her drawn and anxious young face towards the cottage door, just if her blind mother could see her action.

It is probable that the old woman divined the longing glance from the half turned towards the door. It was are just in time." a habit these two women had acquired. They constantly looked towards the door for the arrival of one who stone step. He was like an actor called never came through the long summer days, through the quiet winter evenings; moreover, they rarely spoke of other things, this arrival was the topic of their lives. And now the old woman's life was drawing to a close, as herself felt it, and her daughter knew

There was in both of them a subtle sense of clinging. It was hard to die turning into the little passage, led the without touching the reward of a wondrous patience. It was cruel to deprive the girl of this burden, for in most burdens there is a safeguard, in all a duty, and in some the greatest happiness allotted to human existence.

It was no new thing this waiting for the scapegrace son; the girl had grown up to it, for she would not know her brother should she meet him in the street. Since sight had left the upon this hope.

He had left them eighteen years before in a fit of passionate resentment against his father, whose only fault had been too great an indulgence for the son of his old age. Nothing had anything had been good enough. Educated at a charity school himself, the simple old clergyman held the mistaken view that no man can be eduated above his station.

There are some people who hold this longer. Strikes, labor troubles, and the difficulties of domestic service; socalled gentleman farmers, gentleman shop keepers and lady milliners-above all, a few colonies peopled by university failures, will teach us in time that to educate our sons above their station is to handicap them cruelly in the race of life.

Stephen Leach was one of the early victims to this craze. His father, having risen by the force of his own will and the capabilities of his own mind from the people to the Church, held, as | such men, do, that he had only to give his son a good education to insure his career in life. So everything—even to the old parson's sense of right and wrong-was sacrificed to the education, submitted gravely to this maternal inof Stephen Leach at public school and university. Here he met and selected for his friends youths whose futures were ensured, and who were only passing through the formula of an educawere unfit for the snug government appointment, living, or inheritance of a more substantial sort that might be waiting for them. Stephen acquired their ways of life without possessing ing to ruin for the little country rectory. Not having been a university man himself, the rector did not know that at Oxford or Cambridge, as in the army, one may live according to one's tastes. Stephen Leach had expensive tastes, and he unscrupulously traded on his father's ignorance. He was good-looking, and had a certain brilhancy of manner which "goes down" well at the 'varsity. Everything was against him, and at last the end came. At last the rector's eyes were opened, and when a narrow-minded man's eves are once opened he usually becomes stony at the heart. Stephen Leach left England, and be-

fore he landed in America his father had departed on a long journey. The send back the little sums of money saved by his mother in her widowhood, and gradually his letters ceased. It was known that he was in Chili, and there was war going on there, and yet the good old lady's faith never wa-

say; "he will surely come."

in her chair by the fire in winter, by things which some think they ought to answer. the door in summer. They had never say and do. house put aright.

Yet, he never came. A greater in- tive young doctor came a little later firmity came instead, and at last Joyce in the evening he shook his head. suggested that her mother should not | "Yes,' 'he said, "I see that she is get up in bad weather. They both asleep and quiet-too quiet. It is a knew what this meant, but the episode foretaste of a longer sleep; some old Drought makes every road a river of passed as others do, and Mrs. Leach people have it." was bedridden. Still she said:-

come."

some one coming along the road." bed, staring with her sightless orbs his side.

towards the window.

momentary. By the time she reached to follow.

the bed her mother had recovered con-

"Go," said the old lady breathlessly; 'go and let him in yourself." Down-stairs, on the door-step, the girl "Yes, mother, he will come. Of course found a tall man of thirty or therehe will come!" and the girl turned abouts, with a browner face than English suns could account for. He looked down into her eager eyes with strange questioning wonder.

> "Am I too late?" he asked in a voice which almost seemed to indicate a hope that it might be so. "No, Stephen," she answered. "But

and shuffled uneasily on the clean to seek. suddenly upon the stage, having no knowledge of his part. The return of cess. No one seemed desirous of himself or the past, but about Joyce husks or otherwise, and with whom he had eaten. The quiet dignity of the some lives, do without its object. She all the work and bear all the burden, a word, he asserted his authority as a prive him of any romance that might have attached itself to him. She ignored his half-proffered hand, and

> way up-stairs. Stephen Leach followed silently. He especially for the stairs; moreover, he had a certain burliness of walk, such in the open. There was a vaguelypained look in his blue eyes, as if they had suddenly been opened to his own first time I have slept in my clothes," short-comings. His attitude towards

Joyce was distinctly apologetic. When he followed the girl across the threshold of her mother's bedroom, the old lady was sitting up in bed, holding out trembling arms towards the door. old mother's eyes she had fed her heart | better what to do. He held his mother in his arms while she sobbed and murmured out her joy. He had no words but his arms meant more than his lips could ever have told.

It would seem that the best part of happiness is the sharing it with some

"Joyce," was the first distinct word been too great for dear Stephen-hardly | the old lady spoke, "Joyce, he has come at last. He has come! Come here, dear. Kiss your brother. This is my firstborn—my little Steve."

The young man had sunk upon his knees at the bedside, probably because it was the most convenient position. He did not second his mother's proposal with much enthusiasm. Altogether view still, but they cannot do so much he did not seem to have discovered much sympathy with the sister whom

he had left in her cradle. Joyce came forward and leaned over the bed to kiss her brother, while the old lady's hands joined theirs. Just as her fresh young lips came within reach, he turned his face aside, so that the kiss fell on barren ground on his tanned cheek.

"Joyce," continued the old lady feverishly, "I am not afraid to die now, for Stephen is here. Your brother will take care of you, dear, when I am

It was strange that Stephen had not spoken yet; and it was perhaps just as well, because there are occasions in life when men do wisely to keep silent. "He is strong," the proud mother

went on. "I can feel it. His hands are large and steady and quiet, and his arms are big and very hard." The young man knelt upright and

"Yes," she said, "I knew he would grow to be a big man. His little fingers were so strong—he hurt me sometimes. What a great moustache! knew you had been a soldier. And the skin of your face is brown and a little tion so that no one could say that they rough. What is this? what is this, Stephen, dear? Is this a wound "?

"Yes," answered the Prodigal, speaking for the first time. "That is a sword cut. I got that in the last war. I am a colonel in the Chilian army, or

was, before I resigned." The old lady's sightless eyes were their advantages, and the consequence fixed on his face as if listening for the was something very nearly approach- echo of another voice in his deep quiet

> "Your voice is deeper than your there-as a traitor. I could not tell her father's ever was," she said; and all the while her trembling fingers moved lovingly over his face, touching the deep cut from cheek-bone to jaw with soft inquiry. "This must have been very near, your eye, Stephen. Promise me, dear, no more soldiering."

"I promise that," he replied, without

raising his eves. Such was the home-coming of the Prodigal. After all, he arrived at the that might be altered in this world, but sometimes, by a mere chance, things ne'er-do-well had the good grace to come about rightly. And yet there was something wrong, something subtle, which the dying woman's duller senses failed to detect. Her son, her Stephen, was quiet, and had not much to say for himself. He apparently had the habit of taking things as they came. There was no enthusiasm, but rather "He will come, Joyce," she would a restraint in his manner, more especially towards Joyce.

And somehow it came to be an un- The girl noticed it, but even her small derstood thing that he was to come in experience of human kind had taught face with his honest soft blue eyes, she the afternoon when they were all ready her that large, fair-skinned men are failing to meet his glance. for him-when Joyce had clad her often thus. They are not "de ceux qui pretty young form in a dark dress, and s'expliquent," but go through life placwhen the old lady was up and seated idly, leaving unsaid and undone many

imagined his arrival at another time. After the first excitement of the re- announced quietly, and then he closed It would not be quite the same should turn was over it became glaringly ap- the door behind him. he make a mistake and come in the parent that Stephen had arrived just morning, before Joyce had got the in time. His mother fell into a happy sleep before sunset; and when the ac-

For the first time Joyce's courage "He will come, Joyce! He will surely seemed to give way. When she had been alone she was brave enough, but And the girl would go to the window | now that her brother was there, woand draw aside the curtain, looking man-like, she seemed to turn to him cholera; if grain or vegetables, he is down the quiet country road towards with a sudden fear. They stood side reminded that the bubonic pest, which by side, near the bed, and the young is the fatal "little sickness" of Bombay, "Yes, mother, he will come!" was her doctor involuntarily watched them. chiefly affects vegetarians. Fish is usual answer; and one day she gave a Stephen had taken her hand in his with forbidden by taste as well as by prudlittle exclamation of surprise and al- that silent sympathy which was so ence. Milk must be rigorously esnatural and so eloquent. He said noth- chewed, and butter is not less baneful, apologized to the audience, and said this might result in such increase of 'Mother," she exclaimed, "there is ing, this big sun-tanned youth; he did Bread and tea are both poor in India, not even glance down at his sister, who and water is always dangerous. The

The doctor knew something of the Thus they waited. The man stopped history of the small family thus moopposite the cottage, and the two mentarily united, and he had always women heard the latch of the gate. feared that if Stephen Leach did re-Then Joyce, turning, saw that her turn it would only kill his mother. This, mother had fainted. But it was only indeed, seemed to be the result about bright young faces can appropriately matter didn't end there for the news- tween 30,000 and 40,000 barrols were go with that style of apparel.

Presently the doctor took his leave He was a young man engaged in getting together a good practice, and in his own interest he had been forced to give up waiting for his patients to fin-

ish dving. "I am glad you are here," he said to Stephen, who accompanied him to the door. "It would not do for your sister to be alone; this may go on for a couple of days."

It did not go on for a couple of days, but Mrs. Leach lived through that night in the same semi-comatose state. change in the girl's tone, for she, too, mother cannot live much longer. You The two watchers sat in her room until supper-time, when they left their The young man made a hesitating mother in charge of a hired nurse, little movement with his right hand whose services Joyce had been forced

> After supper Stephen Leach seemed at last to find his tongue, and he talked in his quiet, almost gentle voice, such this prodigal was not a dramatic suc- as some big men possess, not about nesslike way, he proceeded to investigate the affairs of the dying woman, girl, who had remained behind to do and the prospects of her daughter; in seemed in some subtle manner to de- brother, and Joyce was relieved and happy to obey him.

> It is not in times of gaiety that friendships, are formed, but in sorrow or suspense. During that long evening this brother and sister suddenly became intimate, more so than months was rather large for the house, and of prosperous intercourse could have made them. At ten o'clock Stephen quietly insisted that Joyce should go as is acquired by men living constantly to bed, while he lay down, all dressed,

on the sofa in the dining-room. "I shall sleep perfectly; it is not the

he said simply. They went up-stairs together and told the nurse of this arrangement. Joyce remained for some moments by the bedside watching her mother's peaceful sleep, and when she turned she found Here Stephen Leach seemed to know | that Stephen had quietly slipped away. Wondering vaguely whether he had the fraternal good-night, she went to her own room.

The next morning Mrs. Leach was fully conscious, and appeared to be stronger; nevertheless, she knew that with me at my hotel, which ended in bridge between the island and the mainthe end was near. She called her two children to her bedside, and, turning her blind eyes toward them, spoke in broken sentences:-

"I am ready now—I am ready," she said. "Dears, I am going to your father-and-thank God, I can tell him that I have left you together. I always knew Stephen would come back. I found it written everywhere in the Bible. Stephen-kiss me, dear!"

kissed her. could see you-just once before I die. performance of a few feats of strength Joyce!" she added, suddenly turning to and endurance by the strongest man her daughter, who stood at the other in the world, who handled cannon balls side of the bed, "tell me what he is of 200 pounds weight as easily as a lady like. But-I know, I know-I feel it. could handle balls of yarn, Sebastian Listen! He is tall and spare, like his picked up the balls from the chest and father, His hair is black, like his laid them with a deep dull thud on the father's-it was black before he went platform. Then he placed a ball upon away. His eyes, I know, are dark- each shoulder, where he balanced it, almost black, He is pale-like a Span- while he lightly tossed a third to the iard!"

hair should be. She looked upon a crown to toe-and the quiet command of his lips made her say: "Yes, mother, yes."

For some moments there was silence. Joyce stood pale and breathless, wondering what this might mean. Then the dying woman spoke again:-

"Kiss me," she said. "I am going. Stephen first, my firstborn! And now Joyce—and now kiss each other—across tell-your-father."

With a last effort she raised her hands, seeking their heads. At first Joyce hesitated, then she leaned forward, and the old woman's chilled finwas the end.

Half an hour afterwards Joyce and this man stood facing each other in the little dining-room. He began his explanation at once. "Stephen," he said, "was shot-out

that! I did not mean to do this, but what else could I do?" He paused, moved towards the door

with that same strange hesitation which she had noticed on his arrival. At the door he turned to justify himself:-"I still think," he said gravely, "that

it was the best thing to do. Joyce made no answer. The tears stood in her eyes. There was someright moment in the afternoon, when thing very pathetic in the distress of the house was ready. It sometimes this strong man, facing, as it were, an does happen so in real life, and not emergency of which he felt the delionly in books. There is a great deal cacy to be beyond his cleverness to

handle. "Last night," he went on, "I made all the necessary arrangements for your future—just as Stephen would have made them-as a brother might have done. I—he and I were brother-officers in a very wild army. Your brotherwas not a good man. None of us were."

His hand was on the door. "He asked me to come to tell you," he added. "I shall go back now." They stood thus: he watching her

"May I come back again?" he asked suddenly.

She gave a little gasp, but made no "I will come back in six months," he

-Henry Seton Merriman.

AN UNPLEASANT PLACE.

India is a very uncomfortable country. This year is worse than common. dust; other rivers are dried up. Grain ance waddled into the ring, and drank kets there have been overstocked at is poor, as well as scarce, and garden products are sapless. If the traveler eats meat or fruit he is threatened with The old lady was already sitting up in stood small, soft-eyed, and gentle at only good and sure thing is whiskey.

METHOD IN IT.

bright colors in dress? She—Because she has read that only

SOME GOOD STORIES TOLD BY THE FAMOUS DAN RICE.

Relates How Mis Struggles to Be Truthful Were Often Foiled By His Assistant Manager.

There are tricks in all trades, and I suppose the circus business is included in the category, said Dan Rice, the veteran clown and showman. In all my career I guarded against impostures and frauds of all kinds, well knowing that I had a reputation to maintain, but in spite of all my strenuous efforts my agents would occasionally trick me, and succeeded in cleverly humbugging the learning whether he had lived upon and the future. In a deliberate, busi- public, which, as all showmen know, loves to be humbugged. One instance of the kind in particular occurs to my mind.

It was while playing the Eastern there. States in the early 50s that I picked up Bill Turner, who, I am safe in saying, was the shrewdest showman I ever saw, but he was unscrupulous, and as ingenious as he was unscrupulous. Bill | completely around it. But it looks was a likely-looking young Yankee, smart and active, and quickly rose from one position to another until he became assistant manager of my circus, not much larger than an ordinary vil-At Newburyport, Mass., Sig. Gustivo, lage Hooryard. A child could almost the Italian Samson, otherwise Bill throw a stone across it. Smith, of Bennett's Mills, N.J., who had been astonishing circus-goers by his ago a reckless bird-hunter, tempted by prodigious feats of strength, got ang- the eggs of the numberless sea gulls ry at something and deserted the show. Which whitened the top of this giant

intentionally solved her difficulty, as to ment for he had been widely advertised promise of a cow-a characteristically and I had no one to take his place. It | Celtic reward-actually succeeded in was at this juncture that Bill Turn- | scaling the almost perpendicular wall er appeared and sought an interview of rock and establishing a sort of rope my engaging, at \$100 a week, Don Se- land. When he had driven his stakes bastian, the Spanish man of iron, whose specialty was toying with LARGE CANNON BALLS.

Turner was engaged at a moderate salary as attendant on Don Sebastian, prompted by mere bravado, certain it who was as bright a looking Irishman as I ever saw. The engagement began at an afternoon performance, when it The man leaned over the bed and took four men to carry Sebastian's chest containing four cannon balls into the "Ah!" she sighed, "how I wish I ring. The ringmaster announced the Joyce, looking across the bed with it in its descent. The audience went slow horror dawning in her face, wild over his performance, and mainlooked into a pair of blue eyes beneath | fested their enthusiastic appreciation, tawny hair, cut short as a soldier's in a tremendous outburst of applause as he ran lightly from the ring. I was man big, broad, fair-English from more than satisfied with his success.

Don Sebastian proved to be one of the strong drawing cards of my circus for several weeks, when to my surprise, I one day noticed that when he laid the balls upon the platform the sound of their fall did not ring out until a suspiciously long time afterwards. at once realized that there was fraud concealed in the strong man's performance; that the heretofore unrivaled rethe bed! I want to hear it-I want to putation of my circus was at stake, and so at once quietly began an investigation, with the result that the Spanish iron man was satisfactorily proven

to be a rank fraud. The cannon balls proved to be made gers pressed their lips together. That of rubber, and were inflated with air,

LIKE FOOTBALLS.

The dull, deep thud which resounded when the balls touched the platform were made with a heavy hammer in the hands of an accomplice behind the curtain. I felt outraged at the deception, and sorry for the duped public, and hauled Turner vigorously over the coals, while Don Sebastian was reduced

in rank and made a candy butcher. Had I known that Turner was a party to the deception, said the old showman, earnestly, I would have immediately discharged him. In view of the subsequent events P concluded that Turner was the leader in the iron man fraud. Upon entering a Kentucky town, after a few days' besence from the show, I found one of our most extensively-advertised attractions to be the Great Hooded Python of the Amazon, ever in captivity." It was further represented that so powerful and venemous was this reptile, it was necessary to keep the monster constantly under the influence of opiates. Upon entering the circus I found a great crowd of people viewing the python, which was coiled in apparently deep slumber, loathsome reptile, 8 inches through. Turner satisfactorily accounted for its presence, and it drew crowds until accidently discovered that it was clev-

ed with sawdust. In calmly looking back now over the years I can plainly see that Bill Turner lacked conscientious scruples, said the

THE INEBRIATE BEAR,

ance. It was somewhere in the South | try. work of whisky.

papers got hold of the affair, and vig- shipped from Halifax.

orously denounced me, and that was the first stain ever cast upon my character as a moral showman. "How did you settle with Bill Tur-

ner ?" Col. Rice was asked. "Discharged him at once," was the reply. "He wandered to the West, and became a missionary or something or other among the Indians."

QUEER SHEEP PASTURE.

On Top of a Rock in the Shetland Islands Islands-Sheep Reach It by Cable.

Ponies are not the only things for which the Shetland Islands are famous. They exhibit also some startling and picturesque arrangements in rocks, one of the most remarkable examples of which lies off the southeast coast of Bressay, and is known as the Noss. It is famous, not only for the peculiarity of the formation, but also for a strange and dangerous custom which prevails

The Noss is called an island, and it answers to the definition, since it is certainly an extremely solid "body of land" and the bleak northern sea foams more like a huge black "stand-pipe," for it is a cylindrical column 160 feet high, its flat top having an area

It is said that more than 200 years That put me in a serious predica- column, and further influenced by the and secured the ropes, his friends entreated him to be the first to

TRY THE NEW DEVICE. But whether he had shrewd suspicions as to its safety, or whether he was is that he refused, and chose rather to return by the same perlious track by which he had come.

But as he was slowly and painfully tolling down from the dizzy height, his foot slipped, he lost his hold, and then—there was no one to claim the promised crow, but the sea claimed one more victim.

Nevertheless, the fruit of his bold endeavor remained, and it is still there to substantiate the story, for the bridge of rope between Bressay and the Noss is still maintained. The canny Scotch farmer, whose means of existence in these bleak isles are not calculated to top of the tent and gracefully caught excite envy, saw that there was a bit of good pasture on this summit; so he made a kind of wooden chair or cradle just large enough to hold a man and a sheep; and in this primitive way he still transports his flock, one at a time

over to this little browsing place. Of course not many sheep can be taken over, for more than a dozen would dangerously crowd the place. It is not guarded by an iron fence, and one can hardly imagine some witless lamb allowing his high, awkward legs to carry him over the edge; or perhaps a dignified old ram, intent upon maintaining discipline in the flock, mght make a plash at some offender and find himself, to his great surprise and horror, shooting off the face of the earth. But fortunately, sheep are, as a rule, placid creatures, not much given to vertigo or "nerves" or intelligence; so they probably promenade this dizzy pasture land quite oblivious of its

THE GREAT APPLE CROP.

A, Peculiarity of the Fruit-The Marketing of the Crop.

The largest of the estimates made months ago of last year's enormous apple crop on this continent have been more than verified as far as verification is possible. The crop was by far the greatest ever known. A peculiarity of many of the apples of this great crop is that they have ripened after picking more rapidly than apples usually do. Many apples are as ripe now as they ordinarily would be on March 1, 38 feet in length; the only specimen and this condition of things exists all over the United States and Canada. Greenings especially have ripened and scalded so that it has been necessary to crowd many of them on the market in advance of the time for which they were held. For example, many greenin a glass-inclosed cage, It was a great | ings that had been held for February have been put on the market and sold.

The stock of apples in growers' and dealers' hands is still very heavy, but erly made of linsey woolsey and stuff- | the tremendous consumption, due to the great supply and low prices, have cleaned up to a considerable degree the supplies put away last fall, and caused a reveteran clown with a smile, There newal of inquiry. There is said to be now a favorable prospect for a more satisfactory sale of the remainder of for instance. That was his contriv- the apples held throughout the coun-

that I learned such a creature was ex- | Subsequently the same state of affairs hibited in Dan Rice's show, and lav- exists in Europe. There the apple crop ishly advertised as "A great animated last fall was smaller than usual, but the temperance lecture approved by pulpit exports to Europe from American ports and press." I saw the attraction. It have been far greater than usual, and was a black bear that at every perform- | they have continued large; the marcopiously from a large bottle of cheap | times, and some American shipments whisky until thoroughly intoxicated, have resulted in loss to the shipper, when it would ludicrously stagger back | the proceeds not covering cost of shipto its cage. One day I was horrified ment. Extremely low prices have, to hear the drunken bear burst out however, helped in Europe as here to with a torrent of profanity, which was close up stocks, and there is now a refollowed by the maudlin singing of, newed inquiry for apples from the "Landlord, Fill the Flowing Bowl," | United Kingdom and from continental while the disgusting creature was led ports. A very extensive receiver and to a cage behind the curtain, I humbly shipper of American apples said that that there was no accounting for the shipments as to bring about another glut in European markets; but it was Without delay I went behind the cur- thought that of apples hardy enough tain, stripped the bearskin from the to export the supplies remaining are insulting drunkard and gave Ben Dole, not so great as to take at reasonable a canvasman, the worst licking of his prices the quantities that will be sent. He-Why does Miss Agely affect such life for his part in the most outrage- The exports of apples last week from ous fraud ever perpetrated upon an un- the United States and Canada amountsuspecting and gullible public. And the ed to about 75,000 barrels, of which be-