KNIGHT OF THE HOBBY-HORSE.

He rode away with flashing eyes
To fight in distant lands;
His charger was a coal-black steed,
His sword was in his hands.
"I may be gone a hundred years,"
He said, "and so, farewell!
The papers I shall send to you,
My valiant deeds will tell."

His mother waved a last good-by
And sped him on his way.
"When you come back to me," she cried,
"'Twill be a happy day!"

He rode across the nursery,
And through the garret dim,
Then paused to view the country round,
Beyond the window's rim.
The day was warm, he journeyed far;
He said: "I'll rest awhile,
And then again my steed and I
Will ride full many a mile."

They found him there as night came on,
His flashing eyes were closed;
With arms around his charger's neck
The warrior reposed.
—Elizabeth Lincoln Gould, in Youth's Companion.

Two Hundred Dollars Reward

By Katherine Head.

(Copyright, 1901, by Authors Syndicate.)

AS HE was crossing the avenue near Twenty-third street Felix Singleton, the poet, saw a tiny, frightened dog dodging between the carriages. The poor little creature was so terrified and so evidently unused to being out alone that Felix was afraid she would be killed. So he picked her up in his arms. She was a beautiful lap-dog and her shining coat spoke of loving care, as did the blanket she wore, which was marked with a handsome monogram, in gold. As soon as the dog felt herself in a safe asylum she began to lick the hands of her benefactor and to look at him with gratitude. They were already friends when, having climbed six flights of stairs, the poet deposited the waif in the sorry garret that served him as temporary lodging.

Singleton was 25 years old and was beginning to be recognized as a man of talent, but talent is a merchandise not always negotiable. Fortune had not yet discovered the road to his mansard, a road that, to do her justice, was hard traveling for a person who is always represented with eyes shut. While he waited for the blind goddess to knock at his sixth story floor, Felix lived from hand to mouth. It would be all right, he often told himself, if his great book "Redemption" was once on the market, but the callous publisher, while not denying its beauties, doubted its popularity, and refused to publish it without a guarantee of $200. Felix could have effected a peace between Britain and Boer as readily as to have produced the money; thus were the wheels of progress blocked by want of a paltry $200!

When he and the dog reached home Felix lighted a candle which was stuck in the neck of a bottle, and, brushing the loose papers—which were parts of his yet unrecognized masterpiece—from the table, he proceeded to set forth his meager repast. He shared his dinner and his bed with the dog, and, in the morning, they divided equally the milk that formed his breakfast. Singleton was sure that the dog was a valuable one. So he went down and bought a morning paper to see if she was advertised. He turned to the Lost and Found column, and this is what he read:

"TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD!!!—For the return of a lap-dog, answering to the name of 'Mirza,' lost yesterday near Twenty-third street."

He called: "Mirza! Mirza!"

The dog barked joyfully and ran toward the door.

"Ah, ha!" laughed Singleton. "Now I know your social position and your name, my friend. Two hundred dollars reward! To think of giving $200 for such a very little dog! Some one must love you very much. Two hundred dollars! What a godsend for some poor devil—like myself," he added as an afterthought.

He rested his head on his hands and tried to think. Two hundred dollars was just the sum he needed to publish his book. "Redemption" once out, his play would be accepted, his success assured! Why not take this money? It was simply a question of his own wretched pride. It was honest money. Or, he said to himself, if he did not like the idea of keeping the money, what was to prevent him from considering it as a loan sent by the Goddess of Chance? A loan that he could return, once the current of success turned toward him. The temptation was too strong! "Redemption" should be published.

This decision made, he felt that he had crossed the Rubicon; it only remained for him to think of the least mortifying way for him to claim the reward. Suddenly he smiled. "The very thing!" he cried, patting Mirza on the head. He ran down the six flights of stairs and soon returned with the complete costume of a house painter, which he had borrowed from the son of his landlady. He dressed himself in the white trousers and the paint-stained blouse, took Mirza in his arms and went to the address given in the advertisement.

He was shown into a drawing-room, where, while he waited for some one to appear, he had an opportunity of studying an unflattering reproduction of himself in a long mirror. His courage began to fail and he looked longingly toward the entrance. Suddenly the door was flung open and a charming young girl came in like a whirlwind. Without saying a word to him, she picked up the dog and showered kisses upon her soft muzzle, interspersing them with loving words and affectionate reproaches.

Poor Singleton stood as if nailed to the floor. He was at once disgusted and horrified. Here was the prettiest girl he had ever seen, and what a mess he had made of the whole thing with his clever disguise! At that instant he would have sacrified unhesitatingly the entire manuscript of "Redemption" could a chasm have opened under his feet and swallowed him and his dirty blouse. She looked at him at last and smiled kindly, a little surprised evidently at the appearance of this workman. He seemed decidedly above his position!

"It is you," she said, "that I must thank for returning my darling Mirza. I have missed her so much. I am very grateful for returning her and for your kindness to her. How can I ever thank you?"

She stopped suddenly, evidently remembering how he expected to be thanked, and blushing prettily, she added: "I must tell mother. Wait a moment, please."

Not giving him a chance for a word, she ran out of the room. Felix could hear whispering in the next apartment, and then the mother appeared. He saw with joy that she was alone. She added her thanks to her daughter's, and then going with Felix to the door, she pressed something into his hand, and, the next minute, he found himself on the doorstep.

He was covered with shame; red with rage! What had he done? What should he do next? Ring the bell, and say that it was all a mistake? Offer an explanation to that lovely girl? No, no, a thousand times, no! He could not face her again. Now that the worst of his programme was over, why not follow the rest of it out to the time when he could return the loan? After that, who knew what might happen?

That evening he wrote to his publisher.

. . . . .

Two years afterwards, at a great charity bazar, one of the most popular tables was the one presided over by Mrs. Dennis and her charming daughter, Gertrude. The rooms were crowded by elegantly dressed people, and the bazar was such a success that even the simplest things were selling for many times their value.

Everyone was talking about Gertrude Dennis. She was very beautiful, and then her fortune was something enormous. She had already refused many offers, it was rumored, but look at the men around her now. The crowd was so great, indeed, and the flowers she was selling were going so fast that some one suggested that the remaining ones be auctioned—in this way they might bring even higher prices. Stem by stem, they disappeared at fabulous prices until nothing was left on the table but a tiny bunch of violets. Furious competition had pushed the price on these to $20, when a new voice was heard:

"Two hundred dollars!"

Everyone turned to see who the happy man was, whose means permitted such generosity.

"Oh," said one, pointing out a fashionably-dressed young fellow, whose head dominated the crowd. "Of course! It's Singleton, the poet, whose play is having such a run. His success has been remarkable. Two years ago almost no one had heard of him, but by Jove! he deserves his luck!"

Gertrude, blushing slightly and smiling, held up the violets.

"Two hundred dollars! Two hundred dollars! Going at $200! Am I offered any more? Going—going—Sold!"

The crowd separated before Singleton, who came forward and gave the money to the young girl. She seemed embarrassed as she handed him the flowers and looked searchingly at him for a moment, as if trying to connect him with some incident in her memory. Then she thanked him very prettily for his generosity, in the name of the charity for which the bazar was given.

"Do not thank me," he said, lowering his voice so that no one else could hear him, "I am simply paying a debt contracted toward you during a most trying time in my life."

"Ah," Gertrude cried. "Then I have seen you before! You are—"

"Mirza's rescuer! After you, I shall always be grateful to her for her timely help."

Mrs. Dennis joined them, and Singleton, with the confidence of a man whose present prosperity permits him to resurrect an unfortunate past, told them how, with their $200, he had published "Redemption," and how all his luck had dated from that happy occasion. He ended, gayly, by begging to be allowed to thank Mirza in person for her part in his fortune.

"Do come to see us," said Mrs. Dennis, graciously. "We will be glad to have you, and I am sure that Mirza has not forgotten her rescuer."

Felix Singleton's first visit was followed by others, until the day when his most audacious dream was realized. That day, as they returned from the church, he beamed with love and happiness as he entered the house, and he pressed very closely to his side the trembling little hand of the girl who had agreed to bear his name, a name that, thanks to her, and the dog, was now a celebrated one.

An Explanation.

Pa Zimmerman said, when he got back from Europe: "America is good enough for me." He must have assurances from the duke, says the Chicago Record-Herald, that the latter is going to stay on the other side.

Careful Diagnosis Dangerous.

It is reported now that the sultan has a cancer, but this is probably a mere guess, says the Chicago Record-Herald. No doctor would be likely to run risks by going close enough to see.

LARGEST LAND DEAL.

So the Famous "Yazoo Purchase" Might Be Called.

Memories of the Early Settlement of Mississippi — Historically the Most Interesting Section of the South.

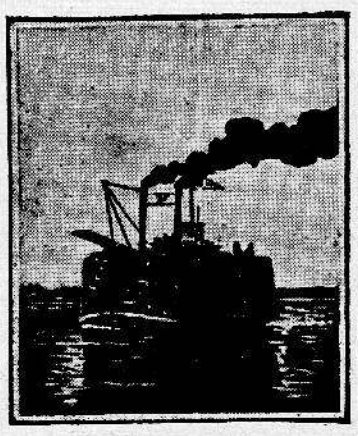
[Special Vicksburg (Miss.) Letter.]

IN A cane-brake on the summit of a hill overlooking picturesque Mill-dale is the grave o. one of the most historic personages who figured in the earliest settlement of this then Spanish territory, now known as Mississippi. The "dale" is perhaps the prettiest spot in this

BAD ROADS IN THE DELTA.

weird, heavily-wooded region of gnarled oaks and sylvan dells. It is about two miles from the river Yazoo, which takes its name from the "Yazous," Indians who disputed the possession of this wild country with the adventurous Spaniards. This beautiful and historic spot of rolling hills and picturesque "dale," was settled a few years after the close of the revolution by Ambrose Douglas, of Downs, of Aberdeen, Scotland, a descendant of the historic chieftain "Black" Douglas, whose clan was so powerful as to cause the rulers of Scotland considerable anxiety for their power and thrones. He was the husband of the "Heiress of Douglas," Lady Jane Douglas, so celebrated in Scottish song and story. The family estate was known as the "downs," and, as was the custom in those days, this branch of the Douglas clan assumed the name of "Downs," after the estate. The father of Ambrose Douglas was a baron, and his "clan" was one of the most powerful in the downs of Scotland. The title descended to the eldest son, and Ambrose, William and Henry came to America. Ambrose came before the revolution, and fought in Morgan's brigade. After the revolution he came to this section, and located at the beautiful Mill-dale, then forest primeval.

His portion of the state enabled him to locate a large tract of land, which he improved and lived upon in almost baronial splendor in this wilderness among the Yazous and Spaniards. Here, in this dale, he built a fine castle after the Scottish style of architecture, and also a mill upon the pretty stream which courses through the dale. Hence the name—and a more appropriate one could not have been given—this home of the wood-nymphs, if such sprites dwell upon earth. The "baronial castle" was dismantled during the civil war, and the



TRANSPORTING COTTON BY STEAMER.

old mill was destroyed, but the foundations remain, and the little stream rushes over the moss-gray stones as of old on its impetuous way to the Yazoo. On the hill overlooking this picturesque dale and the ruins of the palace home in the forest lie the remains of the last descendants o. the immediate house of Douglas—Ambrose Douglas, and his brothers, William and Henry, sons of Lady Jane Douglas. These were the earliest colonial settlers in the Mississippi valley, hence this spot is of especial historic interest.

In a few years the richness of the lands of the Yazous reached the older settlements of the Carolinas, and gradually the "delta" became settled with wealthy planters, who brought along their slaves, and established plantations limited in extent only by their ability to cultivate them. The Choctaw and the Yazous Indians claimed the territory by right of occupancy—their forefathers having lived in this region for unknown ages, tracing their ancestry to the mound-builders. The Yazous lived on the banks of that stream from near what is now Mill-dale, for a hundred miles up the delta. The Choctaw settlement extended from what is now Vicksburg to near the Natchez tribe. Their chief settlement was what is known as the "old ball ground," where they played a game something like our town ball. This place later came into the possession of one of the descendants of the original settler of this valley—Ambrose Douglas Downs. The Spaniards, who were endeavoring to dispossess the Indians, occupied the banks of the river, having built forts at various points. Where Vicksburg stands was Fort Nogales, so named from the immense forest of walnut trees on the many hills at this point. Until the traveling preacher, Vick, settled there in the early part of last century the point was known as "Walnut Hills."

The United States also claimed this country by virtue of the English government having recognized the claim of Georgia to this section before the revolution. Companies were organized to purchase large tracts of land from Georgia, and by this means the great Yazoo and the Mississippi valleys became settled by Americans, and the country was eventually wrested from Spain and the Indians. The largest land deal perhaps on record was the noted "Yazoo purchase" of 15,000,000 acres, for which $200,000 was to be paid. Georgia had no funds, and in order to raise money sold these lands, after extinguishing the Indian title. But the newly formed United States government also claimed these lands on the grounds that, as Georgia had adopted the constitution, that state had thereby relinquished this territory to the general government, and, further, that Georgia should surrender these lands as part payment of that colony's expenses in the revolution. After the expulsion of the Spaniards and the extermination of the Indians the real trouble began, and the Yazoo purchase became the most celebrated case in the country. The general government alleged that a state could not make a treaty with Indians. It was also shown that nearly all of the legislators who had voted for the bill had shares of stock in the company. Duels and street fights followed, and finally the sale was annulled by the legislature. The records of the great purchase were publicly burned by the governor at the state capitol, which was Lewisville. The money paid was ordered refunded to

A MILL-DALE OAK TREE.

the purchasers. Unluckily, however, the greater part of the money was stolen by a dishonest official, as there were no banks in those days and the money was piled up in chests in the state house. The state transferred its interest in the Yazoo delta lands to the general government. For more than half a century this noted case came to the surface in land contests in the state and the United States courts. The supreme court had, in effect, decided that the sale was legal, but the manner in which Georgia authorized the sale was tainted with fraud and was the downfall of a number of politicians, and cast a blur upon the character of the members of the company who purchased the lands. In those primitive days bribery and the receiving of bribes were crimes, and not considered as "smart politics." Though all official records of this "Great Yazoo purchase swindle" have been expunged from the statute books and legislative records, it still lives in tradition among the oldest settlers on the Yazoo.

The early planters cultivated tobacco, indigo, wheat and corn, and "raised" their own horses and mules for plantation use. Flat-boating was the system of transportation until the invention of steamboats during the first quarter of the past century. Only a small quantity of cotton was cultivated by each planter, which was used mainly for home consumption, until the invention of the cotton-gin. Then indigo and tobacco gave way to cotton. Slaves were imported in greater numbers from the West Indian islands, principally Cuba, and the Yazoo delta and the Mississippi valley soon became known as the greatest and most productive cotton sections in the United States. Wealthy planters from the older states removed to these cotton belts, and here lived for half a century an aristocracy surpassed in no other section of the south in point of wealth and culture. These lands are compared to those of the Valley of the Nile in richness, caused by the frequent overflows of the Yazoo and the Mississippi rivers and the consequent heavy rich alluvial deposits. The group of gulf states, of which these valleys form a large area, now produce nearly 50 per cent. of the cotton of the world. With the increase of factories in the south about one-fourth of this product is manufactured in the United States. Cotton raising in the south gives employment and support to about 7,000,000 negroes—white men not being adapted to this class of labor.

J. M. SCANLAND.

ANTIQUITY OF THE VICES.

Recently Translated Babylonian Letters Reveal the Evils of Financial Schemes.

The letters and inscriptions of Hammurabi, a king of the Babylonian dynasty, dating back to 2200 B. C., which have recently been translated, throw most interesting light not only upon the antiquity of vices of a financial kind, but also upon the manner in which they were punished in those far-away days, says the Chicago Tribune. In one of these letters Hammurabi notifies his correspondent that a case of bribery has been reported to him, and that the man who offered the bribe, the man who took the bribe, and a witness to the transaction are in Babylon. The officer is further notified to apprehend all these men, as well as to "set a seal upon the money or upon whatsoever was offered as the bribe, and cause it" and all the parties to be brought before him for summary punishment. The outcome of the case is not reported, but as Hammurabi, the Amraphel of Genesis, was absolute in power, it is not unlikely that two Babylonians lost their heads as a salutary warning to others.

The second letter bears upon the question of money lending in those ancient days. A serf had informed the king that Ani-ellati, a notorious usurer, had laid claim to certain lands which belonged to him, and had appropriated his crops. The king, after looking into the matter, found that the usurer held a mortgage upon only a small part of the serf's acres, and ordered that his pledge should be returned to him, and that the usurer should be brought to him for punishment, the registry of title being held sufficient to defeat a usurious claim—a feature of land laws which, curiously enough, is now advocated in England.

These two letters, over 4,000 years old, show not only the antiquity of the vices of greed but also the excellent manner in which justice was administered sometimes in the early days of the race. In the bribery case the briber was held as equally guilty with the bribed. In the usury case the Babylonian Shylock lost not only his interest but his principal and was punished besides. In the bribery matter the king was determined not to touch the hush money, 400 ounces of gold, so he ordered his officials to return it to the briber, after deducting 398 ounces for legal expenses and two ounces for fees to the servants, which shows that Hammurabi was crafty as well as just. Justice after all has not made much advance in the last 41 centuries; on the other hand, its administrators to-day might learn a useful lesson from the study of the Hammurabi tablets.

MONEY ON OCEAN LINERS.

Enormous Amounts Stored Away in the Treasure Rooms of Big Steamers.

A French steamship that left New York lately carried in its strong box more than $4,000,000 in gold. It was rumored, says the Chicago Tribune, that the sum would have been much larger if the insurance companies had not objected, but the bankers say this story is absurd, calling attention to the fact that $8,000,000 was exported on a single steamer at the time of the recent British bond award to subscribers in this country. These figures serve to call attention to the enormous values that may be concentrated in the comparatively small compass of a modern ocean liner. The vessel that carried abroad $8,000,000 probably represented in itself an investment of $4,000,000, while it may have carried a freight cargo worth $1,000,000, besides the lives and personal property of many hundreds of passengers. This makes a total money value of more than $13,000,000, aside from the lives of the passengers and crew, whose combined numbers would equal the population of a fair-sized village. No Spanish galleon heavily laden with the spoils of Mexico or Peru ever sailed out of the Caribbean with a cargo that could compare with that of one of these modern treasure ships. The extreme rarity of disasters among these large vessels, as reflected in the fact that the insurance companies are eager to take the risks on gold in transit for a premium of $650 on $1,000,000, is highly creditable to the modern shipbuilder and navigator.

Settled a Dispute.

At a recent meeting of the Entomological society in London the president G. H. Verrall, told an amusing story to prove that a knowledge of insects may even be useful in settling questions in literary history. Commentators on the works of Robert Louis Stevenson were trying in vain to discover whether the notes made by him in a certain book were written before or after he took up his residence in Samoa. It happened that a fly had been squeezed between the pages and when Mr. Varrall saw it he instantly recognized it as belonging to a species peculiar to the Polynesian islands. That settled the question.—Chicago Chronicle.

Mice Saved Lives.

Mice played an important part recently during a serious fire which broke out in a Pennsylvania coalmine. Several mice were lowered down one of the shafts in order to discover whether the air was sufficiently pure to allow men to descend. The mice were drawn up alive and miners then went down and commenced to build up the passages. Mice were also lowered into the second shaft, but these were suffocated, showing that the pit was still in a highly dangerous condition.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

PAYS TO SMUGGLE CHINAMEN.

Large Profits for Canadians and Others Engaged in the Business.

An investigation of the methods employed by the people engaged in smuggling Chinamen from Canada into the United States shows that large profits are made by them, says the New York Sun. The headquarters of the smugglers are at Montreal where the executive force of the Chinese smuggling trust is stationed, though its owners are the big Chinese companies of the United States.

Chinese representatives in Montreal furnish to each individual Chinaman bound for the other side of the boundary line by the underground route the necessary cash with which to pay for being smuggled through. This money has to be returned out of the first earnings of the immigrant, and as failure to pay would simply lead to the defaulter's being denounced to the American authorities and expelled from the country, no risk is run by the advancers of the money. The total cost of smuggling a Chinaman from Montreal into the United States is about $200, of which $85 goes to the individual who actually puts the Chinaman across the line.

For a year or two there was a lull in the actual smuggling of Chinamen over the border, the method adopted during that period being the swearing of their countrymen into the United States by means of Chinese witnesses, procured by border lawyers. The discovery of the fraud in a few instances, and the necessary locking up of the immigrants, during the investigation of each case, in Plattsburg jail, have resulted in a return to the old plan of direct smuggling.

The boldness with which the white men employed in this business in Montreal are now acting, encourages the hope that some of them may fall into the hands of the United States authorities ere long. Yet so well do they lay their plans that in the last ten years only two white men of this class were ever caught red-handed by the United States officials, and these two walked out of Plattsburg jail one rainy night, about a month after they were captured, and came back to Montreal.

MUD AS A LIFE SAVER.

Inhalation of Dust from London Streets Causes Many Grave Disorders.

In London it was noticed that when the streets were muddy there was a marked diminution of diseases that were prevalent when dust is blowing, says the Boston Transcript. Bowel troubles are plentiful when people are compelled to inhale dust. Consumption, too, often gets its start from dust. Other illnesses almost equally grave follow from the breathing of flying particles of filth. Add sufficient water to transform the dust into mud, and the power for harm is gone, for mud is not inhaled. The germs that infest dry dust become inert in mud, because these germs, vicious as they are, are too lazy to go anywhere unless they are carried. Moreover, mud is very likely to get ultimately into the drain pipe, and the germs are carried off where they can do no harm. Even when mud dries on the clothing and is brushed off the dust that arises therefrom does not appear to be as dangerous as that which has not been recently wet.

It will thus be apparent that there is a bright side to mud, and henceforth all but the most fastidious will revel in muddy streets. Many physicians may advise their more weakly patients to go abroad in search of exercise only when the roads are muddy. Rich men may be looked for to have special mud plots somewhere on their grounds, while sanitariums may be expected to advertise that all the walks about their buildings are so constantly attended to that mud is guaranteed every day in the year. Mud baths have long been utilized, and mud would seem certain to become one of the great curative agents of the near future. Yet wise medicos are learning nothing that has not been known for ages to mothers of large families in rural districts, where "playing in the mud" has always been known as the children's healthiest pastime.

Bull Fighters Afraid of Cows.

It will probably not surprise our readers to hear that most Spanish bull-fighters object to fighting cows. The real reason may, however, astonish them. A sportsmanlike objection to persecuting a female animal has nothing whatever to do with it. The fact is that the average toreador is sincerely afraid of a cow. And he has good reason. The cows of the half-wild breed used for the arena are much quicker in their movements than are the bulls. Their horns are more pointed and more formidable; they do not lower their heads to the ground, shut their eyes, and charge like a locomotive upon the rails, but are alert and ready to follow every movement of their persecutors. Their warlike tactics have been adapted, not to blind, bovine frontal attacks, but to the strategy of active and cunning beasts of prey, of which the human bull-fighter is only a feeble mimic. If these cheap idols of the Spanish populace would face young and active wild cows, which had just been robbed of their calves, they might, perhaps, forestall the butcher, but they would, at any rate, do something to earn their laurels.—Pearson's Magazine.

European Aristocrats in Prison.

According to an apparently authentic article in a French periodical, not fewer than 20,000 aristocrats are at present confined in the prisons of Europe. Russia stands first, with 12,000 blue-blooded law breakers.—Indianapolis News.