THE COURIER.

OPELOUSAS, - - LOUISIANA.

GENERAL PARAGRAPHS.

Haps and Mishaps.

—The flooring of a Presbyterian church in Hudson City, N. J., gave way one night recently, and some forty children were injured, some seriously.

—A powder mill, near Tamaqua, Pa., was blown up the other day. Samuel Miller was killed. The shock was felt for several miles.

—A gentle parent at Greencastle, Ind., lately broke the arm of his seven-year old boy with a club, because he took a piece of candy without leave and divided it with his baby brother.

—Three virtuous Chicago roughs attacked an old man whom they found fishing on Sunday, and after knocking him down and jumping on him, asked him if his Bible didn't tell him better than to fish on Sundays.

—Walter Howe, of Portland, Me., a quarrel with whom recently led Ella Batchelder to commit suicide by drowning, at Cumberland Mills, shot himself at the same place a few days ago.

—At Mattison, Coon County, Ill., the other day, the elder of two boys by the name of Wedel, while playing with an old pistol, shot the younger through the brain, injuring him fatally.

—At Kirkwood, Mo., an old gentleman named Harper arose in his sleep and walked out of a second-story window of his residence. He fell a distance of fifteen feet, breaking his backbone. He was not expected to live.

—A young daughter of William Fall, residing near Fulton Junction, Iowa, tried to kindle a fire with kerosene. The flames communicated with the can, which burst, scattering the burning oil all over her body. Before it could be extinguished her flesh was burned to a crisp.

—Some department watchmen were being exercised at Washington in the use of fire extinguishers, which they had strapped to their backs. One man failed to open the vent of his machine, which soon made one, ripping it from top to bottom, shaking the man considerably and breaking his shoulder-blade.

—Two men who had robbed a store at New London, Wis., the other night, were subsequently captured at Shawano, and a vigilance committee of sixty citizens took them from the Sheriff to the nearest tree, put a noose round their necks, and choked them till they confessed where the goods and money were.

—Isaac Logan was stabbed and killed with a pitchfork by Michael Kearnen, at Linden, Union County, N. J., the other day. Logan was in a field loading a wagon with hay when Kearnen, who had been on a spree, came up and took the fork from him and stabbed him three times in the lower part of the body, inflicting wounds from which he died the same evening.

—Dr. Thomas Dudley, First Assistant of the Eastern Lunatic Asylum, at Lexington, Ky., recently committed suicide by taking three grains of morphine. He was about forty years old, and had been with the institution nearly twenty years. During the past year or two he had shown some evidences of insanity, owing, it is supposed, to his intimate relations with the insane and the intense application to his duties.

—James Gannon shot and killed his wife at Louisville the other day. His wife separated from him some years since on account of ill-treatment but Gannon ceme up from New Orleans a month or two ago, and she then came back to him. She lived with him three weeks, and again left him. Gannon went to the house where his wife was staying, and, after some conversation with her, pulled a pistol from his pocket, placed it against his wife's breast and fired. She died almost instantly. Gannon was arrested after a brief chase, and lodged in jail.

—Stephen Hood, a negro, has been arrested at Cleveland, for the murder of his adopted son, a boy about twelve years of age, named Greenberrie. Hood took his nephew and adopted son and told them he was going hunting. After getting into the woods he sent his nephew away to get some liquor. The boy, unable to find a saloon, returned to find his uncle alone. He asked where his cousin was and was told that he was lost. The boy reported this to Mrs. Hood, who informed the police. They, after searching about the place where Greenberri was last seen, found his body buried about a foot underground. The only mark of violence on the body was a dent on the right temple, as if made by a club.

—We have just heard of the attempt, made by a negro boy, to murder a child by burying it alive, in the bottom oposite this place one day last week. It appears that the boy had for spite against its parents taken the child and put it in a hole and then covered it up, all but its feet, when the family discovered him and started to see what he was doing. The young demon then took an ax and threatened to kill any one who should intefere with him, but the courageous mother of the child succeeded in getting to the spot and dragging the body from the ground in time to bring back the life that had been nearly crushed out of existence. The negro made his escape in a skiff which he stole at the landing, and has not been heard from since.—*Washington (Mo.) Observer.*

School and Church.

—Over 1,300 persons in Geneva have joined the Liberal Catholic order under the lead of Pere Hyacinthe.

—Miss Jennie McKinstry, of Mattoon, is a candidate for Superintendent of Public Schools in Coles County, Ill.

—Mrs. Susan Willis, of Charlestown, Mass., has contributed $100,000 to the relief of the indebtedness of Carleton College, Minnesota.

—The experiment recently made in Ohio of placing women at the head of all the schools below the high schools is pronounced a decided success.

—There are eighty-three women in the University of Ann Arbor—forty-two in the literary department, thirty-seven in the medical, and four in the law.

—Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, of Elmira, N. Y., announces that he will preach Sunday afternoons at Eldridge Park, a beautiful resort two miles from the city, and that the choir is to consist of a popular brass band, engaged for the special purpose of playing psalm tunes on the occasion.

—Miss Clara M. Babcock, daughter of the pastor of the Warren Street Unitarian Chapel, Boston, has passed through a regular course of study in the Divinity School of Harvard College, and occupied her father's pulpit on a recent Sunday, both morning and afternoon. She intends to study a year in Germany before entering upon the active work of the ministry.

—Rev. Clarence Fowler, pastor of the Unitarian church in Laconia, N. H., having been taken suddenly sick one Sabbath morning lately, his wife occupied the platform and conducted the services in his place. The local paper says: "No one was aware of the change until she took her place and announced it. She conducted herself with the modesty of a blushing school girl combined with the ease and dignity of a pulpit veteran."

Personal and Literary.

—Mr. and Mrs. Olive Logan sail for France in August, and mean to stay there two or three years.

—Paul Morphy, it is said, will go to the Vienna Exposition to enter the chess contest for the $2,000 prize.

—Dr. Mary Walker was arrested in Baltimore the other day for appearing in man's clothes, but was soon released.

—The statue of William H. Seward to be erected in Central Park, New York, will be in a sitting posture, and sixteen and one-half feet high.

—The London lady whom Joaquin Miller is to marry is Miss Hardy, the novelist, and daughter of Sir Thomas D. Hardy, long employed in the office of the Master of the Rolls, and himself a learned historiographer.

—Mr. George Francis Train is laid up at Hamburg in Germany with chills and fever contracted while imprisoned in the Tombs. He has been confined to his bedroom there for weeks and his condition is represented as precarious.

—The old Walworth mansion in Saratoga has a deserted look, being occupied only by Mrs. Chancellor Walworth, the aged grandmother of Frank. She is eighty years old. Her hair is silvered, but she is still a fine-looking woman.

—Mr. A. T. Stewart is accompanied on his trip to Europe by his physician, Dr. Mercy, of Fifth avenue; but his journey is for recreation, rather than health. He will visit Paris, London, Switzerland, and Italy, and perhaps inspect the Vienna Exposition.

—At the funeral of Mrs. Utica V. Claflin Booker, a sister of Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull, in New York, there was no display, no crape, no indication of death about the house. The corpse was attired in a pink wrapper, with lace encircling the neck and wrists, and was quietly buried without any of the usual "hollow mockery attending display funerals."

Odds and Ends.

—The way to forget all common miseries—Wear tight boots.

—A ton of hay sells in Buffalo for twice as much as a ton of corn.

—Lots of New York school girls haunt the Tombs to get a sight of Stokes.

—Buttermilk is sold at restaurants in Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit and other places.

—*Judy* judiciously distinguishes between the falsetto voice and a false-set-o'teeth.

—A Chicago attorney, well "versed" in the law, has filed a bill for divorce in rhyme.

—A small boy has gravely asked this question, "Pa, does heartburn mean sick after your girl?"

—Some strange disease is said to be taking off horses in Florida. They call it thieves in Texas, and apply hemp.

—The success of the balloon experiment, now on the carpet, will prove whether or not it is Wise to cross the Atlantic.

—A Saratoga belle fainted away three times on learning that her little poodle dog had been run over and killed.

—A New York man has witnessed the death of three swans, and he says that none of them sang before they died.

—Hartford claims to have $12,000,000 invested in manufacturing enterprises, besides upward of $1,000,000 in banking and insurance.

—The Hartford insurance companies have contributed $28,000 toward the $100,000 for the detection and punishment of incendiaries.

—At last a milk-and-water man has been found and fined. His name was Holt, he lived in Boston, and $200 was the penalty for swindling his customers.

—New Jersey people don't say "liar" right out, but remark: "Sir, you remind me of my lamented brother, who could pervert truth with the greatest of ease."

—It is believed that the compass of the City of Washington was affected by the steel on board. The power of steal compasses the destruction of too many things now-a-days.—*Graphic.*

—The market is very well supplied with berries. The new worm that comes with them this year is rather acid in flavor, and not altogether unpleasant.—*Danbury News.*

—A frontier correspondent who saw Captain Jack after his capture, writes that, in his opinion, the Modoc Chief's appearance would have been vastly improved if he had been washed before he was ironed.

—The *Enterprise*, a Minnesota paper, was sued for five thousand dollars damages, and the jury returned a verdict of seven cents. The plaintiff then tried to whip the defendant and was half killed.

Foreign Items.

—The wine served at the dinner of the Shah with the Prince of Wales dated back to 1660.

—England is beginning to be alarmed at the rate of emigration among her farmers. They prefer to crop out.

—It is stated that the Queen has given her consent to the marriage of Prince Alfred and the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrowna.

—While the Shah was in England, by express command several noted prize-fighters appeared before him in Buckingham Palace and exhibited their skill. He was delighted and the Queen disgusted.

—A St. Petersburg letter says four hundred and fifty German residents of Russia have left in a body for the United States, because the government declared them liable to enforcement in the military service.

—The Prince Imperial will go to Chiselhurst the 15th of August to receive the Bonapartists To make more evident his assumption of the position of head of the family, the Empress will go to Scotland to leave him alone. The Chiselhurst circle is extremely active in distributing memorial photographs of the Emperor throughout France.

—Glass bonnets are among the novelties of the Vienna Exposition. These articles come from Bohemia, and specimens have been sent to Paris and London, and some also to this country, in the hope that they will become popular, and be "all the fashion" next fall. The hat is described as made of loose pieces of glass fastened closely together by a gutta-percha band, which allows it to conform to the head. Inside there is a lining of silk, and the trimmings are various. Birds and flowers are chiefly used for ornamentation, colored so naturally that in appearance they are far superior to the usual artificial goods. A bonnet of glass weighs but a few ounces, only a very small quantity being used in its construction. Of course they are very durable, rain will not spot them, and the cost is said to be small.

Ingenuity of an Insane Man.

The Lancaster (Pa.) *Express* relates the following in giving an account of an attempted escape of an insane man: "In the insane department of the Lancaster County Hospital there is confined a man named John Eichburne. He is not dangerous, but is not safe to be let at large. A short time since he managed to scale the yard wall, fourteen feet in height, but was shortly afterward captured. Yesterday evening one of the assistants, in making a tour of the yard, discovered hid under a pile of stones in a corner a singular-looking ball, which he took to Superintendent Cox. On examination it was found that this ball was made up of a rope, something thicker than broom twine, and that the material used in making it were the leaves of peach trees, with which the yard is studded, the bark of the small limbs and some grass. The rope when unwound is nearly 300 feet in length, when in a ball it is as large as a twenty-four pound round shot. It is so tough that the strongest hands cannot tear it apart. The man must have been working upon it for several weeks, his object being to escape from the institution by its aid."

Capture and Robbery of a Railway Train—A Villainous Affair.

We copy the following from the Davenport (Iowa) *Gazette* of July 23:

The wrecking of the C., R. I. & P. Railroad train near Adair, the murder of the engineer and the robbery of the safe, news of which was given the public in yesterday morning's *Gazette*, formed the principal topic of conversation everywhere in the city yesterday, and we doubt not, throughout the country. The arrival of the train which encountered the robbers was anxiously awaited. It was due at 7 a. m., but did not reach the Perry street depot until half-past three o'clock in the afternoon. It had box cars for baggage-cars, while the coaches were the ones which came so near being smashed in the wreck. One coach was devoted to forty Chinese youth, sons of Celestial lords, who were on their way to Springfield, Mass., of whom more in another place. A crowd at the depot awaited the train, every person on the great platform being anxious to see Express Messenger Burgess or to interview some passenger who saw the robbers. The fact was, there were but two gentlemen on the train who came in personal contact with the robbers, and they were Mr. O. P. Killingsworth and Mr. Matthew Claire, both of Omaha—the former being mail register clerk, and the latter agent of the C., R. I. & P., at Omaha, who were accompanying the Chinese to Chicago.

Mr. Killingsworth's account of the affair to our reporter was very interesting.

To begin with, he said that the "express run" that night from Omaha was very light, owing to the fact that there had been a Saturday night and Sunday night run from Omaha on the C., R. I. & P., else the amount in the safe would have been large. To be sure there were three tons of bullion—gold and silver bricks—on the floor of the car, stuff that was hardly portable except by dray. Well, the train left the Bluffs on time, and was making splendid time when the stoppage occurred. At that time the parties in the express car were Assistant Superintendent Royce, Albert Fick, baggage master, and Messrs. Killingsworth, Burgess and Claire. The train had passed Anita, and was within three miles of Adair, when there was a sudden and slight slack of speed, and the report of fire-arms outside arrested their attention. Mr. K. says it sounded amid the rumbling of the train much like a package of fire-crackers. Bullets pattered about Mr. Royce, and one grazed the side of Fick's head. In a moment more there was a violent concussion, the express car was lifted at one end, turned around, shoved forward, and then careened at an angle of forty-five degrees, and stopped its maneuvers. It did not fall completely upon its lower side. Of course packages went pounding to the lower side of the car, and the inmates were considerably knocked about and shaken up. They had hardly recovered their uprightness when into the door on the lower side—the one on the upper being shut—sprang a man with a revolver in each hand, and a mask on his face; he was the leader of the robbers, as was ascertained afterwards. No sooner had he entered than he tore the mask from his face. He was above medium height, was well built, red-faced, sandy-haired, and had a vicious coutenance. He was dressed like a laborer, wearing blue linen pants and coat of thin material. No sooner had he entered the car than two other fellows in masks appeared at the door with a revolver in each hand, which they leveled at the heads of the inmates. The scoundrel in the car did all the talking, and he commenced as soon as he was in—shouting at the top of his voice, "Give us those keys," (an oath) "give us those keys or I'll blow your brains out! Give us the money" (another oath). "Where's them safe keys—quick" (another oath), or some of you'll get killed!" At the same time he pointed his pistol close to the heads of the astonished listeners. "Where's the bullion—give us the bullion." Then he shouted to his men: "Rush in and help! Come on!—rush in and help!"

Some one told Burgess to give the scoundrel the safe key, and he did so. The fellow unlocked the safe, the men at the door telling the inmates that if they stirred they would shoot their heads off. The chief robber seized a sachel belonging to Burgess and crammed the safe packages into it, and as he did so he said, "Here isn't half as much as we want—where's that bullion, give us that bullion!" By this time he was on his feet. Mr. Killingsworth pointed to the bullion on the floor, saying "There it is under your feet!" The robber replied, "We don't want them things—give us the bullion" (an oath) "or we'll blow your brains out!" Then he appeared to forget all about the bullion, and asked if there was any money in the mail-bags. "No, not a cent," replied the agent. Then the fellow put the revolver close to Mr. K.'s head, as he had before to Mr. Burgess', and said, "Hand out your knife" (an oath) "quick." Mr. K. surrendered his knife. Then the robber picked up a mail sack: "That's for Chicago, is it?" "Yes." "Is there any money in it?" "No." He dropped that sack, picked up another one, threw it down and asked, "Where's the other safe —haven't got half enough money yet—where's the other safe?" Burgess replied there was no other safe. The man was an ignoramus—at least about bullion. He supposed it was coin and that there were bags full of gold in the safe. He didn't believe that the gold bars and silver bricks on the floor of the car were anything better than lead.

At last the bold villain thought it time for him to leave. So he picked up Mr. K's satchel, containing register books, a package of letters, and a few private articles, and bade the whole five to get out before him, at the same time pointing his revolver at two of them and telling the men at the door to keep sharp watch. Out the five gentlemen walked, and then for the first time got a view of the wreck. The chief directed them around the place where the engine lay, at the same time expressing the hope that nobody was killed—they didn't want to kill anybody, all they wanted was money! He asked if anybody was killed—and just then Burgess saw the engineer sitting between the engine and tender, both on their sides. He went up to him, found that he was dead, and told Mr. Royce so. The head robber expressed sorrow, and really spoke as if he meant it, and repeated his remark that they didn't intend to hurt anybody.

Then all the robbers went off toward their horses, which were hitched about a hundred yards south of the track, and, mounting them, rode away toward the southwest. They did not run to their horses, but walked in a deliberate manner, and went across the country just as deliberately.

The above includes all the main features of Mr. K.'s statement. He said the "whole thing did not last more than five minutes," and in fact, no person had time to recover from his astonishment before the robbers were gone. It seemed incredible to him that so much should have been said and done in so short a time.

After Superintendent Royce and the rest had been released from surveillance, they had opportunity to view the situation. The robbers had chosen a good place for their deed—and this and the way in which they ditched the engine, were the only evidence of smartness they gave. The locality was one of the most lonely on the whole line, and the place of operation was in a cut with the banks fifteen feet high on either side, and was at the rounding of a curve, too. The way they managed to throw the engine was to unspike a rail, and remove a fishplate at one end, and when the engine was within a few yards of the place the rail was pulled towards the other side of the track—and thus the engine would fall from, instead of toward the scoundrels, who held the rope and were concealed among the weeds in a ditch. The engineer had slackened speed a little on the curve, but was still going at the rate of nearly twenty miles an hour. The engine and tender turned over into the ditch, the front baggage car turned nearly across the track with one end up the embankment, while the express car went crashing against the baggage car, and then veered for the embankment, left the track and turned on one side, as described above. The passenger coaches did not leave the track; the forward trucks of the advance coach went off, and that was all.

Now we come to the other doings of the robbers—we mean the pranks of the chaps in regard to the train generally. The passengers—there were three coaches of them—heard the firing and shouts of the robbers and then, with the noise of the crash in front, were all brought standing, and thrown about generally by the smash-up ahead. The Chinese all lay down flat on the floor, and were in that position when Mr. Claire went to them. Some of the passengers, after the train stopped, put their heads out of the windows, and the scoundrels on the sides of the cut fired down and told them to stay in or they'd shoot. Several stepped out upon the platforms and were told to get back. Not liking the looks of the revolvers leveled at them, they obeyed. A few got off at the rear, and started to run away, but the robbers called to them to come back, saying, "We don't want to hurt you," and the passengers returned and were told to get into the car quick, which they did.

There was one plucky old gent, who got off the rear platform of his car and started toward the engine; a robber told him to go back; he told the robber to go to regions below, called him a damnable scoundrel, and cried to the passengers to "come out and go for the villains, and not let them rob the whole train." But nobody was infected by the old man's heroic conduct, and he stood and vented his indignation at the villain on the bank.

The firing was almost constant from its opening until the leader gave the call to put for the horses. The fellows on the banks kept firing down the embankment, without taking aim at anything. The passengers told Mr. Killingsworth that one chap was drunk, and fired "with wabbling arms," as they expressed it. No bullet holes were found in the coaches, nor their windows.

After the smash-up, and the robbers had gone, there was a general out-pouring of passengers. Some of the ladies, who had been frantic with terror, came out pale as ghosts and still trembling—and several of them wept like children when they heard of the death of the engineer and the manner in which he stood at his post.

Gold watches seemed to be no object to the robber chief. There were four of them in the express car, with costly chains attached, on the persons of the inmates, but he took no notice of them. "Bullion" was what he wanted.

The pursuit of the robbers was carried out yesterday according to the plans telegraphed by Superintendent Kimball on Monday night. It is probable that not less than five hundred men, a large number being mounted, were on the hunt for the scoundrels, yesterday. Up to a late hour last night no intelligence of the capture of any of them had been received.

Lord Gordon Gordon.

Gordon Gordon is probably not a lord in fact. His resonant and reverberating name does not appear at all in the British book of heraldry. He encourages the designation of Milord; but when asked in the New York court who his father was, he replied, "Wall, really, gentlemen, d'ye know I haven't any ideah; I never thought it worth while to inquiah."

"Lord" Gordon came to Minnesota in 1870, direct from Scotland, where he was very much wanted; and his first move was to deposit $20,000 with Mr. Westfall, banker, of this city. "Don't want any interest," he said, in answer to a question, "this is just a little pin money I happen to have with me, you know, and a few thousand in interest money is nothing to me, you know. I want a trusty friend; I like you, Mr. Westfall, and I want you to keep this trifle, really, you see, instead of carrying it around in my pockets. I shall send to London for some money soon—a million or so. Would show you credentials, you know, but men of honor," with a lofty wave of his hand "do not descend to such things." So he came among us and deposited his pin money with Banker Westfall. Of course his lordly generosity was whispered about; how he didn't really make anything at all of being a lord, and how he refused to consider the bagatelle of interest money in a city where a loan of greenbacks brought one per cent. a month. Then he slyly laid his plans for a "haul."

Gordon bears a close resemblance to Sothern as *Dundreary*—a smallish face; dark curly hair; no moustache; heavy "mutton chop" side whiskers; a small nose, *retrousse;* a man of medium size, who gives the impression of always commanding himself. In acquirements and power of execution he seems to be a sort of Count of Monte Christo—a good judge of men, and a supreme master of "contingencies." He has a wonderful range of languages, and also of language, from the lowest billingsgate to the most elegant and flowery flights, from indecency, obscenity, and profanity to the highest reaches of sentiment and philosophy. He has a sharply contradictory character in all respects. At times in business he is cool and far-sighted, striking right to the center of the mark, and again he is puerile as a school boy; sometimes resolute and strong, and again weak and vacillating; sometimes serious, and again volatile. The only element of character in which he is consistent is his entire lack of positive conviction. He was generally polite and even courteous during his short life in Minnesota, but he seemed to have no more moral purpose than a faun or a Yucatan ape.

He had been in Minnesota only a few weeks when it was whispered around that he was planning a purchase on a grand scale of lands along the Northern Pacific road for a colony of poor Scotch immigrants. The land officers of the road interviewed him. "Yes," he said, "I do covet a few thousand acres of your beautiful lands; not for myself—I have more than enough for the remnant of my poor life; but for me beloved sister, for the gratification of her benevolence. She would like to preseent to some of my old tenants lands in your free republic where they may rear their families in peace and plenty; and to gratify my beautiful sister, I would like to buy a few thousand acres—not many thousand, you know—say—say—say, about fifty thousand acres or so—just a little for my poor people."

Then there was a buzz! The office of the Northern Pacific was agitated. Here was a Lord—a Lord—who spurned interest money—and he wanted a little bit of land—fifty thousand acres, for benevolent purposes! He would like to inspect it, of course, before purchasing. So they equipped a caravan and led him promptly forth. It was the last of August when the princely retinue started—from St. Paul to the Northern Pacific, under command of Col. Loomis, the deviser and commander of the excursion. Can the glories of that caravan be told? It was equipped for a Lord. There were half a dozen teams with a carriage for Milord, besides the omnibuses, ambulances, etc. There were twelve men to do the manual labor, with a French cook and darkey waiters in linen aprons and white silk gloves, and the royal table was unloaded from the baggage wagons at every meal, and set out with fresh napkins, silver plate and china—unhappily chinaware without the Gordon arms.

Ah, it was gorgeous! Every luxury that the markets of Chicago, St. Paul, and Minneapolis could produce was there; and all the game of the boundless prairie, from woodcock to buffalo. Champagne three times a day. For this creature was a Lord, you see—a Lord as lofty and unmindful of expense as Harold Skimpole. When the caravan had skirted Oak Lake, Milord wanted to see Fergus Falls, and when it had done Fergus Falls, he longed for Morehead, and when it had digested Morehead, he yearned to visit the glimpses of the moon beyond the Red River. So on, and on, the deluded Loomis pressed, ever rowelling the sable waiters, ever cajoling and reproaching the French cook, ever perspiring between anticipation and apprehension, and sending relays of messengers for more potted grouse, more cranberry jelly and more champagne. Meantime he studied the sphinx Milord, and concluded that he was a queer cross between the lofty and the lowly; he was half lord and half lackey; perhaps his father was an English Earl and his mother an Irish chambermaid. In November they came back, half frozen. Milord had selected his fifty thousand acres in Otter Tail and Beaver counties. The Northern Pacific Railroad Company footed the bills —$15,000 for two months!

The absurd farce was at an end. Milord Gordon did not buy the land for his poor tenants, and he never again mentioned his benevolent sister to anybody!—*Minneapolis Tribune.*

Glimpses of Ghost-Land.

It is no longer the fashion to scoff at tales of the supernatural. On the contrary there is a growing tendency to investigate subjects which were formerly pooh-poohed by most persons claiming to be well informed and capable of reasoning. It is, however, without propounding any theory or advancing any opinion that I record a few instances of apparently supernatural, or at least inexplicable, occurrences. I can vouch for the truth of nearly all the stories I am about to relate, one of them only not being either my personal experience or narrated to me by some one of the actors in the scene.

My first story shall be one that was told to me by an aged lady who was one of the friends of my youth, and who often mentioned this strange incident of her placid, yet busy life. She was a sensible, practical woman, the last person in the world likely to be led astray by an overheated imagination or deceived by hallucinations. Her early youth had been passed in the country, her father being a wealthy farmer. She had formed a close intimacy with the daughter of a gentleman living at some distance from her father's farm, and the two were seldom apart. An invitation given to my friend (whom I shall call Mrs. L——) to visit some relatives in a neighboring city caused a brief separation between the two girls, and they parted with many protestations of enduring affection. On the day appointed for Mrs. L——'s return she set out at the prescribed hour. The latter part of her journey was to be performed on horseback. On a bright sunny afternoon in June she found herself, about five o'clock, drawing near her father's house. Suddenly in the broad road before her she perceived a female form walking rapidly toward her, and, to her delight, recognized her friend coming, as she thought, to meet her.

"I will make her go back with me and take tea," was Mrs. L——'s thought as she whipped up her horse in her haste to greet the dear one, who was all the more beloved on account of their temporary separation. But as she approached the figure, and before she had had time to speak, or indeed do more than notice that her friend looked very pale and ill, her horse, an unusually quiet, steady animal, seemed struck with sudden terror, reared, shied, and finally plunged into a hollow by the roadside, from which she had some difficulty in extricating him. When she did succeed in bring him back to the level road she found, to her astonishment, that the young girl had disappeared. Around her lay the open fields, before her and behind her the road—all in the bright luster of the summer afternoon—but no trace of the figure could she see. Completely mystified, she hastened home, there to learn that her friend had died suddenly that very morning.

I once knew a young lady who, on going to pay a visit to a friend who had recently moved into a new house, was asked to walk up stairs, and on complying saw an old woman preceding her up the staircase. Supposing her to be one of the servants, she took but little notice of her, though struck by the peculiarity of her gait, a sort of jerky limp, as though one leg was shorter than the other. In the course of conversation with her friend she mentioned the old woman, and asked if she was the housekeeper. "Housekeeper? no," said the lady: "we have no such person about our house. You must have been mistaken." The visitor then described the person she had seen, and when she mentioned the peculiar limp her hostess seemed startled. After a pause she said: "No such person lives here *now*, but the woman who took care of his house before we rented it was exactly such a person as you describe, and was lame in just such a manner. But she died here about six weeks ago—I think in this very room—so your eyes must certainly have deceived you." The lady still persisted that she had seen the old woman; so the servants were called and the house thoroughly searched, but no intruder was discovered.

I have known several persons who have seen the "fetch" or apparition of a living person, called in Germany the "Doppelganger;" yet, though such appearances are usually supposed to portend the death or illness of the person thus strangely "doubled," I have never yet heard of a case where any unpleasant consequences followed. For instance, an old friend of mine, a gentleman of undoubted veracity, once told me that on one occasion he entered his house about five o'clock in the afternoon, and ran up-stairs to his mother's bed-chamber, where he saw her standing near the center of the room, clad in a loose white gown and engaged in combing out her long black hair. He remained looking at her for some moments, expecting that she would speak to him, but she did not take notice in any way of his presence, and neither spoke nor looked at him. He then addressed her, but, receiving no reply, became indignant and went down-stairs, where, to his amazement, he found his mother seated by the window, and dressed as usual. It was some years before he would trust himself to tell her of what he had seen, fearing that she might consider it an omen of approaching death, and indeed, though not a superstitious man, he was inclined to so view it himself; but his mother lived for many years after the appearance of her wraith.

I also knew a young gentleman to whom the unpleasant experience of beholding his own double was once vouchsafed. He had been spending a quiet evening with some young ladies, and returned home about eleven o'clock, let himself into the house with his latch-key and proceeded to his own room, where he found the gas already lighted, though turned down to a mere blue spark. He turned it up, and the full light of the jet shone on his bed, which stood just beside the burner, and there extended at full length, lay—himself. His first idea was of a burglar or some such intruder. But his second glance dispelled that impression. He stood for some moments gazing at the prostrate figure with feelings which must have been anything but agreeable; he noticed little peculiarities of his own dress and features, and marked the closed eyelids and easy respiration of slumber. At length, plucking up courage, he attempted to pass his hand under the pillow to draw out a small revolver which he usually kept there, and as he did so he felt the pressure of the pillow as though weighed down by a reclining head. This completely unnerved him. He went out of the room, locked the door on the outside, and spent the remainder of the night on a sofa in the parlor He did not re-enter his chamber till broad daylight, when to his delight he found that his ghostly visitor had vanished.—*Lucy Hooper, in Lippincott's for August.*

Lions and their Habits.

The public must feel some difficulty in forming a true estimate of the prowess of the African lion from the number of conflicting statements made by different travelers and hunters. The truth appears to be that, while each one has formed an opinion from the behavior of the particular animals they chanced to meet with, the fact that every single lion differs from another in temper and disposition has been allowed to drop out of sight. That some lions will make a point of attacking any human being they see without the slightest provocation, admits of no doubt, while it is at least equally certain that there are others that can hardly be forced to retaliate, and which, even when wounded, will always rather run than fight.

In most cases utter immobility and coolness will often avert an attack. If the animal, judging by your behavior, imagines that you do not want to hurt it, it will, after trying you for several minutes, and even making one or two sham charges, often walk away and allow you to do the same; but merely raising the arm, much less pointing the gun at it, is sure to make it come on. One or two instances of this occur to me. A large native hunting party had gone out, and were scattered over the thorns. One of my gun-bearers, who had gone with it, suddenly found himself face to face with a full-grown male lion, without a yard between them. He had presence of mind enough to stand perfectly still, without even attempting to take one of the spears he carried in his left hand into the other. After a couple of minutes the brute walked away, turning its head round every second to watch him. Before going far it met another man, who raised his spear, as if to throw it. It instantly sprang on him, and inflicted such wounds that he died within half an hour. I have no doubt that if this man also had stood still, he would have been perfectly safe. Again, a hunter of mine was following buffalo tracks into a thicket; suddenly a male lion rose out of one of them and snarled at him; he had hardly seen it when another, about three-quarters grown, showed itself a little on one side, and from behind he heard the low growling of a third. Partly turning, so as to watch them all, he saw the latter was a lioness; and that three cubs, not much larger than cats, were following their mother, one of them running toward him without showing the least fear. He had, unawares got into the center of a lion family. The lioness, in fear for her offspring, rushed up, and, as he afterward described it, fairly danced round and round him, springing to within a yard of him, sideways, backward, and every way but on him. In this case, also, he stood still without any movement, for, as he said, it was a hundred to one he did not kill the mother; and suppose he had, the other two would have soon avenged her. It ended by their ultimately retiring into the thicket, and watching him as he cleared out. Had he been nervous, or done anything but remain quiet, there is no doubt he would not have come out alive.

I lived for many years among these animals, and their very name recalls innumerable recollections and anecdotes.

Perhaps the most beautiful sight I ever saw in connection with them, was on a morning I had gone out to hunt with one bearer at dawn. I had not gone far from camp, and my gun was still unloaded, while I was examining some buffalo-spoor, when, on looking up, I saw my gun-bearer, who had my cartridges, running away at full speed. Knowing he must have seen something to frighten him so, I did not shout, but went to where he had been standing, a few yards ahead, and there, sure enough, not twenty yards off, were a pair of lions; the lioness rolling on its back, and striking out at the male's head with its fore-paws like a kitten while he stood majestically above her. I stopped a moment to watch them, and it was well worth it, and then rushed off after my Kaffre to load. The position was good, and I might have killed one to a certainty, but when I had succeeded in getting him down from the top of a big tree, and went back, they had gone. I suppose they must have got our wind. No doubt they had been hunting all night, and had been down to the river to drink preparatory to going to bed.

I do not think the lion deserves his title of king of beasts, though perhaps he is the most notable looking. Elephants are decidedly more sagacious, and the black rhinoceros is certainly more dangerous, and either of the two could kill him in a few moments, with but little danger to themselves. Indeed, he cannot manage an old buffalo-bull, unless he takes it by surprise.

Their favorite food is buffalo and zebra, preferably the latter, though they generally go after the former, as they are more easily stalked from frequenting the thicker parts of the jungle.

Sometimes, when attracted by meat, they will come and roar all night within a few yards of the camp, and cases have occurred when they have attacked it. I remember one man, a European, who had to spend the night in a tree watching the male lion which had sprung into the camp and seized a piece of meat, kindly taking no notice of the terrified scramble he caused, and which, after roaring for a little, was joined by two lionesses, the three proceeding to eat all the buffalo meat in stock, one always keeping guard while the other two went to water.

This is a habit of theirs when they have killed anything, to protect it from vultures, wolves, and jackals, which, if not prevented, would pick the bones clean in a few minutes.

I know a Dutch hunter, a very powerful man, who was once sleeping out near the Nkwavuma. He had been unsuccessfully pursuing game all day, and had made no camp-fence or other protection, as he had got no meat with him. During the night he was awoke by something catching hold of his arm. Thinking it was a wolf, he made a tremendous effort to free himself, striking out at it with the disengaged arm. The blow was such that if it did not knock the animal down, it at any rate drove it back, and enabled him to snatch up his rifle and fire. The lion, as to his astonishment it turned out to be, jumped away roaring, and next morning was found dead a few yards off.

They are excessively fond of eating buffalo and other game, killed too late in the day to be broken up, and, even when the hunters are sleeping by it, they will come almost within the glare of the fire, and tear and crunch away, taking no notice of shots or stones, but an occasional growl, unless hit, when they are pretty certain to make one spring into the center of the camp and do all the mischief they can. *Apropos* of this, I remember hearing of a very plucky thing done by a native hunter of a friend of mine. He had killed a buffalo and was sleeping out by it alone, and during the night heard crunching going on that only a lion's powerful jaw could produce. He got up, and by the dim light of a third-quarter moon could just make out the outlines of two lions, about twenty yards off. He took a steady aim—he only had a single-barrel—and fired at the nearest, which made a bound upward and fell dead. The other took no notice, and after a minute resumed its meal, upon which he quietly loaded and shot it dead on the spot. It showed great pluck, for alone in the dark with two lions, and only one shot to trust to, is anything but a pleasant position.

Sometimes I have heard the most extraordinary concerts going on round game the lions were feeding on, wolves, hyenas and jackals keeping up a continual round of howling, squealing, and laughing, which, being interpreted, meant, I suppose, that they were very hungry and wished the lions would clear out and let them begin. It is by no means unusual to find a wolf or jackal lying dead, punished on the spot for daring to approach too near the bigger robber's supper, and I have often seen the spoor of where a lion had chased wolves several hundred yards away from his prey.

Much has been written about their roar, and I must confess to having been disappointed in it at first; but after a time I discovered that, though it has no resemblance to thunder or anything of that sort, it really is a very awe-inspiring sound. It commences by a low booming growl, repeated two or three times, and increasing in loudness until it becomes a roar that fills the air, and then dies away again in a low muttering. Lions coming from different directions will often keep it up for half an hour answering one another, and it shows how the animal is dreaded, that the moment it is heard near camp there is a dead silence. More wood is hastily heaped on the fire, and all the natives uneasily shift their positions, and take up their guns and spears. More than once I have lost a night's sleep by a serenade of this description, the lions being hungry, smelling our meat, and keeping growling about close to until dawn. The low, warning moan uttered by them, if you approach too near a thicket where they are concealed, is a most unpleasant noise, and, when I first heard it, I almost mistook it for the moan of some large animal in pain; but it invariably means that the lion is in a bad temper, and you had better not go too close.

The danger, if you do come to close quarters with them, can hardly be exaggerated. There are cases where single-handed, and armed only with a spear, a native has succeeded in killing one that has sprung on him, without receiving anything but trifling injuries; but these are only exceptions that prove the rule that where they strike they kill. Unlike other large game, they divide their attentions equally, springing from one to another, and fighting with tooth and claw in the most wonderful manner. It is a grand sight to see one charge a native regiment sent out after it, as they sometimes are, springing over the heads of the first line right into the center, flying about knocking men down with every blow, until a complete seive of assigai-wounds, it dies fighting.

They generally lie in the kaku-thorns, or in the dense evergreens which line the rivers, and in the summer in the reeds. The best chances for killing them are obtained in the former place, as you often come across them asleep when you are stealing about after game. It is better not to fire if its head is toward you, as, even if you shoot it through the brain, its dying bound may land it on top of you; but if you see one, go round, and try to get a shot at its back—they always lie on their side—and then there is a good chance at the head or heart, with a possibility of breaking the backbone. Sometimes the bush is too thick for you to go round, and in that case hide, and break a twig, or give a low whistle, and it will get up, uncertain what has disturbed it, and give every opportunity for a steady shot.

Sometimes one meets them in bad places, where it would be very dangerous to fire if alone, when, if seen, it is best to stand one's ground, not attempting to make any offensive movement, and *not to kneel down*; for some reason, probably because they themselves always crouch preparatory to attack, lions will rarely stand this if in anything of an ugly temper. When you do fire try for the shoulder, or, if a very crack shot, and not at all nervous, the brain; do not aim too high, as the forehead is perfectly flat, and a ball is apt to glance. With a male, in firing at the shoulder, take care the floating mane which covers it does not cause you to aim too high, as, when the brute is angry and bristles up, it makes it seem a much larger mark than it really is.

When you have to take refuge in a tree, go up as far as you can get, for if none of its bones are broken the lion will generally have a try at you, though, if the branches are thick, there is little danger even within its distance.

In a case where a few seconds' delay may save your life, it is worth while to know that any thing thrown down—a hat, coat, etc.—will first be torn up with a crunch of the teeth or a blow of the paw before your pursuer resumes the chase. It has, to my own knowledge, saved more than one man at a pinch.—"D.," *in Land and Water.*

Activity of the Mind in Sleep.

Undoubted proof has been afforded that the energy of the intellect is often greater during sleep than at other times, and many a problem, it is asserted, has been solved in sleep which has puzzled the waking senses. Cabanis tells us that Franklin on several occasions mentioned to him that he had been assisted in dreams in the conduct of many affairs in which he was engaged. Condillac states that while writing his course of studies he was frequently obliged to leave a chapter incomplete, and retired to bed, and that on waking he found it, on more than one occasion, finished in his head.

In like manner Condorcet would sometimes leave his complicated calculations unfinished, and, after retiring to rest would find their results unfolded to him in his dreams. La Fontaine and Voltaire both composed verses in their sleep, which they would repeat on waking. Dr. Johnson relates that he once, in a dream, had a contest of wit with some other person, and that he was very much mortified by imagining that his antagonist had the better of him. Coleridge in a dream composed the wild and beautiful poem of "Kubla Khan," which had been suggested to him by a passage he had read in "Purchas's Pilgrimage" before he fell asleep. On awaking he had a distinct recollection of between two and three hundred lines, and taking writing materials, began early to set them down. Unfortunately he was interrupted before a quarter of the task was done—was called away to attend to some business which detained him an hour—and found, when he had returned to his writing, that the remainder had vanished from his memory. The most remarkable testimony of this kind is perhaps that of Sir Thomas Browne, who declared that, if it were possible, he would prefer to carry on his studies in his dreams, so much more efficient were his faculties of mind when his body was asleep. He further adds, that were his memory as faithful as his reason was then fruitful, he would prefer that season for his devotion.

Moravian Customs in their Cemeteries.

A letter from Salem, N. C., to the Richmond *Enquirer* gives the following: In the Moravian cemetery, in Salem, they separate and classify their dead—male infant from female; the old from the young; the married from the unmarried. They won't bury the husband by his wife. The dead are all placed on an equality. The tombstones are all alike, being small blocks of marble a foot square, that they place at the head of the grave. No different tombstone is allowed. Neither can you find a single epitaph. Some of the graves are over one hundred years old. One, a negro's, reads: "Abraham Niger, Guinea, died April 12, 1770." On Easter mornings, soon after midnight, the Moravians get up and march to the cemetery with a band of music in front, and the procession tapered off from the youngest to the oldest person, who brings up the rear. They remain in the cemetery playing music and conducting services until morning. It is said they go there to see the dead rise. When a Moravian dies in Salem, instead of tolling the bells, they announce the death with a band of music in the church belfry. They have three different tunes; one for the old, one for the young, and one for the married. An old inhabitant's death is blown out soft and solemn with lengthened notes.

—This comes from Boston: "Straws tell which way the wind blows. On Tuesday, when the wind was southwest, about seven hundred straws were used up in one of our first-class saloons; but yesterday, at the same place, when the wind was east, only about one-tenth that number found their way into sparkling cobblers."