A HEAD OF DEATH.

What a Man Saw in a Mirror to Horrify Him.

A Millionaire Frightened by an Uncanny Reflection—A Mysterious Illness—Its Cause and Cure—An Ungrateful Patient.

This is a story that Dr. Clarke Forster told us after dinner. I had had a busy morning—some twenty patients, one on the heels of another—and now that the last had departed, and noon was long past, I begun to think hungrily of my luncheon. But just as I got up to leave my consulting-room my servant entered and handed me a visiting-card, upon which was engraved the name, "Mr. Alexender Carathwaite." "There can be but one Alexander Carathwaite," thought I, "and he is Alexander Carathwaite, the famous iron king and millionaire."

"Show him in," I said to my servant.

The person who presently seated himself opposite me struck me as a singularly healthy-looking invalid; tall, robust, with clear, ruddy skin and a bright gray eye. However, "What is the trouble?" I asked.

"Well," he answered, "it's a queer case; but, to put it briefly, I'm afraid the trouble's here," and he tapped his forehead.

"Let me hear your symptoms."

"It's a long story," said he, "and I must begin it at the beginning."

Therewith he plunged his hand into an interior pocket of his coat and brought forth a small tissue-paper parcel. "This," he explained, as he unwound the paper, "is rather a valuable antique. It came as a present to my wife, the other day, from the Earl of Salchester, whom we entertained when he was in America a year or so ago. As you see, it's a mirror. The glass is believed to be a specimen of mediæval Venetian work, and the frame is unquestionably a magnificent bit of Cinque-cento."

The whole affair was no bigger than a lady's hand. The glass, unusually thick, and fluted round the edge, was veined, and spotted, and bleared over with a fine bluish mist, like the eye of an aged man. The frame was indeed magnificent. Oval in shape, and apparently of pure gold—so soft at any rate, that you could have indented it with your finger-nails—it was sculptured with no fewer than five exquisite nude female figures, disporting themselves in fantastic but graceful attitudes amid a profusion of delicately chiseled fruits and leaves. Three of these figures reclined upon tiny golden couches, in each of which was set a lustrous ruby; the other two stode upon conventionalized lions, and each lion held a pearl between his teeth. At the base a pair of dolphins twisted their tails together, and formed the handle. Upon a scroll at the handle end were incised the date 1561, and the initials, E. D.

"It is a beautiful piece of work," said I, laying it aside, "and I envy you the possession of it. But what has it got to do with your visit here?"

"Everything," he returned. "It's this way." He paused a moment; then he went on: "Last night, after dinner, I picked that little mirror up, and said, jokingly, to my wife, 'This, my dear, is a magical glass. If

"This, My Dear, is a Magical Glass!"

I hold it over my waistcoat, thus, and you look in, you will see straight through into my heart and behold the face of the woman I love.' So Mrs. Carathwaite laughed and looked, and, of course, she saw her own face. Then, to carry on the farce, I said, 'Now let me see whether it will show the face of the man you love.' And, always laughing, I held it over her breast and looked in."

"Yes?" I prompted, as he paused again.

"Well, Doctor, instead of my own face, what I saw reflected in that glass was a grinning death's head, a skull. I saw it just as plainly as I see you now. I looked at it steadily, without moving, for, I should think, three minutes. It never varied. A human skull in absolute detail, eyes, nose, teeth, even the very seams between the bones, perfectly distinct. I'm not a superstitious man, but I confess the sight gave me the goose-flesh. If I were superstitious, I don't know what I might think. I'm not a drinking man, either, or else I should believe it was a touch of delirium tremens. As it is, I'm at an utter loss to account for it in any way except on a theory that it's the beginning of some mental disease." He spoke nervously, and looked at me anxiously when he had done. He was plainly in a "white funk."

"Humph! You say you saw it steadily for two or three minutes?" I inquired.

"Yes."

"Then did it disappear?"

"It did not disappear till I moved. As soon as I moved, the death's head disappeared, and I saw the reflection of my own face.

"Have you ever had any similar experience? Ever fancied you saw an object just before you that in reality had no existence?"

"Never in my life."

"Is your digestive apparatus in good shape?"

"In such perfect shape that I'm never conscious of possessing such a thing."

"And your general health—"

"Superb."

"Let me feel your pulse." His pulse was firm, regular and proper in time. "Show me your tongue." His tongue was pink and clean. "Open your eyes wide and look towards the light." His eyes were steady in their gaze, the pupils contracted readily and the lid dropped spontaneously upon approaching my finger.

"Did you tell your wife what you had seen?" I asked.

"No, I didn't want to alarm her. She noticed that I started at the thing in rather a startled manner, but I laughed it off."

I was silent for a while, toying with the mirror and wondering what the case might mean.

"Well, what do you make it out to be?" he inquired.

"Oh," I replied, "I can't say as yet. I haven't sufficient data. The trouble may be in your optic nerve, it may be in your liver, and it may be elsewhere still. I should have to put you through a lengthy examination. And just at this moment I am too tired and too hungry to begin one. If you will give me time to eat some luncheon, I'll be in better trim."

"Oh, certainly, certainly. Only can't you tell me at once whether I am going to lose my reason?"

"I hardly think you are going to lose your reason," I replied. "And now, if you will excuse me for a little, I'll go downstairs and take a bite. Perhaps you would like a chop and a glass of wine yourself?"

"Oh, no, thank you; no, thank you. I shan't be able to eat with any appetite until this fear is off my mind."

While I swallowed my hasty luncheon I thought the matter over. It puzzled me a good deal, but, suddenly, as I was folding up my napkin, an idea struck me which, I hoped, might clear the whole matter up.

Rejoining Mr. Carathwaite, in my office, I said to him: "I have come to the conclusion that this is a case for a specialist. If you like, I will go to a specialist with you."

"I am quite at your orders," he responded. "Do you think it's the brain or the eye?"

"I hope it's neither; but the specialist will tell us."

We entered my carriage, and were driven down town to a famous curiosity-shop in Seventeenth street, just west of Union square, the proprietor of which, Mr. Maverick, is esteemed, as everybody knows, one of the most learned authorities in antique curios in America.

"Here we are," said I, getting out of the carriage. "Will you come?"

"But what are we going in here for?" questioned Carathwaite.

"To consult our specialist," said I.

My patient looked mystified, but he followed me into the shop. I presented my card, and asked to see Mr. Maverick. In another minute we were closeted with him in his private office.

"Will you hand Mr. Maverick your mirror?" I demanded of Carathwaite.

Maverick took the mirror, and looked it over. He studied the frame through a magnifying glass. "This is a bit of work from the hand of Etienne Delaulne," he an-

"The Sight Gave me Goose-Flesh!"

nounced presently, "one of the most skillful goldsmiths of the sixteenth century. I don't know where you got hold of it, but I may tell you that it is infinitely valuable. I have never seen a finer specimen of Delaulne's handicraft, nor one in a better state of preservation."

"And the glass?" I queried. "We are especially interested in the glass."

"The glass," said Maverick, "is probably Venetian. I must examine it a little."

He went to the window, and began to scrutinize the glass, twisting it about, and peering at it from various angles. "Ah, yes, I thought so!" he claimed all at once. "Come here, gentlemen," he called to us.

He held the glass off at a certain oblique angle, and inquired, "Now, when I hold it like that, what do you see?"

Carathwaite simply uttered a long, low "Ah-h-h!"

"Why, I see a human skull," I said. "A most perfect image of a human skull. I would swear it was the genuine reflection of a real one. How it gets there I can't for my life imagine."

"Ah, that was the art of the Venetian glass-workers," said Maverick.

He crossed the room and took down from a book-case a volume entitled "Manual Arts of Mediæval Italy." He ran over a few pages, found his place and read aloud: "Venetian looking-glasses of the sixteenth century were often ornamented with grotesque designs—serpents, skeletons, skulls, sometimes crucifixes—produced in the coating of quicksilver in such a way as to be visible only at one angle of vision, and then to give the effect of a reflection of some exterior object."

"Well, Doctor," said Carathwaite, smiling rather sheepishly, when we had regained the street, "you have effected a speedy cure. What's your fee?"

"I can hardly ask you a fee since your trouble was all in the mirror," I said. "I will take it out in telling the story."

The gratitude of millionaires is very like that of kings. I have never seen nor heard from Mr. Alexander Carathwaite again. When he needs medical attendance or advice he calls upon that notorious humbug Blank.

SIDNEY LUSKA (Harry Harland).

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Hasty Backing Out.

New York Weekly.

Miss De Boney (school-teacher)—I am informed that you loudly spoke of me on the public streets as an old maid.

Bad Boy (much scared)—N-n-o, ma'm. I said y'r mother was an ole maid.

Cupid Under Arrest.

The Epoch.

Mr. Pulliam (about to propose)—Miss Sanford, I am now going to say what I wanted to say an hour ago. Can you not guess, from my eyes, what it is?

Miss Sanford—Do you mean "Good night?" You look sleepy.

A Long Time to Wait.

Cloak Review.

Willie—You'll have to wait some time yet, Sister has only got on her bonnet.

Featherstone (who has invited her to go to the play, and is nervously waiting)—Why, what else has she got to do?

Willie—She's got to look in the glass.

A Little Change.

New York Weekly.

Old Friend—Don't you remember sweet Alice, who danced with delight when you gave her a smile, and trembled with fear at your frown?

Mr. B. Bolt, jr.—Oh, yes. She doesn't care a cent for my smiles or frowns either now. We'er married.

One Customer Found.

New York Weekly.

Stranger—Have you Rudyard Kipling's criticisms of Chicago?

Chicago Dealer—Yes, sir. Don't seem to be much demand—

Stranger—Give me half a dozen copies.

Dealer—Certainly. Certainly. How is everything down in St. Louis?

Didn't Have Time.

Cloak Review.

Mr. Bingo (rushing in)—The barn is burning down! Quick, where is the fire extinguisher?

Mrs. Bingo (excitedly)—It's locked up in the closet, and the key is in the pocket of my other dress up-stairs.

Bingo (resigned)—Then let the barn burn.

Toto's Reasoning.

From the French, in New York Truth.

"Mamma," said Toto, "where do the babies come from?"

"People buy them."

Toto reflected a moment, and said wisely:

"Nonsense! I do not believe people buy them."

"Why so?"

"Because the poor have more babies than the rich."

Still Here.

Cloak Review.

"Did I hurt your finger last night, darling, when I squeezed your hand so hard?" he asked tenderly, bending over her to catch the fragrance of the rose that an hour before had cost him a week's salary.

"It is of no consequence, dear, she answered merrily, striving with her Jersey City choir accents to reassure him. "It is somewhat disfigured, but," she added quickly, noting the sharp look of pain that shot over her lover's face, "it is still in the ring."

Chicago's Delay Explained.

New York Weekly.

New Yorker—You Western people are great fellows for talk. Where is that airship you were going to run from Chicago to New York in an hour?

Chicago Man—That air-ship is all right. But in order to make its first journey thoroughly national, we desire, on arriving at New York, to plant the American flag on top of the Grant monument. We're waiting for the monument.

THE JOURNAL'S POETS.

A Tale of El Mahdi.

Upon Saharan sands, they say,
El Mahdi traveled late one day.
He traveled with the utmost speed,
Because of water there was need.

The Bedouins who with him rode,
Who fleetest horses had bestrode,
Began to feel their steeds' breaths quicken—
A warning that their pace must slacken.
They prayed that he would give them power
To stand the thirst for many an hour.
They asked that he would send a light
To search the desert in the night;
That they might find in that strange land
A streamlet crawling in the sand.

Their prayers the Mahdi did not heed.
All night he spurred his jaded steed.
Faint streaks of gray lit up the East.
The leader called "Halt!" Man and beast
Drew up. "Dismount and dig!" Then rang
Upon the sand the rattling clang
Of spears. 'Mid plaint, and curse, and moil,
He lashed and scourged them on to toil.
Three days they worked 'neath burning sun,
Nor knew they why they had begun—
When lo! a fountain, cold and clear,
Shot up into the desert air,
Painting the rainbow's varied hue
Against the bright cerulean blue.

How Moslems danced, and leaped, and sang!
How Allah's loudest praises rang!
"The Mahdi! Blessed be his name!"
"The Mahdi! Aye, 'tis He, the same
The Koran promised us should come
And lead us through the desert home!"

—Salem P. Welman.

America.

America, my country, dost thou dream,
Because I offer thee no song of praise,
That any land or any age may seem
Splendid beside the luster of thy rays?
Thy name a glory is from sea to sea,
Thy name alone. What praise is worthy thee?

As in mid-August all the winds are spent,
And dazzling clouds o'er harvest-fields bend down,
And through the quiet land breathes deep content,
From leafy grove to uplands' golden crown;
So full devotion still must silence teach,
And only pity arms itself with speech.

Then grudge not poppies to the worn-out hills,
Deep scarred with ancient streams of blood and tears;
Nor pluck the desert palm from falling rills,
Where yet too plain the barren rock appears;
Nay, help to plant them! All the fields are thine,
The flowery slopes, the orchard and the vine.

—Minnetta Taylor.

The First Boone County Bluebird.

Jest rain and snow! and rain again!
And dribble, drip and blow!
Then snow, and thaw, and slush; and then—
Some more rain and snow!

This morning I was 'most afeard
To *wake up*—when, I jing!
I seen the sun shine out and heerd
The first bluebird of Spring!
Mother she'd raised the winder some;—
And in acrost the orchard come,
Soft as a' Angel's wing,
A breezy, treesy, beesy, hum,
Too sweet fer anything!

The winter's shroud was rent apart—
The sun bust forth in glee,—
And when *that bluebird* sung, my hart
Hopped out o' bed with me!

—Benj. F. Johnson.

Sonnet.

Across the waste of sand, the narrow strip
Surrounding with its sedge the broad lagoon,
That mirrors wing of passing crow or loon,
The sundown reddens; there in gauzy ship
The gnat's abroad, and where the grasses drip
The frogs are singing; over all the moon
Is launched upon the ether with her boon
Companion hanging at her nether tip.
Amid the solitude of desert hills,
A wand'ring goose is skirling left and right,
To fade in silence; only sedgy rills
Are waking now, in petulant affright,
Or down the valley, where a cascade spills
Its soul of music on the waste of night.

—Alonzo Leora Rice.

ABOUT PLAYS.

It Is One Thing to Write Them and Quite Another to Put Them On the Stage.

Walter Besant, in Philadelphia Press.

Why, however, it will be asked, do not poetical young men try the drama? They do. Most of them do—first, because the drama is, to many minds, the most attractive of all forms of art; secondly because the rewards are so very great. But the difficulties in the way of getting a play put on the stage are simply incredible. Those who only see the result cannot understand the trouble, the vexations that have been endured in order to get that result. I am not complaining. Much of this trouble is inevitable. I only state the fact as the chief reason why more young men do not take to writing plays as a profession. The most tedious of all things, for instance, is the rehearsal of a new play. The thing is gone over again and again; every situation is tried in a dozen different ways; all kinds of things are suggested to strengthen the scene. I remember, for instance, a certain piece in which I was concerned, the introduction, after earnest consultation, of a rustic stile, over which the ladies had to step. This stile did really much improve the scene. The dialogue has to be cut down here, and written up there. Certain characters have to be strengthened, and others have to be pushed into the background. "Above all," a very successful dramatist once said to me, "never forget the gallery boy. That little demon sits up aloft watching for his opportunity to bring ridicule on your most pathetic situations." I think, however, that if I was young again, with my present knowledge and experience, I would brave all the vexations and disappointments, and become a dramatist. The novelist has a great power, but he cannot feel it. All the world may be reading his books, but he comprehends it not. So with the poet. The editorial writer, also, has great power; he knows that what he writes will be read by half a million every day, but he cannot see them reading him. Now the dramatist sits in his box and surveys the house. The actors are playing his fable. They are uttering, far better than he himself could do, his own thoughts, and the people are listening; he can watch their faces; he sees them light up as they catch the points; he sees them laughing, he sees them crying, and to himself he murmurs, "Ipse feci; I myself have done it."

She Didn't Telephone.

Detroit Free Press.

A boy about twelve years old rang the door-bell of a house on High street east the other day and said to the lady who answered it:

"Won't you please telephone to the police station for me? I have found a lost boy."

"A lost boy? How old?"

"About four years, ma'am. He can talk but he can't tell where he lives."

"Some poor child, probably."

"Some awfully poor child. Why, he was the dirtiest boy you ever saw, and so hungry that ma said he hadn't eaten anything for a week. We think his folks lost him on purpose. Ma says they ought to be sent to State prison."

"So they had. Does he give any name?"

"Oh, yes. He says his name is Burt ——."

"What! Has he light hair and blue eyes?"

"Yes'm."

"And one front tooth gone?"

"Yes'm."

"He's my own boy, he is, and you walk him over here as quick as you know how! Also, tell your mother that people have become rich minding their own business!"

One Side of the Story.

New York Recorder.

Briggs—Heard there was a big row between you and Simpson at the board meeting yesterday.

Wilson—It wasn't much of a row. I merely said that Simpson was an idiot.

Briggs—What did Simpson do?

Wilson—He got up and proved it.

A SENSE OF JUSTICE

Thus fobbed by the rusty curb of old Father Antic, the law.—Falstaff, in "Henry IV."

All the people of Yoakum and the country district round about were going to court. It was the day on which the case of Hobley vs. Dutton was to be tried.

The plaintiff, Deacon Silas Hobley, and his wife were on their way to town in an old farm-wagon. They did not lack a better vehicle, but the Deacon was anxious to impress upon his neighbors the fact that the cart in which they had for years seen him jogging about the country was no more. It was on account of the smashing of this cart that the suit had been brought.

The plaintiff and his wife were laboring under too much excitement to feel inclined to talk. Mrs. Hobley had asked Silas several times whether he thought the case would be decided in his favor. At last he answered:

"Well, I dunno. Sometimes I kinder wish I had took the $50 compromise that they offered. Course we know the cart wasn't wuth no two and a half which I'm asking for damages. And I allow Abner—Judge Peck—he knows it well enough; but then he has a sense of justice, and knows Colonel Dutton he can better afford to give two fifty than I can to take jest fifty for that cart. So it reely all rests with the Judge; 'n we can's tell what he'll do."

"Well, I jest don't b'lieve," said the deacon's wife, "that Abner would go 'n' decide against us."

The defendant, Col. Miles Dutton, his daughter Ethel and Ralph Elliott, his attorney, came to town in a very swell turnout—the horses whereof wore tan-colored harness and large clanking nickel chains. On the box sat Peter Martin, the coachman, who had been responsible for the breaking up of Deacon Hobley's cart. Miss Ethel, who would come in spite of the fact that the Colonel had declared that she should not, wore a taking light green frock and a smart hat, and over her shoulder jauntily swung a checkered parasol. The country people whom they passed from time to time along the road could not but admire her, although they made various unpleasant remarks about "the way them Duttons was always puttin' on dog."

"Confound it, they are all coming!" growled the Colonel, as the high-steppers distanced one bob-tailed caravan, consisting of a farm sulky and a gig; "the people of this infernal place seem to have a veritable passion for litigation."

"They must be interested in something, papa," said Miss Ethel; "of course they don't have any of the things to go to that we have in the city; so why shouldn't they make the most of these court things—decisions and cases and all that, you know?"

These last few words were delivered in a confidential fashion to Ralph Elliott, at whom she darted, from time to time, when the Colonel was not looking, an arch side-glance. There was an understanding between the two—a little ambiguous as yet, owing to the fact that the Colonel did not much approve of the young lawyer.

"To be sure," assented Elliott; "and it is plain that Hobley versus Dutton is destined to be one of the greatest events of the Yoakum season."

"Fudge!" exclaimed the Colonel, who was in a very bad humor indeed; "it all comes from their insane admiration of that ancient Alcalde, Judge Peck. He has been justice of the peace in Yoakum township for the last twenty years, and the people hereabouts regard him with the same awe that you might a whole bench full of lord chancellors and chief-justices."

"Does he know much law?" inquired Elliott, passing his hand over the pile of calf-bound volumes on the seat beside him.

"About as much as a lizard," answered the Colonel.

"He reminds me of Sancho Panza," said Ethel. "They say he has a sense of justice and tries to be fair—and you ought to see what a funny round pink head he has, with fuzzy hair on the back of it."

"A sense of justice!" roared the Colonel, while Elliott began to laugh. "I have never seen any manifestation of it. No sooner had I bought this place, Elliott, than these people began to take advantage of every excuse to drag me into court. And I have been worsted every time. Of course, I can appeal—"

"But it isn't worth while!" said Elliott.

"Yes, partly that. However, as no one ever appeals from Judge Peck's decisions I don't want to run the risk of being mobbed for what they would consider an outrageous insult to their judiciary."

"From what I hear," said Elliott, a faint trace of anxiety showing through his careless good humor, "this honorable court is not likely to look with much favor on the efforts of a stranger in the bailiwick—such as I am."

"Oh, no," replied the Colonel, grimly; "he will size you up at the outset as a city dude lawyer, and you won't be in it at all."

"You are so encouraging, papa," cried Ethel. Then, when the Colonel turned to speak for a moment with the driver, she put her hand in Elliott's and whispered: "I know you will win; and just think, if you do—"

"I hope so," whispered the other, "but just think, if I don't—"

The room where the famous Judge Abner Peck held court in and for the township of Yoakum, was over "The Store," a small hall lighted by several curtainless windows which stared through the grimy white walls. The floor was bare; there were plenty of benches for spectators, and a few chairs. The lawyers had a long pine table, the edges of its top serrated with many ancient whittlings by jack-knives. The court occupied an exalted position on a broad platform at one end of the room. Above the judge's chair and desk there hung a canopy of thick red damask, violently suggestive in shape and general appearance of a pair of old-fashioned window curtains. A part of this drapery, weighted with dust and cobwebs, had pulled loose from its moorings above and hung down over the judge's seat, so that, as he moved about, the frayed edge not infrequently tickled his bald crown.

At a few minutes before 10 o'clock the eyes of the hundred spectators that crowded the court-room turned toward this platform to behold the eminent jurist Abner Peck formally take his place upon the bench. He ascended the steps with a slow and dignified gait, sank back in the big arm chair, and leaned his head against his hand. As he gazed benignly into the faces of his assembled friends and neighbors he seemed to them a very personification of a sense of justice.

One-half of the lawyers' table was taken up by Judge Bellows, who represented the plaintiff. On his right hand were Deacon Hobley and his wife. The law books of Ralph Elliott were spread out over the remaining half of the table. After a brief wrangle with her father, in which she, as usual, came out victorious, Miss Ethel had accompanied Mr. Elliott into the court-room, and now occupied a seat at his side. The Colonel sat behind, and with him was Peter Martin, the unlucky coachman, who was accused of responsibility for the smashing of the deacon's cart.

"The Judge is looking at us," whispered Miss Dutton. "Did you ever see such funny, woolly hair in all your life?"

"Never mind his hair," answered Elliott; "what I want to know is how to get at him. If you could only catch his eye and smile sweetly on him—"

"Tell me when it is the right time for him to decide our way, and I'll do it," said the young lady.

"There is no use in having a jury, you understand," said the Colonel, leaning forward; "the old mandarin will sit there and gravely tell them what their verdict must be."

"Well, we will give the best defense we can, and throw ourselves on the mercy of the court."

"Small mercy it will be," growled the Colonel; "he has it in for me—they all have. I suppose I must pay the $250 and costs, as prayed for. And the d—d cart wasn't worth the $50 that I offered as a compromise."

The case opened with Deacon Hobley on the witness-stand. He told how he had left his cart hitched in the road, and how the runaway colt had smashed it into shoe-pegs.

"Did you see all this yourself?" inquired Mr. Elliott.

"No, I wasn't there," answered the witness; "but my da'ter, she told me all about it."

"I move that that testimony be all stricken out," said Mr. Elliott.

"Look here young man," said the Deacon, "if you mean to insinuate that my da'ter—"

"Deacon," cried the court, reprovingly, and the plaintiff was silenced. Then, turning toward Elliott, the Judge said, with very distinct emphasis:

"That motion ain't passed."

The young attorney, who had risen to his feet, gave a gulp of astonishment, looked about him for a moment, as if to take his bearings anew, and then resumed his chair.

The Deacon continued his testimony. He had come now to the matter of the value of the cart, which he placed at the modest sum of $250. When called upon to give a reason for putting it at this figure, he stated that Ike Converse had said it was worth it.

"We object," cried Elliott, starting up again. "If the plaintiff wants to introduce the testimony of Ike Converse as an expert on carts, why does he not subpena him?"

There was a sudden and awful hush in the court-room. The judge turned slowly around in his chair, and leaned forward across his desk toward Elliott, saying:

"Because he is dead."

"Well, we object to such testimony as this," continued Elliott, with a recklessness that caused some of his hearers to fairly hold their breath; "it is incompetent and immaterial."

"Ike Converse incompetent!" exclaimed the Deacon. "Why, young man, he was the best wagon-maker—"

"Deacon," interrupted the judge, "let me answer this objection." Then he continued, in solemn, judicial tones: "This court knew Ike Converse well, and it holds that his judgment in a matter of this kind was better than that of any man now living in this country. The witness may proceed."

"You see it is no use," whispered the Colonel, as Elliott, silenced and aghast, dropped back into his seat. "You may as well take it easy. The more you object the more you will inspire the old fool's prejudice."

"Well, where does that sense of justice come in?" asked Elliott.

"Tell me," interrupted Miss Ethel, "is it time for me to begin to flirt with the court?"

"Not yet," answered Elliott. He pondered on the situation a few moments. Was there a sense of justice in that round pink head? If so, how was he to get at it? There was something about the flaxen poll that reminded him of Polonius, and he began to mutter absently to himself the phrase so dear to the heart of the fat-witted diplomatist:

"By indirections find directions out."

In that moment he hit upon a plan.

By this time the witness was telling the court and the spectators generally his opinion of Peter Martin, Colonel Dutton's "hired man," as a tamer of colts. Elliott sprang to his feet and objected. He was promptly crushed by the court. The Deacon went on. When he had finished a short dissertation on Colonel Dutton and other men who came down from the city and tried to run things in Yoakum, Elliott moved to strike the testimony out, on the ground that it was argumentative. The motion was denied.

So it continued through the remainder of the Deacon's occupancy of the witness-stand. Elliott rose up at the end of nearly every sentence and offered some objection. The Deacon got mad. Judge Bellows, his attorney, got mad, and even the court showed evidence of the great internal struggle that was necessary for him to keep his temper under control. Elliott assumed a dogged and insolent air, that astonished Ethel and her father, and exasperated everybody else. There was no longer any doubt that he had excited the prejudice of the court against him to a lively degree.

Mrs. Hobley was the next witness. Before she took the stand Elliott objected to her testimony on the ground that she was the wife of the plaintiff. When this was overruled he began systematically to fight every question that was put to the witness, and afterward to move to have the answers stricken out. Often he would argue the points at great length, quoting decisions in cases which, it is needless to remark, were largely imaginary, rattling off Latin phrases which had nothing to do with the matter in hand and occasionally reading from the law-books which he had brought. It was all in vain; every motion was denied, every objection overruled. To any one looking on it would have appeared that the attorney for the defense was exerting himself to the utmost—fighting the case inch by inch—but that it was a struggle against hopeless odds. Presently an air of discouraged indifference began to show itself in his speech and conduct. He made his points in an aggrieved fashion, that plainly said: "Of course you will decide against me, but I must do my duty."

At last he dropped back into his chair and settled himself, as one does who has no expectation of, rising again very soon. His face wore a look of complete resignation.

"He is clean beat out," said the Yoakumites. It was a triumph for their fellow-townsman, and added lustre to the glory of the court. At the same time many of them felt no little sympathy for the young man who had fought so hard and had failed.

"Don't give it up, please, Ralph," whispered Miss Ethel.

Elliott shook his head. Every one, including the court, noticed the action, and divined what the young woman had said. The Colonel also leaned forward with a similar remark, but again the attorney made a motion of discouragement.

"It is all right," whispered Elliott to Dutton a moment later; "whenever the old chap glances in this direction look sorrowfully and appealingly at him."

A number of witnesses for the plaintiff now followed one another upon the stand, and were allowed to give their testimony pretty much as they pleased, assisted by occasional suggestions from Judge Bellows. The particulars of the accident were recounted several times, and a number of residents of Yoakum swore to the extraordinary value of the ruined cart. The attorney for the defense maintained a dogged silence. At last, when one witness began an extended argument in favor of the Deacon's claim for damages, the court glanced at Elliott as though he expected to hear an objection. When none was forthcoming the judge himself interposed, and declared that "there was gettin' to be too much of that. The lawyers should do all the arguing."

"Ah ha!" exclaimed Elliott to Miss Ethel in a triumphant whisper, "the sense of justice is awakening. Now is our chance."

"That concludes the testimony for the plaintiff," said Judge Bellows as the last witness left the stand.

All eyes were turned upon Ralph Elliott. The court looked in this direction, but saw only the countenance of Miss Dutton. Her dark orbs were saying as plainly as though the words were written out in big letters: "Dear Mr. Judge, please don't be horrid to us any more." He blushed, and fumbled with the papers on his desk. At last he said, "The defense will now go on."

Elliott rose slowly to his feet and stood a moment before he began to speak. Finally he said, hesitating at the end of every phrase: "May it please the court, I had intended at this stage of the proceedings to make a motion which I had hoped your honor would grant. Although, perhaps it may not—well, I will make it. I will move for a non-suit, may it please the court. Possibly this may seem to the court a matter of small importance, yet it is a point in our favor, and one that I conceive we have a right to demand. In this connection I am compelled to crave the indulgence of the court while I venture a few remarks of a somewhat personal nature. I am a stranger in this court and am not vested in all of its methods of procedure. I have done what I could in support of my client's case, yet the fact is painfully evident that my efforts have thus far been in vain. Every motion has been denied, every objection overruled. Not a single point has been allowed in our favor. I do not complain of any prejudice on the part of the court. The Latin adage occurs to me, 'Quousque tandem, Catalina, abutere patientia nostra,' which is, 'The judge who seemeth most severe hath often at heart a true sense of justice.' All I ask is that the court, in passing upon our motion for non-suit, shall take into consideration the unbroken line of decisions in favor of the plaintiff which have marked the progress of this case up to this time."

The court was looking intently at Miss Ethel.

Miss Ethel was looking at the court.

"Say," whispered Judge Bellows to Elliott, as the latter took his seat, "there ain't no use in that, you know. He don't savvy non-suit."

"No?" said Elliott, with a bland smile; "I suspected that he did not."

"I don't believe the court needs to hear from me on this point," Judge Bellows said aloud, with an air of easy confidence. "This motion of my learned brother from the city will be denied, of course."

Judge Peck gazed thoughtfully at the ceiling a moment, and then took up his pen. He wrote a few words on the book before him. Then he motioned to the clerk, and the latter, after noting the words which he had written, proceeded to enter them on a much larger book, which lay on the desk. There was dead silence in the court-room.

"The motion is allowed," said the court with startling firmness.

A buzz of approval ran around the court-room. "That's only fair," said the people; "he orter give the young feller some show."

Elliott rose from his chair and began to gather up his books and papers.

"Why, what is the matter?" exclaimed Ethel.

"Nothing is the matter," he answered, "except that the case has been decided in our favor, and we may as well go home."

"Great Scott!" cried the Colonel, "that was neatly done, Elliott."

Judge Bellows and Deacon Hobley were both on their feet, protesting vigorously. It may be suspected that the court, to whom all technical law was the veriest abracadabra, was not a little astonished when he discovered what he had done, but he was too shrewd to make that fact public. For once, Judge Bellows was snubbed, and even threatened with a fine for contempt of court.

The Duttons and Ralph Elliott made their way through the crowd out of the court-room. Peter Martin followed behind, his arms full of law-books. In spite of the fact that all the Yoakumites were watching them, Miss Ethel and Mr. Elliott whispered and laughed a great deal, and looked at one another in a way that seemed to indicate that the "understanding" between them was now perfectly clear.

—Charles Dwight Willard, in the Argonaut.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

It will take 100,000 barrels of cement to mend the break in the Soo canal.

There is only one sudden death among women to every eight among men.

Excellent wheat lands north of Manitoba overlie frozen earth that never thaws.

The United States is said to be the greatest candy country in the world, $5,000,000 worth being consumed every year.

The ground on which Yakutsk, Siberia, is built is perpetually frozen to a depth of 612 feet.

A Lancaster, Pa., man recently received $50 through the mail, with a letter stating that it was stolen from him forty years ago.

An Atchison girl seven years old cried a whole day over the death of Barnum. She thought his death would be the end of circuses.

A miner near Halifax, N. S., recently, was carrying fifteen pounds of dynamite on his back, when it exploded without seriously injuring him.

Mention is made of a child born at Hartford, Conn., last month, which weighed only two pounds and three ounces when it was three days old.

There lives at Fonda, Ga., a man six feet three inches tall, and whose reach between finger tip and finger tip, when his arms are outspread, is eleven feet.

A judge of Alpena, Mich., caught two lawyers taking a nip from a bottle in the court-room during a trial. It cost them $50 each for the fracture of the court's dignity.

It is a mistake to suppose that polar research has cost enormously in human life. Despite all the great disasters, ninety-seven out of every one hundred explorers have returned alive.

The lowest body of water on the globe is the Caspian sea. Its level has been gradually lowering for centuries, and now it is eighty-five feet below the level of its neighbor, the Black sea.

A Jersey Central railroad brakeman fell from his car and was dragged five miles over the stones and ties, clinging to the brake-chain, and, wonderful to relate, sustained no injuries beyond a few bruises.

A sixty-seven foot snake of unknown species has been captured in central Brazil. It is variegated in hue, blue, green and pink predominating, has tusks like a boar and a horn two feet long on its forehead.

A farmer brought to Milton, Fla., a few days ago, the tusk of a hog he had recently killed. The tusk measured 9⅜ inches in length. The point of the tusk was kept worn off, or it would have been considerably longer.

The principal relic belonging to the Church of Sainte Gudule, in Brussels, consists of a thorn which is said to have formed part of the Savior's crown. It was brought to the Netherlands in the time of the crusades.

The largest rain gauge ever made is probably that used on an experimental farm at Rothamsted. Its area is one-thousandth of an acre. The funnel is of wood, lined with lead, the upper edge being a vertical rim of plate-glass, beveled outward.

The fact that many of the houses of Portland, Ore., and San Francisco are built of redwood is given as a reason of the few destructive fires that occur in those cities. The wood is almost uninflammable, and, though a fire will smother in it, it never blazes.

Under an old law making it illegal to shoot at night, a sportsman recently arrested in Paris for unlawful killing of game drew from the courts a legal definition of the day's end. It was decided that night began with the close of twilight, or when the sun had descended 6° below the horizon.

Some of the hide and leather men are amusing themselves in discussing the largest hog skin in the world. A Cincinnati firm claims to have the lead in this line, with a skin that measured six and one-half feet from head to tail and six feet wide, measuring in all thirty-seven feet of neat, fine skin.

A curiosity is on exhibition at Casper, Wyo. It is an imprint of a monstrous palm leaf, caused by the leaf falling into the clay, and the clay afterwards petrifying. The rock was found on Salt creek, and indicates that ages ago, when the big coal-beds were being formed, Wyoming possessed a tropical climate.

A most remarkable curiosity is on exhibition in Florence, S. C. It is a piece of corn-bread which has been shut up in a safe for nearly two years, and which, when it was taken out, was covered with a black silky hair eight inches in length. A great deal of this has been pulled off now, but enough remains to prove the statement that it was covered.

Near the old cemetery in West Alexander, W. Va., a big tree is growing, which forks at three feet nine inches from the ground. Apparently it is a white oak, but on examination it appears that above the fork it branches into two species, one a white oak, and the other a white cherry, with the foliage peculiar to each. The oak is about sixty-five and the cherry fifty-five feet high.

ODDS AND ENDS OF FASHION.

Embroidered shawls of crepe will be worn this coming summer as much as ever.

Invisible fastenings are more than ever the style for securing the waists of gowns.

Black lace flounces again drape silk skirts that are closely gored on the front and sides.

Vests are worn with open jackets, and the pretty habit-shirt will be worn again as soon as the warm season is here.

Wedding breakfasts are drifting back to the good old times when the spread was a substantial feast, well worth attending.

Short tea-gowns for young women are made in early English fashion, with round waists cut with a low, rounding neck and finished at the back of the belt with two large rosettes.

In some stylish examples the braiding is seen only on the sleeves, which will be entirely covered, or again, there will be no braid except upon the vest, and that will be completely covered.

Loose-fronted jackets, with a vest of matching or harmonizing material, are worn, and such a vest may be simply pointed, extended in long-pointed or square fronts, or rounded off in a shorter or long curve.

The small cape with the Medici collar will still be worn. The latest style is to make it of very dark blue, green or brown cloth, piped round all outlines with some bright shade of red, pale blue or yellow.

A very pretty model shows the vest of the jacket occupying the whole space of the front between the shoulders, and in this example the sides are scarcely seen, so broad is the vest over the bust. At the belt the jacket fastens with three slender thongs on the right, while on the shoulder the vest effect terminates in one thong, and the cuffs are adorned with five very small ones.

A porcelain blue and white lawn has the skirt made with a graduated ruffle. This ruffle, which extends half way to the waist at the side, is about eight inches deep in front, and is edged, top and bottom, with a Valenciennes lace ruffle. The ruffle of lace follows the slope of the graduated lawn ruffle, and so makes the skirt look exactly as if it were made with a deep apron overskirt, and is very graceful. At either side of the full back a ruffle of lace is cascaded from belt to bottom of skirt. So full is this cascade the lace meets in large points in the center of the back, giving a very pretty and new effect.

Too Big a Contract.

Somerville Journal.

If we all loved our neighbors as we do ourselves, most of us wouldn't have any time to do anything else.

READING FOR SUNDAY.

He Careth.

"The good God always builds the blind bird's nest!"
So runs a Turkish proverb, sweet and wise.
How calmly may she fold her wings in rest,
Knowing His touch upon her shadowed eyes!
Thou, who hast known His love so strong and grand,
Rest, too, in His right hand.

"Behold!" he crieth, "I will bring the blind
By ways they have not known"—assurance sweet—
"Straighten the crooked path, make life more kind,
Turn darkness into light