FATALISM.

THE duck pie that the cook had served for breakfast at the club was exquisite! Too exquisite in fact, for my friend, Robert Mercier, and I made such a hole in it that, on rising from the table, we felt a vague sensation of sleepiness and congestion.

"Will you take a walk with me?" asked Robert. "Let us go to my rooms. I want to show you two new pictures."

"All right."

We were walking very fast, oppressed by the cold, smoking our cigars with rapid puffs and not saying much, when with a common movement we stopped to look at a superb bay cob, harnessed to a tilbury, who was coming in our direction at a gate that showed supple strength and perfect rhythm. Just then we were opposite the Palais de l'Industrie, almost at the corner of the Avenue Marigny. At the precise moment when the horse was passing by us he slipped with all four feet and fell to the ground heavily. There he lay, entangled in the shafts and traces; with an air of bewildered abandon.

Passers-by came running up Soon there was a group, talking and gesticulating. At last the horse was extricated, raised up and led away by the bridle. The carriage, one of the shafts of which was broken, was hauled to the nearest carriage house by a team of officious by-standers, among them, of course, a kitchen maid.

As we moved off I said to my friend: "A fine invention, decidedly, this wooden pavement! At the least frost, the slightest drizzle, these poor horses are unable to stand up. I have seen seven or eight accidents myself, on this very spot, within a year."

Robert, turning very pale, answered me in a strange voice that was also a little hard:

"If so many accidents happen on this spot, it is my fault."

"Your fault? You are mad!"

"No; but morally I am innocent."

And he continued, for my air of amazement implied all possible interrogations for enlightment:

"Ah! my dear fellow, how incidents of no apparent importance sometimes upset our whole lives! You must have asked yourself why I have changed my way of living. I am going to tell you the story which has opened my eyes to the invisible world."

This phrase, and especially its conclusion, filled me with some anxiety. Whether it was the duck pie, or the fear of seeing Robert go mad, I do not know, but I felt a disagreeable cramp in my stomach. With wandering eyes and contracted brow he continued:

"You remember George Sauviniere and his targic death about two years and a half ago. On reaching home one night, I found a letter in which he announced to me his intention of killing himself. I immediately hurried to the little hotel in the Rue des Saussaies, a dismal den where he had lived since his misfortune. I arrived too late; he hanged himself. While the servant went in search of a useless doctor and to notify the police, I remained there, alone with the body which we had stretched upon the bed. Around the neck a very slight violet streak, a countenance that was almost smiling, the chin thrown a little forward. As I took a few steps toward the mantel-piece to light two candles, my foot caught in the rope that we had cut and thrown upon the ground. A curiosity seized me—a curiosity that was mingled with a sort of timid respect—to get a closer view, to examine and feel this thing that had killed. It was a curtain cord, covered with red worsted, and looking bourgeois and harmless enough, and, while I was handling it, thinking 'What! it was this and filled with that astonishment which always come from finding so paltry and simply the factors of the problem of death, which seems to us so gigantic, there came to my mind that old superstition which makes the rope with which a man has been hanged an infallible talisman of good luck."

"Well, you took the rope. But I do not see the relation."

"Wait! No, I did not take the rope. The police officer who was coming would ask to see it, and I would blush a little at this fit of superstition. But I cut off a little piece of it, two or three inches in length, which on reaching home, I carefully placed in my pocketbook."

"And then?"

"Then, starting from the moment when I had this bit of rope in my possession, I began to digest badly, I had constant nightmares that took no particular form at first, and then, little by little, became more definite; and every night I again saw Sauviniere, with his little violet streak around his neck. It was dreadful. It came to a pass where I was afraid to go to sleep. I spent many nights in gambling at the club. And what ill-luck I had! You can imagine. Finally, I was taken sick. The doctors knew not what to do. You understand, of course that I was not going to tell them my dreams. At that time I was with Marthe—you know Marthe. One day she told me that her cook knew a certain Saggi. You do not know him? A wonderful man, my dear fellow, a sorcerer."

Robert uttered this word with an indescribable expsession of anxious respect.

"But the rope? Where did that

"Then this cook had Saggi consult the cards for her. Marthe wanted to see him, and advise me to consult him. Let me tell you that this Saggi is astonishing—frightful, even. You have never paid any attention to sorcery?"

"Very little."

"You are wrong. You see, people laugh without realizing that they are playing with terrible things."

"But the rope, the rope!" I cried.

"Ah, yes, the rope—I am coming back to it. For a year I studied with Saggi, and all that time misfortune continued to rain upon me. I broke my leg in falling from a horse; Marthe left me; I quarreled with three old friends, and was neglected in the will of my uncle, who had made me play chess with him twice a week for 15 years, Everything, in short, everything!"

"But the rope? Where did that come in?"

"The rope! Exactly; it was the rope!"

"What, it brought ill luck?"

"Yes, my dear fellow. You would never have believed it. But that's because yon dc not know. And at that time I did not know either. But now!"

And with an air that was at once triumphant and sorrowful, Robert added:

"I was always dreaming of the hanged man. I had a nervous disease. I have it yet, for that matter. Unable to stand it longer, I determined to tell all to Saggi, and he explained everything to me. Very bad, my rope! Deplorable! An absolute toked of ill luck!"

"Oh ho! Another illusion wiped out! Painful, very painful," I said in a conciliating tone.

"Do not joke; it is a very serious matter. This was Saggi's explanation. The rope with which a man has been hanged does indeed bring luck, but on the express condition that the man hanged did not commit suicide, but was executed by a public hangman."

"Precious information! But the horse that we saw just now?"

"I am coming to that. The rope that has hanged a suicide brings, on the contrary, ill luck. Enlightened by this revelation, I wanted to get rid immediately of the rope which I had been keeping so carefully, and which was unquestionably the cause of all my misfortunes. But how to do it? It was not a thing to be done lightly. The talisman might fall into other hands and become the misfortune of some one else. In that case the responsibility would be mine, and, you see, nothing obstructs the flow of the fluid portion of the soul like"—

"Thank you, I prefer to remain in ignorance. But what course did you take?"

"I resolved to throw this cursed rope into the water. With that in view I left my house one night, holding the piece of red rope, which seemed to me to have a demoniacal tint. As I was crossing the Champs Elysees, at the place where we just saw the accident, I stumbled into a heap of sand—they were just then laying the wooden pavement—and fell so awkwardly that I again broke the leg which had suffered by my previous accident. In my fall I dropped the rope. I fainted: they carried me to my house and I lay there flat on my back, for three months. The rope remained in the hole and they laid the pavement over it. And since that time all the horses fall at that spot, and there have been fatal accidents. It is frightful and queer, is it not?"

"Terrifying," said I, with an air of conviction. "But how about yourself? Have you got rid of your evil genius?"

"Oh, you may be sure. I bought the whole rope with which Stramford, the English assassin, was hanged last Summer in London. I went to get it myself. It cost me dear, but I do not regret it. Now, I am in luck; and, in fact—I may announce it to you—I am going to be married."

Thumped Him for a Fool.

James Welch, of Middletown, Conn., having been told that the force of a dynamite explosion was downward, made a practical test of this principle a few days ago by boring a big hole into a monstrous gnarled log, into which he put a lot of dynamite, ignited a short-time fuse and carelessly sat down astride one end of the log. Soon Welch and the log ascended in a curve about 30 feet. In the descent the position of the couple was reversed. Welch arrived at earth first, the log followed, and Welch says it thumped him several times after he was down.

Natural Gas in Cæsar's Day

Natural gas has been known and extensively used in China and other parts of Asia for many centuries, and history tells us of a natural gas well in France in the time of Julius Cæsar. It was first discovered in the United States near Pittsburg, about fifty years ago, but it is only of late years that it has been extensively utilized.—Golden Days.

Artificial Lightning.

Provide a tin tube that is larger at one end than it is at the other, and in which there are several holes. Fill this tube with powdered resin; and and when it is shook over the flame of a torch the reflection will produce the exact appearance of lightning.—Cor. Sunny Hour.

AGRICULTURAL TOPICS.

INFORMATION ABOUT MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE FARM.

Diseases of Fowls--Adulterated Cheese--Why the Dairy Does Not Pay--Canadian Wheat Growing--The Philosophy of the Gizzard.

Diseases of Fowls.

Says a correspondent in the Michigan Poultry breeder:

From a reading of the many poultry papers, and a consideration of the numerous advertisments of "roup pills," "cholera cures," "egg foods" and other nostrums, one might suppose that one of the necessities of the fowls was a hospital and an apothecary shop. But there is where we are apt to go wrong.

The doctoring of the sick fowls, especially when you do not know what ails them is generally a hopeless task: It is far better to keep them well than to try to cure after they get sick. An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure. A few simple remedies, generally such as are useful about the house any way or generally kept on hand, are all the case requires. Spirits of turpentine, kerosene, sulpher, sulphate zinc, camphor carbonic acid, and insect powders are about all that are needed. For gaps, for instance, a few drops of camphor on a bread pill taken in time will cure; so what is the use of buying anything else for the purpose? For roop, camphor in drinking water is a good preventive, sulphic of zinc for syringing the nostrils and turpentine for swabbing out the throat or wind pipe are equal to any known remedies.

For scaly legs, a very common disease, particularly for old fowls, sulphur and lard or kerosene, applied freely to the affected part, are both "sure cures,"

For scabs, very prevalent during the summer months, after picking off the scab, apply an ointment made of soap, one teaspoonful; carbolic acid five drops. It is a dead shot.

For lice and mites, sulphur and lard or a dusting with the pyrethrum insect powder is all sufficient. A sprinkling with a 1 per cent solution of sulphuric acid will drive these pests away from the premises.

For cholera the best known remedy is a sharp hatchet. The great preventive is a thorough sprinkling of yards, houses, nests, etc., with a 1 per cent solution of sulphuric acid.

Bumble foot requires an operation.

Diarrhœa may be controlled by soaking oak bark in the drinking water.

Other diseases are generally obscure and should not be treated with medicines. Confinement and a change of diet is about the best that can be done in such cases.

A proper understanding of the fowl business will relieve it of the complication with which it has been invested by writers on the subject. The whole thing is simple enough and rests upon a few fundamental principles. Cleanliness, comfort and proper feeding, in general terms, cover the ground. All minor features must conform to these, but may vary to suit the circumstances of each case.

Canadian Wheat Growing.

Writing of wheat growing in Canada a writer in the Ohio Farmer has this to say:

Of course one system will not apply to all soils and latitudes with equal success, but some real system should be the motto of every agriculturist. My own is as follows: First, plow the ground in the fall and let it lie as left by the plow until the first of July, then plow again from six to seven inches deep. I plow deep in order to get a soil that will stand hardship if necessary; and one that is not easily exhausted. Then harrow down solid, use the roller freely, as much time is saved and much good done by its use. It makes your soil firm and solid and makes it stand the dry weather much better. Work the surface of your soil thoroughly with cultivator and harrow, and in every case after it is worked with these implements follow with the roller. If there be Cannda thistles in the ground use your cultivator most and endeavor to do the cultivating on dry hot days and follow immediately with the roller, for by so doing you kill the thistles and pulverize your soil. Continue this until the last week in August; then plow from three to four inches deep and follow with harrow and roller. Make the ground very solid and firm; then prepare your seed bed from one and a to two half inches deep, and by having solid ground below this depth the roots of the plant take firm hold on the solid soil and do not heave out so easily as if the soil were loose. Judging from my own experience this system is a good one and will give good satisfaction.—Frank H. Walker, Waterford, Ont.

The Philosophy of the Gizzard.

A fowl's gizzard, where so many lost articles turn up, is a curious trap as well as a necessary vital organ of the fowl, says a contemporary. Diamonds, pearls, coin, buttons, tacks, orange peel and about everything else, save dynamite; have been found in the gizzards of fowls. A study of the organ is interesting. Experiments have demonstrated that what may be called the gastric juice in fowls has not sufficient power to dissolve their food without the aid of the grinding action of the gizzard. Before the food is prepared for digestion, therefore, the grains must be subjected to a triturating process, and such as are not sufficiently bruised in this manner before passing into the gizzard, are there reduced to the proper state by its natural action. The action of the gizzard is, in this respect, mechanical, this organ serving as a mill to grind the feed to pieces, and then by means of its powerful muscles, pressing it gradually into the intestines in the form of a pulp. The power of this organ is said to be sufficient to pulverize hollow globules of glass in a very short time, and solid masses of the same substance in a few weeks. The rapidity of this process seems to be proportionate generally to the size of the bird. A chicken, for example, breaks up such substances as are received into its stomach less rapidly than the capon, while a goose performs the same operation sooner than either. Needles and even lancets given to turkeys have been broken in pieces and voided without any apparent injury to the stomach. The reason, undoubtedly, is that the larger species of birds have thicker and more powerful organs of digestion.—Farmers' Review.

Adulterated Cheese.

It is claimed that the sale of skim cheese has grown to large proportions on this coast, but we dare say that there are few persons who deal in them, let alone the consumers, who are aware how they are made. On this coast, skim cheese is manufactured of emulsion of refined lard and skim milk. At the East, a large proportion is made of emulsion of refined lard and potatoes, no milk being used. How the emulsion of refined lard is prepared is a secret, but it cannot be very expensive, for skim cheese sell in our market, in jobbing lots, at around five cents a pound, while at the East they are sold for still less money. The manufacturer and also the dealer in oleomargarine and butterine are liable by law to severe punishment if they sell either without proper notice to purchasers; yet cheese made chiefly of hog fat or cotton-seed oil is sold to unsuspecting persons as cheese made from milk. Its consumption in quantity undermines health, even if it does non entail death, yet the person or persons who are instrumental in this health-destroying business go unpunished. Organized farmers, who did so much to have laws passed defining oleomargarine and visiting with severe punishment those who manufacture and also those who deal in it without proper safeguard for the general public, would do well to have similar laws passed about skim cheese.—Pacific Rural Press.

Why the Dairy Does Not Pay.

One of the prime reasons why the dairy does not pay better, is that there is not an equalized production of dairy produce, and the surplus now comes when it is the most difficult season to carry it an unchanged condition, so that there is a constant effort on the part of the sellers to force this butter and cheese upon the market, to the demoralization of prices. The answer often made is that there are no winter factories near us. The factory closes its doors the 15th of November. Why did it close its doors? Was there a supply of milk in sight for five months to come? Had the farmers tried to have a supply of milk to keep the factory open? In these days of demand for fresh made dairy produce the year round, there is no factory man so stupid as to shut up his factory with 3,000 pounds of milk to be had daily for the winter, when this means a profitable income to him through the winter. As a rule the farmer is about the only man who can afford to stop business and forego income for five or six months every year, and especially when dairy produce is selling at double the prices that the same goods bring in the summer. These are facts worth looking up and acting upon.—Practical Farmer.

Profit in Stock.

According to the German experiments, food equal to two per cent of the weight of an animal must first go to sustain life before any gain can be made; thus for a 100 pound animal two pounds would be fed without profit, for a 200 pound animal four pounds, and for a 300 pound animal six pounds. There is the most profit in smaller pigs and quicker returns. It is possible to put any amount of feed into a hog and get no return for it. As an an exchange says: "Swine have an immense power for the consumption of food, and can use up grain remarkably fast without making any commensurate return, if the feeding is not done with judgment. On the other hand, under proper conditions, they can turn the grain to flesh with as handsome a margin for profit as can any stock on the farm." A rapid and constant growth are necessary to avoid loss and secure the greatest profit.

Some Pointers.

As to whether it is best to sell sheep early with the wool on, or later with the wool off, can only be determined by the prices.

Wool can not be grown to the best advantage from the backs of poor sheep any more than good crops of grain can be grown on a thin, rundown soil.

The English farmer turns his sheep into the turnip field to gather the crop for themselves. He thus saves the labor of handling them, and at the same time gets the land well-manured.

It takes a certain quantity of food per 100 pounds of cow to keep her alive. Above that what she eats goes to milk or flesh. The 900-pound cow pays better than the one that weighs 1,400 pounds.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE RISING GENERATION.

A Fox Story--A Little Sunbeam--Lemonade By Rule--Cargo of Elephants--Disarmed

A Fox Story.

We are accustomed to lavishing a great deal of sympathy on the fox that is chased over hill and dale, through wood and meadow, by packs of hounds and red-coated huntsmen, and men have been known to state their opinion that this is a very hard world because the fox gets chased all about, but never has much sport in the hunting line himself, which is a very mistaken notion. If any creature gets sport out of life, it is no less a being than Master Reynard himself, who terrorizes Brer Babbit is an inveterate wild and tame goose-chaser, and who as a hunter of mice is unsurpassed. One fox that I was reading about a short time since retired early from the hunt in which it was intended he should be victim, and to escape the hounds took refuge in a magpie's nest, while he whiled away the hours of the afternoon eating up the magpies as they returned home in very finished style.

Another story it said to have been told by a "gentleman of the strictest veracity," who got the tale in France. A friend of his was in the habit of shooting in a very wild and rocky section of the country. Part of the rocky ground was on the side of a very high hill, not accessible to sportsmen, and from this hill the hares and foxes, which were the chief game of the region, would at night betake themselves to the plains below. Leading from these rocks to the lower ground were two gullies made by the rains, near one of which the veracious gentleman who tells the story stationed himself and his attendant one night in the hope of bagging some hares.

Hardly had they taken up their position when they perceived a fox creeping stealthily down through the gully, followed closely by another. After they had played together for a few minutes, one of the foxes went into hiding under one of the larger rocks at the end of the gully, and the other having apparently bidden him good night, sneaked back to the hill again. In a moment he was back; but before him; racing down through the gully—being chased, in fact—was a hare fleeing for her life; and as the intended victim was passing the rock where the first fox lay concealed, he tried to seize her by suddenly springing upon her, but his sim was bad and he missed. The purusing fox came up at this moment, and finding that the lack of skill of his co-conspirator had resulted in the loss of his supper, he began to snap and snarl at the other in such a fashion that the spirit of the offending fox was aroused, and a rough-and-tumble fight resulted. They fought fiercely for several minutes, but as neither seemed to be getting the better of the other, the huntsman himself took the matter in hand, and shot them.

It is true that this little story ended in a tragedy for the foxes, but there can be no doubt that they had all the sport out of the hare that they were entitled to, nor is there any reason to believe that had they caught her they would have treated her any more gently than the fox-hunter is accustomed to treat his prey, so that after all the cunning creatures are not entitled to very much of our sympathy.—Harper's Young People

A Little Sunbeam.

Railroad engineers and firemen, grimy and taciturn, lead a more dangerous life than any soldier, but their occupation is prosaic, and few give them credit for heroism or the gentler feelings which make up the romantic side of human nature. Yet in their existence there sometimes falls a spark of light or a ray of sunshine illuminates the smoky cab. The overland train had arrived at Oakland, California, and the great iron engine was throbbing and puffing after a long and sinuous trip over the mountain sides and rocky defiles, lofty trestles, and marshy stretches.

The din in the depot was deafening, but out of the chaos sounds of a sweet, girlish voice was heard welcoming her parents, who had arrived on the train. She was a little golden-haired beauty, scarcely seven years of age, with a quick intelligent eye and a loving nature, to which she gave full vent in the radiant and impulsive way she welcomed her parents back. At last they took her by the hand and proceeded towards the waiting ferry-boat.

As they passed by the engine attached to the train, the little one broke away, ran up to the big, black machine, and patted the driving wheels affectionately with her small white hands. Then, looking up at the smokestack she said:—

"You good, big, old iron horse, you have brought back papa and mamma safe over the great mountain to their little girl, and I want to thank you, even if you don't care for me, because I am so little. And you, too," she continued, turning her face wistfully towards the grimy engineer and fireman, who were looking down at her; "I love you all." Then she kissed her hand to them and was gone.

"Bill," said the engineer to his fireman, "what was that?"

"'Peared like an angel," said the fireman, echoing the other's thought.

Just then a fleeting sunbeam from the great orb sinking down in the Golden Gate came stealing through a chink in the depot and stole by the engineer into his cab. There was a strange look on his face for an instant and when he turned his head there were two light spots on his dust begrimed cheeks.—Golden days.

Lemonade by Rule.

Eleanor Hamilton was fourteen years old, and like most girls of fourteen she was fond of the society of young women even more advanced in age than herself. So when Kitty Williams, her dearest friend, aged fifteen, brought her cousin Maud Williams, aged seventeen, to call—well, Eleanor felt like a grown-up young lady.

It was a warm summer afternoon, and Eleanor had taken her guests to the broad piazza that was already frunished with two little tables, a hammock, and a number of chairs. It was so sheltered by vines that only a stray sunbeam found its way into the green retreat.

Kitty and Maud had been seated about five minutes, when a trim little maid appeared, bearing a pitcher and three tumblers.

"Miss Jessie sent you this, with her compliments."

"Oh, lemonade! How kind of your sister!" exclaimed Kitty. "I hope we will see her this afternoon."

"Jessie is up to her eyes in dough, so to speak," answered Eleanor. "Ever since she graduated from the cooking-school nothing will keep her and her cook-book out of the kitchen."

"And did she make the delicious lemonade?"

"Of course she did," said a fresh blithe voice. "She made it, as she makes everything else, by rule."

"Oh, Jessie, do tell us your rule. Somehow I never get it quite right. Do tell me exactly how you made this, and I'll promise to follow your directions 'ever after,' as the fairy-books say."

"I've got some mousse packed in the freezer that I must go back to in a minute. But here's the reciept: To begin with, allow one lemon to each tumbler of water. If you want to make lemonade for four persons, use four lemons. Squeeze three and a half into a pit her, and slice up the last half-lemon. Use a sharp knife, and slice it very thin."

"Why not squeeze all four lemons?" asked Maud. "Why add the sliced lemon?"

"For ornament only," answered Jessie. "It looks pretty in the glasses with the ice. Then," she continued, "add four tumblers of water, but don't fill the tumblers quite full. The ice will melt some, and that weakens the lemonade a trifle. Add three heaping teaspoonfuls of granulated sugar for every lemon used, unless you want it very sweet. Then stir it thoroughly, so that when the last glassful is poured out, it won't be a mass of syrup. Last of all, add some cracked ice."

"How much?" asked Eleanor.

"As much as the cook will give you," answered Jessie, laughing. "Oh, dear!" she added, in mock despair. "My mousse! my mousse!" And bidding a hasty good-by to her friends, the little cook betook herself to her kitchen and to the interesting concoction known as mousse, leaving Eleanor, Kitty, and Maud to their own devices.

Cargo of Elephants.

"An elephant's shoulder is never still," is a Hindoo saying indicative of the restlessness of the animal. Mr. J. L. Kipling, in his "Man and Beast in India," tells how the animal's passion for moving about once came near wrecking a ship.

A batch of elephants were taken on board at Calcutta, and the steamer went down on the Hooghly, and at night anchored off Sangor Point. The sea was as still as oil, but the ship rolled so much that she was in danger of rolling over. The elephants had found that by swaying to and fro all together, they could produce a pleasant rocking motion.

As the ship had no other cargo, and rode light, the captain was much frightened. The mahouts were hurried down into the hold, and each one, seated on his own beast, made him "break step;" but they had to stay there for a long time.

Disarmed.

A true Celt does not need to kiss the "blarney stone" in order to gain a flattering tongue. In is his as part of his birthright.

A little eight-year-old Irish boy in one of our public schools was reproved by his teacher for some mischief, says an exchange. He was about to deny his fault, when she said:

"I saw you, Jerry."

"Yes," he replied, as quick as a flash. "I tells them there didn't much yous don't see wid them purty black eyes of yourn."

That was the soft answer that turned away wrath.

Her Sympathy.

Little Dorothy takes a trip alone in the horse cars every morning, under the conductor's care, on her way to the kindergarten. On her return at noon she always has some story to tell of what she has seen on her journey.

"What did you see in the car this morning, Dorothy?" asked her mamma at dinner one day.

"Why, mamma," said sweet-tempered Dorothy, sorrowfully, "I saw a man and woman sitting side by side and quarreling! So I went and sat between them, for I felt so sorry for that poor man, mamma!"

Milk and cream are very susceptible to odors and should not be kept in cellars where there is anything that will contaminate.

A cow that can not be made to give 300 pounds of butter a year isn't much of a cow, or the owner isn't much of a feeder: In general we must convict the owner and acquit the cow.