. I tell yout 'z Os Jonu's voice I hear. I know it but too well. "Thou shalt revenge! it says to me. Only three words: "Thou shalt avenge!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

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Nearly a week clapsed after Tom's interciew with the Squire before he was again invited to Pincote, and after what had passed between himself and Mr Culpepper he would not go there again without a special invitation. It is probable that the Squire would not have sent for him even at the end of a week had he not grown so thoroughly tired of having technically the sent of the control of the control of a week had he not grown so thoroughly tired of having technically end of the control of the cont FINDS HIS TONGUE,

at the road-side grass as he jogged contentedly

Jong.
Two or three minutes passed in silence. Then from spoke "Jane" he said, and it was the first ime he had ever celled her by her Chris an name. "Jane, your father has forbidden me to nake love to you."

make love to you,"

It seemed as if Jane had nothing to say either for or against this statement. She only breathed a little more quickly, and a lovelier color flushed her cheeks. But just then Diamond swerved towards a tempting tuft of grass. The carriage gave a slight jerk and Tom fancied—but it might be nothing more than fancy—that, instinctively, Jane drew a little cl ser to him. And when Diamond had been punished by the elightest possible flick with the whip between his ears, and was again jogging peacefully on, Jane did not get farther away again, being, perhaps, still slightly nervous; and when Tom looked down there was a little gloved hand resting, light as a feather, on his arm. It was impossible to resist the temptation. Dispensing with the the whip for a moment he lifted the little hand tenderly to his lips and kissed it. He was not repulsed.

"Yes, dearest." he went on, "I am absolutely forbidden to make love to you. I can only imagine that your aunt has been talking to your father about us. Be that as it may, he has forbidden me to walk out with you or even to see you alone. The reason why I asked you to meet the today was to tell you of ake love to you, It seemed as if Jane had nothing to say either

r even to see you alone. The reason why I sked you to meet me to-day was to tell you of

hese things "
Still J ne kept silence. Only from the little and, which had somehow found its way back in to his arm, there came the faintest possible ressur_hardly heavy enough to have crushed

pressur hardly heavy enough to have crushed a butterfly.

"Ito'd him that I loved you," resumed Tom, "an' he could not say it was a crime to do so. But when I told him that I had never made love to you, or asked you to marry me, he seemed inclined to doubt my veracity. However, I set his mind at rest by giving him my word of honor that, even supposing you were willing to have me—a point respecting which I had very strong doubts indeed—I would not take you for my wife without first obtaining his full consent to do so.

road again then the spurt toned itself down to the customary slowtrot, with, however, an extra whisk of the tail now and then which seemed to imply: "Mark well what a fiery steed I could

the customary slow; trot, with, however, an extra whisk of the tail now and then which seemed to imply: "Mark well what a fiery steed I could be if I only chose to exert myself."

"All this but brings me to one point," said Tom: "that I have never yet to dyou that I loved you, that I have never yet to dyou that I loved you, that I have never yet asked you to become my wife. To-day, then—here—this very moment, I tell you that I do love you as truly and sincerely as it is possible for man to love; and here I ask you to become my wife, Get along, Diamond, do, sir."

"Dearest, you are not blind," he went on. "You must have seen, you must have known, for a long time past, that my heart—my love—were wholly yours; and that I might one day win you for my own has been a hope, a blissful dream, that has haunted me and charmed my life for longer thau I can tell. I ought, perhaps, to have spoken of this to you before, but there were certain reasonfor my silence which it is not necessary to dilate upon now, but which, if you care to hear them, I will explain to you another time. Here, then, I nak you whether you feel as if you could ever learn to love me, whether you can ever care for me enough to become my wife. Speak to me, darling—whisper the one little word I b im to hear. Lift your eyes to mine, and let me read there that which will make me happy for lic." Except they two, there was no human being visible. They were alone with the trees, and the bridge and the sailing clouds. There was no one to overh at them save that sty old Diamond, and he pretended to be not listening a bit. For the second time he came to a stand-stil, and this time his artfulness remained unreproved and unnoticed.

Jane rembled a little, but her eyes were still cast dawn. Tom tried to see into their depths but could not. "You jnomised papa that you would not take me from him without his consent?", she said, speaking in little mere than a whisper. "That consent I shall give me you will never cons nt."

"And I feel equally sure that he will. I have

while standing there he had fallen into

while standing there he had fallen into a snooze, and had dreamt that another pony had been put into his particular stall and was at that moment engaged in munching his particular struss of hay. Overcome by his feelings, he turned deliberately round and started for home at a gentle trot. I hus disturbed, Tom and Jane came back to sublunary matters with a laugh and a li the confusion on Jane's part. Tom drove her back as far as the toolgate and then shock hands and left her. Jane reached home as one in a blissful dream.

Three days later Tom received a note in the Squire's own crabbed hand-writing, asking him to go up to Pincote as early as possible. He was evidently wanted for something out of the ordinary way. Wondering a little, he wont. The Squire received him in high good humor and was not long in letting him know why he had sent for him.

"Thave had some fellows here from the railway company," he said. "They want to buy Prior's Croft."

"I have had some fellows here from the railway company," he said. "They want to buy Prior's Croft."
Tom's eyebrows went up a little. "I thought, sir, it would prove to be a profitable speculation by and by. Did they name any price?"
"No, nothing was said as to price. They simply wanted to know whether I was willing to sell it."
"And you told them that you were?"
"I t.ld them that I would take time to think about it. I didn't want to seem too eager, you know."
"Thats right, sir. Play with them a little be fore you finally heok them."
"From what they say, they want to build a station on the Croft."
"Yes, a new passenger station, with plenty of siding accommodation."
"Ah! you know something about it, do you?"
"I know this much, sir, that the proposal of the new company to run a fresh line into Duxley has put the old company on their mettle. In place of the dirty ram-shackle station with which we have all had to be content for so many years, they are going to give us a new station, hand some and commodatious; and Prior's Croft is the place named as the most probable site for the new terminus."
"Hang me, if I don't believe you knew something of this all along!" said the Squine. "If not, how c uld you have raised that heavy mort gage for me?"
There was a twinkle in Tom's eyes but he said nothing. Mr Culpepper might have been still further surprised had he known that the six thousand pounds was Tom's own money, and that, although the mortgage was made out in another name, it was to Tom alone that he was indebted.
"Have you made up your mind as to the price vor intend to a were and a station."

mother name, it was to Tom alone that he was indebted.

"Have you made up your mind as to the price you intend to ask, sir?"

"No, not yet. In fact it was partly to consult you on that point that I sent for you."

"Somewhere about nine thousand pounds, sir, I should think, would be a fair price."

The Squire shook his head. "They will never give anything like so much as that."

"I think they will, sir, if the affair is judiciously managed. How can they refue in the face of a mortgage for six thousand pounds?"

"There's something in that, certainly."

"Then there are the villas yet unbuilt it is

"Then there are the villas yetubuilt it is ue—but the plans of which are already drawn, and the foundations of some of which are already drawn, nd the foundations of some of which are al-each laid. You will require to be literally re-numerated for your disappointment and outlay a respect to them."

n respect to them."
"I see it all now. Splendid idea that of the villas."
"Considering the matter in all its bearings, nine thousand pounds may be regarded as a very moderate sum."
"I won't ask a penny less."
"With it you will be able to clear off both the

"With it you will be able to clear off both the mortgage and the loan of two thousand, and will then have a thousand left for your expenses in connection with the villas."

The Squire rubbed his hands. "I wish all my specular ions had turned out as successful as this one," he said. "This one I owe to you, Bristow. You have done me a service that I can never forgat."

et."
Tom rose to go. "Is Mrs McDermot quite well, ir?" he said, with the most innocent air in the sir?" he said, with the most innocent air in the world.

"If the way she eats and drinks is anything to go by, she was never better in her life. But if you take her own account, she's never well—aconfirmed invalid she calls herself. I've no patence with the woman, though she is my sister. A day's hard scrubbing at the wash tub every week would do her a world of good. If she would only pack up her trunks and go, how thankful I should be!"

"If you wish her to shorten her visit at l'incote, I think you might easily persuade her to do so."

o so."
"I'd give something to find out how. No, no,

"It give something to find outhow. No, no, Bristow you may depend that she's a fixture here for the next three or four months. She knows—no woman alive better—when she's in comfortable quarters,"
"If I had your sanction to doing so, sir, I think that I could induce her to hasten her departure om Pincote." The Squire rubbed his nosethoughtfully. "You

The Squire rubbed his nosethoughtfully. "You are a queer fellow, Bristow," he said, "und you have done so he strange things, but to induce my sister to leave Pincote before she's ready to go will cap all that you've done yet."

"I cannot of course induce her to leave Pincote till she is willing to go, but after a little quiet talk with me, it is possible that she may be willing, and even anxious, to 3et away as quickly as possible."

The Squire shook his head. "You don't know Fanny McDermot as well as I do," he said.

"Have I your permission to try the experiment?"

ent?"
"You have—and my devoutest wishes for your success. Only you must not compromise me in any way in the matter."
"You may safely trust me notto do that. But you must give me an invitation to come and stay with you at Pincote for a week."
"I shall devote myself very assidueusly to Mrs McDermot, so that you must not be surprised if

AcDermot, so that you must not be surprised if ye seem to be very great friends in the course of couple of days."

we seem to be very great triends in the course of a couple of days."

"Do as you like, boy. I'll take no notice. But she's an old soldier, is Fan, and if for a single moment she suspects what you are after she'll ne'll her colors to the mast and defy us all, and stop here for six months longer."

"It is, of course, quite possible that I may fail," said Tom, "but somehow, I hard I think that I shall."

"We'll have a glass of sherry together and drink to your success. By the bye, have you contrived yet to purge your brain of that lovesick tomfoolery?"

ifoolery?"
If, sir, you intend that phrase to apply to feelings with regard to Miss Culpepper, an only say that they are still totally unnanged."
"What an idiot you are in some things, Brisow!" said the Squi.e, crustily. 'Remember thi -I'll have no love making here next week." "You need have no fear on that score, sir."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

EXIT MRS. MACDERMOT

Tom and his portunanteau reached Pincote together a few days after his last conversation with the Squire. Mrs. McDermot understood that he had been inviced to spend a week there in order to assist her brother with his books and farm accounts. It seemed to her a very injudicious thing to do, but she did not say much about it. In truth, she was rather pleased than otherwise to have Tom there. It was dreadfully monotonous to have to spend one evening a ter another with no company save that of her brother and her audience were tired of her. Mr. Bristow, as she knew already, could talk well, was lively compan, and, above all things, was an excellent listener. She had done her duty by h r brother in warning him of what was going on between Mr. Bristow and her neice: if, after that, the Squire chose to let the two young people come together, it was not her place to dispute his right to do so.

Tom was very attentive to her at dinner that

came three distinct taps fr. m the inside of the case, and next instant from the same place can denote in send next instant from the same place can denote instant from the same place can ext instant from the same place can denote instant from the same the sou do fa hollow, ghost like voice. "Fanny—Fanny—Jist! I want to speak to you," said the voice, in slow, solemn tones. But Mrs McDermot did not wait to hear more She screamed, dropped her candle, and staggered, arguer did not wait to hear more in did not tay much about the voice, in slow, solemn tones. But Mrs McDermot did not wait to hear more She screamed, dropped her candle, and staggered, arguer did not wait to hear more She was deaduly. "My dear Mrs McDermot, what to be ar more She was deagainst the opposite wail. Tom was by her side in a moment.

"The voice in slow, solemn tones. But Mrs was deave, dropped her candle, and staggered, darger with the voice, in slow, solemn tone

day. Of Jane he took no notice beyond what the occasion absolutely demanded. Mrs McDermot was agreeably surprised "He has come to his senses at last, as I thought he would," she said to herself. "Grown tired of Jane's society, and no wonder There's nothing in her."

her." As soon as the cloth was removed, Jane ex used hereif on the score of a headache and left he room. The Squire got into an easy chair sub-ertled himself down for a post prandial nap. Tom moved his chair a little nearer that of the yidow.

widow.

"Theve grieved to see you so far from well, Mrs.

"McDernot," he said as he poured himself out another glass of wine "My father was a doctor, and I su pose I caught the habit from him ef reading the signs of health or sickness in people's faces."

Mrs. McDermot was visibly discomposed. She was a great coward with regard to her health, and Tom knew it.

was a great coward with regard to her health, and Tom knew it.

"Yes," she said, "I have not been well for some time past. But I was not aware that the traces of my indisposition were so plainly visible to oth rs."

"They are visible to me because, as I tell you, I am half a doctor both by birth and bringing up. You seem to me. Mrs. McDermot, pardon me for saying so—to have been fading—to have been going backward as it were, almost from the day of your arrival at Pincote."

Mrs. McDermot coughed and moved uneasily in her chair. "I have been a confirmed invalid for years," she said, querulously, "and yet no one will believe me when I tell them so."

"I can very readily believe it," said Tom, gravely. Then he lasped into an ominous silence.

"I—I did not know that I was looking any worse now then when I first came to Piucote," she said at last

worse now than when I first came to Piucote," sh aid at last "You seem to me to be much older-looking auch more careworn, with lines making their ppearance round your eyes and mouth, such in never noticed before. So, at least, it strikes ne, but I may be, and a dare say I am quite

roug." The w dow seemed at a loss what to say. Tom's

The w dow seemed at a loss what to say. Tom's words had evidently rendered her very uneasy. "Then what would you advise me to do?" she said, after a time, "If y u can detect the disease so readily, you scould have no difficulty in specifying the remedy."

"Ah, now I am afraid you are getting beyond my depth," said Tom, with a suile. "I am little more than a theorizer, you know: but I should have no hesitation in saying that your disorder is connected with the mind."

"Gracious me, Mr Bristow!"

"Yes, Mrs McDermot; my opinion is that you are suffering from an undue development of brain power."

The widow looked puzzled. "I was always considered rather intellectual," she said, with a

The widow looked puzzled. "I was always considered rather intellectual," she said, with a glance at he brother. But the Squire still slept. "You are very mtellectual, madam; and that is just where the evil lies."

"Excuse me, but I fail to follow you"

"You are gifted with a very large and a very powerful brain." said Tom, with the utmost gravity. The Squire snorted suddenly in his sleep. The widow held up a warning fluger. There was silence in the room till the Squire's long-drawn snores announced that he was happily fast asleep.

"Very few of us are so specially gifted," resumed Tom. "B it every special gift necessitates a special obligation in return. You, with your massive brain, must flug that plenty of work to do a sufficiency of congenial employment—other-

Tom. "B it every special gift necessitates a special obligation in return You, with your massive brain, must find that plenty of work to do—a sufficiency of congenial employment—otherwise it will inevitably turn upon itself, grow m r bid and hypochondriacal, and slowly but surely deteriorate, till it ends by becoming—what I hardly like to say."

"Really, Mr. Bristow, this conversation is to me most intere-ting," said the widow. "Your views are thoroughly original but, at the same time, I feel that they are perfectly correct."

"The sphere of your intolectual activity is fur iton narrow and confined," resumed Tom; "your brain has not sufficient pabulum to keep it in a state of healthy activity. You want to mix more with the world—to mix more with clever people, dise yourself. It was never intended by Natu e that you should lose your-elf among the narrow coteries of provincial life; the metropolis claims you; the world at large claims you A conversationalist so billient, so incisive, with such an exhautlless fund of new ideas, can only hope to find her equals among the best circles of London or Parisian society."

"How thoroughly you appreciate me, Mr Bristow!" said the widow, all in a flutter of gra find vanity, as she edged her chair still closer to Tom.

"It is as you say. I feel that I am lost here—that I am altogether out of my element. I stay here more as a matter of duty—of principle—than of anything else. Not that it is any gratification to me, as you may well imagine, to be buried alive in this dull hole. But my brother is getting old and infirm—breaking fast, I'm afraid, poor man," here the Squire gave a louder snore than on colish girl. They both need the guidance of a kind but firm h nd. The interests of both demand a clear brain to look after them."

"My dear madam, I agree with you in toto. Your Spartan views with regard to the duties of every-day life are mine exactly. But we must not lorget that we still have another duty—that of carefully preserving our health, especially when our lives are inval

hope!"
"Whit I say, I say advisedly. I think that
with ut difficulty I can specify a few symptoms
of the cerebral disorder to which you are a victim. You will bear me out if what I say is

Norrect."
"Yes, yes; please go on "
"You are a sufferer from sleep'essness to a sertain extent The body would fain rest, being tired and worn out, but the active brain will not allow it to do so. Am I right, Mrs McDermot?"
"I cannot dispute the accuracy of what you are."

say"
"Your nature being large and eminently sympathetic, but not finding sufficient vent for itself for lack of other aliment, with the concerns and daily doings of those around it, giving them the benefit of its vast experience and intuitive good

daily doings of those around it, giving them the benefit of its vast expe ience and intuitive good sense; but after being met sometimes with coldness i stead of sympaty, it collapses, falls back upon itself, and ecomes morbid for want of proper int-llectual companionship. May I hope that yo; follow me?"

'Yes—yes, perfectly," said the widow, but looking somewhat mystified notwithstanding.

"The brain thus 'hrown back upon itself engenders an irritability of the norves, which is altogether abnormal. Fits of peevishness, of ill-temper, of causeless fault finding, gradually su pervene; till at length all natural amiability of disposition vanishes entirely, and there is acting for the a we telsed hypochondriae, a misery to himself and all around min."

"Gracieus me! Mr Bristow, what a picture! But I hope you do not put me down as a misery to myself and all around me."

"Far from it—very far from it—my dear Mrs McDermot. You are only in the premonitory stage at present. Let us hope that, in your case, the later stages will not follow."

"I hope not, with all my heart."

"Of course, you have not been troubled with hearing voices? Whatever do you mean, Mr Bristow?"

"Hearing voices! Whatever do you mean, Mr Bristow?"

"Cheof from the earlier stages of which you are now suffering, is that the patient hears voices—or fancies that he hears then, which is pretty

"One of the worst symptoms of the cerebral disorder, from the earlier stages of which you are now suffering, is that the patient hears voices—or fancies that he hears them, which is pretty much the same thing. Sometimes they are stange voices; sometimes they are the voices of relatives, or riends no longer among the living. In short, to state the case as briefly as possible, the patient is haunted."

"I declare, Mr Bristow, that you quite frighten

"a genare, ar Bristow, that you quite frighten met"

"But there are no such symptoms as these about you at present Mrs McDermot. The moment you have the least experience of them—should such a misfortune ever overtake you—then take my advice, and seek the only remedy that can be of any real benefit to you."

"And what may that be?"

"Immediate change of scene—a change total and complete, Go abroad. Go to Italy; go to Egypt; go to Africa;—in short, to any place where the change is a radical one. But I hope that, in your case, such a necessity will never arise."

"All this is most deeply interesting to me Mr

ise." 'All this is most-deeply-interesting to me Mr

that, in your case, such a necessity will never arise."

All this is most deeply interesting to me Mr Bristow, but at the same time it makes me very nervous. The very though, of being haunted in the way vou mention is enough to keep me from sleeping for a week."

At this moment Jane came into the room, and a few minutes later the Squire awoke. Tom had said all that he wanted to say, and he gave Mrs McDermot no further opportunity for private conversation with him.

Next day, too, Tom carefully avoided the widow. His object was to afford her ample time to think over what he had said. That day the vicar and his wife dined at Pincote, and Tom became immersed in local politics with the Squire and the Parson. Mrs McLermot was anxious and uneasy. That evening she talked less than she had ever been known to do before.

The rule at Pincote wa to keep ear y hours. It was not much past ten o'clock when Mrs McDermot left the drawing room, and having obtained her bed candle, set out on her journey to her own room. Half way up the staircase stood Mr Bristow. The night heing warm and balmy for the time of year, the staircase window w s stil half open and Tom stood there, gazing out into the moonlit garden. Mrs McDermot stopped, and said a few gracious words to him. She would have liked to resume the conversation of the previous evening, but that was evidently neither the time nor the place to do so is os be said good night, shook hands, an i went on her way, leaving Tom still standing by the window. Higher up, close to the head of the stairs, stood a very large old-rashioned case clock. Mrs McDermot held up the cradle to see the time s she was passing it. It was nearly twenty minutes past tes. But at the very oment of her noting this fact, there came three distinct taps from the isame place came the sou d of a hollow, ghost like voice. "Fanny—Fanny—list!! I want to speak to you," said the voice, in slow, solemn tones. But Mrs McDermot did not wait to hear more She screamed, dropped her candle, and staggered, back against the

bank of close horizon. The wind blew in hollow fitful gusts. Any one learned in such lore would have said that a

"Wherever else the voice may have come from it is plain that it couldn't come from here,' said Tom, as he proceeded to relight the widow's candle
"It came from there, I'm quite certain. There were three distinct raps from the inside as well.'
"Is it not possible that it may have been a mere hallucination on your part? You have not been well, you know, for some time past."
"Whatever it may have been, it was very terrible," said Mrs McDermot, dr-wing her skirts round her with a shudder. "I have not forgotten what you told me yesterday"
"Allow me to accompany you as far as your room door," said Tom
"Thanks. I shall feel obliged by your doing so. You will say nothing of all this downstairs?"

"Thanks. I shall feel obliged by your doing in Thanks. I shall feel obliged by your doing to Thou will say nothing of all this downstairs?"
"I should not think of doing so."
The following day Mr Bristow was not at uncheon. There were one or two enquiries, but no one see uel to know exactly what had become of him. It was Mrs McDenmot's usual practices to retire to the library for an hour after luncheon—which room she generally had all o herself at unch times—for the estensible purpose of reading the newspapers, but, it may be, quite as much for the sake of a quiet sleep in the huge leathern thair that stood by the library fire. On going there as usual after luncheon to-day, what was the widow's surprise to find Mr Bristow sitting there has asleep, with the Times at his feet where thad drupped from his relaxed fingers.
She stepped up to him on tiptoe and looked clesely at him. "Rather nice looking," she said to herself. "Shall I disturb him, or not?"

closely at him. "Rather mice looking," she said to herself. "Shall I disturb him, or not?"

Her eyes caught sight of some written documents lying out-spread on the table a little distance away. The temptation was too much for her. But hardly had she stooped over the table when the same hollow voice that had souded in her ears the previous night spoke to her again, and forze her to the sput where she was standing. "Fanny MoDermot, you must get away from this house, 'said the voice. If you stop here you will be a dead w man in three months!"

She was too terrified to look round or even to stir, but her trembling lips did at last falter out the words; "Who are you?"

The answercame. "I am your husband, Geoffrey. Be warned in time."

Then there was silence, and in a minute or two the widow ventured to look round. There was no one there except Mr Bristow, fast asleec. She ma aged to reach the door without disturbing him, and from thence made the best of her way to her owa room.

Two hours later Tom was encountered by the Squire. The latter was one broad smile. "She's going at ast "he said. "Off to-morrow like a shot. Just told me."

"Then, with your permission, I won't dine with you this evening. I don't want to see her again."

"But how on earth have you managed it?"

again."

"But how on earth have you managed it?"
asked the Squire.

"By means of a little simple ventriloquis —
nothing in re. But I see her coming this way,
I'm off." A d off he went, leaving the Squire
staring after him in open-mouthed astonish
ment.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DIRTY JACK.

There was one thing that puzzled both General St George and Lionel Dering, and that was the persistent way in which Kester 't George stayed on at Park Newton. It had, in the first place, been a matter of some difficulty to get him to Park Newton at all, and for some time after his arrival it had been evident to all concerned that he had made up his mind that his stay there should be as brief as possible. But after that ne er-to-be-forgotten night when the nuse of ghostly footsteps was heard in the nailed up room—a circumstance which both his uncle and his cousin had made up their minds would drive him from the house for ever—he ceased to talk much about geing away. Week passed after week and still he stayed on. Nor could his uncle, had he been desirous of doing so, which he certainly was not, have hinted to him, even in the most dicate possible way, that his room would be more welcome than his company, after the pressure which he had put upon him only a short time proviously to induce him to remain Nothing could have suited Lionel's plans better than that his cousin should continue to live on at Park Newt-n, but he was certainly puzzled to know what his reason was for so doing; and, in such a case, to be puzzled was, to a certain extent to he disquiete!.

to know what his reason was for so doing; and, in such a case, to be puzzled was, to a certain extent to he disquiete:

But nuch as he would have liked to do so Kester had a very good reason for not leaving Park Newton at present. He was, in fact, afraid to do so. After the affair of the factsteps he had decided that it would not be advisable to go away for a lit le white. It would never do for people to say that he had been dri en away by the ghost of Percy Osmond. It was while thus lingering on from day to day that hehad ridden over to see Mother Mim. One result of his interview was that he felt how utterly unsafe it would be for him to quit the neighborhood till she was safely dead and buried. She milgt send or him at any moment, she night have other things to speak to him about which it behoved him to hear. She might change her mind at the last moment, and decide to tell to some other person what she had already tolinin; and when she should die, it would doubtless be to him that application would be made to bury her. All things considered, it was certainly una viviable that he should leave Park Newton yet awhile.

Day after day he waited with smothered impa-

of your hanky-panky tricks here. They won't go don't none there person what she had already told him; and when she should die, it would doubtice less beto him that application would be made to bury her. All things considered, it was certainly unalviable that he should leave Park Newton yet awhile.

Day after day he waited with smothered impatione of roome further tidings of Mother Mims and when she should leave Park Newton. The place and have made personal enquiries for the place and have made personal enquiries for the place and have made personal enquiries for all that he did not do it. He shrank with a responsible to all that he did not do it. He shrank with a responsible to all that he did not do it. He shrank with a responsible to make thought of any further contact with either that the there was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "He was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "It was evident that he was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "Who are you, sir, and what are you doing there saked him keep sound in long or what he had been drinking. "It was evident that he was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "Who are you, sir, and what are you doing where a sked reser, skernly. "It was evident that he was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "Who are you, sir, and what are you do ing whe here sake distance in fluence of what he had been drinking. "It was evident that he was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "Who are you, sir, and what are you don ing "Saked Kester, sternly."

It was evident that he was still under the partial influence of what he had been drinking. "It was received what he had been drinking. "It was received what he had been drinking." "It was received what he had been drinking." It was received what

But before this came about, Kester St George But before this came about, Kester St George had been left for the time being, with the exception of certain servants, the sole occupant of Park Newton. Lionel Dering had gone down to Bath to seek an interview with Pierre Janvard, with what result has already been seen. Two days after Lionel's eparture, General St George was called away by the sudden illness of an old Indian friend to whom he was most warmly attached. He left home expecting to be back in four or five days at the latest; whereas, as it fell out, he did not reach home expecting to several weeks.

weeks.

It was one day when thus left alone, and when It was one day when thus left alone, and when the solitudelwas becoming utte ly intolerable to to him, that Kester made up his mind that he would no longer be a coward, but would g that very atternoon and see for himself whether Mother Mim were alive or dead. But even after he had thus determined that there should be no more delay on his wart, he played fast and loose with himself as to whether he should go or not. Had there come to him any important letter or tel gram demanding his presence fifty miles away, he would have caught at it as a drowning man eatches at a straw. The veriest excuse would have sufficed for the putting off of his journey for at least one day. But the dull hours wore themselves away without relief or change of any kind for him, and when three o'clock came, having first dosed himself heavily with brandy, he rang the bell and ordered his horse to be brought round. What might not the next few hours bring to him? he awayed himself

change of any kind for him, and when three o'clock came, having first dosed himself heavily with brandy, he rang the bell and ordered his horse to be brought round. What might not the next few hours bring to him? he asked himself as he rode down the avenue. They might perchance be pregnant with doom. Or death might have lift ed this last bit or burden from his life by sealing with his bony fingers the only lips that had power to do him harm.

For nearly n fortnight past the weather had been remarkably mild, balmy, and open for the time of the year. Everybody said how old winter was dying. But during the previous night there had come a bitter change. The wind had suddenly veered round to the northeast, and was still blowing steadily fom that quarter Steadily and bitterly it blew, chilling the hearts of man and beast with its ley bre-th, stopping the grewth of grass and flowers, killing every faintest gleam of sunshine, and brunging back the reign of winter in its cruellest form.

Heavy and lowering locked the sky, shrilly through the still bare branches whistled the ice-cold wind, as Kester tt. Georg, deep in thought, rode slowly through the park. He buttoned his coat moe closely around him, and pulled his hat more firmly over his brows as he turned out of the long gates, and setting his face full to the wind, urged his horse into a gallop, and was lost to view down the winding road.

It would not have taken him long to reach the edge of Buriey Moor had not his horse suddenly fallen laume. For the last two miles of the distance his pace was reduced to a slow walk. This so annoyed Kester that he decided to leave his horse at the rode-ide tavern in the last hamlet he had to pass through, and to traverse the renamineer of the distance on foot. A short three miles across the moor would take him to Mother Mim's cottage.

To a man such as Kester a three miles walk was a rather formidable und rtaking—or at least, it was an uncommon one. But there was no avoiding it on the present consistence.

To a man such as Kester a three miles walk was a rather formidable und raking—or.atleast, it was an uncommon one. But there was no avoiding it on the present occasion, unless he gave up the object of his journey and went back home. But he could by no means bear the thought of doing that. In proportion with the hesitation and reluctance which he had previously shown to a certain either the best or the worst of the affair, was the anxiety which now possessed him to reach his journey's end. His imagination pictured all kinds of possible and impossible evils as likely to accrue to him, and he cursed himself again and again for his negligence in not making the journey long ago.

Very bleak and cold was the walk across the desol.te, I nely moor, but Kester Et George, bried in his own thoughts, hardly felt or heeded anything of it. All the sky was clouded and overcast, but far away to the north a stil darker.

anything of it. All the sky was clouded and overcast, but far away to the north a stil darler bank of cloud was creeping slowly up from the

The wind blew in hollow fitful gusts. Any one learned in such lore would have said that a change of weather as imminent.

When about half-way across the moor he halted for a momont to gather breath. On every side of him spread the dull treeless expanse. Nowhere was there another human being to be seen. He was atterly alone. "If a man crossing here we e suddenly stricken with death," he muttered to himself, what a place this would be to die is! His body might he here for days—for weeks even—before it was found."

At length Mother Mim's cottage was reached. Everything about it looked precisely the same as

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when he had seen it lest. If seemed only like a few hours since he had left it. There, tro, crouched on the low ward outside, with her skirt drawn over her head, was Mother Min's grand daughter the girl with the black glittering eyes, looking as if she had never stirred from the spot since he was last there. The made no movement or sign of recognition when he walked up to her, but her eyes were furl of a cold keen criticism of him. far b yould by age and apperance. How is your grandmother?" said Kester, abruptiv. He did not like being stared at as she stared at him.

"How is your grandmother?" said Kester, abruptiv. He did not like being stared at as she stared at him.
"She's dead" "Dead!" it was no more than he expected to hear, and yet he could not hear it altogether unpared.

oved.

'Ayeas dead as a door nail And a igood job
o. It was time she went."

too. It was time she went."

"How long has she been dead?" said Kester, ignoring the latter part of the kirl's speech.

"Just half an hour."

Another surprise for Kester. He expected to hear that she had been dead several days—a week perhaps. But only half an hour! our! "Who was with her when she died?" he asked

"Who was with her when she area a first a minute's pause.
"Me and Dirty Jack."
"Dirty Jack! who is he?"
"Who, Dirty Jek. Everybody knows him.
He lives in Duxley and has a wooden leg, and does writings for folks."
"Does writings for folks!" a shiver ran through Kester. "And has he been doing anything for

ou grandmother?"
"That he has. A lot."

"That he has A lot."
"A lot—what about?"
"A lot—what about?"
"A bout you."
"About me? Why about me?"
"Ah, you nover came near. Nobody never came near. Granny got the d of it. 'I'll have my revenge," she said. So she sent for Dirty Jack, and he took it all down in writing."
"Took it all down in writing about me?"
She nodded her head in the affirma ive.
"If you know so much, no doubt you know what it was that he took down—eh?"
"Oh I know right enough."
"Why not tell me?"
"I know all about it, but I ain't a-going to split."

"Why not tell me?"

"I know, all about it, but I ain't a-going to split."

"I know, all about it, but I ain't a-going to split."

Futher persuasion on Kester's part had no other effect than to induce the girl to assert in still more emphatic terms that "she wasn't a-going to split."

Evidently nothing more was to be got from her. But she had said e ough already to confirm his worst fears. Mother Mim out of spite for the neglect with which he had treated her, had made a confession at the last moment, similar in purport to what she had told him when last there. Such a confession—if not absolut-ly dangerous to him—she having assured him that none of the witnesses were now living—might be made a source of infinite annoyance to him. Such a story once made publick might bring forth witnesses an I evidence from twenty hitherto unsuspected quarters, and fetter him round link by link, with a chain of evidence from which he might find it impossible to extricate himself. At every sacrifice, Mother Mim's confession must be destroyed or suppressed. Such were some of the thoughts that passed through Kester's mind as he stood there biting his nails. Again and again he cursed himself in that he had allowed any such confession to emanate from the dead woman, whose silence a little extra kindness on his part would have effectually secured.

"And where is this Dirty Jack, as you call him?" he said, at last.

"He's in there"—indicating the hut with a jerk of her head—"fast asleep."

"Fast asleep in the same room with your grandmother!"

"Why not? He had a bottle of whiskey with him which he kert sucking at At last he con-

"Fast asleep in the same room with your grandmother!"
"Why not? He had a bottle of whiskey with him which he kept sucking at. At last he got half screwy, and when all was over !-e said he would have a snooze by the fire and pull himself together a bit before going home."
Kester sid no more, but going up to the hut, opened the door and went in. On the palletat the farthest end lay the dead woman, her body family outlined through the sheet that had been drawn over her. A clear fire was burning in the broken grate, and close to it, on the only char in the place, sait a man fast asleep. His hands were gring, his linen was yellow, his hair was frowsy. He was a big bulky na, with a coarse, hard face, and was dressed in faded thread bare black. He had a wooden leg, which just now was thrust out towards the fire and seemed as fit were basking in the comfortable blaze.

On the chimney niece was an empty spirit.

now was thrust out towards the fire and seemed as if it were basking in the comfortable blaze.

On the chimney piece was an empty spirit bottle, and in a corner near at hand were deposited a broad brimmed hat, greasy and much the worse for wear, and a formidable looking walking stick.

Such was the vision of loveliness that met the gaze of Kester St George as he paused for a momen or two just inside the cortage door. Then he coughed and advanced a step or two. As he did so the man suddenly opened his eyes, got up quickly but awkwardly out of his chair, and laid his hand on something that was hidden in an inner pocket of his coat. "No, you don't!" he cried, with a wave of his hand. "No, you don't! None of your hanky-panky tricks here. They won't go down with Jack Skeggs, so you needn't try 'em on!"

Kester starred at him in unconcealed discuss.

HELD DOWN TO DIE. An Appalling Incident That Calls to Mind the Story of Tantains.

San Francisco Chronicle. On the track between South San Leandre and the High street station. Alameda, half mile on the San Leandro side, is a long trestle bridge over an estuary of the bay. For over a mile the trestle runs over the marsh land, the tide rising on each side of the embankment. Ever since the railroad has been built there has been trouble keeping the railroad bed from sinking. A few weeks ago the track at this point sunk 150 feet, and traffic was suspended for a short time. Last evening, as the through freight train from Alameda machine and six cars arrived at this particular point, the track sunk, apparently more on one side than the other. The engine was

overturned and the cass piled on top.

The fireman, Dan Driscoll, died a horrible death. When the engine turned over he was held to the ground by an iron bar across his breast and one foot was caught by another He was fully conscious at the time of his death. He was held fast and the tide was rising rapidly. It was evident that he would be drowned in a short time. Six men were on hand and labored to save him They wrapped sheets about his body and exerted their combined strength to pull him from his appalling position. He cried piteously again and again, but with the same result. A levee was built about his head to keep down the rising tide. Buckets were brought, and by faithful bailing it was attempted to keep the water from reaching hi head. He was lying under the cab and a hole was cut through the cab through which be could put his head. They raised his head above the water as much as possible. He remained thus two hours, but at last the levee broke, and the men who were bailing out the water found they could do no more. They held his head above the water, which rose slowly above his body. The men found they must make a final effort. Then his head was lowered and they all caught held and pulled deperately. It was in vain.
They could not move him. They raised his
head again. The water rose slowly but
urely. It reached his chin. A friend held his hand over the drowning man's mouth. The water rose to his nostrils. Nothing more could be done and he was drowned.

BRADSTREET'S WEEKLY RE-PORT.

New York, Oct. 6.-Bradstreet's special elegram reports considerable improvement in the corn crop The September cotton report, published to-morrow, will show that the general condition of the crop is favorable. except in Texas, where it is distinctly good.

No damage is reported by worms except to a certain extent in Mississippi. In Louisiana certain extent in Mississippi. In Louisiana and Albany there is small chance for a top crop. Finished iron is weaker. Pig is firm. Coal is active, and petroleum reacting on account of the reports of increased production again. There were 121 failures in the United States, reported by Bradstreet during the week 52 less than last week, and 35 "it's blowed out in the morning?" 2. Once more than in the corresponding week of last unon a time Ava was paughty, and mamma. more than in the corresponding week of last year. Canada has 11 - a decrease of 7.

-The London Lancet advocates stockings made like gloves to prevent soft corns.

COMIC BUDGET.

-A cat shows its content to purr-fection -What can't be endured should be speed y cured.

-"Consanguinity" is a bloody way to spell relationship.

-An extraordinary thing in ladys' bonnets -an unpowdered face.

- Emma Thursby sings in eleven languages, ut snores only in one.

What we are at home is a pretty sure test of what we really are. - It is the late cat that catches the early

bootjack -- [Buffalo News. -Though twelve dozen is a gross, the tho sells sugar is a grocer.

Love laughs at locksmiths, but it merely

itters at its first "mash." -- Worse than blind is the man that puts

happiness in the custody of ambition. -When an opportunity presents itself don't et it slip, unless it's a good chance to slide.

-Man wants his own good deeds set up in

long primer, his neighbor's in diamond type -It was Joubert who incisively remarked : Children have more need of models than of oritios.'

-Astronomical: No new comet is kenuine nless it has Dr. Blank's Liver Pills printed on the tail.

"There's always room at the top," ammed a mosquito, as it got its work in on a bald head.

-"As we charged," says a war corres-ondent, "the bugle blew." It must have been a trumped-up charge.

-- 'Frightened mouse' is the name of a new color. Put no trust in its not fading. We should expect it rapidly to disappear. -Man often has to pay dear enough for his own whistle, but the heavy expense comes to him when a Western cyclone puckers its

mouth. -Lightning is partial to barns. The trouble is on account of the straw therein. If barns were stuffed with feathers instead, there would be no danger.

-- "Founded on fact," said the editor, musingly, as he cast aside the thrilling MS., "and I wonder how long it took the idiot to manufacture his facts." -A knock-down: "Can you find room for

a scribe on your paper?" "Not unless you want to subscribe." And again was that scholarly youth crushed. -If a woman desires to become conspicuons, let her appear in the same dress twice. After this she will be well enough known to

his own risk .-- Puck. —An Englishman, in attempting to rescue two women from drowning, lost his life, but the women were saved. This proves that it is impossible to live with two women at one

-London Truth astonishes the English

instify a publisher in bringing out her poems

with the statement that "in some of the smaller Western cities of America there are more telephones than there at present in -Mabel (to her grandpapa)-" And Ean you really remember George the Fourtn?"
Grandpapa—" Yes, little one; you see, I am
a good deal older than you are." Mabel—
" How much older must I grow before I shall

be able to remember him? —The aster glows the the falling leaves beneath
The guiden-rod gleams by the hedgerow brown,
As though the dying summer in the frost-king's
teeth
Had hurled her gauntlet down.

The withered banners of the corn are still, And gathered fields are growing strangely wan; While death, poetic death, with hands that color what they touch Waves in the Autumn wood her tapestries of gold and brown. -" Peter, what are you doing to that boy?"

said a schoolmaster. "He wanted to know if you take ten from seventeen how many will remain; so I took ten of his apples to show him, and now he wants me to give 'em back." "Well, why don't you do it?" "Coz', sur, he would forget how many was left" -Curran was once asked how a member of —Curran was once asset from the answer was, Parliament had spoken. The answer was,

"His speech was a long parenthesis." He was asked to explain. "Why," said he, "don't you know that a parenthesis is a paragraph which may be omitted from beginning to end, without any loss of meaning." —A traveler saw in Portland, Me., while waiting half an hour in a railroad station, a barrel of ale rolled into a saloon, an intoxicaled man fight a back driver, and two men irink whiskey from a bottle. He conclude

ometimes broken in Portland. —In the afternoon all windy sounds are still: From wooded ways the cricket's chirp takes fight.

And the dreamy autumn hours lapse on until...
Seatithe sweet evening star, that night by night
Drops luminous like an ever-talling tear,
Down dying twilights of the dying year.

-Hail to thee, Autumn! Thee we hopor

it possible that the Maine prohibition law is

—Hall to thee, Autumn! Thee we honor,
Queen of the seasons, without a peer!
Spring? She had promises of beauty on her,
But thine are the glory and crown of the year,
First in worship why did we set her,
Spring—the wayward, the cold, the coy?
Aye, in our hearts, we have loved thee better,
Autumn, the gracious, the bringer of joy! -An Arkansas boy who had been reading a humorous paper remarked to his father, who was in the field "cradling" wheat: "Say, pap, why does your cradle cut unwil-

ingly?" "Because it's dull, I reckon," replied the old man. "No," said the bay, because it goes against the grain."—Arkaz-saw Traveler. -Mr. Wright went out to fish,
And he became a Wright angler.
He thought he would try and catch a shark,
And became a try angler,
He laughed to think how smart he was

And he became a cute angler;
But he did not see the shark with its nose
under the stern of his craft,
He was such an obstinate angler,
Until the creature tipped over his hoat,
When he became a wrecked angler. -A canard was set affoat some time ago to his anti-Jewish prejudices so far as to insist upon Herr Levi renouncing Judiasm before he would allow him to conduct the orchestra in Parsiful. But the story was so generally credited that Herr Levi has been obliged to

publish a card authoritatively contradicting

He is soon, by the way, to be married to Franlein Daniela von Bulow, a stepdaughter

-A man financially is a good deal like a mud turtle physically. Let either be flat on his back, and he finds it extremely difficult to rise.—Rochester Post Express. In this neck of woods it doesn't make much difference whether a man is flat on his back or not; if he is level or his head he can generally man age to get up.

-"Is Mrs. Brown in?" inquired a gentle-

man of the servant who responded to his ring at a door bell. "No, sir; she is not at home." Well, I am sorry." said the gentleman in a regretful tone, "as I owe her some money and I came to pay it." Whereupon a voice from above the balustrades was heard: "Oh, I am in—to be sure I am! didn't you know that? Ask the gentleman to walk in ! —"Do let me have your photograph, Mr. Howard," said a dashing belle to a gentleman who had been annoying her with his at-

The gentleman was delighted, and tentions. in a short time the lady received the picture in a short time the lady received the product. She gave it to the servant with the question. Would you, know the original if he should all?" The servant replied in the affirmacall ?" "Well, when he comes, tell him I am tive. engaged." -Wit of the Wee-Wees: 1. Two little

upon a time Ava was naughty, and mamma had to frown at her. "O mamma, mamma,"
Ava cried, "don't shut up your forehead that way, 'cause then I know you are going to cold."