Dialogue of the Horses.

From Farm Festivals. A New Volume of Poems by Will Carleton.

FIRST HORSE.

We are the pets of men—
The pampered pets of men.
There is naught for us too gentle and good
In the graceful days of our babyhood;
We frisk and caper in childish glee—
Oh, none so pretty and proud as we!
They cheer and cherish us in our play—
Oh, none so smilingly sweet as they!
And when a little our lives have grown,
Each has a table and room his own,
A waiter to fill his bill of fare,
A barber to clean and comb his hair.
Yes, we are the pets of men—
The pampered pets of men.
They show us, gayly dressed and proud,
To the eager eyes of the clamorous crowd;
They champion us in the rattling race,
They praise our beauty and cheer our pace;
They keep for us our family trees—
They trumpet our names beyond the seas;
They hang our portraits on their walls,
And paint and garnish and gild our stalls.
Yes, we are the pets of men—
The pampered pets of men.

SECOND HORSE.

We are the slaves of men—
The menial slaves of men.
They lash us over the dusty roads,
They bend us down with murderous loads;
They fling vile insults on our track,
And know that we can not answer back;
In winds of winter, or summer sun,
The tread of our toil is never done;
And when we are weak, and old and lame,
And labor-stiffened, and bowed with shame,
And hard of hearing and blind of eye,
They drive us out in the world to die.
Yes, we are the slaves of men—
The slaves of selfish men.
They draft us into their bloody spites,
They spur us, bleeding, into their fights;
They poison our souls with their senseless ire,
And curse us into a storm of fire.
And when to death we are bowed and bent,
And take the ball that for them was meant,
Alone they leave us to groan and bleed,
And dash their spurs in another steed.
Yes, we are the slaves of men—
The slaves of brutish men.

VIOLA'S REVENGE.

By the Author of "My Lady' Secret," "A Waif's Fortunes," "The Lady of Gormon Lea," &c.

CHAPTER III—Continued.

Doctor Preece's eyes filled with sudden tears; but he did not answer. The dying man's eyes were not so dimmed that he could not see them. Into those changed feeble tones of his there came an affectionate gentleness, of which few people would have believed Squire Burgot capable.

"Nay, do not fear to tell the truth, Preece. I had thought myself good for fifteen years as yet; but I am no coward—to be afraid of the leap every man must take. When will it be?"

"To-night," said the doctor solemnly.

"So soon? No time to fetch William then? I should have liked to see William. I fancy I have not behaved quite well to him, Doctor, first and last."

"You know best." replied Doctor Preece.

For ten years he had at odd times dinned this tardily admitted truth into unwilling ears; but he would not say so now.

"I was nearly twenty years his senior," pursued the Squire feebly. "I do not remember sowing many wild oats in my youth, and it was natural perhaps that, when the boy went to the bad, I should be rather hard upon his follies. When he sold his commission, married that Italian woman, and let me into the unpleasant duty of paying a few thousands to square his turf losses and save the family name, I thought I did well to be angry. When I settled a hundred a year upon him, on the sole condition that he should not return to England without my sanction, I considered I had done as much as justice required. The lad must be a true Burgot, Doctor, for he has never offered to eat humble-pie to be restored to favor. Of late I have been wishing for a reconciliation. I should like to see William again."

Doctor Preece was silent. What could he say? In his heart he was repeating the mournful refrain which so often answers such longings—"Too late—too late!"

"But I can make amends to him," continued the Squire, with reviving animation. "Take my keys, Doctor, and unlock the old cabinet in the corner. Often have Mrs. Robert and 'Dear Clara' wondered at the strange whim which led me to keep such an unsuitable article of furniture in my bedroom. That is right; now take out the fifth drawer and press a spring on the right in the recess. Have you done it? Do you see my will?"

"I thought that your will, bequeathing everything to Mrs. Robert Burgot and her daughter Clara, with the exception of a hundred a year to William and five thousand pounds to his daughter Viola, was duly executed long ago," said Doctor Preece, who began to think his patient's mind was wandering.

"Just so—just so; a dummy will, executed to stop Mrs. Robert's mouth, and destroyed immediately. No will made by me is in existence; the one you hold, which is yet unsigned, exactly reverses the provision of its thousand pounds. William enjoys the income from the estate until his death, when it reverts to Viola and Viola's children, or, in the event of her death, to Mrs. Robert and Clara. Call in two of the servants, Preece, and let me sign at once."

"But Clara——"

"Clara is amply provided for, or will be, at Mrs. Robert's death," said the Squire, with a touch of his old arbitrariness. "Will you ring, or must I get out of bed and do it myself? Do not thwart me, old friend; I feel that my time is getting short."

Thus adjured, Doctor Preece obeyed. In a few minutes the will was signed and attested with all legal formalities. The Squire lay back upon his mattress, keeping that last solemn vigil which so rarely seems too long—waiting for death.

He waited patiently, almost cheerfully, accepting the inevitable with a composure the Doctor had hardly anticipated. Very bright and clear was the sick man's mind towards the last; but he would not admit his sister-in-law and Miss Dallas to a parting interview.

"I am weary of their falsehood, their submission, their fulsome flattery!" he cried. "Ever since Robert died, poor fellow, and they came to live at the Grange, they have been awaiting this hour and speculating upon the advantage they might reap from it. Preece, old man, I would give something to see their faces when the will is read."

Then the Doctor tried to turn the dying man's thoughts into a more solemn channel, but with indifferent success.

"Let me alone," was the impatient rejoinder. "Do you think a few minutes at the last is going to weigh a man's life? I stand or fall by what has been done already, and by the help of One who has promised to pull me through. But, Preece, say 'good-bye' to Willie for me. I should have liked to see the boy again."

Willie? The boy? Doctor Preece smiled sadly, thinking that "the boy" must be now forty years of age.

"Doctor, I should like to die at peace with all my friends. There is nothing, I hope, out of the almost daily bickerings of forty years?"

"Nothing, Burgot—nothing."

"That is well. You might give an eye to niece Viola—the niece I have never seen—for my sake. Willie would be sure to let the girl run wild. And, Preece, I feel drowsy, as though I might get a wink or two of sleep. Where is your hand?"

Upon that hand the fingers of the dying man tightened as he sank in a peaceful slumber.

The friend of forty years, who had eaten almost daily at his table, and had wrangled as often as he dined, who knew better than any man living his virtues—which were hidden—and his faults—which were patent to all the world—who loved the stern old Squire like a brother—ay, better than ever a Burgot had loved his own near kindred, sat by him at the last, and held his hand, until that peaceful slumber was merged in the sleep that knows no waking—the sleep of death.

CHAPTER IV.

In a vine-wreathed arbour, upon a sunny hill-slope, sat William Burgot reading the announcement of his brother's death.

There was no fraternal sorrow in his face; that was hardly to be expected, seeing that the dead man had severed all ties of kindred and had doomed him to exile for many years. Nor was there elation which would have been natural at the unexpected change in his own fortune—neither sorrow nor elation, but stupid troubled surprise—surprise which verged upon dismay—was written upon his handsome features; and he repeated vaguely a phrase from a lawyer's letter which lay upon his knee—"The rent-roll of your estate is close upon fifteen thousand pounds."

Fifteen thousand a year! A handsome competence truly; a magnificent bribe for the commission of a wrong.

When much reflection had mitigated William Burgot's surprise, perplexity, not unmixed with fear, remained.

"If I only dared," he muttered—"If I only dared!"

He sat there thinking, until it was time for the evening meal.

"If Viola were in the plot, if I could make a *confidante* of Viola!" was the point to which, from time to time, his meditations brought him. After some such exclamation, he heard her voice calling—

"Papa, papa; where are you?"

And he answered—

"In the arbour, child."

The rustle of a dress, a firm and stately step upon the rocky soil, and she stood before him.

"Viola," he said, "Duke Burgot—your uncle Duke—is dead."

"Yes," replied the girl in a tone of indifference. "I suppose I ought to say that I am sorry; but that would hardly be the truth. I never saw uncle Duke, and I have no great love for England or for English people."

"Yet you are continually talking of going amongst them."

"Because the great purpose of my life calls me thither."

"You may abandon it Viola. There will be no need for you to earn a fortune upon the stage; a ready-made one awaits your acceptance. Burgot Grange and estates which bring in about fifteen thousand English pounds per annum are bequeathed to me, and, at my death, will revert to you."

"Fifteen thousand English pounds every year?" repeated the girl with an air of bewilderment. The magnitude of the sum rendered it fabulous and incredible to one who had esteemed her father's quarterly allowance of five-and-twenty pounds a handsome income. "Papa, will our neighbors, the other English gentry, be as rich?"

"Not many of them, I dare say."

"Then we shall move in the best society—with—with lords, for example?"

"With your prospects of wealth, your blood, and your beauty, you may have a lord for a husband, Viola, if you like."

"Then I am nearer the accomplishment of my life-purpose," said the girl softly.

"To marry an English lord?" laughed her father. "Is that the secret of your continual borrowings from the library of the monastery? Is that why you and old Spezzio are always exercising that wonderful voice of yours? Has that been your ambition all these years?"

"Ask no questions, papa. Let us go in to supper."

"There is something I want to tell you first," said William Burgot, desperately.

His fingers were crumbling and twisting the lawyer's letter. With an effort he raised his eyes to his daughter's face, so frank and ingenuous in its brilliant dark loveliness.

Again he said to himself, "if I only dared!"

"Yes? What is it?"

"I have forgotten," said William Burgot. "No matter; I may remember it perhaps by-and-by."

As he rose from his seat something fluttered to the ground; it was a draft for two hundred and fifty pounds, sent by the lawyers, who had taken the liberty to assume that their esteemed client would be glad of a little ready money.

As his uneasy fingers closed upon the first fruits of his good fortune, sudden resolution strengthened the corners of his mouth; and he registered a silent vow that only in dire extremity should that treacherous memory of his be quickened.

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In an oriel window at Burgot Grange two women were standing. They might have been "two sisters of one race," so juvenile were they both in appearance. Mrs. Robert Burgot, who must have been very near her fortieth birthday, delighted to remember that within the last eighteen months she had twice been reminded of "that charming waltz you gave me at the Hunt Ball, Miss Dallas," the waltz in question having been accorded by the other lady, Clara Dallas, the daughter of her first marriage.

They possessed certain points in common which conduced to their marked resemblance and helped to mitigate the elder's seniority.

Both dyed their hair the fashionable golden tint and called the process "bleaching." Both had slim, graceful figures. Both had good complexions, tiny features, pale, washed-out eyes, and were insipidly but decidedly pretty. Both had very small hands, which were generally well gloved, and very small feet, which were generally shod to perfection. Both spoke in voices which never rose above an intelligible murmur. Both prided themselves upon their excessive good breeding, and both would rather have violated one of the Ten Commandments than have been guilty of a social solecism, or transgressed one of the unwritten ordinances of English society. Both were caressingly affectionate in manner, and both were hypocritical.

"It is twelve minutes," said Mrs. Robert, consulting a diminutive gold watch, "since we saw the white smoke of the train wreathing through the valley. In three minutes the travellers will arrive. Dear Clara, I do hope we shall be able to make a favorable impression upon them."

"Dear mamma, the heartiness of our welcome and the sincerity of our congratulations will be sure to please."

Something in the tone, placid as it was, grated upon Mrs. Robert's ear and awakened uneasiness.

"It is of the utmost importance," she went on, "that we should continue to reside at Burgot Grange."

"Yes; it is such a delightfully lively residence—particularly in winter—immediately after the death of its late owner."

Mrs. Robert's uneasiness deepened.

"You would not like to be turned out of the Grange, to exchange such society as it offers for that which we might command, living upon our joint income in town or at a watering place?"

"I do not know," said Clara slowly.

"Where would be your chance of winning Lord Arnidale?"

"Just where it has rested for the last six months, whilst his lordship has been exploring Palestine."

"But you felt so sure of him, Clara."

"Just as I felt so sure of the wealth and position for which we have for five years played a weary, waiting game, and which pass at last into possession of this Italian adventuress and her father."

"Clara—dear Clara—this is madness!"

"I know it. You need not fear, mamma, that, because I hate these interlopers, I shall fail to ingratiate myself with them. I can hear the wheels of the brougham. Let us go to the door to meet our beloved relatives and welcome them to the enjoyment of that which should have been our own."

CHAPTER V.

The travellers had been received with effusion; they had eaten, drunk, and the home-coming had been made pleasant to them.

William Burgot, who had been at first strangely embarrassed and ill at ease, found his tongue and his lost confidence after drinking a glass or two of choice vintages that had lain since his youth in the cellar of the Grange.

The amiable manners of his sister-in-law particularly commended themselves to him He had lighted her bed-room candle, and had said "good-night" to her once. But he still held her hand in his, whilst he made a little speech expressive of gratification.

"I think it only right to tell you, Mrs. Burgot——"

"Call me Mrs. Robert; it sounds more brother-like," she interposed plaintively.

"Mrs. Robert—that I am agreeably surprised and delighted at the kind reception you and Miss Clara Dallas have accorded to my daughter and myself. I had feared that natural disappointment at the provisions of my late brother's will——"

The little hand he had made a prisoner squeezed his fingers slightly; its fellow raised to Mrs. Robert's eyes a square of embroidery, called by courtesy a handkerchief.

"I trust, William—I may call you William, may I not?—I trust misfortune will never render me unjust. I do not grudge you the good fortune which might have been mine. I have sufficient wealth for my own simple requirements and for Clara's. I have but one thing to regret."

"And what is that, Mrs. Roberts?"

"The loss of a home. For five years, William, I have been led to believe, by him who is gone, poor fellow, that in this house I should end my days. He made a will by which I was placed precisely in your present position, and Clara in that of dear Viola. We shall not feel the loss of fortune, but it will be a bitter wrench to leave the old home."

"Why should you leave it, Mrs. Robert?"

The widow's white fingers fluttered a little in his detaining grasp, and she darted at him from her pale eyes as reproachful a look as they were capable of emitting.

"I trust you do not think, William, that, because Clara and I remained to welcome you to the Grange, and to order the household for a day or two until Viola has quite recovered from the fatigue of her journey and is able to relieve us of the responsibility, it is our intention to intrude upon your hospitality. No; our boxes are packed, and we are ready to depart the instant——"

"But why should you depart?" said William Burgot argumentatively. "The Grange is large enough for all of us, and it will be much more cheerful for an extra inmate or two. Viola must have somebody to chaperon her; in fact, we are both of us so ignorant, owing to long residence abroad, of the usages of English country-life, that it will be of inestimable service that some kind friend should point out mistakes and shortcomings. You may not be aware, Mrs. Robert, that I once had, whilst serving in India, a mild attack of sunstroke, which left my memory very hazy concerning all prior events."

Mrs. Robert was not aware, but was intensely sympathetic, if the expression of her pretty face could be trusted.

Inwardly she was wondering why her brother-in-law confessed so sheepishly to this attack of sunstroke, as though it had been a crime. In her own mind she decided that the confession was only a half-truth, behind which probably lay unrevealed some disgraceful escapade of the teller's wild youth.

"I remember with perfect distinctness," continued William Burgot, "my courtship of Viola's mother, my marriage—in fact every event of the last twenty-one years. But of my boyhood, youth, and early manhood I retain but misty impressions, only a few of which are sufficiently clear to be reliable. I am haunted by two fears—the one is that I may offend old friends by failing to recognize their altered features, the other that I may, during a long residence abroad, have forgotten the duties, privileges, and customs which attach to my present position as a wealthy English landowner."

"Neither of your bugbears is very formidable," smiled Mrs. Robert sweetly; and, as she spoke, she wondered at the earnestness of the man.

Great beads of sweat stood upon his brow, and his handsome features were pale with suppressed excitement Was it possible, thought the widow, that the mild attack of Indian sunstroke had slightly turned the poor fellow's brain?

"Pardon me," he went on; both of my bugbears are in my eyes most formidable. I want you to defend me from them, standing between me and them. Mrs. Robert, I want you to chaperon me as well as Viola. In offering to yourself and Miss Dallas a permanent home at the Grange, I am studying my own interests, believe me, rather than yours."

"Then all my objections are anticipated. We shall be very pleased to remain, William, provided that, after sleeping upon your offer, you do not repent it. Now I must run away, or I shall get no beauty-sleep—a thing women of my antiquity cannot afford to dispense with. Once more, good night."

Blowing him a kiss from the tips of her white fingers, Mrs. Robert swept gracefully from the room. Very jubilant was her face as she climbed the broad staircase, troubled only by a passing reflection that, by playing her cards still better, she might perhaps have won, not only free maintenance for herself and Clara, but also a slight addition to their income.

She paused by the young lady's door, thinking to impart the glad tidings. The sound of murmuring voices betokened that Clara was not alone. Then the widow sank gracefully to a kneeling position upon the soft mat by the door, and. applying her little ear to the keyhole, listened long and intently. When she arose, there was a satisfied smile upon her lips and in her colourless eyes.

"Of course they are becoming the best of friends," she murmured, as she went softly along the corridor towards her own room. "Dear Clara knows on which side her bread is buttered, and will not exhibit to my niece the mood which alarms me. With care and tact, we may still reign at Burgot Grange as though it belonged to us. As for the present owner, he is handsome, he seems amiable, and I shall be able, I feel sure, to twist him round my finger. How vexatious that, in this prejudiced country, a woman cannot marry her deceased husband's brother!"

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Mrs. Roberts's deceased husband's brother was at that instant a very absent-minded man.

He had resumed the chair from which he had risen to bid her "good night." At his elbow were a stand of liqueurs and a glass partly filled with potent spirit, to which he had not yet added the complement of water.

Between his lips was a cigar which he had unconsciously, after a few whiffs, permitted to go out, whilst in his right hand he held the stalk of a consumed fuzee, regarding it with eyes that saw not.

"I should like to look at the old home," said William Burgot, thoughtfully.

He consulted his watch; the hands pointed to eleven o'clock. He went to the window, and, drawing aside the curtains, watched a white moon rising in a jewelled dome. Relighting his cigar, and emptying at a draught that partly-filled glass of potent spirit, William Burgot passed into the hall and began to don a thick overcoat before the eyes of the wondering butler, who was so astonished that he forgot to assist him.

"I am going out of doors to smoke my cigar," said William Burgot. "I shall return in half an hour or so."

"You must be careful not to lose yourself, sir," answered the butler respectfully. Recalling some of the late owner's eccentricities, he had begun to tell himself that such freaks as these must be expected of every Burgot.

"Lose myself?" said his master. "I know every inch of the whole estate, man, as well as you know the pimples on your face."

"Beg pardon, sir, I'm sure," rejoined the butler humbly.

He was vexed to the soul at that allusion to his pimples; and, having opened and closed the outer door, he went into the servants' hall and abused a sleepy footman with virulence. Meanwhile William Burgot, passing round the Grange, struck into its background of woods, with assurance which proved that his boast of knowing every inch of the old estate was no idle one.

It did not occur to him that this knowledge might be difficult to reconcile with the haziness of his memory concerning all events prior to his attack of sunstroke.

By winding rarely-trodden ways, under bare black branches gloomily out-lined against a gloomy sky, across open grassy glades upon which the hoar-frost sparkled in the moonlight, went the master of Burgot Grange, the proud possessor of estates yielding a rent-roll of fifteen thousand pounds per annum, until he came to a cottage in the wood—a cottage that was little better than a heap of ruins.

A low wall, moss-grown and broken down, surrounded it. William Burgot remembered—in spite of the mental haziness incidental to sunstroke—that it had once enclosed a garden, in which gooseberries and currants and cherries grew prodigally, but in which the rabbits made sad havoc amongst lettuces and broccoli. A smokeless ivy-covered chimney stood up against the sky. William Burgot remembered how the white wreaths from a wood fire used to curl out of it, and how the ivy had not climbed half so high.

In the cottage wall was a gaping hole which the ivy vainly tried to fill. William Burgot remembered that it had once been a diamond-paned window, from which a chastened, loving face, with a sweet perpetual refined sadness upon it, had been wont to gaze wistfully.

He turned away. There was no stinging wintry wind to make his eyes water, there was no dusty summer breeze to make them smart; yet William Burgot drew the back of his hand across them. Could it be to brush away a tear?

Then he turned from the ruined cottage and the memories which the Indian sunstroke had not dimmed, and went back, with a faltering step, by the lonely rarely trodden ways in his proud position, his stake in the county, his lordship of Burgot Grange, and his rent-roll of fifteen thousand pounds.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Street Beggars.

It's a good thing to have your glue ready before you break the chair you sit upon. The perusal of the facts herein contained may somewhat lessen the mysterious interest and curious satisfaction which country folk find, who are accustomed to stroll through the busy city, pitying picturesque poverty and accepting as gospel truth highly wrought and ornamental tales of suffering. In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred the street mendicant is a fraud, and the more dilapidated his aspect the more cause to suspect him. No actor is more expert in the matter of make-up than some of these unsophisticated-looking beggars, whose limping often moves susceptible hearts to ridiculous charity. Worthy poverty is too stricken to parade itself. Like charity, it is modest and must be sought out. The more frequented the highway the less likelihood of finding there a worthy beggar. Those that line the crowded avenues of New York are in what they consider a legitimate business. Many of them have been born of professional beggars and trained in their craft, which they consider quite as honorable as keeping apple stands or selling small wares. If the truth be told, they look down on those who engage in these pursuits as common place mortals who, having no wit, are forced to the prosy expedient of peddling. Who are these beggars and how do they live? A majority of them are foreigners, and they all manage to live more comfortably than some of the shop girls who assist them. In order to get some idea of a beggar's revenue take, for instance, one who elects to do his begging on Fourteenth Street, somewhere between Broadway and Sixth avenue. It is a fair presumption that 20,000 people during the day pass him there. Now, if he gets a penny from one out of every fifty people who pass him he has four dollars for his hard work. You may object that one out of fifty is a liberal allowance, and granting you that you must accept the other horn of the dilemma by admitting that it is only one person out of every fifty whose charity is measured by one cent, and so for general purposes the presumption that the beggar gets $4 for a day's work (?) is competent. How many weary-looking women who stop to drop a valued copper in the beggar's hat work from six o'clock on Monday morning until six o'clock on Saturday night for $4 and less! These chaps do not scruple to laugh at the gullibility of their patrons, and often entertain their loafer acquaintances with jocular descriptions of how a lady looked full of pity on hearing some thumping lie and handed out a quarter, or how on hearing of his suppositious moribund wife and starving children took down his fictitious address and accompanied her donation with the announcement that she would call there and get something for the little ones.

The Electric Light in Deep Water.

Baltimore American.

Mysterious flashes of light, far-reaching and brilliant, from the direction of the harbor, over the city and against its most lofty buildings, and again down along the water in one direction or another, excited no little comment Thursday night. The startling illuminations were simply the result of one of a number of proposed experiments with the electric light in a new direction. It is believed by several scientific gentlemen of the city, chief among whom in this matter is Mr. R. S. Jennings, that eventually electric illumination may be made most valuable in deep-water investigations. The theory has not been practically demonstraced, for the experimentation is as yet in its infancy; but it is thought that, under proper conditions, the electric light can be so applied as to brilliantly light up the bottom of a body of water, even though the depth be 100 feet. To test the question, a Brush electric light machine mounted upon a scow, with an eight-horse power steam engine to run it, and a tug was employed to tow the scow about the harbor. The gentlemen interested in the experiments were accompanied by a number of friends. The results were not fully satisfactory, owing principally to the roughness of the water, but the trip was a most interesting one, and the power of the electric light was strikingly manifested. A movable parabolical reflector was used back of the light, which was again and again thrown against vessels from two to two and a half miles distant, bringing them out in clear full view, and enabling their names to be read with the aid of a glass. When the light was thrown upon the dome of the City Hall, it leaped out of the darkness and stood up against the dark sky as if suspended in mid-air. One of the curious features of this part of the diplay was that to persons in the city the shadows of steamers and other vessels passing at this time between the light and the City Hall dome, were distinctly portrayed against the white background. It may well be imagined what a sensation was created by this panorama. If, as is believed, the idea is a feasible one, its workings will be of great importance in the search for lost treasures, for drowned persons, the raising of wrecks, the removal of torpedoes, &c.

Darwinianism.

A drunken man was swaying unsteadily in a Virginia City street, according to the *Chronicle*, when a dog with a tin pan tied to his tail, ran between his legs. The collision was so forcible that the man was upset and the dog ran on minus a piece of his tail. The man got up bewildered, rubbed the bruised end of his spinal column, picked up the dog's tail, and thus soliloquized: "This is (hic) unfortunate! Never before knowed or suspected I had a tail till I go and fall down and break it off. Might made a (hic) fortune 'zibiten' myself as a man with tail. There'd bin millions in it—millions (hic) in it. Jis my luck. Whenever I get a good thing it's always gone before I (hic) find it out."