THE JUSTICE OF THE GODS.

CHAPTER I.

"I wish you weren't going away, Ada," said Captain Walton. "Why on earth should you go to Irkham for Christmas, instead of spending it in London?"

He was engaged to Ada Bennett, and was a masterful lover, passionate—indeed, almost too passionate for the shy-eyed, timid girl at his side—but masterful and accustomed to have his own way with men and women. Yet, in spite of his strength of will, little Ada might have had the firmness to withstand his wishes and decline his love if it had not been backed up by the aunt who so often assured her she had "been more than a mother to her"—yes, far more!—and by her sister Helen.

Helen Bennett—no one ever thought of calling her Nellie—was what is generally termed a "nice, sensible sort of girl;" the sort of girl who does not let romance or caprice or thin-skinnedness of any sort interfere with her advancement in life. When the Bennetts' father died and left them as nearly penniless as twenty pounds a year each could make them, no foolish pride, no dreams of independence, made Helen refuse the home which her aunt, Mrs. Penrhyn, offered them. Helen and Mrs. Penrhyn came to terms at once, without even expressing the terms in so many words. The girls were to make themselves agreeable—that is, dust the drawing-room, arrange flowers, entertain dull visitors, make up for any deficiencies of ill-trained servants, and look always smiling, grateful, and well dressed on twenty pounds a year.

"And some day, if all goes well," added Mrs. Penrhyn, "I'll see you in good homes of your own, I hope."

This was meant as an announcement that the girls were to accept the first eligible men who sought them. Helen saw this, and did her duty nobly. Irkham—black, smoky Irkham, where the jangle of machinery was heard continually, and the air was thick with smoke and cotton flue—might not be her ideal of a city; nor was John Baggallay—rich in factories and vested funds, but not overburdened with either aspirates or aspirations—her ideal of a husband. But she accepted both, and was as happy as a woman of her nature needs to be.

Ada, though far the milder of the two, proved the more rebellious. Perhaps it was the fault of Laurie Penrhyn—her cousin Laurie, who fell in love with her without consulting the wishes of either his mother or his cousin Helen. He seemed to think that consulting Ada's was enough. Herein he erred, for though last Christmas, just a year ago, when he was home from Glasgow on a brief holiday, he had asked Ada if she loved him, and she had whispered "yes," that did not secure her for his wife. When he had gone Helen treated Ada to much common sense, to which Mrs. Penrhyn added a little uncommon coldness, and finally Helen herself wrote the letter which released him from "a hasty and ill-considered engagement, the impulse of youth and thoughtlessness," as she put it, being herself five years younger than Laurie Penrhyn, though certainly more given than he to taking thought for the morrow than the days succeeding.

"You little goose!" she said to her sister, "Laurie has only two hundred pounds a year, and if you get engaged to him auntie will turn you out of doors. She means her handsome son to catch an heiress. And there's Captain Walton evidently attracted by you. I wish I had such a chance!"

For Helen had accepted her Baggallay by this time, and, though prepared to swallow him, could not refrain from a wry face or two.

"Laurie is getting on very well," protested Ada.

"Perhaps he is, but Captain Walton has got on, which is much more to the point. What on earth do you want, Ada? He is a gentleman. He has that look which a man who has once been in the army never loses, and if it is true, as people say, that he made his money in India by dabbling in opium—why, he's made his money, and that's the chief point. I don't see what fault you can find with him?"

"He's too old."

"Old! Forty-five or so. That isn't old. You're a romantic little donkey, Ada, but if you refuse George Walton I'll never forgive you."

Ada did not risk angering her sister. Captain Walton proposed in July, and was duly accepted, which made Laurie Penrhyn exclaim, when in the beginning of December he was offered a good post in an American ship-building yard, that a fellow never got anything he wanted until it was too late to profit him.

Captain Walton did not think so. He seemed to think that Ada Bennett's love, or at least her promise to be his wife, would profit him very much, though he was impatient, and thought it hard that he must wait till spring before he was allowed to claim his bride.

"I shall be a new man when I have you with me, darling," he said, with that fervor of passion which frightened Ada more than it pleased her. "You are everything to me—strength, purity, happiness. I believe in heaven, when I look in your eyes, even if I never do at any other time."

Poor Ada might be forgiven for thinking such wooing slightly blasphemous, and very much too fervent to be comfortable.

"At present Captain Walton felt deeply aggrieved that his betrothed was determined, in that mild, obstinate way of hers, to spend Christmas at Irkham with her sister Helen, now Mrs. Baggallay.

"It would seem strange not to go to Helen the first Christmas after her marriage," she said, "and, besides, Laurie is coming home, so I'm better away."

"What has that to do with it?" cried the irritable lover.

Ada looked nervous, and equivocated:

"He is going abroad almost immediately, and he and his mother won't want any third person with them during his last few days at home."

"H'm! Well, I wish you weren't going to Irkham, that's all. It's a beastly hole."

"Do you know it at all, George?" asked the girl, bringing out her lover's name with an effort, as she always did.

Captain Walton looked as if he did not like the question.

"I was there once, fifteen years ago, and I had enough of it then."

"Fifteen years ago! Ah, that was just when you came home from India, wasn't it? Well, it may have improved since then. And Helen says her home is charming—an old house with a large garden, once in the country, which the town has come up and surrounded. It's not the sort of house the Irkhamites like, she tells me. They prefer brand-new plaster and stucco, and can't understand her being so fond of Gore House."

"Gore House! It's an ugly name."

"Yes, isn't it? I must ask Helen if any one was ever killed there. Or, I'll let you ask her; for you are coming up for Christmas Day, aren't you? Really, you needn't grumble so at my going."

"I wouldn't, if you weren't going a fortnight before me. However, I must submit for the present. But, after the first week in March, your days of liberty are numbered, my pet."

"Then I must make the most of those left me," she said, with a nervous little smile. "So I'll go off to Irkham and be free of your chains till the day before Christmas Eve."

"Well, see that you write to me often and tell me everything. Nothing that you do, nothing that you see or feel, is too trivial to interest me. Remember that, Ada; remember that you are all the world to me; that a new life will begin for me when you are my wife."

Ada sighed, thinking, not gladly, of the new life that would then begin for her, but she was thankful to be released by her imperious lover at the price of a kiss or two, and still more thankful next day to leave smoky London for smokier Irkham.

Her first letter to her lover was bright and cheerful enough, full of the details he said he cared for—a description of Helen's house in general, of the little sitting-room set apart for herself in particular, its chairs, its books, the china plates hung on the walls, the dainty inkstand, even the Shakespeare calendar on the writing table, at which she penned the letter. There were enough of the trivialities he had asked for, and not much besides—not enough affection to justify the passionate way in which he kissed the cold, crisp, lifeless paper, nor the fervor with which he exclaimed under his breath: "Unworthy as I am, I'll make her a kinder husband than, perhaps, a better man would. She'll never know what I have been, and for her sake I'll live as purely as such innocence deserves."

Poor George Walton! He had, it seemed, something in his past life that he wished to conceal from Ada, and he never guessed that down in that quiet, simple heart of hers also there lay a little secret, sad, however innocent. He sighed, and then recalled with a bitter look that it was the day on which he ought to send a certain quarterly remittance, which, though meanness was not one of his faults, was never dispatched without a curse.

Ada's next letter was less cheerful. "You will think me awfully stupid," she said in it, "but I have got quite depressed since I came here. Perhaps it is the climate, which certainly is horrid; nothing but rain—smoky, dirty, towny rain. But I have quite a horrid impression about this house; I think it was the trees at the foot of the lawn that gave it to me first. There are three of them growing all together—quite large trees for a town garden, but there is a horrid red fungus growing on them that made me feel quite faint the first time I saw it. I think it was there I got the dreadful feeling I am telling you of—I can't define it a bit yet, but I am always conscious of it—and it followed me up the garden, into the drawing-room—which has long windows opening on a veranda I think I told you—and even up to my little boudoir, where I am writing about it to you. For I can't get rid of it; that's the silly thing. At night I wake up in a sort of horror; not that I have seen anything or dreamed anything, but I feel as if I were going to hear of something horrid, and though it is so idiotic and unreasonable I can't get over the impression. I haven't told Helen or John about it. I suppose it must be the climate."

"Of course it's the climate," said Walton, as he read the letter. "The damp, mild, enervating, soul-and-body-destroying Irkham climate that's making her morbid. I remember it well enough, and how it seemed to— Ugh! it's not worth thinking of. But I won't let Ada go there again. Happily, she won't want to, thanks to this notion."

He wrote a jesting protest to her, saying that her ghost story came like the other Christmas annuals, too long before Christmas, and after all hadn't even a ghost in it. "Never mind, little girl," he added, "I'll be with you soon, and be something so real to think of that the cobweb 'feelings' and 'impressions' you speak of will vanish from your brain. But don't say anything to your sister or her husband that will put them out of love with their house when they have just got comfortably settled in it, after spending so much on making it pretty. Besides—though theosophy is in fashion now, and all the clever young fellows, who would have been rank materialists ten years ago, are seeing visions and dreaming dreams, and generally overstepping the bounds that separate matter and spirit—I don't want you, my darling, to be anything but a most human, lovable little wife."

Ada obediently tried to repress her fancies, and to enjoy life as it was lived in Irkham; but she could not succeed. She grew more depressed and nervous every day. Perhaps it was indeed the climate that weakened her; perhaps she felt a certain loneliness even with Helen, who had now plenty of friends among young matrons of her own stamp—healthy, happy, animal-like creatures for the most part, who liked their husbands much and their houses more, and their smart clothes most of all. Ada felt lonely among them, in spite of their treating her with a spontaneous friendliness which was their best characteristic, and her loneliness deepened the strange, morbid impression she had taken up concerning Gore House. When she wrote first to her lover on the subject, the idea had been vague and undefined; but, as the days went on, it gathered clearness and coherence.

"I am ashamed," she wrote now, "to speak to you again of the silly notion I have got into my head about this house; but I promised to tell you everything, and somehow this fancy seems far more real to me than any of the solid, tangible things round me. I know almost the whole story now—and haven't seen anything or heard anything, nor have I mentioned the matter to a soul except you; but yet—I know. There was a murder committed here once—let me speak of the thing as if it had really happened. A child—just fancy, George, a poor, innocent little child—was taken out of the room that is now my boudoir and carried down stairs into the drawing-room and killed, and then buried under the trees on the lawn. Is it not horrible? At least, it would be horrible if it had ever happened, and wasn't only a dream of my imagination. I am ashamed to tell you such nonsense, and yet I must speak of it to somebody, for the consciousness of it weighs me down, as if I were somehow connected with the guilty secret."

"Good heavens! is she going mad?" Walter asked himself when he read these sentences. "I know she is absurdly sensitive to the vaguest impressions, and the society of that unimaginative, worldly sister of hers will drive her more and more in upon herself. And Irkham in December is enough to make anybody think of murder and suicide. I must go to her as soon as I can, and I'll bring her away with me the day after Christmas, and if I can help it she'll never enter the place again. Helen can come to London if she wants to see her."

He was seriously alarmed, thinking of the possible effect on Ada's health and mind of this strange, morbid fancy of hers. For he loved her with a passion she could hardly have understood, and felt as if the one ray of light that brightened his path would be quenched if anything prevented her becoming his wife. So he got a timetable, and, having studied it, took the first train to Irkham, determined to see Ada at once, and cure her of her gloomy notions at once by his presence and the power of his love.

CHAPTER II.

There was trouble in the Baggallay household. The parlormaid, with that lack of consideration for her mistress' convenience which Helen looked upon as characteristic of the servant class, sprained her ankle a few days before Christmas. Another equally competent domestic was not to be had at a moment's notice, and Mrs. Baggallay had issued invitations for a dinner party on Christmas Eve, when she proposed to introduce her sister's betrothed to her especial friends. Helen was in despair; she felt that fate was using her unkindly, and in her depression was glad to listen to a suggestion of the girl's, who in her turn did not wish to lose a comfortable situation. She had a widowed sister, a Mrs. Wallwork—evidently, from the way she spoke of her, the member of her family who had "got on"—who might, if she was asked courteously enough, condescend to take her place till she was able to fill it again.

"You know, ma'am, my sister isn't quite like one of us. She's a good bit older than me, and has always held her head high," explained the girl. "She was always well thought on in her places, and one of her families left her an annuity, so, of course, she has a right to think something of herself. But I've no doubt she'll come for a day or two to oblige me if only you don't mind putting it to her as a bit of a favor."

Helen did not mind putting it as a condescension on the part of Mrs. Wallwork, if only she would come, and she had already learned that in the north country the working classes look upon themselves as the salt of the earth, and demand a recognition of the fact from their masters and mistresses. She sent a beseeching note to Mrs. Wallwork, setting forth her desperate plight, and that lady was gracious enough to come and interview her, and to consent to grace Gore House with her presence on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

"If you're having company and extra work, of course you'll need a parlormaid," she said; "but in your ordinary run you can get along if the 'ousemaid will only put herself to it."

With this concession Helen was forced to be content; but in order that Mrs. Wallwork might be as far as possible fit for her duties when she came to undertake them, she took her over the house, and explained to her what would be expected of her.

Gore House was on the outside a very ordinary building—a square house with a portico over the door supported on stucco pillars—such a residence as may be seen by the score in any town. Formerly it had been surrounded by others like itself; but as the tide of Irkham fashion went elsewhere they had been pulled down, and endless rows of small houses, occupied by the poorer of the clerk and the richer of the artisan classes, had taken their place. Those who knew the dictrict said that the changes of the last ten years had made it almost unrecognizable, and most of Helen Baggallay's friends predicted that she would soon leave her old-fashioned house, in spite of its spacious rooms and large garden, and go to some smaller, smarter villa, where she would be surrounded by "people like herself." Helen did not think so. She knew that there was a good deal of social sensitiveness in Irkham, caused by the fact that so many of the millionaires had cousins who were still in their original station of factory hands, with whom, therefore, they did not care to risk coming in contact; and such anxieties could not befall her. Besides, she liked her roomy house, which was so much larger than it seemed from the street, stretching out on the garden side in a long wing, which contained a billiard-room, dining-room and drawing-room, all opening on a veranda that went round two sides of the house, and gave easy access to the sloping lawn.

She was still new enough to her position to feel a thrill of pride as she led her future parlormaid through the rooms. Finally she opened the door of the drawing-room, where the sound of a piano, languidly touched, proved that Ada was trying to get rid of the time that now hung heavy on her hands.

"I shall expect you to—" she began, when the woman by her side uttered a sharp exclamation, ran forward a few steps into the room, and then fell fainting on the floor.

Helen and Ada rushed to her help, but it was some time before she revived. Even when she was restored to consciousness she hardly seemed to recognize them, but looked wildly round the room. "It's the same room," she muttered. "Everything's changed, the paper, and the furniture, and everything; but I can't mistake the room. I didn't recognize the house, and it hasn't the same name, but there's no doubt about the room."

"Well, what about the room?" queried Helen, with a touch of sharpness. She did not like mysteries.

"I saw a dead child in it," the woman moaned. "The child I had nursed since it was a month old, and I was fond of it—oh! if it had been my own, I couldn't have loved it more!—lying in this room on a sofa, dead! That was the last time I was here, and I never thought to enter the place again."

"It's very sad, of course," said Mrs. Baggallay, feeling very much annoyed at the scene; "but the child wasn't your own, after all, and I suppose all this occurred some time ago—"

"Fifteen years," interrupted Mrs. Wallwork; "but you don't understand it, ma'am. The child—the poor little baby, was murdered—killed by its own father!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Helen; but Ada, who had been listening intently, caught hold of the woman's wrist with a convulsive clasp. "Then that was the child that was killed!" she cried, breathlessly.

"Yes, the child, but how do you know, miss?" asked Mrs. Wallwork, and, "What do you know about it, Ada?" demanded Helen.

"Nothing. At least I have been told nothing; but I have felt ever since I entered this house that a crime had been committed in it, and latterly I have felt sure that a child was murdered here—taken from my little sitting-room up stairs, carried down here and killed, and then buried under those trees in the lawn. I never mentioned it to you, because it seemed such a fantastic idea, but I'm sure of it all the same."

"What nonsense!" protested her sister; and, turning to Mrs. Wallwork, added: "We must get you out of this room that affects you so much; and perhaps you had better say nothing about this—ah!—fancy or recollection of yours. One doesn't like such stories about a house, and you know if you don't recognize the house, you may be mistaken in the room."

"No mistake at all, ma'am, but you're right about not speaking of the matter. I've never opened my lips about it this fifteen years, and I don't want ever to mention it again. But if you have any doubts about what I say, take me up to the room the young lady spoke of, and I'll see if it's the one I'm thinking of."

"It's quite useless!" cried Helen.

But Ada said:

"Yes, let us go;" and there was a strained, fierce look on her face that made her sister think it wiser to consent to the suggestion.

She alone knew how self-willed Ada could be, and how obstinate in clinging to her fancies.

They went up stairs, Mrs. Wallwork leaning on Ada's arm, and Helen following them. For once the young sister seemed the more decided of the two.

"Yes, this is the room," said the still trembling woman. "It was the night nursery, and I slept here with the baby. One night, about midnight, I awoke, and the child wasn't in my arms, and—well, I've told you the rest."

"But I want to know everything," demanded Ada. "Who was the man—this father, who murdered his own child?"

"Ah! but I can't tell you. They called themselves Mr. and Mrs. Everett; but I don't think that was their right name. I took them to be a young married couple. They had been in Irkham for some months before the baby was born. I came to them when it was a month old, and was here six months; I suppose they were in Irkham for about a year. From some things they said, I guessed they had been in India; but they didn't get any foreign letters—at least I thought not; all that came to the house had a London postmark. But once I found an envelope with an Indian stamp, and if it was addressed to my master it wasn't in the name I knew him by."

"What name was it?"

"I don't remember now, it's so long ago, and I paid no heed at the time. It was only afterward that I began to put things together."

"Did they know many people in Irkham?" asked Helen.

"Not a soul. I remember my mistress once saying to Mr. Everett that they were more solitary there than in the midst of a desert, and he answered that there was no place like big cities for concealment."

"And why—why did he do this dreadful thing?"

"Ah, miss, it's a sad world!" said the woman. "There's things the like of you don't understand. And perhaps Mr. Everett didn't kill his child. I didn't see him do it; only when I woke up and found the baby gone, I rushed out to the landing and saw a light downstairs. I followed that. It came from the open drawing-room door, and there was the poor child lying dead. I cried out, and then my master rushed in by the open window from the garden, and—silenced me."

"How?"

"He gagged me and carried me upstairs to the nursery. Then he tied me down to my bed with the sheets, and left me for a time. He came back at last, and said:

"'Unless you want a grave dug for yourself, too, you had better dress yourself quietly and come with me.'

"I was afraid of what he might do, so I obeyed him. When I was ready, and went out of the room, I found my mistress waiting on the landing, dressed to go out. She was trembling, and I think she was crying a little, but very quietly, only I could hear her sobbing occasionally. The three of us went downstairs. I tried to walk as heavily as I could, thinking I might rouse the other two servants; but they slept at the end of a long passage in the back of the house, and I was still gagged and could not cry. When we got out of doors, Mr. Everett said to his wife:

"'You know your way, do you not, and have money enough for the present? Go straight away, and I'll follow you as soon as I have settled this creature.'

"My mistress went off by herself, and I thought my end had come; but he only kept me walking through the town till morning—oh, but I was tired!—and then took me to the railway station and put me in the train for Berstowe, the place I came from. He put some money into my hand and said I would get more if I held my tongue; and that was the last I ever saw of him, and I've never breathed a word about it till this day."

"But why did he do it? Why did he do it?" cried Ada.

"That's what I can't tell you for certain," said Mrs. Wallwork. "I have my notions. Well, I'll tell you, and you can make what you like out of it. One morning not long before I had taken the baby to her room. She had just had a cup of tea and a letter brought to her, and she was reading it when I went in. Before I got near her she jumped up with a cry and ran into her husband's dressing room, and I heard her say:

"'Oh, George, this is terrible! Alfred's coming home. He is so old, so old; why can't he die and leave me free?'

"Mr. Everett pulled to the door with a bang, and I heard nothing more; but I've wondered since—well, I may be wrong. There's no use talking about."

"And did you do nothing to bring this man to justice?" asked Mrs. Baggallay.

"N—no. You know what it is when poor folks try to set the law against rich ones; and, besides, I didn't know anything about where Mr. and Mrs. Everett had gone to. I came up to Irkham after a day or two, and went to the house, but it was empty, except that bailiffs were taking away the furniture. I didn't want to get into trouble, so I said nothing."

"Oh, it's horrible that such a crime should go unpunished!" exclaimed Ada, rising from her seat and walking towards the window. She felt maddened with the story that she had just heard. She longed to avenge that murdered child, whose spirit, it now seemed to her excited imagination, had been trying to win her ear ever since she came to the house. She longed to search for this unnatural father, and bring him to justice, but how should she begin? She had been standing with her hand resting on the writing table, and a sudden, impatient movement she made in reflecting on her powerlessness, caused the calendar that lay on it to fall. Stooping mechanically to pick it up, her eye fell on the motto given for that 22d of December: "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us."

"Is that enough?" she asked herself. "Does the vengeance of God really pursue and punish every wrong-doer? Can we leave it to him?"

She did not answer her own questions, but she no longer felt bound to help on the punishment of the crime.

CHAPTER III.

Captain Walton found, when he arrived at Irkham, that Gore House was not easy to discover. The address, as he had received it from Ada, must have been incomplete, though the omniscience of the postman had insured the safe conveyance of his letters. He could tell the cabman to whose care he entrusted himself what district of the town it was in, but for the rest he had to trust to that cabman's knowledge, which was found wanting, and the chapter of accidents. Happily this brought to their aid one of the said omniscient postmen, to whom the cabman appealed for guidance.

"Gore House! why, it's at the end of Gore street," he was contemptuously informed. "Turn off Cambridge street at the end of Rushton lane, and then take the first turn to the left."

The names struck with a painful familiarity on the ear of the traveler, but he mentally echoed his driver's exclamation:

"There! There's no Gore House off Rushton lane that I knows of."

"They called it that after Gore street was built," exclaimed the postman. "It's the house that used to be called Wrexham Lodge."

"I know where you are now?" exclaimed the cabman, driving on; but Walton covered his face with his hands.

"Wrexham Lodge!" he said to himself. "And Ada's in it—in that house of all places in the world."

He forced himself to seem calm when he reached the house and got out. His arrival was unexpected, for he had come to Irkham a day sooner than he had intended, and the housemaid who opened the door for him did not know exactly what to do with him. So she left him in the hall while she went up to Ada's boudoir to consult her mistress.

"Show him into the drawing-room, of course," said Mrs. Baggallay. "Ada, you'd better go and receive Captain Walton yourself."

"If you like," said Ada, "but I can't bear to go into the drawing-room just yet; the idea of it is too dreadful. May I bring him up here? I don't feel any horror of this room, and, if you don't mind, we might sit here this evening."

"Just as you like," though it's rather small. Run off, and meantime I'll take Mrs. Wallwork down the back staircase."

Ada went off, but Helen detained Mrs. Wallwork for a final word:

"Seeing that this is such an old story, and that we can do nothing in the matter, perhaps it would be better to make no allusion to anything you—ah—fancied occurred in this house. There's no proof, you know, and—you understand."

"Oh, yes, ma'am," answered the woman, eagerly. "I don't want to speak of it, only I was so took aback at seeing that room that the whole story came out. But it's no business of mine, and—well—there's five pounds come to me every quarter since that time. I don't know who sends it, but it comes. So I'll keep quiet."

"I understand," said Helen, with a sense of relief; and she led her along the corridor toward the door that separated servants' rooms and staircase from the other part of the house.

As they went along, Ada and her lover were coming upstairs. Mrs. Wallwork turned to look at the pair—was there ever a woman born who did not like to look at happy lovers?—but as she did so she again uttered an exclamation, and seemed about to faint. Helen caught her, and Ada and Captain Walton hurried to help her, but as the latter approached she pushed him away.

"Don't let him come near me!" she cried. "It's Mr. Everett, and he'll kill me for telling you the truth."

"You are mad, woman," cried Helen, though at the moment she spoke she remembered with a sinking heart that Walton's entire name was George Everett Walton.

As for him, he came close to the woman to relieve Helen of her weight, apparently without recognizing her; but at her words he started back.

"Is it you, woman, you!" he exclaimed. "First the house, and then to find you in it, spying on me as you did before. What does it mean?"

"Yes, what does it mean, Captain Walton?" echoed Helen, but in a different tone. "If you are the man this woman thinks you are, you are a murderer and a villain. Is it true?"

"No; it's a lie—a lie!" he cried excitedly. "She mistakes me for some one else; she's mad—she's—"

Ada stopped him.

"Tell lies to all the world, George," she said in a cold, stern tone he had never heard before, "but speak the truth to me. I was to be your wife; I have a right to know. Did you live in this house fifteen years ago under the name of George Everett? Were you guilty of the sin, the crime this woman accuses you of?"

"Ada," he answered, "all men are guilty of things they are ashamed of. Search any man's past—"

She held up her hand with a gesture that silenced him.

"It is enough," she said. "Go, before I am calm enough to decide whether or not I ought to seek your punishment."

He bent his head and turned to go, but to the girl who a few minutes before had been his betrothed he said a last word.

"Ada, I am punished; I have lost you."

Then he left the house, while the three women stood silent, mute with a horror that yet was mingled with awe.

The next day the Irkham newspapers contained an account of a suicide that had taken place the preceding evening. George Walton had gone to a hotel, taken a room, and there poisoned himself with a solution of morphia, which, it seemed, he always had about him. After this fashion he had prepared himself for the discovery that had come upon him at last.

Ada was very ill for a long time after that gloomy Christmas at Irkham. Helen thought at first that the horror of it would kill her, and found her only hope in the thought that her sister had never loved George Walton. That thought carried comfort to another anxious heart, to whom Ada's life was the most precious in the world. And in the end she did recover and find consolation, for the following autumn John Baggallay and Helen had to go to Liverpool to say good-bye to some friends of theirs who were going to America—Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Penrhyn.—*All the Year Round.*

NEIGHBORS.

Your name is Helen; are you dark or fair?
Deep blue your eyes, or black as shadows are
That lie in woods at midnight? Tell me, sweet,
What form you wear—large, medium or petite?
I never saw you, nor you me, I ween,
And yet our verses on the self-same sheet
Are printed in the last new magazine.

I fain would know, fair neighbor, if your song
Came from the woodlands or the city's throng,
From mountain fastness or beside the sea?
Breathed it in chambered solitude, or free
As birds on wing, amidst some sylvan scene?
I pray you grow acquaint, and let us be
Neighbors in thought as in the magazine.

So, may I ask if you are deeply blue
(As to the nose, I mean,) or just a true
Bright little woman—nothing Bostonese—
Whose song is sung without a thought to please
Aught but the singer? May I read between
The lines, and ask such things as these,
Hoping they'll print them in the magazine?

Did hope deferred—that is the weary time
Betwixt acceptance and the printed rhyme—
Make your sweet heart, like my old battered soul,
Endure long agonies and curse the whole
Confounded tribe of editors, whose keen,
Cool, business sense would not at once enroll
Our burning thoughts in their next magazine?

And did you anxiously each month e'er track,
From leading articles to bric-a-brac,
Each page, lest haply they had hid your verse
Between some dreary kind of prose?—or worse,
Lopped off a line to pad a page, and then
Misspelt your name, the tender poet's curse?
Alas, for poets in a magazine!

I question idly. Chance, and chance alone,
Upon one page my verse and yours has thrown.
But, let me whisper, e'er I drop my pen,
I am the steadiest of all married men,
And write these lines—oh, may they yet be seen
By your bright eyes!—in hopes they'll bring me ten
Or twenty dollars from some magazine.

—*The Century.* R. T. W. DUKE, JR.

The Fate of Old Shoes.

It may have been noticed that nowadays very few old shoes and scraps of leather are observable lying in our streets or dust-heaps. This is in a great measure due to the collections of old scraps of leather, which are taken to mills, where they are cut up into fine dust. To this is added about 40 per cent. of India rubber, and the whole is then subjected to a pressure of 6,000 or 10,000 pounds per square foot. The substance is then colored, and it is sold at prices some 50 per cent. below that of natural leather. It is manifestly a poor substitute, and is wholly wanting in fiber; in fact, if it were not for the insane craze for cheap articles, which buyers vainly hope to substitute for those which, though the original cost is greater, and yet in the end cheaper, we should never hear of this compound, which might almost as well be made of saw-dust as leather-dust.

In consequence of the manufacture and sale of large quantities of inferior leather, many old-established tanners are now stamping theirs with a trade-mark, which is some guarantee to the buyer, as he may be sure no man will put his name or trade-mark on an inferior article. It is hoped by this means to enable those who desire to buy the best quality of leather, to be able to secure what they want, namely, a reliable article at a moderate cost.

The Chinese Wall.

The Chinese Wall is no myth, contrary to recent assertions. Built 1,700 years before America was discovered, 1,600 miles of it still remain erect. A correspondent who recently rode two days from Pekin and mounted its ramparts said:

I could see it climbing the mountains and going down the valleys as far as my eyes could reach. It did not diminish in strength nor size at the various points I visited, and its masonry would have been good work for the American builders of to-day. It is about twenty-five feet high, and at the top it is so wide that two carriages could drive abreast along it and the hubs of one would not touch those of the other. Its exterior walls are of blue brick of such a size that they look like massive stones, and these are filled in with earth and paved with brick at the top. The grass and the moss have now grown over the top of this great wall. No archers now guard it, and it stands amid the snowy mountains a monument of the almond-eyed men who thus, two thousand years ago, sought to protect their homes and those of their descendants for all time to come.

Photo-Electric Ophthalmia.

A new disease called photo-electric ophthalmia is described as due to the continual action of the electric light on the eyes. The patient is awakened in the night by a severe pain around the eye, accompanied with excessive secretion of tears. An oculist of Cronstadt is said to have had thirty patients thus affected under his care in the last ten years.—*Science.*

SPRINGTIME stirs up the bile. Simmons' Liver Regulator removes it.

IN ANCIENT TIMES.

Some of the Curious Things that Were Known Centuries Ago.

It is not generally known that the custom of keeping birthdays is many thousand years old. It is recorded in the 4th chapter of Genesis, 20th verse: "And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants."

One of the most celebrated peals of bells in London is that of St. Mary-le-bow, Cheapside, which form the basis of a proverbial expression meant to mark emphatically a London nativity. Brand speaks of a substantial endowment by a citizen for the ringing of Bow bells every morning to wake up the London apprentices.

The modern names of sizes of books are derived from the folding of paper. When the sheet is not folded it is called a folio, and this size is very fashionable throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The folio sheet doubled becomes a quarto; another doubled constitutes the octavo of eight leaves or sixteen pages.

There is in existence a curious class of knives, of the sixteenth century, the blades of which have on one side the musical notes to the benediction of the table, or grace before meat, and on the other side the grace after meat. The set of these knives usually consisted of four. They were kept in an upright case of stamped leather, and were placed before the singer.

The bamboo tree does not blossom until it attains its thirtieth year, when it produces seed profusely and then dies. It is said that a famine was prevented in India in 1812 by the sudden flowering of the bamboo trees, where 50,000 people resorted to the jungle to gather the seed for food.

The most costly undertaking of a literary character ever undertaken by a single individual is the magnificent work on "Mexico," by Lord Kingsborough. This stupendous piece of work is said to have been produced at an enormous cost to the author. It is comprised in seven immense folio volumes, embellished by about 1,000 colored illustrations.

Air cushions are supposed to be an invention of modern times, but that this luxury was anticipated as long ago as the time of Ben Johnson is evident from a passage in the "Alchemist," where Sir Epicure Mammon enumerates to Surly a list of good things to be expected. Among these indulgences is this prophetic forecast of modern inflated india-rubber bed and cushions: "I will have all my beds blown up, not stuffed; down is too hard."

Toward the beginning of 1700 the crowns of hats were mostly round, much lower than before, and had very broad brims, resembling what are now occasionally called Quakers' hats; the protrusive encumbrance soon suggested the convenience of their being turned up in front. Fashion dictated the unbending of another side or flap, and ultimately a third; so that, by this process, in 1704, the regular three-cocked hat became the order of the day, when feathers ceased to be usually worn.

The first bridges were of wood, and the earliest of which we have any account was built in Rome, 500 years B. C. The next was erected by Julius Cæsar for the passage of his army across the Rhine. Trajan's great bridge over the Danube, 4,770 feet long, was made of timber, with stone piers. The Romans also built the first stone bridge, which crossed the Tiber. Suspension bridges are of remote origin. A Chinese one mentioned by Kirchen, made of chains supporting a roadway 830 feet in length, was built A. D. 65, and is still to be seen. The first large iron bridge was erected over the Severn in 1777. The age of railways has brought a remarkable development in this branch of engineering, especially in the construction of bridges of iron and steel.

She Came Down.

"Laura," said the old man, "will you have some taters?"

"If you refer to the farinaceous tubers which pertain to the solanum tuberosum, and which are commonly known as potatoes," replied the sweet girl graduate, "I would be pleased to be helped to a modicum of the same. But taters? Taters? I'm quite sure, papa, they are something of which I never before had the pleasure of hearing."

The old man pounded on the table until the pepper caster lay down for a rest, and then remarked in a tone of icy calmness: "Laura, will you have some of the taters?"

"Yes, papa."

Is our boasted high school system a failure, or is it not?—*Terre Haute Express.*

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OLD-HORSE SALE
OF UNCLAIMED BAGGAGE, AT THE AUCtion Rooms of BELL & CO., 927 K st., Sacramento, SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1889, at 10 o'clock A. M., Consisting of: 11 Trunks, 11 Grips, 8 Bales of Blankets, 1 Sack Clothing, 2 Bundles Mattresses, 1 Carpet Bag, 1 Box and Sack of Clothing, 1 Bag of Tools, 1 Sample Case, 1 Bundle Books, 1 National Money Drawer (complete).
B. B. BROWN, Proprietor State House Hotel.
jy13-4tS BELL & CO., Auctioneers.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.—ESTATE OF CHARLES DELARGY, deceased. Notice is hereby given by the undersigned, the Executor and Executrix of the estate of CHARLES DELARGY, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against said deceased, to exhibit them, with the necessary affidavits or vouchers, within ten months after the first publication of this notice, to them at the office of MATT F. JOHNSON, 627 I street, Sacramento, Cal. JOHN McCAUGHAN, Executor, and ANNIE McCAUGHAN, Executrix
Of the Estate of CHARLES DELARGY, deceased.
Dated July 13, 1889.
MATT F. JOHNSON, Attorney for Executor and Executrix. jy13-5tS

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT, STATE OF CALifornia, county of Sacramento. In the matter of the estate of MARY E. NELMES, deceased. Notice is hereby given that FRIDAY, the 23d day of AUGUST, 1889, at 10 o'clock A. M. of said day, and the Court-room of said Court, at the Court-house, in the City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, and State of California, have been appointed as the time and place for proving the will of said MARY E. NELMES, deceased, and for hearing the application of G. M. COLTON for the issuance to him of letters testamentary thereon.
Witness my hand and the seal of said Court this 19th day of July, 1889.
[SEAL] W. B. HAMILTON, Clerk.
By L. P. SCOTT, Deputy Clerk.
TAYLOR & HOLL, Attorneys for Petitioner.
jy20-5tS

RAILROAD TIME TABLE.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY.
PACIFIC SYSTEM.
July 28, 1889.
Trains LEAVE and are due to ARRIVE at SACRAMENTO.

LEAVE.	TRAINS RUN DAILY.	ARRIVE.
7:00 A.	Calistoga and Napa	11:40 A.
4:05 P.	Calistoga and Napa	8:30 P.
11:00 P.	Ashland and Portland	3:40 A.
5:05 P.	Deming, El Paso and East	7:05 P.
7:30 P.	Knight's Landing	7:55 A.
4:30 A.	Marysville (Mixed)	4:25 P.
9:00 A.	Los Angeles	9:55 A.
9:00 P.	Ogden and East—Second Class	6:30 A.
10:30 P.	Central Atlantic Express—For Ogden and East	3:40 P.
3:00 P.	Oroville	9:50 A.
11:00 P.	Oroville	3:40 A.
3:00 P.	Red Bluff via Marysville	9:50 A.
10:40 P.	Redding via Willows	4:05 P.
4:00 A.	San Francisco via Benicia	10:40 P.
7:00 A.	San Francisco via Benicia	8:30 P.
4:05 P.	San Francisco via Benicia	10:10 P.
*10:00 A.	San Francisco via steamer	†6:00 A.
11:20 A.	San Francisco via Livermore	2:25 P.
3:05 P.	San Francisco via Benicia	11:40 A.
11:20 A.	San Jose	2:25 P.
9:00 A.	Santa Barbara	9:55 A.
5:05 P.	Santa Barbara	7:05 P.
7:00 A.	Santa Rosa	11:40 A.
4:05 P.	Santa Rosa	8:30 P.
9:00 A.	Stockton and Galt	7:05 P.
5:05 P.	Stockton and Galt	9:55 A.
9:00 P.	Truckee and Reno	6:30 A.
10:30 P.	Truckee and Reno	3:40 P.
8:30 A.	Colfax	5:00 P.
7:00 A.	Vallejo	11:40 A.
4:05 P.	Vallejo	†8:30 P.
*12:15 P.	Folsom & Placerv'le (mixed)	*10:35 A.
*7:15 A.	Folsom and Placerville	*3:45 P.
*5:20 P.	Folsom	*6:50 A.

*Sunday excepted. †Sunday only. ‡Monday excepted. A.—For morning. P.—For afternoon.

A. N. TOWNE, General Manager.
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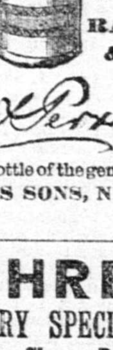
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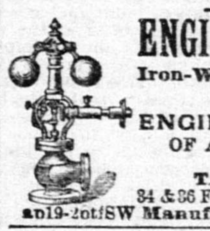
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