THE KING OF THE PLOW.

The sword is resheathed in its scabbard,
The rifle hangs safe on the wall;
No longer we quail at the hungry
Hot rush of the ravenous ball—
The war cloud has hurled its last lightning,
Its last awful thunders are still,
While the Demon of Conflict in Hades
Lies fettered in force as in will;
Above the broad fields that he ravaged,
What monarch rules blissfully now?
Oh! crown him with bays that are bloodless—
The King, the brave King of the Plow!

A king! Aye! What ruler more potent
Has ever swayed earth by his nod?
A monarch! Aye! more than a monarch—
A homely but bountiful God!
He stands where in earth's sure protection
The seed grains are scattered and sown,
To uprise in serene resurrection
When spring her soft trumpet had blown!
A monarch! Yea! more than a monarch,
Though toil-drops are thick on his brow.
Oh! crown him with corn leaf and wheat leaf—
The King, the strong King of the Plow!

Through the shadow and shine of past ages—
While tyrants were blinded with blood—
He reared the pure ensign of Ceres
By meadow and mountain and flood;
And the long, leafy gold of his harvests
The earth sprites and air sprites had spun,
Grew rhythmic when swept by the breezes,
Grew royal when kissed by the sun;
Before the stern charm of his patience
What rock-rooted forces may bow!
Come, crown him with corn leaf and wheat leaf—
The King, the bold King of the Plow!

Through valleys of balm-dropping myrtles,
By banks of Arcadian streams,
Where the wind songs are set to the mystic
Mild murmur of passionate dreams;
On the storm-haunted uplands of Thule,
By ice-girded fiords and floes,
Alike speeds the spell of his godhood,
The bloom of his heritage glows.
A monarch! Yea! more than a monarch—
All climes to his prowess must bow.
Come, crown him with bays that are stainless,
The King, the brave King of the Plow!

Far, far in earth's uttermost future,
As boundless of splendor as scope,
I see the fair Angel—Fruition,
Outspeed his high heralds of Hope.
The roses of joy rain around him,
The lilies of sweetness and calm,
For the sword has been changed to the plowshare,
The lion lies down with the lamb!
Oh! angel majestic! We know thee,
Though raised and transfigured art thou—
This lord of life's grand consummation
Was once the swarth King of the Plow!

—[Paul H. Hayne.

LEGEND OF THE DEVIL'S DIKE.

AS RELATED BY MASTER CISBURY OLDFIRLE, SCHOOLMASTER OF POYNINGS.

[William Harrison Ainsworth, born in Manchester 1805. Novelist. He studied law, but before he had attained his majority he published "Sir John Chiverton," a romance which obtained the favor of Sir Walter Scott. Soon afterwards Mr. Ainsworth devoted himself entirely to literature; he became editor of *Bentley's Miscellany* on the retirement of Dickens in 1840; he also edited *Colburn's New Monthly*, and the magazine which bore his own name in the title. His chief works are: "Rookwood," "Crichton," "Guy Fawkes," "The Tower of London," "Old St. Paul's," "Windsor Castle," "The Miser's Daughter," "Lancashire Witches," "The Flitch of Bacon," "The Star Chamber," "The Constable of the Tower," "Mervyn Clitheroe," "Ovingdean Grange," a romance of the times of the Commonwealth (from which we quote), "John Law, the Projector," "Hilary St. Ives," "Myddleton Pomfret," etc. He has also written a number of poems, amongst which are "Ballads, Romantic, Fantastical, and Humorous," and "The Combat of the Thirty," a Breton legend. Cheap editions of his works are issued by Routledge & Sons.]

The wondrous event I am about to detail happened in the time of the good Saint Cuthman of Steyning, in this county—a holy man, who, from his extraordinary piety and austerity, was believed to be endowed with supernatural power. Many miracles are attributed to him, some of which occurred long before his canonization. While yet a boy, and employed in tending his father's sheep on the downs, in order to pursue his devotional exercises undisturbed, he was wont to trace a large circle round the flock with his crook, beyond which none of them could stray, neither could an enemy approach them. Moreover, the good saint could punish the scoffer, as well as bless and sustain the lowly and the well-doer. Derided by certain blasphemous haymakers for carrying his palsied mother in a barrow—no better means of conveyance being at hand at the time—he brought down a heavy shower upon their heads, rendering their labor of no account; and thenceforward, whenever grass was cut and dried within that meadow, rain would fall upon it, and turn it to litter. Such was holy Cuthman—a man, you will perceive, whom it was necessary to treat with the respect due to his exalted virtues.

At a later period of the saint's life, when his aged mother had gone from him, when he had built a wooden church with his own hands at Steyning, wherein, in the fullness of time, he was interred—and when his reputation for sanctity and austerity had greatly increased, causing him to be equally reverenced and dreaded—dreaded, I mean, by evil-doers, to whom he was especially obnoxious—the holy man walked forth one afternoon in early autumn, wholly unattended, across the downs; his purpose being to visit a recluse named Sister Ursula, who dwelt in a solitary cell on the summit of a hill adjoining Poynings, and whom he had been told was sick, and desirous of being shriven by him. Now Saint Cuthman had his staff in his hand, without which he never journeyed abroad, and he walked on until he reached the eminence for which he was bound. On the brow of this hill in former times the heathen invaders of the land had made a camp, vestiges of which may still be discerned. But it was not with these memorials of a by-gone and benighted people that Saint Cuthman concerned himself. If he thought about the framers of those mighty earthworks at all, it was with thanksgiving that they had been swept away, and had given place to a generation to whom the purer and brighter light of the gospel was vouchsafed.

Thus communing with himself, it may be, holy Cuthman reached the northern boundary of the rampart surrounding the old Roman camp, and cast his eyes over the vast weald of Sussex, displayed before him like a map. The contemplation of this fair and fertile district filled his soul with gladness; but what chiefly rejoiced him was to note how the edifices reared for worship had multiplied since he first looked upon the extensive plain. He strove to count the numerous churches scattered about, but soon gave up the attempt—he might as well have tried to number the trees. But the difficulty he experienced increased his satisfaction, inasmuch as it proved to him that true religion had taken deep root in the land. And he gave glory and praise accordingly, where glory and praise are due.

Scarcely were his audibly-uttered thanksgivings ended when he became aware that some one stood nigh him, and turning his head, he beheld a tall man of singularly swarthy complexion, haughty mien, and eyes that seemed to burn like coals of fire. The habiliments of this mysterious and sinister-looking personage were of blood-red hue, and though their richness and the egret in his velvet cap betokened princely rank, he bore the implements of a common laborer, namely, a pickax and a shovel. No sound had proclaimed the stranger's approach, and his appearance was sudden and startling as if he had risen from the earth. As Saint Cuthman regarded him with the aversion inspired by the sight of a venomous and deadly snake, yet wholly without fear, he knew that he was in the presence of the Author of Ill.

"Comest thou to tempt me, accursed one?" the holy man sternly demanded. "If so, learn that I am proof against thy wiles. Depart from me, or I will summon good spirits that shall cast thee hence."

"Thou canst not do so," the inauspicious-looking stranger replied, laughing derisively. "I am master here. Altars have been reared to strange gods upon this hill, and sacrifices made to them—nay, I myself have been worshipped as Dis, and the blood of black bulls has been poured out upon the ground in my honor. Therefore the hill is mine, and thou thyself art an intruder upon it, and deservest to be cast down headlong into the plain. Yet will I spare thee——"

"Thou darest not so much as injure a hair of my head, Sathanas," interrupted the saint in a menacing voice, and raising his staff as he spoke. "Approach! and lightnings shall blast thee."

"I tell thee I have no design to harm thee," returned the fiend, with a look that showed he would willingly have rent the holy man in pieces. "But give heed to what I am about to say. Vainly hast thou essayed to count the churches in the Sussex weald, and thou hast glorified heaven because of the number of the worshipers gathered within those fanes. Now mark me, thou servant of God! Thou hast taken a farewell look of that plain, so thickly studded with structures pleasing in thy sight, but an abomination to me. Before to-morrow morn that vast district, far as thine eye can stretch, even to the foot of yon distant Surrey hills—the whole Weald of Sussex, with its many churches, its churchmen, and its congregations, shall be whelmed beneath the sea."

"Thou mockest me," returned Saint Cuthman, contemptuously; "but I know thee to be the Father of Lies."

"Disbelieve me if I fail in my task—not till then," said the fiend. "With the implement which I hold in my hand I will cut such a dyke through this hill, and through the hills lying between it and Hove, as shall let in the waters of the deep, so that all dwelling within yonder plain shall be drowned by them."

"And thinkest thou thy evil work will be permitted?" cried the saint, shaking his head.

"Thou, at least, canst not prevent it," rejoined the fiend with a bitter laugh. "I will take my chance of other hindrance."

The holy man appeared for a moment troubled, but his confidence was presently restored.

"Thou deceivest thyself," he said. "The task thou proposest to execute is beyond thy power."

"Beyond my power!" exclaimed the demon. "It is a trifle in comparison with what I can achieve. I have had a hand in many wonderful works, some of which are recognized as mine, though I have not got credit for a tithe of those I have performed. Devil's bridges are common enough, methinks, in mountainous gorges—devil's towers are by no means rare in old castles. Most of the camps upon these downs were planned and executed by me—the very rampant upon which we stand being partly my work. The first Cæsar has got the credit of many of my performances, and he is welcome to it. He is not the only man who has worn laurels belonging by right to others. Saint as thou art, it is meet thou give the devil his due. Do so, and thou must needs praise his industry."

"Thy industry in evil-doing is unquestionable," rejoined the saint. "But good work is out of thy power. Thou darest not affirm that thou hast had any hand in the erection of temples and holy piles."

"Ask thy compeers, Saint Dunstan and Saint Augustine—they will tell thee differently. But I disdain to boast. I have certainly had no hand in thy ugly little wooden church at Steyning."

"And thy present feat is to be performed before to-morrow, thou sayest?" demanded the saint, highly offended at this uncalled-for allusion to his own favorite structure.

"Between sunset and sunrise, most saintly sir."

"That is but a short time for so mighty a task," said the holy man, in an incredulous tone. "Bethink thee, a September night is not a long night?"

"The shortest night is long enough for me," the fiend replied. "If the dawn comes and finds my work incomplete, thou shalt be at liberty to deride me."

"I shall never treat thee otherwise than with scorn," the saint rejoined. "But thou hast said it, and I hold thee to thy word. Between sunset and sunrise thy task must be done. If thou failest, from whatever cause, thy evil scheme shall be forever abandoned."

"Be it so! I am content," the fiend rejoined. "But I shall *not* fail," he added with a fearful laugh. "Come hither at sunset, and thou wilt see me commence my work. Thou mayst tarry nigh me, if thou wilt, till it be done."

"Heaven forfend that it should be done!" ejaculated the saint, casting his eyes upwards.

When he looked up again towards the spot where the Evil One had stood, he could no more perceive him.

"No!" exclaimed the good saint, allowing his gaze to wander over the smiling and far-stretching weald, "I cannot believe that I am taking farewell of this lovely plain. I cannot for an instant believe that its destruction will be permitted. Its people have not sinned, but have incurred the hatred of the arch-fiend solely because of their piety and zeal. It shall be my business to defeat his hated design."

The holy man turned away, and quitting the camp, proceeded in an easterly direction over the hill until he came to a small stone structure, standing near a great old thorn tree, on an acclivity covered with gorse and heather. The occupant of this solitary cell belonged to a priory of Benedictine nuns, situated at Leominster, near Arundel, and attached to the Abbey of Almenesches in Normandy. Sister Ursula Braose had retired to this lonesome spot in order to pass the whole of her time in devotion, and had acquired a reputation for sanctity and asceticism scarcely inferior to that of holy Cuthman himself. She was a daughter of the noble house of Braose of Bramber Castle. Once a week the purveyor of the priory at Leominster brought her a scanty supply of provisions (for the poor soul needed but little), and it was from him that Saint Cuthman had heard of her illness, and of her desire to be shriven by him.

He found the recluse occupied in her devotions. She was kneeling before an ivory crucifix fastened against the wall of her cell, and was so absorbed as to be entirely unconscious of the saint's approach. He did not make his presence known to her till she had done. Sister Ursula Braose had once been remarkable for beauty, but years, the austere life she had led, and the frequent and severe penances she had undergone, had obliterated all traces of loveliness from her features. She was old and wrinkled now, her hair white as snow, and her fingers thin as those of a skeleton. She was clothed in a loose black robe, with a cincture of cord around her waist. Reverentially saluting the holy man, she prayed him to be seated upon a stool, which, with another small seat hewn out of stone, a stone table, and a straw pallet, formed the entire furniture of her cell. An iron lamp hung by a chain from the roof. On the table were placed a missal written on vellum, an hour-glass, and a small taper.

After inquiring as to her ailments, and expressing his satisfaction that she felt somewhat better, Saint Cuthman said, "Are you still fasting, sister? I know you are wont only to break bread and drink water after the hour of vespers."

"Since yestere'en nothing has passed my lips, holy father," the recluse replied.

"It is well," said the saint. "The prohibition I am about to lay upon you—painful to any other unaccustomed to severe mortification of the flesh—will by you be scarcely accounted a penance. I enjoin you to refrain from all refreshment of the body, whether by food or rest, until to-morrow morning. Think you you can promise compliance with the order?"

"Do I think it, holy father?" Sister Ursula cried. "If heaven will spare me so long I am sure of it. I was in hopes," she added, almost with a look of disappointment, "that you were about to enjoin me some severe discipline such as my sinfulness merits, and I pray you to add sharp flagellations, or other wholesome correction of the flesh, to your mandate."

"Nay," rejoined the saint, smiling at the recluse's zeal; "the scourge is unneeded. You have no heavy offense, I am well assured, on your conscience. But keep strict vigil throughout the night, and suffer not sleep to weigh down your eyelids for a moment, or you may be exposed to temptation and danger. The arch-fiend himself will be abroad."

"I will spend the livelong night in prayer," said Sister Ursula, trembling.

"Fear nothing," returned the saint; "the Prince of Darkness has other business on hand, and will not trouble you. He will be engaged in a terrible work, but, with heaven's aid, good sister, yours shall be the hand to confound him."

"Mine!" exclaimed the recluse, seeking by her looks for an explanation from the holy man.

"When the sun hath gone down," rejoined Saint Cuthman, "which will be about the seventh hour, turn this hour-glass, and let the sand run out six times—six times, do you mark, good sister? That will bring you to the first hour after midnight. Kneel then before yon crucifix, and pray fervently that the dark designs of him who took our Savior to the top of the high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment, may be defeated. Next light this taper, which I will presently consecrate; set it within the bars of that little grated window looking towards the east; and pray that its glimmer may be as the first gray light of dawn. Again I say, do you mark me, sister?"

"Not a word uttered by you, holy father, but hath rank deep in my breast," she replied. "Your instructions shall be scrupulously obeyed."

"Nothing evil shall cross this threshold during the night," pursued the saint. "I will guard it as in the days of my youth I guarded my father's flocks on the hills. Light not your lamp, but only the taper, as I have bidden you; and stir not forth on any threat or summons, for such will only be a snare to injure you; and let not your heart quail because of the frightful sounds you may hear. Though the earth should quake beneath your feet, and this solid hill tremble to its foundations, yet shall not a stone of your cell be removed, neither shall any harm befall you."

The saint then took up the taper and blessed it in these terms: "Domine Jesu Christi, fili Dei vivi, benedic candelam istam supplicationibus nostris; infunde ei, Domine, per virtutem sanctæ crucis benedictionem cœlestem; ut quibuscumque locis accensa, sive posita fuerit, discedant principes tenebrarum, et contremiscant, et fugiunt pavidi cum omnibus ministris suis ab habitationibus illis: nec præsumant amplius inquietare, aut molestare servientes tibi omnipotenti Deo."

After going through certain other ceremonials, which it is needless to describe, the saint sat down, and addressing Sister Ursula, declared his readiness to shrive her.

The recluse then knelt down before him, and, inclining her head so as to conceal her features, said she had one secret within her breast which she had never revealed to her confessor—one sin upon her soul of which she had never been able to repent.

After duly reproving her, the saint told her to make clean her breast by confession, declaring she would then be able to repent.

Thus exhorted, Sister Ursula replied, in accents half suffocated by irrepressible emotion: "My secret is, that I loved you—you, holy father—when I was young. My unrepented sin is that I have never been able to banish that love from my heart."

"Alas! sister," rejoined the holy man, trembling in spite of himself, "we have been equally unhappy. In days long gone by I could not behold unmoved the charms of the fair and noble Lady Ursula Braose. But I conquered the passion, and repented that I had ever indulged it. Thou must do likewise. The struggle may be hard, but strength will be given thee for it. Hast thou aught more to confess?"

And the poor recluse, who shed abundance of tears, replying in the negative, the saint gave her absolution, saying that the penance he had already enjoined was sufficient, and that ere the morrow her breast would be free from its load. Struck by her looks, which were those of one not long for this world, he told her that if her sickness should prove mortal, dirges and trentals should be said for the repose of her soul.

The recluse thanked him, and after a while became composed and even cheerful.

Saint Cuthman tarried in the cell, discoursing with her upon the glorious prospects of futurity, and carefully avoiding any reference to the past, until, from the door of the little structure, which opened toward the west, he beheld the sun sink into the sea. Telling the good sister that a thousand lives depended upon her vigilance, he gave her his benediction and departed, never more to behold her alive.

As he took his way towards the northeastern boundary of the ancient encampment, a noise resembling thunder smote his ear, and the ground shook so violently beneath his feet that he could scarcely stand, but reeled to and fro, as if his brain—his! whose lips no drink stronger than water had ever passed—had been assailed by the fumes of wine. Nevertheless he went on, and after a while reached the lofty headland overlooking Poynings.

Here, as he expected, he beheld the arch-fiend at work. The infernal excavator had already made a great breach into the down, and enormous fragments of chalk and flint-stones rolled down with a terrific crash like that caused by an avalanche amidst the Alps. Every stroke of his terrible pickax shook the hill to its center. No one who was not sustained by supernatural power could have stood firmly upon the quaking headland. But Saint Cuthman, planting his staff upon the ground, remained unmoved—the only human witness of the astounding scene. The fiend's proportions had now become colossal, and he looked like one of that giant race whom poets of heathendom tell us warred against Jove. His garb was suited to his task, and resembled that of a miner. His brawny and hirsute arms were bared to the shoulder, and the curled goat's horns were visible on his uncovered head. His implements had become enormous as himself, and the broadest and heaviest anchor fluke ever forged was as nought to the curved iron head of his pickax. Each stroke plunged fathom-deep into the ground, and tore up huge boulder-like masses of chalk, the smallest of which might have loaded a van. The fiend worked away with might and main, and the concussion produced by his tremendous strokes was incessant and terrible, echoing far over the weald like the rattling of a dreadful thunder-storm.

But the sand ran out, and Sister Ursula turned her glass for the first time.

Suddenly the fiend stopped and clapped his hand to his side, as if in pain. "A sharp stitch!" quoth he. "My side tingles as if pricked by a thousand pins. The sensation is by no means pleasant—but 'twill soon pass." Then perceiving the saint watching him he called out derisively, "Aha! art thou there, thou saintly man? What thinkest thou now of the chance of escape for thy friends in the weald? Thou art a judge of such matters, I doubt not. Is my dyke broad enough and profound enough, thinkest thou—or shall I widen it and deepen it yet more?" And the chasm resounded with his mocking lachter.

"Thou art a slovenly workman, after all," remarked Saint Cuthman. "The sides of the dyke are rough and uneven, and want leveling. A mortal laborer would be shrewdly reprimanded if he left them in such an untidy condition."

"No mortal laborer could make such a trench," cried the fiend. "However, it shall never be said that I am a slovenly workman."

Whereupon he seized his spade, and proceeded to level the banks of the dyke, carefully removing all roughness and irregularity.

"Will that satisfy thy precise notions?" he called out when he had done.

"I cannot deny that it looks better," returned the holy man, glad to think that another hour had passed—for a soft touch falling upon his brow made him aware that at this moment Sister Ursula had turned the hour-glass for a second time.

A sharp sudden pain smote the fiend, and made him roar out lustily, "Another stitch, and worse than the first! But it shall not hinder my task."

Again he fell to work. Again the hill was shaken to its base. Again mighty masses of chalk were hurled into the valley, crushing everything upon which they descended. Again the stroke of the pickax echoed throughout the weald.

It was now dark. But the fiery breath of the demon sufficed to light him in his task. He toiled away with right good-will, for the devil can work hard enough, I promise you, if the task be to his mind. All at once he suspended his labor. The hour glass had been turned for the third time.

"What is the matter with thee?" demanded the saint.

"I know not," replied the writhing fiend. "A sudden attack of cramp in the arms and legs, I fancy. I must have caught cold on these windy downs. I will do a little lighter work till the fit passes off." Upon this he took up the shovel, and began to trim the sides of the dyke as before.

While he was thus engaged the further end of the chasm closed up, so that when he took up the pickax once more he had all his work to do again. This caused him to snort and roar like a mad bull; and so much flame and smoke issued from his mouth and nostrils, that the bottom of the dyke resembled the bed of a volcano.

Sister Ursula then turned the glass for the fourth time. Hereupon an enormous mass of breccia, or gold-stone, as the common folk call it, which the fiend had dislodged, rolled down upon his foot and crushed it. This so enraged him that he sent the fragment of gold-stone whizzing over the hills to Hove. What with rubbing his bruised foot and roaring, a quarter of an hour elapsed before he could resume his work.

The fifth turning of the glass gave him such pains in the back, that for some minutes he was completely disabled.

"An attack of lumbago!" he cried. "I seem liable to all mortal ailments to-night."

"Thou hadst better desist," said the saint. "The next attack may cripple thee for all time."

"I am all right again," shouted the demon. "It was but a passing seizure, like those that have gone before it. Thou shalt now see what I can do."

And he began to ply his pickax with greater energy than ever, toiling on without intermission, filling the chasm with flame from his fiery nostrils, and producing the effect of a continuous thunder-storm over the weald. Thus he wrought on, I say, uninterruptedly for the space of another hour.

Sister Ursula then turned the glass for the last time.

The fiend was suddenly checked, but not this time by pains in the limbs or prostration of strength. He had struck the pickax so deeply into the chalk that he could not remove it. He strained every nerve to pluck it forth, but it continued firmly imbedded; and the helve, which was as thick as the mainmast of a ship, and of toughest oak, broke in his grasp.

While he was roarnig like an infuriated lion with rage and mortification, Saint Cuthman called out to him to come forth.

"Wherefore should I come forth?" the fiend cried. "Thou thinkest I am baffled; but thou art mistaken. I will dig out my ax-head presently, and my shovel will furnish me with a new handle."

"Cease, if thou canst, for a short space, to breathe forth flame and smoke; and look towards the east," cried the saint.

"There is a glimmer of light in the sky in that quarter!" exclaimed the demon, holding his breath; "but dawn cannot be come already."

"The streak of light grows rapidly wider and brighter," said the saint. "The shades of night are fleeing fast away. The larks are beginning to rise and carol forth their matin hymns on the downs. The rooks are cawing amid the trees of the park beneath us. The cattle are lowing in the meads—and hark! dost thou not hear the cocks crowing in the adjacent village of Poynings?"

"Cocks crowing at Poynings!" yelled the fiend. "It must be the dawn. But the sun shall not behold my discomfiture."

"Hide thy head in darkness, accursed being!" exclaimed the saint, raising his staff, "Hence with thee! and return not to this hill. The dwellers within the Sussex Weald are saved from thy malice, and may henceforth worship without fear. Get the hence! I say."

Abashed by the awful looks of the saint, the demon fled. Howling with rage, like a wild beast robbed of its prey, he ran to the northern boundary of the rampant surrounding the camp, where the marks of his gigantic feet may be still be seen indelibly impressed on the sod. Then springing off, and unfolding his sable pinions, he soared over the weald, alighting on Leith Hill.

Just as he took flight Sister Ursula's taper went out. Instant darkness fell upon the hill, and Night resumed her former sway. The village cocks ceased crowing, the larks paused in their song and dropped to the ground like stones, the rooks returned to roost, and the lowing herds became silent.

Saint Cuthman had to make a considerable circuit to reach Sister Ursula's cell, a deep gulf having been placed between it and the headland on which he had taken his stand. On arriving at the little structure he found that the recluse's troubles were over. Her loving heart had forever ceased to beat. Her failing strength had sufficed to turn the hour-glass for the last time, and just as the consecrated taper expired she passed away. In death she still retained the attitude of prayer, her clasped hands being raised heavenwards.

"Suspice Domine, preces nostras pro anima famulæ tuæ; ut si quæ maculæ de terrenis contagiis adhæserunt, remissionis tuæ misericordia delantur!" ejaculated the holy man. She could not have had a better ending. May my own be like it! She shall have sepulchre at my mother's grave at Steyning. And masses and trentals, according to my promise, shall be said for the repose of her soul. Peace be with her!" And he went on his way.

Thus was the demon banished by Saint Cuthman from the hill overlooking the fair Sussex Weald, and the people of the plain ever after prayed in peace. But the devil's handiwork, the unfinished dyke, exists to this day. Though I never heard that his pickax had been found.

RELIGIOUS PARAGRAPHS.

There are twenty colored Episcopal ministers in this country.

There are 10,000 curates in England, only half of whom are employed.

The present ruler of the republic of San Domingo is a Catholic priest, Father F. A. De Merino.

There are 71,662 Protestant churches in the United States, or one for every 572 Protestant population.

Muller, of Bristol, on the occasion of his recent visit to Jerusalem, addressed two companies of lepers.

Eight young men on the west coast of South America have been ordained Elders in the Methodist Church by Bishop Harris.

Dr. Lyman Beecher preached until he was 80 years old, and Henry Ward Beecher hopes to do likewise. He will be 69 this month.

The *Lamp of Life* says: "More souls have been converted in the United States during eight weeks past than for eight years before."

The Salvation Army has 265 stations, 385 officers, and an income of $288,000. It distributed 9,000,000 copies of salvation literature last year.

The Moravians number in this country 9,697 communicants—a gain of 136 during the first year. Twenty-five were excluded and 943 "dropped" during the year.

Missionary Smith, of Delhi, says: "Thirty years ago we used to have a convert here in India every two or three years. Now we count them by scores annually."

Victor Hugo believes in salvation by works. "Death," he says, "is the recompense for the good done on earth." The Bible says, "Death is the wages of sin."

A wonderful religious movement is reported in Eastern Bengal, India. Several thousand native Christians have seceded from the Roman Catholic communion and become Protestants.

A church was organized in Chicago two weeks ago by a company of socialists, who call themselves "Self-savers." The church will welcome persons of any creed or no creed, and will seek to reconstruct society on a socialistic basis.

PERSONAL NOTES.

Alexander H. Stephens is now able to occupy his rolling chair and attend to his correspondence.

Paul H. Hayne is engaged on two new poems—for Emory College commencement and for the dedication of the Confederate monument at Charleston, S. C.

Professor C. D. Hartranft, of the Hartford Theological Seminary, is to deliver, June 25th, the annual address before the Christian Fraternity of Dartmouth College.

A memorial window is to be placed in Hughenden Church, England, by Sir Samuel Wilson, to commemorate the Queen's happy escape from assassination by the lunatic MacLean.

"Afraid?" exclaimed Madame Patti, with charming humility, when asked if she did not fear assassination in Russia, "not a bit of it. The Russians can always get another Czar, but never another Patti!"

The will of the late Hannah W. Richardson, a prominent member of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia, bestows $61,000 in cash and 365 shares of valuable stocks upon various benevolent institutions.

It is proposed in England that the house in which Darwin was born be purchased by the public authorities and preserved from destruction, and that a tablet be placed upon it recording the event that has made it famous.

A prominent English physician explains Hanlan's wonderful success at the oars on three grounds, namely, that he has brains and carefully studies his work; that he never goes through the absurdities of so-called "training;" and that he never takes exercise so excessive as to cause exhaustion.

Mrs. Julia C. R. Dorr's home, "The Maples," at Rutland, Vermont, is a modest two-story frame cottage, set on an elevation near the bank of Otter creek. It is surrounded by maples, willows and evergreens, and has a picturesque landscape in the background, showing a range of wooded hills and the peaks of Killington and Pico.

AN INTERESTING FIELD OF STUDY.

Henry Sleight, of Yuba county, writes to the RECORD-UNION concerning an interesting field of study. He says:

Many interesting pages in natural history are revealed by the development of mining enterprises and in washing auriferous deposits for the precious metal. The hydraulic brings to light fossil remains of the fauna and flora that flourished in the post-phocene times. New York Flat, a beautiful little valley near Brownville, Yuba county, is yielding its alluvium to the continuous pressure of the hydraulic pipe for a width of nearly 600 feet. A superficial deposit of a foot or two of sand and gravel, from washings of tributary ravines, overlies about three feet of black loam; then from fifteen to twenty feet of clay, of a greenish-gray color, rests on an evenly-strewn bed of gravel, varying in thickness, however, from a few inches to two or three feet. By examining the formation you will find fossil remains of plants through the entire deposit, of the same growth and varieties as those of today found in the vicinity. As the valley has a gentle fall of about an inch to the rod, it has of course always been wet, and much of it formerly swampy. Hence herbage of the juncus genus has predominated. Here the inevitable willow found suitable soil, and vast quantities may be seen well preserved; also cedar, madrone, pine, together with cones and foliage, etc. There are no petrifactions in this section. Cedar has undergone the least change, and occasionally a section of tree is seen on or near the bedrock that is nearly as hard and tough as when growing. The writer examined a cedar stump twenty-five feet below the present surface of the valley, and found the roots penetrated in the disintegrated granite bedrock just as it had grown. It had been burned off quite close to the firm rock in which it grew, ere it had been superincumbered with alluvium. Charcoal, and the charred remains of trees, are seen in the gravel and on the bedrock right where the gold is found. In certain places a regular jam of drift-wood is unearthed, such as a freshet might deposit now. Again, we come to a mass of rounded lumps of clay, indicating the action of water in making gullies and causing the banks to cave after the deposit had been formed. Fossil remains of the mammoth—the mastodon—and other pachyderms are occasionally discovered in the gravel, or resting immediately thereon, which would seem to prove conclusively that these extinct mammalia existed coeval with the formation of the gold fields of the Pacific, or that the period of time that marked their subsequent advent was geologically brief, and that it was in the phocene times when the superficial earth was blessed with its great wealth in the precious metal. But during this period there is no evidence to be found of the presence of man, for all the stone mortars, arrowpoints, etc., are discovered from the surface to a depth not exceeding ten feet. My observation of many years in the mines in this vicinity justifies me in saying that none were found imbedded in the original gravel strewn on the bedrock, where the remains of the above-mentioned extinct quadrupeds have been unearthed, and careful inquiry of other miners confirms this. These facts are interesting to the miner, and they are worthy of the consideration of the geologist and paleontologist. The diluvial deposit of this valley is composed of greenstone, trachyte and quartz ledges, all of which are to be seen on the adjacent hills. In fact they are of trappean origin. Dikes of greenstone from a few inches to two or three feet wide traverse the valley obliquely, sometimes showing half a dozen faults in the distance of a hundred feet. One interesting phase of this little valley is the gas that bubbles up through the bed-rock in so many places, and continuously. The alkali that forms on the rocks in dry weather has a nauseous, bitter taste. The good water issues from the hard ledges generally. A mineral spring—the water of which is sometimes used by invalids in the community—tastes strong of epsom salt. Our hills are red with the sesquioxide of iron, and all the rocks being highly ferruginous, most of the water contains a liberal percentage of iron. There are traces of chlorine all through the deposit, and this may account for the loss of fossil remains on coming in contact with the air, for they generally molder, even the tusks, and it is only an occasional grinder that stands the exposure. In richness of the precious metal much of the center of the valley pays at the rate of $10,000 an acre.

We are having delightful weather, and it is safe to say that our mountains afford almost every pleasure the heart could wish, and the improvements made indicate clearly that one grand purpose of life is to surround home with comforts.

Besides our well-conducted public schools, we have at Brownsville, under the patronage of Mr. and Mrs. Knox, an institute of learning where the higher branches are taught, Professor E. K. Nill, Principal. At the recent commencement exercises three young ladies were graduated, Misses McQuestion, Arnoth and Berminghan.

THE VALUES OF VEGETABLES.

All vegetables have an effect on the chemistry of the body, so that we cannot speak too highly of their importance at table. We will mention a few of these matters first, and dispose of this aspect of the subject, so as not to seem to mix pharmacopœia with the kitchen. Asparagus is a strong diuretic, and forms part of the cure for rheumatic patients at such health resorts as Aix-les-Bains. Sorrel is cooling, and forms the staple of that *soupe aux herbes* which a French lady will order for herself after a long and tiring journey. Carrots, as containing a quantity of sugar, are avoided by some people, while others complain of them as indigestible. With regard to the latter accusation, it may be remarked in passing, that it is the yellow core of the carrot that is difficult of digestion—the outer, or red layer, is tender enough. In Savoy, the peasants have recourse to an infusion of carrots as a specific for jaundice. The large, sweet onion is very rich in those alaline elements which counteract the poison of rheumatic gout. If slowly stewed in weak broth, and eaten with a little Nepaul pepper, it will be found to be an admirable article of diet for patients of studious and sedentary habits. The stalks of cauliflower have the same sort of value, only too often the stalk of a cauliflower is so ill-boiled and unpalatable that few persons would thank you for proposing to them to make part of their meal consist of so uninviting an article. Turnips, in the same way, are often thought to be indigestible, and better suited for cows and sheep than for delicate people; but here the fault lies with the cook quite as much as with the root. The cook boils the turnip badly, and then pours some butter over it, and the eater of such a dish is sure to be the worse for it. Try a better way. Half boil your turnip, and cut it in slices like half-crowns. Butter a pie dish, put in the slices, moisten with a little milk and weak broth, dust once with bread-crumbs and pepper and salt, and bake in the oven till it gains a bright golden brown. This dish, which is the Piedmontese fashion of eating turnips, is quite unsuited to cows, and ought to be popular. What shall be said about our lettuces? The plant has a slight narcotic action, of which a French old woman, like a French doctor, well knows the value, and when properly cooked it is really very easy of digestion. But in our country, though lettuce are duly grown in every garden, you often hear the remark, "I can't eat a salad," and as few cooks know how to use the vegetable which has been refused in its raw state, the lettuces are all wasted, and so is the ground in which they were grown. [Mrs. Reeves.

SINGULAR MENTAL DISTURBANCE.—An English scholar during a holiday excursion in the Hartz Mountains subjected himself one day to a severe physical strain which produced a singular mental disturbance. He was on his feet from morning till night, and in the course of the day's wanderings made several arduous ascents, taking no rest and neither eating nor sleeping. At night when he reached a place where he could supply his needs he was unable, to his great astonishment, to recollect a single word of the German language, although he ordinarily spoke it with fluency. His memory did not fail him in any other respect, he knew his own language as well as ever, and recalled perfectly all the incidents of the day. As soon as he had thoroughly rested, and had eaten the food which he had procured by signs, his German returned to him completely.

A REMARKABLE BIRD STORY.

In a late number of the *Enquirer* appeared an account of there having been found near Owensboro, Ky., a dead sparrow suspended by the neck to the bough of a tree by a string, leaving the inference to the beholder that his sparrowship had been summarily gibbeted by his fellows. I wish to record a similar observation made by myself and wife a few days since, and which, taken in connection with the above case, has afforded me, as it may others, considerable curiosity, if not mystification.

Adjoining our lot is a building in which at least twenty sparrows, such as frequent this valley, have their habitation. A few feet from the building stands a locust tree, whose branches appear to be used as a sort of public square or assembly grounds. Here for several days before the tragic occurrence to be related were held, with brief intermissions, many very noisy meetings, in which all the tenants appeared to be active participants. The cause of the trouble seemed to be a dispute about the possession of a certain cosy nesting place or suite of rooms in the cornice near the tree, an entrance to which was had by a well-shaped knot-hole. The whole colony, individually, was engaged in either trying to adjust the matter amicably or else were adding to the ferment—there were no neutrals. Within an hour every bird in the burg entered the knot-hole, turned around, and then, with his head peering out, would harangue the others until he was pushed aside by the entrance of another. These visits of inspection, as they seemed to be, were made, however, generally in pairs or by threes, and on the exit of the party they at once renewed their chattering with more earnestness than ever. One squatty old fellow of unusually dirty demeanor, and most of his tail feathers gone, was very active. Every few minutes, by dint of crowding and seemingly threatening gestures, he would force his way into the box, and then, quickly turning, begin to jabber excitedly from the knot-hole. But his ideas always gave immediate offense to the majority, as he would be at once forcibly ejected by two or more from the crowd, and, as he made the descent from the hole, he was set upon and hooted amid the most violent demonstrations of the populace. Toward evening the number of sparrows increased to about fifty, most of whom seemed to be but spectators, and the excitement was not abated at dusk, when we discontinued observations. In the morning the noise was heard at daybreak, but at about 7 o'clock there were no birds to be seen. On making closer examination of the tree we discovered our old aggressive sparrow, whose ideas were the occasion of such riotous demonstrations the day before, hanging by the neck to a cord, each end of which was wound around a small limb, the body banging between; it was easily identified by the distracted shape of his tail feathers. We now quietly withdrew to await any further developments. During the forenoon we could hear on the distant trees and hedges a solemn chirping and piping; the sparrow community had been moved to its depths; a heinous crime had been committed, and justice had shed the blood of vengeance!

Shortly after noon a large number of sparrows were noticed in the locust tree; only five or six were in the part in which the dead one was hanging. There was very little chirping and chattering, but those nearest the body had the most to say, and these, we imagined, deported themselves in a very grave and formal manner. One of them chirped away constantly and somewhat ostentatiously. We took him to be the Coroner, and felt that under his dingy wings he was chuckling over the fee he would get. The balance of the jury took turns picking at the cotton string suspending the body. In the course of an hour or so the string was picked away, and the body of the now defunct malefactor fell to the ground amid a low chorus of groans and "O, mys, how utterly awfuls!" etc.; that is, we imagined they did; anyhow, they certainly acted so. We picked up the bird and closely examined it. The string was a partly rotten one, about a foot long. It was wound twice around the neck, and considerably tangled among the feathers. What had made the noose a fatal one was the fastening of both ends of the cord to the limb, otherwise it would not have held; and yet the bird may have been dead when hung up, or have become entangled by accident. The "suite of rooms" is now occupied by an apparently modest and retiring couple.—[Cincinnati Enquirer.

ARSENIC FOR COMPLEXIONS.

"Are you ever called upon by women to give them something to impro