The New Orleans Crescent.

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 28, 1868.

Drowned.

BY CHALMERS GARVIE.

I.

Ships are tossing at sea,
And ships sail in to the windy cliffs of the shore;
But the ship that is dearest to me
Will never come in with the tide—
Will ripple in the bay no more,
Riding in with the tide.

II.

Under the froth of the foam,
And the yeasty surge and the shuddering gusts of rain,
Lies the lad who will never come home,
His white face hid in the sand;
He neither has care nor pain
Under the sea-weed and sand.

III.

Down by the reefs and the shells,
Far down by the channels that furrow the dolorous deep,
Where the torn sails rise with the swells
And swing in the pulse of the sea,
He is only sleeping a sleep,
Down in the sorrowful sea.

IV.

Above him the wrack and the drift,
The red-lit east and the dark sad glow in the west,
The currents that change and shift,
And the rain blown face of the storm;
There is nothing but silence and rest
Under the beat of the storm.

V.

Tangled in rigging and ropes,
And fenced by the wreck of spar and the ruin of mast,
The purple sea-plant gropes
And wanders over my dead;
He shall waken and rise at last
When the sea gives up its dead.

VI.

So in the dark and dawn
In the gloom of keels and the shadow of homebound ships,
My mariner slumbers on
While I am awake and forlorn,
With a weary song on my lips
Out of my heart forlorn.

[Lippincott's for July.

Sensation Extraordinary.

DISCOVERY OF A LETTER PURPORTING TO BE WRITTEN BY JESUS CHRIST.

[From the Fremont (Ohio) Journal, June 19.]

"The San Francisco Bulletin, of the 11th of May, says one F. Wilson has applied to the United States District Court of California for copyright of a letter said to have been written by Jesus Christ, and found sixty-five years after his crucifixion, about eighty miles from Iconium. It is said the letter was found under a stone, on the face of which was written, 'Blessed is he that shall turn me over.' All people that saw it prayed to God earnestly, and desired that he would make known to them the meaning of this writing, that they might not attempt in vain to turn it over. In the meantime came a little child and turned it over without help, to the admiration of all the people that stood by; and under this stone was found a letter written by Jesus Christ, which was carried to Iconium and there published, and in it were written the commandments, signed by the Angel Gabriel, ninety-eight years after our Savior's birth, to which is added King Abarus's letter, and our Savior's answer, and also his miracles, and a full description of his person, in Sentulu's epistle to the Senate of Rome. Excavations are also said to have brought to light, in Syria, a Hebrew house, dating from about the second century before Christ. Some of the rooms are in good preservation, and among the books found is a collection of Hebrew poems, said to be unknown to present Orientals."

We clip the above from the Cleveland Leader of a late date, and give below a copy of the letter alluded to. The copy is furnished us by Mr. D. A. Altaffer, of this place, in whose family it has been carefully preserved for three or four generations. It is printed in English type, on coarse paper that may once have been white, but is now faded and rotten. The copy in the hands of the Californian mentioned in the above extract is probably similar to the one in our possession. The history of this one, as related to us by Mr. Altaffer, is as follows: One of the ancestors of Mrs. Altaffer, a hundred years ago or more, was an unwilling student or priest in a monastery at Genoa, Italy, where was also a reluctant nun. These two formed an attachment for each other, escaped from Genoa to England, and were married, carrying with them the only copy of "a letter said to have been written by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," which had been sacredly preserved in the monastery. Religious superstition invested it with miraculous powers, and it was preserved as a "charm." It emigrated to America with the family, and is probably the only copy in the United States beside the one in California. The document is as follows:

COPY OF A LETTER SAID TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST,

And found eighteen miles from Iconium, twenty-five years after our blessed Savior's crucifixion, and transmitted from the Holy City by a converted Jew, and faithfully translated from the original Hebrew copy, now in the possession of Lady Cubass's family, in Mesopotamia.

The letter was found under a stone both round and large, at the foot of a cross, eighteen miles from Iconium, near a village called Mesopotamia. Upon the stone was written and engraved: "Blessed be he that shall turn me over." All that saw it prayed to God earnestly, and desired that He would make known unto them the meaning of this writing, that they might not in vain turn it over. In the meantime a little child, about six or seven years of age, turned it over, to the admiration of all present; and under the stone was written the commands of Jesus Christ in a letter, which was afterward published by the angel Gabriel, ninety-eight years after the death of our blessed Savior, and carried by a person belonging to Lady Cubass, and made public in the city of Liconium, etc.

The letter of Jesus Christ is as followeth:

"Whoever worketh on the Sabbath day shall be cursed. I command you to go to church and keep the Lord's day holy, without doing any manner of work. You shall not idly spend your time in bed, or decking yourself with superfluities of costly appearance and vain dresses, for I have ordained it a day of rest; I will have that day kept holy, that your sins may be forgiven you. You shall not break my commandments, but observe and keep them. Write them in your heart, and steadfastly observe that it is written with my own hand, and spoken with my own mouth. You shall not only go unto the church yourself, but also cause your men servants and maid servants to do the same, and to observe my words, and learn my commandments. Your shall finish your labor every Saturday in the afternoon, by six of the clock, at which hour the preparation of the Sabbath begins. I advise you to fast five Fridays in every year, beginning with Good Friday, and continue the four Fridays immediately following. You shall diligently and peaceably labor in your own respective dwellings, wherein it hath pleased God to call you. You shall love one and another with brotherly love, and cause them that are not baptized to come to the church and receive the sacrament of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and to be made members of the church. In so doing, I will give unto you a long life and many blessings; your land shall flourish, and your cattle bring forth abundance, and I will give unto you man's blessing and comforts in the greatest temptations.

"And he that doeth to the contrary shall be unprofitable. I will also send a hardness of heart upon them, until I see them; but especially upon the impertinent and unbelievers. He that hath given to the poor shall not be unprofitable. Remember to keep the holy Sabbath day; for on the seventh day I have taken to rest myself. And he that hath a copy of this letter written with my own hand, and spoken with my own mouth, and keepeth it without publishing it to others, shall be blessed of me, and though his sins be in number as the stars of the heavens and he believe in this, he shall be pardoned; and if he believe not this writing and these commandments, I will send my own plague upon him, and consume both him and his children and his cattle. And whosoever shall have a copy of this letter, written with my own hand and spoken with my own mouth, and keep it in the house, nothing shall hurt them; nor the lightning, fire, thunder or pestilence shall happen to them to do them any harm. And if a woman with child and in labor has a copy of this letter about her, and the family put their trust in me, she shall be safely delivered of the child. You shall not have any tidings of me but by the Holy Scriptures until the day of judgment. All goodness, happiness and prosperity shall be in the house where a copy of this letter shall be found. Amen. JESU HOMINUM SALVATOR."

The assessed value of property in Nebraska is $32,000,000, an increase of $14,000,000 over last year.

Forked Tongued.

"Harry," she gasped, in a strange, harsh, cracked voice; and, as I started and looked up from my work, there was my wife coming towards me, with her arms stretched out, her eyes fixed, and a horrible, ghastly look upon her white face, that made me drop my spade and run to meet her. I caught her just as she was falling, when her eyes closed and she gave a shiver that seemed to shake her whole body.

This was soon after we had settled out in the up country, and there was only another hut here and there in those days; but, after years of knocking about at home, trying to get an honest living and never succeeding, we had to make up our minds to try Australia, and here we were living in a log hut I had knocked up for myself, shepherding, and doing what little I could in the shape of gardening; for, that being my right trade, with all the beautiful rich soil lying fallow, it did seem a sin for me not to have a turn at it; so, getting what seeds I could from Sidney, and adding to the few I had in my chest, I managed to make quite a little Eden of the bit of land I broke up round our hut.

We were not saving money, not to any extent, but there was a roof over our heads, and no rent to pay, plenty of vegetables of our own planting, and they not costing anything, plenty of work to do, and, one sort and another, always plenty to eat; so that, after what we had gone through in England, you may be sure we were willing to put up with inconveniences as fell to our share, and, as a matter of course, there were troubles to encounter out there in what some people would call a wilderness, though it was a wilderness that blossomed like a rose. There were times when we were in dread of the blacks, who had done some very queer things here and there about; then the place was terribly lonely and out of the way if you wanted the doctor, and Mary used to joke me because I could never get a pint of beer, but I found I could get on just as well without it, and, my word, what a capital cup of tea we had out there!

Well, Mary came out to me that day looking so horribly ghastly that, being naturally too fast at fancying troubles in advance, I saw directly half a score of blacks coming to spear us, and some of them knocking out the children's brains with their clubs—and not the first time either; but in a few moments the poor child opened her eyes, and began to stare about her. There were no blacks to be seen. Little Joe was sitting in the path playing, and, though I looked along the edge of the wood behind the house, I could see no signs of danger; and began to think she must have been taken ill, and turned over in my own mind how I should get any help for her.

Just then her face grew contracted again as her thoughts seemed to go back, and, gasping out once more, "Harry, Harry," she gave another shudder, and said, "the baby—a snake!"

I could not see myself, but I know I turned pale, all the blood seeming to rush to my heart, for if there is anything of which I am afraid it is a snake, even going so far as to dislike eels, of which there was plenty in the river close at hand.

I don't know how we got there, but the next thing I remember is standing at the hut window with Mary holding little Joe tight in her arms, and me looking through at the cradle where our little thing of nine months old was lying; and my heart seemed to be turning to ice as I saw nestled in the foot of the cradle, partly hidden in the blanket, but with some of its horrible coils full in sight, and its head resting upon them, the largest snake I had seen since I had been in the country. The feeling was something awful, and I stood there for a few moments leaning upon the round handle of the hoe I had caught up, not able to move, for my eyes were fixed upon the head of that hideous beast, and I expected every moment that the baby would wake and make some movement sufficient to irritate the snake, and then I felt that the little thing must die.

What should I do? I asked myself as the horrible feeling of helplessness wore off. If I crept in and reached the cradle side unheard, I dared not chop at the beast for fear of injuring the child, for I could see that some of the folds lay right across it. I dared not make a noise, lest the next moment the child should wake as well as the reptile, for I knew the rapidity with which the reptiles could wreathe fold after fold around the object they attacked; while, if of a poisonous nature, they strike in an instant. Thoughts came swiftly enough, but they were unavailing, for to await till the baby woke, or to go in and attack the snake, seemed equally dangerous. Even if I made a slight noise the danger seemed as great, since, though the snake might wake first and glide off, the probabilities were just as great that the child might wake at the same time.

And so I turned over the chances again and again, my eyes all the while fixed upon the two sleeping occupants of the cradle, whose pleasant warmth had evidently attracted the reptile.

"I went in and saw it there," whispered my wife, and then, without taking my eyes for an instant from the snake, I whispered the one word "Gun," and she glided from my side.

I did not know then, but she told me afterwards, how she had carried the little boy to a distance and gave him some flowers to play with, while she crept back to the hut, and, reaching in at the kitchen window, brought me my gun, for I had not stirred. And now, as I grasped the piece in my hand, knowing as I did that it was loaded, it seemed of no use, for I dared not fire; but, with trembling hands, I felt in my pockets to see if there was a bullet in them, and then softly pulling out the ramrod, I unscrewed the cover of the worm, drew the wadding, reversed the piece and let the shot fall pattering out, when I softly forced down the bullet upon the powder, examining the cap and stood ready waiting for a chance; for I thought that the shot might have scattered, and if ever so little, might have injured the child instead of its enemy.

And there we stood for quite half an hour, watching intently that horrible beast completely nestled in the blanket, expecting momentarily that the baby would awake, while my hand trembled so that I could not hold the gun steady. One minute I was thinking that I had done wrong in changing the charge, the next minute that I was right, then I fancied the gun might miss fire, or that I might slay my own child. A hundred horrible thoughts entered my mind before little Joe began to cry out to his mother, and she glided away while I muttered to myself, "Thank heaven!" for she was spared from seeing what followed.

As if at one and the same moment, the child and the snake woke up. I saw the baby's hand move, and its little arm thrown out, while from the motion beneath the blanket I knew that it must have kicked a little. Then there was a rapid movement in the cradle, and as I glanced along the gun-barrel, taking aim, there was the whole of the horrible reptile exposed to view, coil gliding over coil as it seemed to fill the whole of the cradle; and now, had my gun been charged with shot, I should have fired, so as to have disabled some part of its body; but, with only a single bullet, I felt that the head must be the part attacked when opportunity served.

Glide, glide, glide, one coil over another quickly and easily, as if it were untying its knotty body, while now the head slowly rose nearer and nearer to the child's face, the forked tongue darting in and out, and playing rapidly on either side of its hideous mouth. I could see the glance of the snake's eyes, and expected every moment to hear the little one shriek in terror, as the lowered head rested over her breast. But no; the child lay perfectly still for a few minutes, and then I stood trembling in every limb as I saw the snake's head drawn back, and then begin to sway to and fro, and from side to side, the glistening neck of the beast undulating, whilst the tongue still darted in and out of the dreadful-looking mouth.

Now was the time when I should have fired, but I was too unnerved! and, laying down my gun, I seized my hoe, meaning to attack the beast with its stout handle; but my hand fell paralyzed at my side as I saw the little one in the cradle smile and laugh at the gently undulating head of the snake; while, as the agony grew to be greater than I could bear, in seeing the little white hands try to catch at it as it swayed to and fro, my powers seemed to come back. I snatched up the gun, and as the snake's head was drawn back preparatory to striking, I pulled the trigger, when the sharp crack of the percussion cap alone followed—perhaps providentially, for in my trembling state I might have injured the child. Then I saw a rapid wreathing of the coils in the cradle, and as the tail of the snake glided over the side, everything around me seemed to swim, and I tried to catch at the wall of the hut to save myself from falling.

But that soon went off, and gazing in at the window, I tried to make out the whereabouts of my enemy, as I recapped and tapped the gun, so that the powder might run up the nipple.

The snake was nowhere to be seen, and darting in I seized the child, and carried it out to its mother, when, now feeling relieved of one horrible calamity, I obtained my shot-pouch from the kitchen, rammed down a charge upon the bullet, and cautiously went in search of the reptile.

I knew he must still be in the part of the hut we used for a sleeping place, and, after cautiously peering about, I came upon the hole where it had taken refuge—an opening between the roughly-sawn planks laid loosely down to form a floor; while, unless there was an outlet beneath the woodwork, I felt that the beast must be there; and, to make it more probable, there was our cat, that we had bought a kitten in Sidney, gazing with staring eyes down at the hole.

Just then I heard a soft rustling beneath my feet, and as I looked down, I could see between the two boards the scaly body gliding along. The next moment came the loud report of a gun, the place was full of smoke, there was a loud scuffling noise, and as I looked down between the boards where the charge had forced a passage through, there was no sign of the snake. "Harry, Harry!" shrieked my wife just then; and on rushing out, there was the beast writhing about in the path evidently badly wounded, while some crushed down flowers by the hut wall showed plainly the hole of communication. I never saw a snake writhe and twist as that creature did, but I was too excited then to feel afraid, and a few blows from the butt end of my gun laid it so that there was only a little movement left in its body, which did not stop for an hour or two after I had cut off its head with the ax.

I should have liked to skin the beast, but I could not master my horror. I measured it, though—fourteen feet three inches long it was, and as thick as my arm; while as to its weight, I saw the cradle rock to and fro heavily as it glided over the side.

Snakes are scarce now in these parts, for there isn't a man in Queensland that does not wage war against them, and where there was one settler then there are scores now.

Monograms for Dinner—Grand Dinner on Murray Hill.

[From the New York Home Journal.]

Mrs. Chester Stanton, (nee Maude Gurney, of Boston,) a lady celebrated for her magnificent social entertainments, both in this city and London, gave a "monogram dinner party," as it was called, on the 20th ult., at her handsome Murray Hill residence, which, for novelty and elegance, has very seldom been surpassed. The invitations, numbering twenty, were gotten up in a beautiful and unique style, a large illuminated monogram covering the entire face of the card and envelop. The object in giving this dinner, we understand, was partly for the purpose of exhibiting a dinner set of China and glass, which was made to order at the royal manufactory at Copenhagen, each piece being decorated with the monogram "M. G. S." Much gossip was created in society by the rather odd announcement, and those who were so fortunate as to receive an invitation to the entertainment were objects of envy. We have previously described Mrs. Stanton's very elegant drawing-rooms in these columns; suffice it now to say that on the evening of the dinner they presented a decidedly brilliant appearance, being lavishly decorated with flowers, lighted by two immense chandeliers, and a select company of ladies and gentlemen promenading the rooms, admiring the fine pictures which adorn the walls, and the innumerable articles of *vertu* which are to be found at every step. Dinner was announced at eight o'clock by the servants drawing aside the crimson satin curtains which hang over the folding doors leading to the dining-room, when each gentleman escorted a lady to a seat at the table, the band, which was stationed up stairs, performing, meanwhile, selections from "Lurline." The sight that met the eyes of the guests as they entered the room they will never forget. In the center of the room was a large circular table, covering a large monogram embroidered at each corner, and in the center, the edge being finished with a heavy white fringe. Besides on each plate was a bouquet of flowers in a small filagree standard, and a goblet of fine glass, in which was folded a napkin, both napkin and goblet being embellished with a monogram. A large *epergne*, which stood very high, was placed in the middle of the table, and was ornamented with fruits and flowers, and surrounded by four small globes, on gilt standards, containing gold-fish. The dinner itself, which was served in thirteen courses, was simply superb, and would have caused Delmonico, had he been present, to hide his head. There were four kinds of soup—queen, tomato, colbert and purée de gibier—shad, salmon and pike fish; roast turkey, with champagne sauce, wild ducks, English snipes, woodcocks, stewed pigeons; oysters in every style, filet de sole au Gratin and chickens; beets, green peas, corn, turnips, string beans, asparagus, oyster plant, tomatoes and spinnach; chicken, lobster, meat and plain salads; some delicious entrees, and innumerable relishes and side dishes and cold dishes. We can not begin to enumerate all the delicacies which were served, and will speak of the dessert as comprising almost everything ever heard of. All the china was of the finest and most transparent description, ornamented with a wide gilt border, below which is a band of coral. On ever plate, dish, cup, saucer, etc., was a monogram, painted in coral and gold. The vegetable dishes and side dishes were round instead of oval, and made quite deep. The wine glasses also were very beautiful, and looked fragile, a vine of flowers, surrounding a monogram, ornamenting each one. The goblets were in the shape of a small round bowl, on a very slight stem of *mousseline* glass. The champagne glasses were of the same shape, ornamented with a vine of flowers and a monogram, surrounded by small gilt stars, presenting a novel and beautiful effect. At eleven o'clock the ladies retired from the table to the drawing-rooms, leaving the gentlemen to their wine and cigars. Shortly after midnight the German commenced, led by Mr. Watson, of this city, which was continued for about two hours. Several pretty figures were introduced, all pertaining to the feature of the entertainment. Most of the young ladies were dressed in excellent taste. One wore a dress of light green silk, with a long train, ornamented on the bottom with a deep flounce of *point applique*. The corsage was cut low, and with short sleeves, over which was worn a loose sack, also of *point applique*, confined to the waist with a belt and sash of green silk to correspond with the dress; ornaments of rose coral. Another dress was of light blue *gros grain* silk, made with a long skirt, very full at the back. The waist was cut round and high, and trimmed with narrow folds of blue satin, and edge of white lace; white sash of blue satin, tied loosely at the back, and ornaments of pearl. The charming hostess wore a white silk, with a pink satin stripe. The skirt was made of a graceful train, probably three yards in length, cut into small vandykes, bound on the bottom with a heavy pink satin cord; low corsage, with cape and sleeve *a la* Marie Antoinette, of fine Valenciennes lace and inserting. She wore white kid gloves, with gauntlets reaching to the elbow, and on the back was embroidered a large monogram in pink and white. Her ornaments, ear-rings, necklace, and bracelets were of diamonds of almost priceless value. A well-known leader of fashion in Boston wore a Bismarck satin robe, trimmed with a flounce of Chantilly lace; a short sack, also, of lace, was worn to correspond; ornaments of emeralds and pearls. There were also handsome toilets of white satin, brown, blue, yellow and black silks, which we have not the space to describe in detail. The guests separated at a very late hour, and this, one of the most unique, elegant and costly social entertainments given in the metropolis for many a year, came to a close. We are told that the monogram china and glassware used on this occasion cost over seven thousand dollars. Mrs. Stanton contemplates spending the summer in Paris, but will return to the city in autumn.

Paris Fashion Items.

Gentlemen have openly adopted lace ruffles down shirt fronts on grand occasions.

The dress of the season for walking purposes is a foulard—the shade light faun or cream color, with fringe of a somewhat darker shade or satin.

A fete was given a few days ago by the Marquise de Lagrange, after which a splendid supper was served in old Sevres china. The loveliest toilets were white muslin covered with lace and gauze, or tulle. It looks like snow flake.

M'lles de Moustier have quite adopted this style. Ruche of tulle on muslin with pink—that pink called Hortensia—is perfectly tempting. The more white women wear on green lawns, diversified with cerise satin in small proportions, or straw, or lilac mauve, the more womanly they look.

Fruit on bonnets is spreading into very undue proportions.

Valenciennes on silk is all the mania still.

The empress's robe at Rouen was a lovely crépe de chine covered with lace. She left Paris in gray, and dressed en route in the imperial car converted into a boudoir. It was remarked, when she took refreshment at Rouen, the wife of the prefect there, instead of calling the cider offered to the empress by the plain name of cider, a product the country ought to be proud of, converted what appeared to her a too homely word, into "*sirop* of Normandy." There is no knowing how I should feel if I were a French empress, but the idea of drinking *sirop* would have disagreed with my system. After this Eugenie took two biscuits and a glass of champagne. The emperor mixes his champagne with water.

HOW TO REMOVE THE SKIN FROM PEACHES.—As the time for preserving and canning peaches has come, many a housewife will doubtless be glad to know how to remove the skin from this delicious fruit with as little trouble and waste as possible. The following method from an exchange deserves trial:

"Make ley as strong as possible of wood ashes and soft water. Fill a kettle with the lye, and when boiling rapidly, drop in twelve or eighteen peaches and take out again almost immediately, and immerse them in a pail of cold water. Take one in your hand and you perceive that the rind will slip off entirely, leaving a round, beautiful yellow ball; throw it immediately into another pail of pure water, and so proceed till all are done. This process will not injure the flavor of the finest peach, and once tried the old-fashioned way of peeling with a knife will not be again adopted. If the lye is not strong enough, put into the kettle two dippersful of clean wood ashes. This is an excellent way to rid small onions of their jackets preparatory to pickling them. Try it.

To a Caged Canary.

[From the Galaxy for June.]

What subtle pulse is in thy blood,
Poor bird, that teaches thee to sing,
That tells thee that the fair-eyed Spring
Again to these rough shores is wooed?

How dost thou know that skies are fair,
Close pent within a curtained room?
How canst thou argue from thy gloom,
The light and rapture of the air?

I know that home-bound swallows flit
Across the opal of the sky,
My brain is servant to my eye;
But how hadst thou a hint of it?

How canst thou know that ash-buds swell,
That violets peep in sweep surprise;
By what sense dost thou recognize
The Spring-song of the crocus-bell?

I am upbraided by thy voice:
For, barred from all that makes the Spring
To human thought a blessed thing,
Thou dost unwearyingly rejoice.

I learn a lesson, bird, from thee;
Shame, were my song less glad than thine,
When Spring, with all her wealth, is mine,
And the wide world's aglow for me.

Willie's Wife.

[From Lippincott's Magazine.]

A blustering evening! I am all alone. An old maid, with no husband to destroy her peace, nor any dreadful annoyances in the shape of children, with money enough at interest to keep the wolf from the door, and a house of her own overhead, might surely expect, after the tea things were washed and put away, the fire made, the table drawn close to it, the lamp close to her elbow, and a book close to her nose—an old maid thus happily situated might, I say, in all reason, expect a comfortable time. Alas! far from it! The wind whistles around the house with more than ordinary defiance and I tremble inwardly; for well do I know, and well does it know, also, the cracks and holes in my dilapidated dwelling. Here it comes whistling and roaring! With a whisk it turns my new wig askew; with another, the leaves of my book are fluttering and flapping, as if they were in league with the boisterous thing. I adjust my wig and refind my place in vain! There it comes, again and again! A rough blast down the chimney sends the smoke pouring into the room, scattering a shower of ashes over my clean white curtains.

I slam my book with a petulant jerk, take up my lamp and start on an indignant march up to bed. Creak, creak go the boards, as if they were possessed. The door refuses to open; I jerk and pull spasmodically; another blast of wind; my lamp goes out; still I tug at the door; it opens suddenly, and down I go. Miss Jemima Bloor picks herself up, minus dignity, temper and a wig. I grope my way up stairs, stepping angrily on certain shaking steps, and running a splinter into my hand from the broken banister. I reach my room at last; must leave the door open because the lock is out of order; undress, creep into bed, and cannot close my eyes, because there is a loose piece of plaster gaping just above my head—more terrible to me than the sword of Damocles.

During the long hours of that sleepless night I worked myself up to a desperate resolution. The case, you see, was grave and urgent. I ran imminent risk of losing that bland, amiable disposition which (as I know from the concurrent testimony of my most discriminating friends) is natural to me. The house shall be thoroughly repaired! Not another night will I sleep in it till it is!

I arose at peep of day and noon found me domesticated at Mrs. Robinson's, just over the way. I am to sleep on the lounge in her parlor, for the little woman possesses only two rooms and a kitchen.

I immediately assembled all the carpenters, glaziers, tinners, bricklayers, painters and paperhangers with whom our village is blessed. My house is being repaired and renewed outside and in. I contemplate the changes thus going on with—well, let the truth be told—with somewhat mixed emotions. I am slowly coming to the conclusion that there is no such thing as perfect happiness in this sublunary sphere. Men are so intensely aggravating, especially carpenters, glaziers, tinners, bricklayers, painters and paperhangers.

One afternoon we sat—my hostess and I—in her little parlor; I at the front window, looking across the street and watching that rascally John Stocker, the carpenter. Good heavens! There he sat in my best-room window, swinging his heels and smoking a pipe—not a thought of my work in his head! Now, the odious creature knows—no one better—what a hurry I am in and how I detest a pipe. Yet here I may be, for all he cares, sleeping on Mrs. Robinson's lounge for a month or two, and all the time my parlor—Miss Jemima Bloor's best room—scented with tobacco! I wonder if the man expects to go to Heaven when he dies? I wonder if he expects me to pay him three dollars a day for smoking his pipe and swinging his heels?

Ah! there comes Joseph Baldwin just back from dinner, and—let me see—it's twenty-five minutes past two. If I had my way about women's rights, I'd put the men out of this world altogether; that would settle the question. What are they, after all, but an aggravation, a marplot and a general nuisance?

Now, there goes Will Wiley, tramping right over my verbena bed! Has the man no eyes in his head? or did his mother never succeed in beating it into his dull brain that a verbena bed is not to be walked on, and that a garden path is?

And, now I think of it, it was only yesterday I found five broken panes in my up-stairs window. Yet that faithless, good-for-nothing glazier had sworn to me that very morning that he had taken every sash out, from garret to cellar, and left all in perfect order. Lords of creation, indeed! Lords of fiddlesticks! Wonderful example of superior intellect—was it not?—to take a window sash out for repairs, and puts it back in perfect order with five broken panes in it! If Miss Jemima Bloor were to sit in a maiden lady's best room window and smoke a pipe and swing her heels—if she were to come from dinner to her work at twenty-five minutes after two—if she were to go tramping about on people's verbena beds—if she were to declare a window-sash with five broken panes completely repaired—would she call herself a lady of creation and a superior intellect? I ask the world, would she call herself a lord or a lady of creation and a su—

At this point my indignant reflections were interrupted by a soft splish-splash and a subdued little flutter of sobs.

My hostess had been knitting, with her comfortable fat hands, a baby's hood for Mrs. Peters, next door.

As I looked up I saw the tears trickle down on her knitting needles till they shone and winked at me in an impish manner.

This little woman is my mental cushion—my social rest. Mild, round and rosy in body, crying is the only luxury she seems thoroughly to enjoy. The tears roll over her plump cheeks as if they were used to it, and leave them plumper than before. The round, light blue eyes are always ready for a shower, and look all the rounder and bluer after it is over. I never knew her to have an original idea of any description. The thought of her whole life had been "her Willie." Mrs. Robinson, although a weak little woman enough, has had a curious history of her own.

She was an orphan; had married, at twenty, William Robinson, a sailor of the town, and had moved into her present home with her husband and an old uncle, with whom she had lived before her marriage. Two months afterward young William sailed for India. The appointed time for his return has passed; month by month went by, and still his wife looked for him who never came. After two years the old uncle was laid at rest, and the little woman was left quite alone.

How she waited and watched—watched all through youth, all through middle age—waited and watched in vain through twenty long, long years!

In all that time her one thought, when she rose in the morning, was of "Willie;" her last thought as she laid down at night was of her lost husband. Nightly, long after we had gone to bed and she thought me asleep, her little figure would steal from the bed-room and kneel in a spot she had often shown me, where Willie had said his good-bye, and there she would pray in a soft low voice, the words always the same. "My God, take me home to my Willie; oh, come and take me! Willie, my husband, come and take me!" And then she would creep away to her room as quietly as she came.

By the fire-place stood Willie's arm chair; out in the pantry was Willie's cup and saucer, carefully, tenderly washed every day. Over the mantelpiece hung Willie's picture—to her that of a beautiful hero; to me that of a rather commonplace young man with blue eyes, light curling hair, large features and a turned-up nose. I had seen love, devotion, infatuation—all manner of mischief brought on through men—but I never in all my experience had encountered such complete merging of one life into another. To her Willie seemed to be, not all this world only, but all she dreamed of in the world to come. She did not think of him as on earth, but as in Heaven.

The little woman's mind and heart were a study to me. I was sitting, with my hands in my lap, thinking over her: she was knitting, and the click of the needles, diversified by the splash, just audible, of the large, comfortable tears on her neat black silk, when we were both startled by a vigorous swing of the gate and a heavy step on the gravel. A moment more and the door was flung open, and suddenly, without a word or gesture, a large, weather-beaten, rough-looking man stood, like an apparition, before us. A long, purple scar, crossing his forehead and cheek, gave a sinister expression to one eye. He stared at us, and then gazed about the room for some time without speaking; at last he fastened his eyes on Mrs. Robinson. She crept behind me and whispered, "Please send him away, Miss Jemima; see how he stares! Dear, dear, what a dreadful man!"

"What do you wish, sir?" I inquired, boldly enough, I think, although quaking internally, for he had now transferred his eyes to me.

"Does Mrs. Mary Jane Robinson live here?" The harsh voice made us both start.

"Yes, I am Mrs. Robinson," said the little woman, retreating further behind me. Suddenly I was seized, chair and all, and deposited in the middle of the room; the next moment the stranger lifted Mrs. Robinson and gave her a bear-like hug, the little woman struggling and screaming with all her might. I ran to the door, intending to call for help, but the words, "Mary, my wife, don't you know me?" struck me dumb. I turned in amazement. He still held her in his arms. She had ceased struggling, and was looking at him with strange, wild shining eyes. Was her mind shaken? Had the shock been too much for her?

"Let her go, you will kill her," I cried, scarce knowing what I said.

He put her down gently, still holding her hand. She stood quite still and passive, as if frozen, the two fixed, bright eyes staring from her death-white face. The man looked from one to the other in a frightened way.

"Do you think I've frightened her out of her wits?" he asked, in an uneasy whisper, as she stood with her eyes riveted on his face.

"I dare say you have," I blurted out, curtly, as I turned to Mrs. Robinson. "Mary, my dear, what is it?" taking her passive hands in mine. She made no motion, not even shifting her eyes. "Won't you speak to me, Mary?" The eyes turned on me, and slipping her hands from mine she groped in the air like a blind person. It was terrible to see. "Mary," I said, desperately, "it is your husband come back to you"—anything, I thought, to rouse her—"won't you speak to him!"

"Yes," said Mr. Robinson, eagerly, "I am your husband; don't you know me, Mary? Ain't you glad to see me, my dear?" The tears stood in his eyes, and although they could not soften the look of the scarred one, still I could see a dim—a very dim—likeness to the picture over the mantel piece, and could no longer doubt his identity. Deep lines seemed to grow in the little woman's face as he spoke to her; the very roundness appeared to fall into sharp angles, such as long years of sorrow had failed to produce.

"Send him away; tell the man to go away. Cannot he go away?" she said, piteously.

"No, my dear," said her husband, "I have come to stay, and I thought you'd be glad to see me." His rough voice trembled a little. "See, I've carried your picture with me through thick and thin. When we was shipwrecked, I thought about it, and tied it up water proof, so that I should have that any way; and all them long years, when Tom Bright and George Griffith and me used to sit in our huts o' night, and talk over our wives and homes, your picture used to look so hopeful-like—just like you used to look them first two months—I almost forgot I was a shipwrecked sailor, thousands of miles away. Oh, Mary, the long days and the dreary nights, and the weeks, and the months, and the years, all stretching out, one after the other! Yes, child, it was awful dreary-like, and your picture got dim and blurred, and I grew old and gray afore my time; and George, poor fellow! he died of a queer kind of a fever, and we buried him decent as we could under the big palm just above the hut. Then Tom and I led a rough kind of life; we got savage-like, and didn't seem to care much about anything."

There he paused and looked at Mary, sitting motionless. "I thought sometimes, if I ever did get back, it would be kind o' hard for you to get used to me and my ways, and I'd feel awkward with decent folks. It was nigh on to twenty years, I think, before we was found; but I thought may be you'd be kind o' glad to see me, any way." And the poor fellow broke down, and looked wistfully at his wife.

But the little woman's mind seemed quite gone. She did not answer him a word, and had again fallen into that fixed, unnatural stare. I thought I might rouse her by calling her thoughts back to daily things. "Mary, dear," I said, "Mr. Robinson must be hungry after his journey; won't you get him some supper?"

She left the room without a word, moving mechanically, like one in a dream. Half an hour passed, during which Robinson had given me a sketch of his shipwreck. It was the old story—the same, with variations, that De Foe and Tennyson and Adelaide Procter have told. He and his two companions had been washed on an island, rich in beautiful vegetation, but infinitely dreary in its solitude through the long, long years of watching to which the castaways were doomed. He told me how hope had almost died out, when one morning, at sunrise, they saw a ship steering for the island, signaled her, and were taken on board. She was the Zephyr, bound for New York; and in a little more than two months she brought them home.

When Robinson had finished his story, I went out to see what had become of his wife. She was in the pantry, standing before Willie's cup, and the blessed tears were streaming down her face. As soon as she saw me she fell on my neck, sobbing convulsively:

"Must I give him Willie's cup? No lips have touched it since he went away. How can I give it to that man?" I let her cry until she was exhausted; then I raised her gently and carried her to bed.

"Lie there fifteen minutes, dear; by that time I shall have supper ready."

She obeyed as a little child might. When I went to her she was white and still, and her lids closed. Alarmed, I called her hastily by name, and she raised her eyes to mine. There was still the same fixed glitter in them. I lifted her from the bed, and arranged her dress; she was quite passive under my hands.

It was a dreary supper, and a more dreary evening. But at last it came to an end.

I lay half the night turning restlessly on my lounge. The moonlight poured across the room in a broad stream. Willie's picture looked down on me with an unearthly expression; Willie's arm chair took weird forms in the dim light. I thought over the rapid succession of events, until my head grew dizzy with thinking. Then the reproachful eyes of the young Willie seemed staring at me from the dark corners of the room; and mingled with his youthful traits came the rough features and sinister eye of the adult Robinson. Through this chaos of faces Mary's came up, just as I had seen her when she stood at the door of her room bidding me good night, her eyes large with terror, and her hands stretched out to me for help—for help, alas! which how could I give her? For what he not her husband? And is it not to her husband that a woman must cleave?

Suddenly my heart stood still. The little woman herself crept noiselessly from the bed-room, her face looking horribly wan in the moonlight—crossed the parlor and knelt in the accustomed spot. Her hands were raised above her head; her upturned face was convulsed with an agony of appeal; but, for a time, no words came from her lips. She sank prostrate on the floor. "Oh, my God!" at last she moaned: "Willie has gone from heaven! I have lost him! Oh, where is he?" Then she glided back as silently as she had come, but the bitter moan sounded in my ears the long night through.

The next morning she wore the same stony face. I stayed with her three weeks, and then returned to my own home, which had, meanwhile, been thoroughly renovated. I could sit in peace before my fire-place now, without fear of storms or risks of draughts. I could sit in peace outwardly, but my mind had little rest. At intervals of two or three days I went to see the little woman. Month by month her face grew smaller and her eyes larger and brighter. Their glitter haunted me.

More than a year passed. One cheerful morning in early spring I was ironing in my kitchen; a pleasant breeze came through the window; the blithe birds without made the orchard vocal with their lively twitterings and a bed of strawberries in the garden delighted my eyes with its white blossoms. Life seemed pleasant to me this bright morning, and my hands moved briskly at my work. A shadow fell across the ironing-board, and caused me to look up. There was Mr. Robinson standing in the doorway. The weather-beaten face had changed much in the year—an unhappy year it had been to him—but its events had stirred the gentler parts of his nature. He looked even sadder than usual this morning, and his voice was low and subdued.

"Miss Jemima, my Mary seems lower than common; she's clean given out and gone to bed. My rough hands and ways ain't no account in a sick room; wouldn't you just step over and see if you could help her any? I wouldn't ask it if I could get along without you."

"Instantly," I replied, putting on my bonnet. "I will lock up the house and go back with you." I found Mrs. Robinson lying on her bed, the room darkened. She looked up at me and smiled—a sweet, dim smile—then, closing her eyes, she lay quite still. Hour after hour, that I sat by her bedside, she never moved nor spoke. In the evening I sent for the village doctor—a quiet, meek little man—who shook his head, looked doubtful, and left some powders.

And so she lay for five days and four nights. Sometimes she was feverish, and would turn and mutter; but usually she lay quite still, her small, thin hands folded, and that wonderful smile on her face. The evening of the fifth day the room was intensely still; Mr. Robinson and I sat watching the calm face, white as the pillow beneath it. Suddenly a light broke over her features. She flung her arms upward with a murmur of joy: "Willie, I am coming!"—sank back, her breathing growing shorter and feebler—a gentle, scarce perceptible struggle, and the little woman was gone from her pain, from her longing, from her fond delusion—gone to a world of light and of peace, where all delusions vanish—gone to a world where, ere long, there will be another meeting; and then Willie will be recognized and welcomed by that faithful heart, and loved forever!

Meanwhile, a bent old man still lives in the house over the way. He, too, is going fast. His hair is white—a softened light shines in his eyes; his mouth falls easily into a tender smile when you speak to him of Mary, his wife, in heaven. Perhaps—who can tell?—she is watching him thence; her Willie, becoming gentler, more spiritualized, through his loving heart, his lonely life and the guardian influence exerted over him from another world than ours.

A Cheap Little Paris in the Heart of London.

A writer in Once a Week says: "In Old Compton street cheap life on the Paris plan is carried out in a series of the most unsavory looking tenements. Yet the establishments which are French contrast most advantageously with those which have obstinately remained British. The Café Lombardo, or the Masonic Café, inscribed *Aux Vrais Amis*, should be examined in contrast with one or two horrible little English coffee houses which elbow them. The narrow windows of the café display a *gigot* of foreign cut, trimmed cutlets, fresh salad, an artichoke or two, to please the eye. The English coffee house shows two or three dirty eggs, a few cups and saucers, a chop, and the advertisement sheet of an old Bell's Life, with a curtain as dingy as a tramp's skirt for background. The fastidious man might, in a strait, satisfy his appetite pleasantly enough in the Café Lombardo—say with a dish of sardines, an omelette, *fines herbes* and a salad. But should hard fate lead him into the English coffee shop, boiled eggs, coarse bacon, and stale, crumbling bread must be his fare. The British coffee house keeper has passed the windows of this café every day for years, and has caught the savory odors stealing from its kitchen, and has only gone back again to boil the egg hard or soft. He has never cared to reach the dignity of an omelette. The dandelion, and the mallow, and the salsify, and the haricots, and the lentils are, he will sneer, stuff for Mounseer, but not for John Bull.

"A little way off is a very small hotel for very humble lodgers—the Hotel du Pavillion; but its restaurant window is enriched with delicacies. Round the corner is a purveyor of French and German comestibles. He can show you thirty varieties of sausages and twenty varieties of cheese. In his shop are open tubs of gherkins and olives and saur kraut. He has given you a shilling's worth of excellent truffled *foie-gras*, and he will count you two or three sardines for lunch or dinner. People come with little baskets, and with a shilling intelligently laid out get a light repast of real dainties. It is positively delightful to see the shabby old foreigners peering and poking about the establishment, which is as thickly larded with the good things of this life as the lively picture in the old *Almanach des Gourmande*.

"Higher up the street an establishment is wholly devoted to Italian comestibles and fruits. Herein you may buy tomato paste from Turin and butter from Milan, fresh every Wednesday, as our thriftless, ignorant English poor can just manage to buy pickled cabbage. Not far off is the Café de l'Etoile, in Windmill street, where a fixed price dinner, including a half bottle of Bordeaux ordinaire, is to be had for two shillings. A dish of beef is to be got, with such tomato sauce as is not obtainable in the best English feeding establishments round about. The British idea of tomato sauce is the flattest, thinnest, most disgraceful conception of a delightful vegetable. The British cook, even he who pretends to cater for people who are willing to pay good prices, has not yet discovered that the finest tomato paste is to be had in penny-worths. The poor but intelligent foreign cooks about Soho are alive to the fact, and profit by it.

"It would be ridiculous to assert that the two shilling dinner at the Café de l'Etoile is a specimen of artistic excellence; but compare it with any two-shilling English dinner to be had in London, and it must be accepted as a triumph of mind over manner. The salad alone shames the British kitchens of the neighborhood—aye, kitchens planted in very fashionable neighborhoods indeed."

A German Kindergarten.

Dr. Hurst writes from Bremen to the New York Methodist:

"Perhaps a better idea cannot be presented of the working of a Kindergarten than a description of the way in which the principal one in Bremen is conducted, and which I have had occasion to visit. Many of the children are so small that they need to be conducted thither by older persons, when they are met at the door by a servant, who relieves them of hats, coats, shawls and lunch-box, care being taken, however, that each child aid in adjusting its own things, and having a fixed place for all. The proprietress, Miss Grabau, is assisted by two other ladies. The school is divided into two classes, either one or the other of which is nearly always in the large hall for exercise, or working in the little gardens out of doors. In the school-room each scholar is provided with a very neat and comfortable desk and chair, and is taught to regard them as its own property. The employments are worsted work, knitting, elementary drawing and every other imaginable thing which is supposed to furnish such young fingers and minds with combined skill and amusement. The children have patterns before them for everything they are to do, and the teacher personally superintends them in each little labor, when every pains is taken to impart as much elementary instruction as possible. For example, if a little girl is at work upon a book-mark, or a lamp-mat, she is taught imitation, combination, perspective, counting, the alphabet and many other things. As soon as she is tired of one employment she is at liberty to begin something else that she may like. Thus all weariness is avoided.

"The room for exercise is very large, and, like the school-room, neatly ornamented with pictures, and when the children are in it they are under the care of a teacher, who has them go through many gymnastic exercises. This is the most interesting feature of the Kindergarten. The children, boys and girls promiscuously, are directed to assume a certain position. It may be that of a regiment drawn up in a line of battle. The teacher then commences a story about a certain battle; then comes some stirring song, when all sing it together, and then the battle commences in right good earnest. After the great victory is won, the teacher narrates a peaceful story in verse, which the children have been also previously taught, and which they repeat with her, going through with all the gymnastic exercises suggested by the verses. For instance, she tells of a great pigeon-house, out of which the pigeons come one by one. Some fly slowly and others more rapidly; others go off and hop around on the ground, while others light on the chairs, some get tired and others fall down, and thus the supposed movements of a whole flock of pigeons are represented by the children.

"Afterward, the teacher may begin to tell in prose about an old blacksmith, and by and by she reaches the verses telling of his anvil, bellows, red-hot iron and great hammer, when the children sing with her, and the whole room is transformed, for a time, into a great smithy, and all the little folks industriously and laughingly playing blacksmith. Another song tells about walking over a heath, where at last a great pond is reached. The frogs are heard to croak, and seen to leap into the pond. During this time the entire class becomes a large group of similar croakers.

"In all these initiatory exercises the children preserve strict order, but their risible propensities are but little restrained. Just as soon as the slightest fatigue or decrease in interest is observed the exercises are changed, when the class is immediately taken into another room, or else into the garden. About one-half of the time seems to be devoted to the gymnastic and horticultural employments, and the other half to the light manual labor at the desks in the school room proper.

"There are a great many of these half-poetical and half-prose stories, having somewhat of a theatrical character, taught and performed in the Kindergarten. I have at hand a volume which contains fifty in all, profusely illustrated. Some of the titles are: 'The Mouse and the Cat,' 'The Ants,' 'The Stork and the Frog,' 'The Butterfly,' 'The Grasshopper and the Worm,' and 'The Horse-chestnut Tree.' Each of these stories requires, perhaps, from ten to fifteen minutes to repeat and perform.

"The exercises and employments at the Kintergarten are sure to be brought away by the children, and enter largely into their home life. If you send your little folks to one of them for three months you may expect, for a long time afterward, to see them hopping about your premises like frogs, leaping like deer, springing like cats, and, as nearly as they can, flying like swallows, barking like dogs, swimming like fish, swinging like tree tops, sailing like boats, and chattering like magpies."

Beware of tooth poisons vended under the name of "dentifrices." Adopt and adhere to the only preparation that really preserves the teeth and hardens the gums—fragrant Sozodont. Its effects on decaying teeth are marvelous.