

Echo of the Past.

"Well, sir," said Farrier, after a lengthy pause. "I've taken you all over the premises, what do you think of my house?" His tones betrayed the keenest anxiety, for was not Mr. Butler his prospective father-in-law?

"I like the house," replied the old man, pompously, as he sat heavily in a big armchair, "how does business go on, eh?" Is the practice increasing?"

His inquiry, as Farrier well knew, was a command, and he replied eagerly enough:

"I can honestly say, sir, that it has surpassed my expectation. Somehow everyone seems to overwhelm me with kindness, mainly, I feel sure, due to your interest in me."

Mr. Butler solemnly inclined his head.

"Yes, yes; I may say I have done my best for you, because I felt from the beginning that you were a good and upright man. You might care to know that, before I permitted my daughter to be introduced to you, I made every inquiry concerning your character. Fortunately all was as I expected, and I am glad to give my consent to your engagement with my daughter and to welcome you to my family."

Could the worthy banker and pillar of the church have had but one glimpse of his future son-in-law's mind he would have somewhat altered his opinion concerning him, for an intense desire to shout or to laugh was agitating the younger man, whose nerves were at high tension.

"I trust in the future to continue to merit your encomiums, sir," Farrier gravely remarked, and then the interview so long dreaded, was at an end. "Thank God, he's gone!" he ejaculated, wiping his forehead and throwing himself into a chair; "it only shows how careful one has to be. I wonder how he wrote to for my character? Well, it's no good looking at the past for now it's dead and buried, and I'm on the high road to fortune. If only I could push on the marriage I'd be rid of the haunting fear that clogs me that some ghosts from the past may throw their shadows across me even now."

The door opened, and his housekeeper, demure of aspect, and 50 years of age, glided in. She suited the doctor well, but in his heart he loathed the sight of her, for he felt sure she spied on him.

"Would you mind, my going out for an hour, sir?" she asked.

"Certainly, Mrs. Capon, by all means."

In a few minutes the slamming of the door told him that, save for the surgery boy, he was alone. The afternoon was foggy, and, thankful to have an hour to himself, he basked in the warmth of the fire.

Suddenly the surgery bell rang, and with a subdued grumble he went to the door. A woman, dressed quietly in black, stood waiting in the gloom. As she entered, he caught sight of her face, and muttered an oath.

Muriel! Why do you come here?" he asked in sharp, agonized tones.

"Let me sit down, for I am tired out," she gasped, and reeled with exhaustion against the closed door.

Half-carrying and half-dragging her, the doctor succeeded in getting his half-unconscious burden into his consulting room, and gently laid her on his sofa. Finally, after a pause which seemed an eternity, she said: "Don't look at me so fiercely, Jack, it breaks my heart."

The man, sitting on the edge of the table, sullenly swung his legs backward and forward, while his heart thumped against his ribs.

"When you left London you were generous to me, I'll own, but nothing has gone well with me since. My little business went to rack and ruin, and many a time I've starved when I hadn't bread or the means of getting it. At last I could bear it no longer, and I have come to ask you to help me once more. I know I've done wrong in coming, Jack, but no one knows my errand, and I am unknown in this out-of-the-way place. Say you'll help me, Jack!"

How cheerfully in the past had Farrier forged the chain that seemed destined now to ruin and to degrade him! and how he loathed himself as he felt it dragging now at his heels!

"By all means, I'll help you, Muriel, but don't come here again. I've done with the past forever, and I'm going to be married." He went nervously to the door, opened it and closed it again. The woman feebly nodded.

"If anything of this were to come out, I should be utterly ruined; and after all, I've tried to be a good man."

Utterly absorbed in this unexpected blow, Farrier failed altogether to notice the increasing pallor of his visitor.

"Let me see, would thirty—"

A quivering whistle from outside sent the blood madly to his brain, for he knew that in another minute his fiancée would be knocking at his door.

"Come, Muriel! here come some visitors of mine—and you must hide—stay! get into this cupboard—there's lots of room, and I'll let you out shortly."

He tore open the door, thrust a small stool into the deep old-fashioned recess and tried to raise the unwelcome guest. The bell pealed and a loud knock

sounded through the house. Already he heard his boy running downstairs to open the front door and he felt frantic. Gently lifting the woman, who seemed still half fainting, he placed her on the stool and locked the door.

"You might have whistled back, Jack!" reproachfully exclaimed a tall, handsome girl, as she hurried into the room followed by a stout elderly lady.

"You look ill, dear, what's the matter?" she asked, tenderly, after she had shyly kissed him.

"I've had a weary day, little one, and I feel utterly done up. I'm afraid I cannot let you both stop, for I'm expecting several patients." His lips seemed strangely dry and his tongue almost refused its office.

"Now, look here, Jack! I'm your guardian angel now, and I insist on tea—don't you agree mother?"

At any other time Farrier could have smiled, but now, with his past in the old cupboard, the idea of merry making sickened him.

Laughing and talking, the two women helped the boy fetch the tea things, while the man tried to be animated, but failed utterly in the attempt.

He was trying to drink, when he heard with ears sharpened by anxiety a deep sigh coming from the cupboard, followed by a slipping, sliding noise. His heart nearly suffocated him until he saw that none but himself had heard it, and he laughed loud and long in a hysterical burst of merriment.

"I'm awfully sorry, little woman," he gasped when at last his ghastly merriment had ceased, "but the fact is I've been overdoing it lately, and I want a holiday, badly. Please forgive me." His face was white and drawn.

With tears in her eyes Miss Forrest looked at her lover.

"Very well, Jack, dear, we'll be off now, for it's close on 6, and I mean to try and persuade mammy and father to let us be married soon; so that you can get your holiday." She turned lovingly to her mother. "Doesn't he look ill mammy? We must look after him a bit more and see that he doesn't overdo it." "Good-by, Jack, darling, you'll come round to-morrow, won't you?"

In a few moments they were hurrying home through the dark streets, and Farrier was alone once more.

Half dreading what he was to find, he forced himself to unlock the cupboard door, which swung violently open. To his horror he saw in an instant that the still figure which had slipped down against the locked door, and which fell with such a sickening thud as it was opened, was but the dead body of one to whom in the past he had owed countless kindnesses. He stood as if turned to stone, while the loud ticking of the clock seemed almost unbearable. Then his numbed brain awoke again to life, and project after project flashed before him, while ever present in his thoughts were his servants and their virulent gossip.

To call in the police was, he knew, the wisest course, and to trust to his luck to extricate him from suspicion. Then doubts began their paralyzing mission. Suppose some one found out his acquaintance with the deceased, would not the fact that he had concealed the body during the visit of Miss Forrest be damning proof of his guilt? Would he be able to convince the world that the woman died from exhaustion and not from the close cupboard? Then he wondered if his housekeeper would come in, and with giant strength he raised the dead body and placed it upright in the armchair, where, with glassy, staring eyes, it seemed to accuse him with pitiless severity.

Time was slipping away, and still he had come to no decision, while every minute increased his risk.

Locking the door, he opened his side entrance and looked out. The evening was dark and foggy, and but few people were about, and it was only by the sound of their steps that he knew that. Opposite his side door was a long narrow court which divided two rows of houses built in the pre-sanitary past, and which ended in a cul-de-sac. He unlocked the door once more and turned down the gas, and took the body in his arms, and, darning everything, ran unsteadily across to the dark passage. Here, placing it in a sitting position against the wall, he left the dead woman alone! Gently closing the street door, he entered his consulting-room and turned up the gas, while the sweat stood in great beads on his face. Then on his hands and knees he searched for any evidence of the catastrophe, and found a glove and a bonnet pin. The glove he thrust deep into the fire and the pin he broke into pieces, and then with a low cry he dropped into his chair, for he heard the key grate in the outside door. Controlling himself by an effort which left him quivering, he waited.

"I've come back, sir," said the housekeeper, looking curiously around and noting the tea-things; "I'm sorry I was out."

"It didn't matter, Mrs. Capon; the lady I am to marry shortly—Miss Forrest—came with her mother. You needn't wait," he added, irritably.

And no one ever knew or connected his name with the tragedy of Culverstown, but never until the day of his death will Dr. Farrier cease to regret the past which, with its palpable cloud hangs over his mind.

NOT ALLOWED TO USE NICKNAMES.

Mrs. Gratebar! said little Susan Staybolt, looking in at the open door, my mother wants to know if you will lend her a little sarahratus.

Sarah Ratus! child! said Mrs. Gratebar. Why, for the land's sake, what on earth do you mean?

Well, I suppose you call it sallyratus, said little Susan, but you know my father doesn't let us use nicknames.

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

Sweet Girl—Papa, Mr. Poorchap proposed to me last night, and I told him I would marry him, if you were willing.

Father—Send him about his business.

Sweet Girl—He hasn't any.

About the House.

FOR THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

Here is a new version of ham and eggs. The end of boiled ham, or a ham that has passed the slicing stage, is sometimes difficult to dispose of without waste. Chop very fine a cupful; mix with equal quantities of cracker or fine bread crumbs and moisten to a soft paste with cream; put in a flat buttered dish, take a small, round-bottomed coffee cup and make depressions in the mixture, break an egg in each, dot the whole with bits of butter and place in a good oven until the eggs are set. Sufficient for four persons. The ham and cracker should be made hot before putting in the baking dish. New potatoes stewed in cream and light corn-meal gems are nice accompaniments.

Sautéed beef kidneys with rice muffins or pancakes is another favorite breakfast. Wash a fresh kidney and cut in thin slices, rejecting all the hard white portions; lay in cold water containing a spoonful of vinegar for half an hour, drain and dry in a cloth. Put butter the size of half an egg with a spoonful of dripping in a frying pan, and when very hot throw in the kidney, stir and shake for five minutes; season with salt and paprika, shake over a tablespoonful of flour, and when browned slightly add a half pint of stock or gravy of any kind. As soon as a thick, smooth gravy has formed, finish the seasoning with a teaspoonful of lemon juice and two of minced parsley.

Scrambled eggs and tomatoes are excellent, and so are eggs and chipped smoked beef, but a mixture of the three was voted the best of all. Have ready half a cup or two large tablespoonfuls of minced smoked beef and heat in a frying pan with one cup of drained canned tomatoes; season with paprika, a little very finely minced onion, which is best if colored in a teaspoonful of hot butter in the pan before adding the beef and tomatoes; when smoking hot, add twelve beaten eggs whipped with a tablespoonful of cream; stir until the eggs are cooked and pour over neat strips of toast. Sometimes a nice change is made by the addition of a little grated cheese stirred in with the eggs.

A Spanish omelet, which is not an omelet at all, is a great favorite with many. Peel with a sharp knife, without scalding, three good-sized firm and ripe tomatoes; slice them, with three small, sweet, green peppers from which the seeds have been removed, into a frying pan containing butter the size of an egg, that has been made hot; season with salt, pepper and a trifle of sugar or the veriest pinch of baking soda to correct the acid of the tomatoes. Do not stir, but shake the pan. When the peppers are cooked, which will be in about 15 minutes, slip into the pan from a shallow dish six eggs beaten as for scrambling; stir with a fork until the eggs are cooked. For variety's sake the eggs may be slipped whole, as for poaching, into the stewed tomatoes and peppers and cooked covered, until the eggs are set.

A savory way of serving remnants of a roast of veal, mutton or beef, which the family have dubbed a "left-over ragout," is made as follows: Fry in butter until tender and colored a light yellow, a cupful of sliced Spanish, Bermuda or young onions; add a cupful each of cold gravy and canned or fresh stewed tomatoes with paprika salt, and a pinch of curry powder, if curry is liked; stew fifteen minutes and add the sliced cold meat; when hot (through arrange a mound of nicely boiled rice in the center of a steak platter, lift out the slices of meat let them overlap around the rice, and pour the gravy over all. Sweet potatoes boiled, mashed, made into small cakes, dipped in egg and crumbs and fried brown, make a nice accompaniment if the meat be cold veal. For mutton or beef, white potato cakes or oysterplant fritters.

Indeed, to the ingenious housekeeper it is the left-overs themselves that will suggest a variety of dishes, the formula for which can be found in no cook-book principally because these articles must necessarily vary as to quantity and kind in each individual case.

USE AND ABUSE OF BROOMS.

The virtuous woman who, according to Solomon, "looketh well to the ways of her household," takes good care of her brooms, as of her other belongings, which in consequence last much longer than do those of her less careful neighbors.

An old broom well kept will sweep clean for a long time. In the first place, have a broom pocket and keep your broom therein. It will pay for its cost many times in the saving before its life of usefulness is over. A broom not in use should always be kept upside down, so that the straws fall outward. This keeps it in shape. In sweeping, use first one side and then the other. If you sweep always on the same side of your broom it will soon grow one-sided and have to be cast aside. When, however, a broom is not badly worn, only mashed out of shape, it can be straightened by wetting, pulling into shape and drying, bottom upward.

On sweeping day have a pailful of warm suds, made by dissolving a tablespoonful of pearlina in a pail two-thirds full of warm water, and rinse your broom off whenever it becomes dusty. A damp broom sweeps a dusty surface much better than one which is bone dry. Have a bag of heavy cotton flannel to fit your broom, with drawing-strings to tie around the handle, and use this over the broom for shellacked hard wood floors.

In pursuance of this idea a clever woman has patented a sweeper for such floors, fashioned something like a miniature garden roller, with the cylinder covered with cotton flannel in several thicknesses. Highly polished floors cannot be treated too tenderly. When done sweeping, pick up all the lint, etc., from the straws of the broom and rinse it before setting it away. It seems superfluous to say that separate brooms should be kept for different purposes—that the kitchen broom should never be used either for the pavement or for upstairs, yet most servants must be watched lest this be done.

Exact that your carpet sweeper shall be thoroughly cleaned on every sweeping day, and never put away dirty. Unhook it over a newspaper and take out every bit of dust, lint and dirt; then Swedish servants have a superstition that taking an old broom in a new house when the family moves brings misfortune, and will entreat that all such may be left behind with the rubbish to be cast on the dump.

POOR WAY TO ECONOMIZE.

"It is difficult to economize, and the most difficult part of it is to know in what possible direction to practice economy," said the wise woman. "Often those who do it will carry their economy to too great an extreme. The right way to do it is to get along without extras and use just what is necessary for everyday comfort. It does not mean that there should not be enough, or any deprivation of necessary comforts.

"There are women who when they economize, will do so at the wrong end. She comes to the conclusion that whenever she doesn't buy anything or cuts off an item of expense she is economizing. She will attend to the grocers' bills. That is well, but sometimes she will expend 20 cents' worth of time, and strength to save 5 cents. Then the same woman may economize on her luncheon. She will convince herself that eating a midday meal is a mere habit, and will dispense with it. She finds it all the easier to do so because her husband is not home at that meal, and of course she does not want him to go without enough to eat. She thinks that he needs more food than she does.

"The woman who practices this sort of economy will find that the deprivation impoverishes herself and her children mentally and physically. Often, in the long run, it is more expensive in actual cash, for the doctor has to be called in.

"The right way to economize is in extravagances, not in necessities."

DELIGHTFUL PERFUME.

An exquisite mixture for perfuming clothes that are to be packed away and which is said to keep out moths also is made as follows:

Pound to a powder one ounce each of cloves, caraway seed, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon and Tonquin beans and as much orris root as will equal the weight of the above ingredients put together. Little bags of thin muslin should be filled with this mixture and placed among the garments.

SEWING HINTS.

If you are in the habit of doing much sewing do not bite off the thread; use a pair of scissors. Apart from the fact that biting the cotton is injurious, the trick often results in a very sore mouth. When silk thread is bitten the danger is greater, for it is usual to soak the thread in acetate of lead, so the result may be very serious, and even lead to blood poisoning.

FIRST MAHOGANY BUREAU.

Many people suppose that the use of mahogany for the manufacture of furniture is very ancient. As a matter of fact, the first record we have of this rare wood is in 1695, when Sir Walter Raleigh repaired one of his ships with it in the port of Trinidad. The next we hear of mahogany is many years later, when an Englishman who was sailing from one of the West Indies used quite a lot of what appeared to him rough lumber for ballast, and when he arrived in England and found his brother building a house he gave (this apparently ill-favored timber to him for his house. When his brother turned the lumber over to his carpenters, they refused to use it, because it was so hard that it spoiled their tools; so its use for building that house was abandoned.

His wife, however, a short time after gave some of this wood to her cabinetmaker in order to have him make for her a candle box. He, too, complained of the hardness of the wood and its effect upon his tools. The candle box was finished at last, however, and it was so handsome, having taken on such a beautiful polish, that this box became quite a curiosity among the society people of that day; so much so that the lady's husband had the same cabinetmaker make him a bureau of the same wood. The bureau was so unusually beautiful that the cabinetmaker went regularly into the business of manufacturing bureaus, and made not only a reputation but a large fortune out of the business.

COULD NOT SHOOT.

Our Hunters Might Take a Lesson in Humanity From Pagans.

A Hindu looks upon the slaughter of an animal with the same dread and horror with which he would witness the taking of a life of a human being. It would be well for some of the hunters of our own country to learn from such pagans a lesson in humanity. Rev. B. Fay Mills tells the story of a hunter who employed as a decoy for deer a peculiarly constructed whistle, which closely imitated the voice of a young fawn calling its mother.

With his rifle in hand ready for instant action, he was one day blowing his whistle, when suddenly another deer thrust her head out of the bushes and looked straight toward him. There she stood, trembling with fear, yet looking this way and that in search of the little one, which she supposed to be in danger. The hunter said:

"As I looked into those eloquent eyes, anxiously glancing here and there with maternal fear, my heart melted. I could not shoot."

Young deer that have not been chased or fired at by hunters will frequently come very near to unarmed travellers. The writer has had a deer walk just in advance of the horse for some distance; and it is well known that wild deer often come into pastures and feed with the cows. To take advantages of this confidence seems very near to murder.

FAMOUS MADSTONE

Gave Sir Walter Scott Inspiration for "The Talisman."

The famous madstone is to be sold; and thereby hangs a tale. This strange bit of mineral which is said to have furnished Sir Walter Scott with his inspiration for "The Talisman," is now under lock and key in the Loudoun National Bank at Leesburg, Va.

At the December term of court the old stone, whose virtues have been heralded for a hundred years, will be sold in order to settle the estate of the late Mrs. Fred. This stone, whose properties are asserted by some to be merely of a superstitious nature, while others show them to be a scientific reality, is now awaiting the decision of a lawsuit.

The madstone is about the color of chocolate in tint, is two inches long by one inch broad, and half an inch thick. The facts regarding the madstone, as gathered by a lady visiting in Leesburg, are that it came over to Canada from Scotland in 1776, and has been religiously preserved as one of the most valuable relics of the age. It is able to cure the poison of a mad dog by application to the wound, adhering to the bite till the virus is entirely absorbed.

A SILENT COMPANION.

He is not my fellow student in the sense of attending the same educational institution as myself, and I have little knowledge of the source from which he derives his training. However, it is evidently one well adapted to his mental calibre. Nigger is, nevertheless, my friend and fellow-student; his face at all times expressing sympathy and feeling, and his superior intelligence leading him to take an interest in things of which others of his social position have no knowledge. He is ever near while I am busy with my studies, ready to assist me if occasion require, and to give his opinion on matters of importance. In fact, at this moment, from his position on my shoulder, he is critically examining my writing, and purring a tune of satisfaction with my description of him.

The most striking feature about this extraordinary being is that he is almost entirely devoid of color—no light spot breaks the blackness of his sombre coat. He has the ordinary size of a full-grown domestic cat, and, indeed many of his external qualities are common to all his race, but his mental attributes mark him as a cat among cats. His head is of unusual size; the phenological bumps of approbation, mirthfulness, love of home, being well developed; those of selfishness, destructiveness, and secretiveness being unusually small. As is the case with every aristocratic pussy, his brow is low and broad; his chubby face, good-natured; his round eye, well opened; his small mouth, well shaped. His large ears give evidence of the fact that his is an open-handed nature, if the expression may be applied to one of the lower order; and, although ill-natured people have said that his rather flat nose proved him a lazy and indolent cat, his firm chin, evincing great strength of character, entirely contradicts the statement.

Pussy has just jumped down from his elevated position, in quest of the mouse making itself heard in the wainscoting, and, as I should not like to hurt his feelings, I wish to state, while he is not watching, that my poor old cat is cross-eyed, and that some wicked boys, in default of other sport, one ill-fated day cruelly cut off his whiskers, thereby robbing him of much of his feline beauty. Not wishing Nigger to see these derogatory remarks, I shall close, before he returns, this ordinary attempt to describe an extraordinary cat.

In Italy 600,000 find employment in rearing silkworms.