The Miller and the Maid.

Across the heath and down the hill,
Aback of patient Dobbin,
The farmer's daughter rides to mill,
And mocks the thrush and robin.

For saddle she's a sack of grain,
She sidewise sits and chirrups;
A finger in old Dobbin's mane
Is good as forty stirrups.

The miller comes—a merry blade!
And doffs his hat and greets her—
"What wish you here, my pretty maid?"
"I've brought a sack of wheat, sir."

"And have you gold to give for grist?"
"Not I, we're poor, alack, sir;
But take your toll—a tenth, I wist—
From what is in my sack, sir."

He lifts her lightly from her seat,
And laughs—a merry miller!
"I cannot take my toll in wheat,
I must have gold or siller.

"But since you've brought no coin nor scripe,"
He smiles and fondly eyes her—
"I'll ask no toll but from your lips—
A kiss—who'll be the wiser!"

The maiden blushed and bowed her head
And with her apron fingered,
And pouted out her lips of red,
Where countless kisses lingered.

"A single kiss?" (She smiled in glee,
As one would say, I've caught you.)
My father said your toll would be
A tenth of what I brought you."

The mill stream shouted to the sands:
"He kissed the farmer's daughter!"
But the grim old wheel stretched out its hands
And spanked the saucy water.

In the Lane.

And art thou then, my heart, too cold,
Ever to leap with love again,
To feel the strong blood-torrent rolled
Through leaving breast and teeming brain?
Is it no more, my heart, for thee
Life's one unquestioned ecstasy?

Are faded quite those dim, far days
When music mothered every sound,
When up and down youth's happy ways
Fared glories in an eternal round?
Has chill of years killed every joy
That blossomed for the wandering boy?

These are the trees once known so well
We felt to them all but beknown;
Their very shadow we could tell
From others by the forest thrown.
The same glad songs from bush and bough—
As once we heard, we hear them now.

And these sweet flowers beneath my feet,
Their young eyes greet us as of yore.
The hope, there! will they think to meet
Her glance that shall not answer more?
To us alone it cannot be
They're looking up so tenderly.

This is the same gray path we took
Behind the slowly going day;
As they do now, the light leaves shook
When evening breezes blew this way;
And there's the glow upon the dome,
And here the cows are coming home.

Ah, no, good heart, thou still canst stir,
Still lives the love first felt they leap;
Still are we at the side of her
They laid away 'neath yonder steep.
Though clods be on her and a stone,
In the dear old lane we're not alone.

THE CHOICE OF THREE:

A NOVEL.

"Then follows the reply dated Maritzburg, 2nd February."

"Sir:

"'1. I have to direct you to convey to Lieutenant and Adjutant Kershaw, and the surviving members of the corps known as Alston's Horse, the high sense entertained by the Officer, etc., of the gallant conduct of that corps in the face of overwhelming odds at Isandhlwana on the 22nd of January.

"'2. It is with deep regret that the Officer, etc., learns of the heavy misfortune which has befallen Lieutenant Kershaw. He wishes to express his appreciation of the way in which that officer handled the remnants of his corps, and to inform him that his name will be forwarded to the proper quarter for the expression of Her Majesty's pleasure with regard to his services.

"'3. I am directed to offer you a commission in any of the volunteer corps now on service in the campaign.

'I have, etc.,

(Signed) "'CHIEF OF THE STAFF.'

Then comes a letter from Sergeant-Major Jones, gratefully acknowledging the expression of the high opinion of the Officer, etc., and declining the offer of a commission in another volunteer corps.

Next is a private letter from the Officer, etc., offering to recommend Sergeant-Major Jones for a commission in the army.

And, finally, a letter from Sergeant-Major Jones to Officer, etc., gratefully declining the same.

Ernest looked up sharply. The *raison d'entre* of the movement was gone, for he could no longer see, but the habit remained.

"Why did you decline the commission, Jeremy?"

Jeremy moved uneasily, and looked through the little cabin window.

"On general principles," he answered presently.

"Nonsense! I know you would have liked to go into the army. Don't you remember, as we were riding up to the camp at Isandhlwana, you said you proposed that if the corps did anything, we should try and work it?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"Well, I said so!"

"I don't quite follow you, Jeremy."

"My dear Ernest, you can't go in for a commission now, can you?"

Ernest laughed a little bitterly.

"What has that to do with it?"

"Everything. I am not going to leave you in your misfortune to go and enjoy myself in the army. I could not do it; I should be wretched if I did. No, old fellow, we have gone through a good many things side by side, and, please God, we will stick to each other to the end of the chapter.

Ernest was always easily touched by kindness, especially now that his nerves were shaken, and his heart softened by misfortune, and his eyes filled with tears at Jeremy's words. Putting out his hand, he felt about for Jeremy's, and, when he had found it, grasped it warmly.

"If I have troubles, Jeremy, at least I have a blessing that few can boast—a true friend. If you had gone with the rest at Isandhlwana yonder, I think that my heart would have broken. I think we do bear one another a love that 'passeth the love of a woman.' It would not be worth much if it didn't, and that is one thing. I wonder if Absalom was a finer fellow than you are, Jeremy; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. Your hair would not weigh two hundred shekels after the king's weight though" (Jeremy wore his hair cropped like a convicts); "but I would back you to throw Absalom over your shoulder hair and all."

It was his fashion to talk nonsense when affected by anything, and Jeremy knowing it, said nothing.

Just then there came a knock at the door, and who should enter but Mazook, but Mazook transformed! His massive frame, instead of being clothed in the loose white garments he generally wore, was arrayed in a flannel shirt with an enormous stuck-up collar, a suit of pepper-and-salt reach-me-downs several sizes too small for him, and a pair of boots considerably too large for his small and shapely feet, for, like those of most Zulus of good blood, his hands and feet were extremely delicately made.

To add to the incongruity of his appearance, on the top of his hair, which was still done in ridges Zulu fashion, and decorated with long bone snuff-spoons, was perched an extremely small and rakish-looking billycock hat, and in his hand he carried his favorite and most gigantic knobstick.

On opening the cabin-door he saluted in the ordinary fashion, and coming in squatted down on his haunches to await orders, forgetting that he was not in all the freedom of his native dress. The results were most disastrous. With a crack and a bang the reach-me-down trousers, already strained to their utmost capacity, split right up the back. The astonished Zulu flew up into the air, but presently discovering what had happened, sat down again, remarking that there was "much more room now."

Jeremy burst out laughing, and having sketched his retainer's appearance for the benefit of Ernest, told him what had happened.

"Where did you get these things from, Mazook?" asked Ernest.

Mazook explained that he had bought the rig-out for three pounds ten from a second-class passenger as the weather was growing cold.

"Do not wear them again. I will buy you clothes as soon as we get to England. If you are cold wear your great-coat."

"Koos!" (chief.)

"How is 'The Devil?'" Ernest had brought the black stallion on which he had escaped from Isandhlwana home with him.

Mazook replied that the horse was well, but playful. A man forward had been teasing him with a bit of bread. He had waited till that man passed under his box, and had seized him in his teeth, lifted him off the ground by his coat, and shaken him severely.

"Good! Give him a bran mash tonight."

"Koos!"

"And so you find the air cold. Are you not regretting that you came? I warned you that you would regret."

"Ou ka Inkoos" (oh, no, my chief), the Zulu answered in his liquid native tongue. "When first we come upon the smoking ship, and went out on to the black water out of which the white men rise, and my bowels twisted up and melted within me, and I went through the agonies of a hundred deaths, then I regretted. 'Oh, why,' I said in my heart, 'did not my father kill me rather than bring me on to this great moving river? Surely if I live I shall grow like a white man from the whiteness of my heart, for I am exceedingly afraid, and have cast all my inside forth.' All this I said, and many more things which I can not remember, but they were dark and heavy things. But behold, my father, when my bowels ceased to melt, and when new ones had grown to replace those which I had thrown forth, I was glad, and did eat much beef, and then did I question my heart about this journey over the black water. And my heart answered and said: 'Mazooku, son of Ingoluvu, of the tribe of the Maquilisini, of the people of the Amazulu, you have done well. Great is the chief whom you serve; great is he on the hunting path; great was he in the battle; all the Undi could not kill him, and his brother the lion (Jeremy) and his servant the jackal (Mazooku), who hid in a hole and then bit those who digged. Oh, yes, he is great and his breast is full of valor; you have seen him strike the Undi down; and his mind is full of the white man's knowledge and discretion; you have seen him form the ring that spat out fire so fast that his servants the horsemen were buried under the corpses of the Undi. So great is he, that the "heaven above" smelled him out as "tagati" (a wizard) and struck him with their lightning, but could not kill him then. And so now, my father wanders and shall wander in the darkness, seeing not the sun or the stars, or the flashing of spears, or the light that gathers in the eyes of brave men as they close in battle, or the love which gleams in the eyes of women. And how is this? Shall my father want a dog to lead him in his darkness? Shall his dog Mazooku, son of Ingoluv, prove a faithless dog, and desert the hand that fed him, and the man who is braver than himself? No, it shall not be so, my chief, and my father. By the head of Chaka, whither thou goest thither will I go also, and where you build your kraal there shall I make my hut. 'Koos! Baba!'"

And having saluted after the dignified Zulu fashion, Mazook departed to tie up his split trousers with a bit of string. There was something utterly incongruous between his present appearance and his melodious and poetical words, instinct as they were with qualities which in some respects make the savage Zulu a gentleman, and put him above the white Christian, who for the most part regards the "nigger" as a creature beneath contempt. For there are lessons to be learned even from Zulu "niggers," and among them we may reckon those taught by a courage which laughs at death; an absolute fidelity to those who have the right to command it, or the qualities necessary to win it; and in their raw and unconverted state, perfect honesty and truthfulness.

"He is a good fellow, Mazook," said Ernest when the Zulu had gone, "but I fear that one of two things will happen to him. Either he will get homesick and become a nuisance, or he will get civilized and become drunken and degraded. I should have done better to leave him in Natal."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ERNEST'S EVIL DESTINY.

About nine o'clock on the morning following Mazooku's oration a young lady came running up the stairs of the principal Plymouth hotel, and burst into a private sitting-room, like a human bomb-shell of attractive appearance, somewhat to the astonishment of a bald-old gentleman who was sitting at breakfast.

"Good gracious, Dorothy! have you gone suddenly mad?"

"O Reginald, the Conway Castle is nearly in, and I have been to the office and got leave for us to go off in the launch; so come along, quick!"

"What time does the launch leave?"

"A quarter to ten exactly."

"Then we have three quarters of an hour."

"Oh, please, Reginald, be quick; it might go before you know."

Mr. Cardus smiled, and, rising, put on his hat and coat, "to oblige" Dorothy, he said, but, as a matter of fact, he was as excited as she was. There was a patch of red on each of his pale checks, and his hand shook.

In a quarter of an hour they were walking up and down the quay by the Custom-House, waiting for the launch to start.

"After all these years," said Mr. Cardus, "and blind."

"Do you think that he will be very much disfigured, Reginald?"

"I don't know, dear; your brother said nothing about it."

"I can hardly believe it; it seems so strange to think that he and Jeremy should have been spared out of all those people. How good God is!"

"A cynic," replied Mr. Cardus with a smile, "or the relations of the other people might draw a different conclusion."

But Dorothy was thinking how good God was to her. She was dressed in pink that morning, and

"Oh, she looked sweet
As the little pink flower that grows in the wheat."

Dorothy neither was, nor ever would be, a pretty woman, but she was essentially a charming one. Her kindly, puzzled face (and, to judge from the little wrinkles on it, she had never got to the bottom of the questions which contracted her forehead as a child), her steady blue eyes, her diminutive, rounded form, and, above all, the indescribable light of goodness which shone around her, like a halo, all made her charming. What did it matter if the mouth was a little wide, or the nose somewhat "tiptilted?" Those who can look so sweet are able to dispense with such fleshly attributes as a Grecian nose or chiseled lips. At the least, they will have the best of it after youth is past; and let me remind you, my young and lovely reader, that the longer and dustier portion of life's road winds away toward the pale horizon of our past, on the farther side of the grim mile-post marked "30."

But what made her chiefly attractive was her piquante, taking manner, and the "chic" of her presence. She was such a perfect lady.

"All aboard, if you please," broke in the agent. "Run in the gang-way!" and they were off toward the great gray vessel with a blue pennant at her top.

It was a short run, but it seemed long to Dorothy and the old gentleman with her. Bigger and bigger grew the great vessel, till at last it seemed to swallow up their tiny steamer.

"Ease her! Look out for the line there! Now haul away! Make fast!"

It was all done in an instant, and next moment they stood upon the broad white deck, amid the crowd of passengers, and were looking round for Ernest and Jeremy.

But they were not to be seen.

"I hope they are here," faltered Dorothy.

Mr. Cardus took his hat off and wiped his bald head. He too hoped that they were there.

At that moment Dorothy became aware of a great black man, clad in a white smock pulled on over a great-coat, and carrying a big spear and a kerrie in his hand, who was pushing his way toward them. Next moment he stood before them saluting vigorously.

"Koos!" he said, thrusting the spear into the air before Mr. Cardus' astonished nose.

"Inkosi Casa" (chieftainess), he repeated, going through the same process before Dorothy. "This way, master; this way, missie. The chief without eyes sent me to you. This way; the lion bring him now."

They followed him through the press toward the after part of the ship, while, giving up the unfamiliar language, he vociferated in Zulu (it might have been Sanskrit for all they knew.)

"Make way, you low people! make way for the old man with the shining head on whose brow sits wisdom, and the fair young maiden, the sweet rose-bud, who comes," etc.

At that moment Dorothy's quick eye saw a great man issuing from a cabin, leading another man by the hand. And then she forgot everything, and ran forward.

"O Ernest, Ernest!" she cried.

The blind man's cheek flushed at the music of her voice. He drew his hand from Jeremy's, and stretched out his arms toward the voice. It would have been easy to avoid them—one need never be kissed by a blind man—but she did not avoid them. On the contrary, she placed herself so that the groping arms closed around her with a cry of, "Dolly, where are you?"

"Here, Ernest, here!" and in another moment he had drawn her to him, and kissed her on the face, and she had returned the kiss. Oh, fie! Dorothy, fie!

Then she kissed Jeremy too, or rather Jeremy lifted her up two or three feet and kissed her—it came to the same thing. And then Mr. Cardus rung them both by the hand, wringing Ernest's the hardest, and Mazook stood by, and Zulu-fashion, chanted a little song of his own improvising, about how the chiefs came back to their kraal after a long expedition, in which they had, etc.—and how Wisdom in the shape of a shining-headed and ancient one, the husband without any doubt of many wives, and the father of at least a hundred children, etc.—and Beauty in the shape of a sweet and small one, etc., etc.; and finally they all went very near to crying, and dancing a fling on the quarter-deck together.

And then they all talked at once, and set about collecting their things in a muddle-headed fashion; and when these had been put in a pile, and Mazook seated, assegai and all, upon the top of them as a solemn warning to thieves (and ill would it have gone with the thief who dared to meddle with that pile), started off to inspect Ernest's great black horse, "The Devil."

And behold, Dorothy stroked "The Devil's" nose, and he, recognizing now sweet and good she was, abandoned his usual habits, did not bite her, but only whinied and asked for sugar. Then Ernest, going into the box with the horse, which nobody but he and Mazook were fond of taking liberties, felt down his flank till he came to a scar inflicted by an assegai, in that mad charge through the Undi, and showed it to them. And Dorothy's eyes filled with tears of thankfulness, as she thought of what the horse and its rider had gone through, and of the bleaching bones of those who had galloped by their side; and she would have liked to kiss Ernest again, only there was no excuse, so she only pressed his hand, feeling that the sorrow of the empty years which were gone was almost atoned for by this hour of joy.

Then they went ashore to the hotel, and sat together in the pleasant sitting-room which Dorothy had chosen, and made sweet with great bunches of violets (for she remembered that Ernest loved violets), and talked. At length Mr. Cardus and Jeremy went off to see about getting the things through the Custom-House, where they arrived to see Mazook keeping half a dozen gorgeous officials, who wanted to open a box, at bay with his knobsticks, and plastering them with offensive epithets which fortunately they did not understand.

"Doll," said Ernest, presently, "it is a beautiful day, is it not? Will you take me for a walk, dear? I should like to go for a walk."

"Yes, Ernest, of course I will."

"You are sure you do not mind being seen with a blind man; you must give me your hand to hold, you know."

"Ernest, how can you?"

Mind giving him her hand to hold indeed! thought Dorothy to herself, as she ran to put her bonnet on. Oh, that she could give it to him for always! And in her heart she blessed the accident of his blindness, because it had brought him so much nearer to her. He would be helpless without her, this fall, strong man, and she would be ever at his side to help him. He would not be able to read a book, or write a letter, or move from room to room without her. Surely she would soon be able so to weave herself into his life, that she would become indispensable to it! And then, perhaps—perhaps—and her heart pulsed with a joy so intense at the mere thought of what might follow, that it became a pain, and she caught her breath and leaned against the wall. For every fibre of her little frame was thrilled with a passionate love for this blind man whom she had lost for so many years, and now had found again; and in her breast she vowed that if she could help it she would lose him no more. Why should she? When he had been engaged to Eva, she had done her best for him and her, and bitterly had she felt the way in which he had been treated. But Eva had taken her own course, and was now no longer in the outward and visible running, whatever place she might still hold in the inward and spiritual side of Ernest's nature. Dorothy did not underrate that place; she knew well that the image of her rival had sunk too deep into his heart to be altogether dislodged by her. But she was prepared to put up with that. "One can't have everything you know," she said, shaking her wise little head at her own reflection in the glass, as she tied her bonnet-strings.

She was an eminently practical little person was Dorothy, and having recognized the "eternal verity" of the saying that half a loaf is better than no bread, especially if one happens to be dying of hunger, she made up her mind to make the best of the position. Since she could not help it, Eva would be welcome to the inward and spiritual side of Ernest, if only she could secure the outward and visible side; "for, after all, that is real and tangible, and there isn't much comfort in spiritual affection, you know," she said with another shake of the head.

In short, the arguments which proved so convincing to her were not unlike those that carried conviction home to the gentle breast of Mr. Plowden, when he made up his mind to marry Eva in the teeth of her engagement to, and love for, Ernest; but, putting aside the diversity of the circumstances, there was this difference between them; Mr. Plowden recognized no higher spiritual part at all; he did not believe in that sort of things; he contracted for Eva as he would have contracted to buy a lovely animal, and when he had gotten the given quantity of flesh and blood he was satisfied. Of the beautiful soul which the human casket held, and which loathed and hated him, he had no account. He had got the woman, what did he care about the woman's soul? Souls, and spiritual parts, and affinities with what is good and high, and the divinity of love, etc., etc., were capital things to preach about, but they did not apply to the affairs of every-day life. Besides, if he had been asked, he would have given it as his candid opinion that women did not possess any of these things.

There are hundreds of educated men who think like Mr. Plowden, and there are thousands of educated ladies who give color to such opinions by their idle, aimless course of life, their utter inappreciation of anything beyond their own little daily round, and the gossip of the dozen or so of families who for them make up what they call society and the interests of existence; and by their conduct in the matter of marriage. Truly the great factor in the lowering of women is woman herself. But what does it matter? In due course they have their families, and the world goes on!

Now Dorothy did believe in all these things, and she knew what an important part they play in human affairs, and how they dominate over and direct finer minds. So did she believe in the existence of the planets, and in the blooming of roses in walled gardens; but she could not get near to know the beauties of the stars, or to see the opening rose-buds, so she had to satisfy herself with the light that poured from the one, and the scent that came from the other. When one is star-stricken, or mad in the matter of roses, that is better than nothing.

And so, taking Ernest by the hand, she led him through the crowded streets with tender care, and on to the quiet Hoe. And as they passed, the people turned to look at the handsome young fellow who was blind, and some thought that they would not mind a little blindness if it led to being personally conducted by so sweet a girl.

Soon they reached the gardens.

"Now tell me about yourself, Ernest. What have you been doing all these long years, besides growing bigger and handsomer, and getting that hard look about the mouth?"

"A great many things, Doll. Shooting, fighting, playing the fool."

"Pshaw! I know all that, or at least I can guess it. What have you been doing in your mind, you know?"

"Why, thinking of you, of course, Doll."

"Ernest, if you talk to me like that, I will go away, and leave you to find your own way home. I know well of whom you have been thinking every day and every night. It was not of me. Now, confess it."

"Don't let's talk of her, Doll. If you talk of the devil, you know, you sometimes raise him; not that he requires much raising in this instance," he laughed, bitterly.

"I was so sorry for you, Ernest dear, and I did my best; indeed I did. But I could do nothing with her. She must have been off her head, or the man and Florence had some power over her; or perhaps she never really cared for you; there are some women, you know, who seem very sweet, but cannot truly care for anybody except themselves. At any rate she married, and has a family of children, for I have seen their births in the paper.

"O Ernest, when I think of all you must have suffered out there about that woman, I cease to be sorry for her, and begin to hate her. I am afraid you have been very unhappy, Ernest, all these years."

"Ah, yes, I have been unhappy sometimes—sometimes I have consoled myself. There, what is the use of telling lies?—I have always been unhappy, and never so much so as when I have been in process of consolation. But you should not hate her, poor girl; perhaps she has her bad times too; only, fortunately, you women cannot feel, at least not much—not like us, I mean."

"I don't know about that," put in Dorothy.

"Well, I will qualify my remark—most women. And, besides, it is not quite her fault; people can not help themselves much in this world. She was appointed to be my evil destiny, that is all, and she must fulfil her mission. All my life she will probably bring me trouble, till at last the fate works itself out. But, Dolly, my dear, there must be an end to these things, and Nature, always fertile in analogies, teaches us that the end of sorrow will be happiness. It is from the darkness of night that day is born, and ice and snow are followed by the flowers. Nothing is lost in the world, as old Alston used to say, and it is impossible to suppose that all the grief and suffering are alone wasted; that they are the only dull seed that will not, when their day comes, bloom into a beautiful life. They may seem to be intangible things now; but after all, the difference between tangible and intangible is only a difference of matter. We know that intangible things are real enough, and perhaps in a future state we shall find that they are the true immortal parts. I think so myself."

"I think so too."

"Well, then, Doll, you see, if once one gets the mastery of that idea, it makes the navigation easier. Once admit that everything works to an end, and that end a good and enduring one, and you will cease to call out under your present sorrows. But it is hard for the little boy to learn to like being whipped, and we are all children, Doll, to the end of our days."

"Yes."

"And you see, Doll, for some reason I have been picked out to catch it pretty warm. It does seem rather hard that a woman like that should be allowed to turn all the wine of a man's life into vinegar; but so it often is. Now, if she had died, that would have been bad enough; but I could have borne it, and bided my time to join her. Or if she had ceased to love me, and learned to love the other man I think I could have borne that, because my pride would have come to my rescue, and because I know that the law of her affections is the only law that the heart of woman really acknowledges, however many others she may be forced to conform to; and that a woman of refined nature who has ceased to love you, and is yet forced to live with you, is in consequence a thing worthless to you, and dishonored in her own eyes. Besides, I ask no favor in such matters. I have no sympathy, as a general rule, with people who raise a howl because they have lost the affection of their wives or sweethearts, for they should have been able to keep them. If any man could have cut me out, he was welcome to do so, for he would have proved himself the better man, and, as for the lady, I would not have her without her heart. But I gather that was not quite the case with Eva."

"Oh, no, indeed; at least she said that she was wretched."

"Exactly as I thought. Well, now, you will understand that it is rather hard. You see I did love her dearly, and it is painful to think of this woman, whose love I won, and who by that divine right and by the law of nature should have been my wife, as forced into being the wife of another man, however charming he may be; and I hope for her sake that he is charming. In fact, it fills me with a sensation I can not describe."

"Poor Ernest!"

(To be continued.)

FARM AND GARDEN.

Working the Garden—Spring Suggestions—Use of Fertilizers.

Peas may be hastened by sprouting the seed in a box of moist sand before planting.

Do not use fertilizers too lavishly on potted plants. A small quantity applied frequently is better than a full allowance at one time.

Never use whitewash in the stables or hen-houses unless carbolic acid is added to it, as a single application of the mixture is better than two or three applications of the whitewash alone.

The silver maple is a rapid-growing tree, often attaining a diameter of ten inches in ten years. It also thrives well on sandy soils, requires but little care, and has few insect enemies.

Make your hot-bed frames in sections, so that they can be stored away when not in use. It is much better than allowing them to remain on the ground to become useless.

The best place for your wood ashes is around your peach trees. The effect may be easily noticed the first season after the ashes shall have been applied.

It is an easy matter to have a garden so arranged as to cultivate it with a horse-hoe, but the best results are usually obtained on small plots well manured and worked by hand.

A few boxes in the house filled with earth, and planted to tomatoes, lettuce and cabbage, will be found a cheap mode of securing early plants. Now is the time to begin, as they will not grow too rapidly when the seeds have sprouted.

If potted plants be watered around the roots with lime-water the angle-worms will be destroyed in the soil. The caustic qualities of the lime-water kill all soft-skinned worms. Only a small amount of the lime-water is necessary.

Clean out the old stalks of the carnations, sprinkle the soil and plants with lime-water and clean off the space around them so as to permit of plenty of heat from the sun. They are well worth the small amount of labor required for bringing them to perfection.

There is no advantage in having young ducks, geese or turkeys too early in the season, as they will not thrive as well as when hatched in April or later. A good start in dry weather will enable them to grow rapidly and entail less labor, while dampness is fatal.

Freas' grafting-wax is four pounds of resin, one pound of tallow and one pound of beeswax. Melt all together over a slow fire and when it is melted turn out into a tub of cold water and pull as shoemakers' wax is made. Soften with hot water.

Mr. Galloway, of Malden, N. Y., who has tried cold storage for peaches, says that with him it has been a decided success. This indicates that the time is coming when peaches may be stored and offered for sale in the middle of the winter season.

Do not be tempted with all the new "novelties" offered in garden seeds, as some of them are only old varieties with new names. Before devoting the garden to any new variety, give it a test by procuring a packet of seeds for experimenting, as a loss from poor seed or from an inferior variety cannot be recovered. Time is an important item in gardening.

Place the hotbed in a position so as to get the most sunlight, and cover the sash at night so as to avoid loss of heat by radiation. Glass permits heat to escape very rapidly, and it is best, therefore, to use a double glazed sash, as the air space between the panes of glass will serve as a protection from the cold.

Here is the way the large strawberries are produced. Apply a heavy dressing of a mixture of two parts each of muriate of potash and superphosphate, with one part nitrate of soda. Keep the young plants clean, water when necessary, and do not allow a single runner to start, as they should be pinched back. Mulch the young plants in the fall and remove the mulch early in spring. Then apply another dressing of fertilizer and clean the soil by stirring it about an inch. When the young berries are set pinch off all but the largest. It requires work, but it will pay.

Regarding strawberry rust opinions differ. Some ascribe the cause to too much moisture, others to excess of manure on the plants, while it is also claimed that it is due to the effects of too much heat from the sun. What is known as rust, or blight, may, however, be traced to a minute worm, which does the mischief by working around the plants. It is suggested that the best remedy is to burn a light covering of straw over the plants.

"Behold How Good a Thing It Is," etc.

The oldest Protestant church in Canada is St. Paul's, Halifax; the next oldest is the Mohawk Church, near Brantford, and the next is St. Gabriel's Presbyterian Church, Montreal. Of the last-mentioned church, now a venerable edifice, but a very insignificant one compared with the modern churches of the commercial metropolis, Rev. Robert Campbell is writing the history. There are many interesting points connected with the old building, but one that stands out prominently is the fact that the congregation enjoyed in early times unusually friendly relations with other religious bodies. When an Episcopal church was burned the Episcopalians worshipped in this Presbyterian church, and when the Presbyterian church was undergoing repairs the neighboring Roman Catholic priest lent the congregation a Roman Catholic building to worship in.

Warmth of Bodies After Death.

Cases have of late been frequently reported in the newspapers in which, despite medical evidence to the contrary, bodies have been kept from burial because they did not become cold. Faith-healers and miracle-workers have been called in on such occasions to resuscitate the supposed victim of suspended animation, and indulged in diatribes at being called in too late. It is not generally known that there is, as a rule, an elevation of temperature immediately after death, owing to the blood no longer being cooled in its passage through the lungs, and to the stoppage of the circulation, and in many cases where the nervous system has been affected, and in cholera, small pox, yellow fever and hepatic abscess. The post mortem rise in temperature is often very decided. The heat of an apparently dead body is hence not conclusive evidence of life.—*Medical Standard.*

The Widow's Mite.

"My friend, we expect a contribution from you to aid this good work."

"I would be glad to contribute," responded Johnson, "but I am so very poor that I don't believe I can contribute anything."

"But it is for your own good to contribute. A contribution from your poverty will win you a credit mark also." The widow's mite is of more value than the offering of the rich."

"Yes," replied Johnson, "but you see, I'm not acquainted with any widows."—*Pittsburg Dispatch.*

—"What is the best way to manage a man?" asks a feminine correspondent. The answer to this old conundrum is, "Don't let the man know you are trying to manage him."

One of the passengers on a snow-bound Northern Pacific train in Montana suddenly jumped from the coach with a yell and started up the side of the mountain in the face of a driving storm. He was pursued, and after a half-mile chase was captured and brought back with frozen face and ears. He had suddenly become insane.

CANADIAN VICE-ROYALTY.

Views of the Wife of a Canadian Judge in Paris.

(Paris letter in the London Truth.)

The wife of a Canadian judge, who read what Sir C. Tupper said upon the "Truth eries," has called to give me supplemental information about the past and present representatives of Her Majesty at Ottawa. She was in that city when the announcement was made that the Lansdownes were to get the chateau of Montreal (?) fitted up and to spend there the coldest months of the year, which are the ones in which tobogganning, sledging, curling, skating tournaments and torchlight processions are in full fling. This news caused intense excitement and the Anglo-Scotch thought it rather a shame that the Vice-regal court should go in midwinter every year to show the light of their countenance to the French at Montreal. Lord Lansdowne, I am told, keeps up a fine show. His carriages and horses have given a great idea of his wealth to the colonists. What must it have been, they wonder, before his income from his Irish estates was reduced by a quarter—a reduction which was on his side voluntary, and, therefore, to his honor. But there is no burning of candles at both ends of the Government House as in the Dufferins' time. At their entertainments the Marquis and Marchioness do things magnificently, but close economy is the every-day rule.

Lord Dufferin not only spent his £10,000 yearly, but dipped his estates and sold the timber off them when he could gain political points by a judicious use of money. My visitor assured me that "Lorne and the Princess Louise did not salt away a dollar" when they were away in Canada. The Princess was as beneficent as could be, and was never appealed to for money without (when she was satisfied that she had to deal with honest people) putting her hand in her pocket or signing a cheque. She was a great success until the sledge accident befell her. Her nervous system then got upset, with the effect that, in speaking, she was apt to make use of words just the contrary of those she wanted to say. She, therefore, imposed on herself the rule of silence with those whom she did not well know. This passed for sullen reserve and favoritism, and caused a good deal of resentment among the ladies.

"Lorne was just as good as he could be, and first-rate in business," said my visitor, "but he was unendurable." "How so?" I asked. "He was so stand-off in his demeanor. Dufferin knew the Christian and pet names of all the children in Ottawa, read of the births in the papers, and remembered to congratulate the fathers of the new-born babes. He shook hands publicly with a grocer's wife who had triplets, and one day got out of his carriage to go and admire them when they were with their mother and the servant in the street. If a newsboy said a smart thing to him he'd stop to talk to him, and I often saw him shake hands with a conductor of the street cars who came from his part of Ireland, and he had always something bright and pleasant to say. Lorne's stand-offishness after Dufferin's chaff and heartiness was like an icy blast in the month of May."

The Princess Louise enjoyed best in Canada the society of the French. She was very fond of getting away from Ottawa and going to live *en artiste* at the citadel of Quebec—an old place that dated from the Marquis de Montcalm. (It was built by the Duke of Wellington.) It became the thing there to be artistic. Officers, the sons and daughters of judges and of ministers (preachers), successful trades people, and so on, went in for sketching, impressionism, art furniture and art unions, to be *bien en cour*. The princess used to go out on sketching expeditions in a boat. She had some narrow escapes near rapids; that, however, was not at Quebec, but high up the river. It used to be said of her that she was all radiance to the French Canadians, and had more French than English books on her drawing-room table. But Lady Sophia Macnamara understood the "independent" temper of the ladies of the Anglo-Scotch provinces, and helped to make things smooth and agreeable.

A Letter from His Dead Wife.

Benjamin Harley is a well-to-do resident of Roaring Branch, this county, writes a Lock Haven, Pa., correspondent. He is an old man, and is a strong believer in Spiritualism, no thing having ever been too miraculous if done in the name of Spiritualism to weaken his faith or arouse his suspicion. He has two sons, one a wild and shiftless young man named Henry, the other a thriving citizen. The latter is a partner of his father's in the mercantile business. Old Mr. Harley is a widower, his wife, who was also an enthusiastic Spiritualist, having died only a few weeks ago. The other morning old Mr. Harley awoke and found lying on his pillow a piece of paper, folded and addressed to him. He opened it, and found that it was a letter purporting to come from his dead wife. It was a business letter. It informed Mr. Harley that the writer was in heaven, which was a thoroughly practical place—so much so that she had set up in the millinery business. She was just then in need of $50 to put in the business, and requested her husband to inclose her that amount. She instructed him to put it in a letter and place the letter in a stump near her son Henry's house. Extravagant and ridiculous as this letter was, old Mr. Harley did not doubt for a moment that it came from his wife. He could not spare $50 that day, but he wrote a letter to his wife, inclosing $20 and informing her that he would send the remainder in a few days. The letter he placed in the stump as directed. Young Henry Harley long ago exhausted his credit at the tavern and other places in Roaring Branch, and his longing for conviviality had been necessarily unsatisfied for some time. Two or three days ago the tavern-keeper was surprised to see the young man walk in and pay up the old score out of a neat roll of bills. Young Harley paid up other small accounts about town, and the astonishing fact that he had money soon became the talk of the village. The news was not long in reaching old Mr. Harley's ears, and, after pondering over the matter for some time, and closely examining the letter from his departed wife, he at last reluctantly made up his mind that he knew how Henry had got the money. This belief was made positive when, in a business transaction with Charles Green, another storekeeper in the place, he received the veritable $20 bill he had inclosed to his wife to help along her celestial millinery business. He learned that the bill had been changed for young Henry Harley.

Congregational Singing.

Rev. Bird Wilkins, of St. Paul, one of the leading colored divines of the Northwest, preached at Bethesda Baptist Church last Sunday. He is modeled somewhat after the Sam Jones style, and at the evening service, noticing that only the choir—a quartette—took part in the singing, he said: "My brethren and sisters, this will never do. Singing is a part of the worship, and I desire that all of you engage in it. Do you suppose that only four of the angels in heaven do the singing? This church is a model of the upper church. They all sing up there, and I would like to have you all sing down here. Now sing." They sang.

Pass It Up This Way.

Spring has arrived and has registered on the open page of nature's book in her own bright chirography. Wild violets and lilies are blooming, the green grass is growing, the swelling buds are bursting, the larks are singing their spring matins and everything indicates that nature is glad to welcome spring's early arrival.—*Albany (Ga.) News.*

MIND-READING.

Amusing Experiences of the Prince of Elucidators.

Mr. Washington Irving Bishop, who has lately been exciting so much attention by what he terms his "mind-reading," has had many interesting adventures and not a few amusing ones. While I was in Belfast Mr. Bishop gave an entertainment in Ulster Hall, which caused a great deal of animated discussion among those present. During the evening, and after the successful performance of several astonishing feats, a temporary lull occurred, during which a rich voice in the gallery loudly called out:

"Misthur Bishup, Misthur—"

"Well, well, what do you want?" inquired the entertainer.

"Oi s'pose ye can find anything a man wants?"

"Well, I think I can—nearly anything."

"Will yez found something for me, then?"

"Certainly."

"Well, the morrow's Sunday, and I'd loike yez to find me a mighty fine dinner."

Mr. Bishop is authority for the statement that the hero of this occasion received a "goodly" half-sovereign. "It was all the best advertisement I ever had," said he.

He also tells that while in New Zealand the King of the Maoris was so desirous of viewing an exhibition of the Professor's unusual powers that he obtained a private audience. After some parleying it was decided that his dusky Highness himself should conceal an article which Bishop was to discover. Mr. Bishop was taken from the room, and on the Maori King's signifying his readiness, the mind-reader was brought blindfolded into the kingly presence, and at once began the search. In a few minutes Mr. Bishop turned to the sovereign's mouth as the place where the article was concealed. His Highness granted an emphatic dissent to the place located by the Professor as containing the article for which he was in search. Bishop insisted that it was there, and finally demanded that the royal mouth should be opened wide. After considerable refusal and persevering persistence on the part of the King and the Professor, the mouth was slowly and reluctantly opened. The next instant, however, the King began to cough violently, which resulted in a button being expelled. The King, finding the place had been correctly located, attempted to swallow the button, and thus defeat the determined mind-reader. What might have happened to Bishop had the Maoris lost their King is one of those things we tremble to contemplate.—*Editor's Drawer, in Harper's Magazine for March.*

Money Makers

don't let golden opportunities pass unimproved, there are times in the lives of men when fortunes in money can be made rapidly and easily, which otherwise can be earned by years of labor. Write Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine, who will send you, free, full particulars about work you can do, and live at home, wherever you may be located, at a profit of at least from $5 to $10 daily. Some have made over $50 in a single day. Capital not required; we start you. You are started free. Capital not required. Either sex; all ages.

A Rome, N. Y., girl filled three beer jugs with wet sand, corked them tightly, and set them in the oven to heat, so that she could warm her bed with them. The heat generated steam from the wet sand and an explosion followed, which filled the room with flying sand and fragments of beer jugs. The girl and the rest of the family were badly scared, but unhurt.

I suffered 7 years with sciatic rheumatism. No treatment relieved me. Mallalieu's Rheumatic Repellant cured me in 10 days; that for 2 years I have not had less than 10 symptoms of rheumatism. A. Furtenay, Hickory, Mich., formerly of Berlin, Ont.

—Barnard's comet is now visible to the naked eye on the eastern horizon before daybreak, but is so low down that it is not readily seen unless one knows exactly where to look. It was discovered October 6th. About 5 a. m. it makes a beautiful object in the telescope—a final halo surrounding a sharp white mass in the centre. It has a short nebulous tail, about 2° in length. Its distance from the earth is now about 113,000,000