A LEGEND.

There went a widow woman from the outskirts of
the city,
Whose lonely sorrow might have moved the stones
she trod to pity.

She wandered, weeping through the fields, by God
and man forsaken,
Still calling on a little child the reaper Death had
taken.

When, lo! upon a day she met a white-robed train
advancing,
And brightly on their golden heads their golden
crowns were glancing.

Child Jesus led a happy band of little ones a-Maying,
With flowers of spring and gems of dew, all innocently playing.

Far from the rest the widow sees, and flies to clasp
her treasure;
"What ails thee, darling, that thou must not take
with these thy pleasure?"

"Oh, mother! little mother mine, behind the rest I
tarry,
For see, how heavy with your tears the pitcher I
must carry.

"If you had ceased to weep for me, when Jesus went
a-Maying,
I should have been amongst the bleet, with little
Jesus playing." EMILY PFEIFFER.

BEWITCHED IN MID-OCEAN.

I.

'Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.'

Old superstitions, like old religions, take a great deal of killing. About no four-footed creature have religious beliefs or superstitions clung more tenaciously than about the cat, from the feline deity of Egypt, and the gaunt grimalkin of the witches, to the tame tabby of our fireside. It is difficult, however, to believe that, in this quarter of the nineteenth century and among sane Englishmen, pussy should ever be an object of fear and foreboding. Yet hear the story of my friend, the captain of the Seamew, recently come in to port after an unusually stormy and strange passage from Baltimore:

We had a capital run for several days. After dropping down the river, we gave her sheet across the cold belt of water that lies along the coast, and out we 'swished' into the Stream and away along it.

'Jack,' says I to my mate, who has sailed with me in the Seamew a many years, 'home in thirty days. Eh?'

'Humph,' said Jack, 'maybe.' Jack was a Scotchman, and cautious about an opinion.

Well, on March 14 (I have reason to remember the date) a little after 12 o'clock, in latitude 41° north and longitude 53° west (I had just taken our bearings and remember 'em), I was sweeping round with my glass careless like when I sighted a ship on our starboard bow. I had a good look; she was a barque, and was flying signals of distress. I called Jack.

'Jack,' said I when he had looked, 'what do you think? We must bear down on her, I suppose?'

'Humph,' said Jack. 'Ay, I suppose.'

We shortened sail and bore down. We came within hail, but nobody answered from the barque. Presently, though, a boat was launched and pulled toward us; but their pulling was weak and 'dippy.'

Then a man stood up in the middle of the boat, tugged his coat off and waved it, and sang out, 'Ahoy! Ahoy!' in a half cracked kind of voice. This was odd, and I trampen up and down, impatient to hear what they wanted.

'We are starving!' That's what the captain that stood up in the middle said. 'We are starving,' says he. 'The Lily of Plymouth, outward bound for Baltimore.'

We got 'em up the side. I took the master into the cabin, and sent the men for'ard. Lord! to see that man drink and eat! With a delirious eagerness, as you might say, and yet afraid to eat too fast or too much. He knew he must keep in his awful appetite and still it would keep a breaking from him. He told us their story in scraps between: They had been provisioned for three months, and that was their 125th day out! The weather they had experienced had been most peculiar; not stormy, but playful and perverse-like; sometimes blowing this way, sometimes that, often not blowing at all. Near eleven weeks had gone by before they sighted Cape Henry, and when they did, down came a furious, sprawling nor'wester, and drove 'em out to sea again. And so they had beaten about in adverse winds, of course, ever since. Their last drop of water and their last scrap of biscuit went five days ago. Then they came to cooking their boots, and sucking the oil from the lamps—even from the binnacle.

'We ate my dog last!' And the poor fellow burst into tears. 'As sure as fate,' said he, looking oddly at me, 'we have been bewitched.'

'Bewitched!' said I. 'What, now—what makes you think of such a thing?'

'Ah, well,' said he, 'I don't know. But we'll see.'

After that he was in a hurry to return to his ship. We filled their boat and a boat of our own with all the provisions we thought we could spare (and there were thirteen of 'em, an awkward number to feed). Jack went with our boat, and when he came back, says he to me:

'That skipper's not a bad sort, though he be a Cardiff man. He's sent ye this keg o' spirits—and it's maybe as well out o' their way now—and, what d'ye think? four bottles o' champagne in the basket here! They had thought o' saving them for land sight, but he's sent them to you.'

We looked in the basket of champagne at once. The bottles lay sloped in, with their heads out. Underneath was a little packing-straw, and underneath that—oh, Jack's face and language when he saw it!—a tabby, a brinded cat, lying curled up asleep.

'Oh!' cried Jack. 'Oh, the sly, ungrateful devil! This is your Welshman, your Taffy! This is what he thought he was bewitched wi'! And he's been afraid to make away wi' it! So he sends the witchcraft here! The coward he is! But we'll play Jonah's trick, and chance the whale.'

So he seized the cat and swung out his arm to toss it overboard; when my little Maggie, that sailed with me this voyage, and that scarce understood his words, but understood his action, caught his wrist and cried:

'Oh, no, please, Jack! Give it to me!'

Now Jack was very fond of her, so he arrested his act at her bidding at once; but he said, 'It's bewitched, though, Maggie lass. If I don't believe in that sort o' thing, there's them here that do,' with a glance at the men for'ard.

'Ay, sir, there be,' said Dick Sandys, an old seaman who had been standing by all the while helping to hand up the boat by the davit line, and keeping, as I had observed, a sidelong eye on the basket. 'There's them aboard this here Seamew, and I don't say as what I ain't one on 'em myself, as 'll straight out begin to think the rare luck of this here present v'yage is gone. But they'll dread worser luck, sir, if ye throw overboard a brinded cat as has been carried aboard across water.'

'Is that so?' asked Jack.

'Yes,' said I in a low voice. 'I've heard that before. But,' said I aloud, and looking at Dick, and trying to work oil my uneasiness in a joke, 'how can you have a "sea" or any other "new" without a cat?'

'This cat,' said Jack, 'scarcely looks as if she would mew again. Just look at her—skin and bone.'

My little Maggie had waxed her up with stroking, and the wretched creature tried to stand and to walk, rubbing against Maggie's leg. But she fell over again and again. Jack caught the animal up, and sniffed her breath, while she gave him an averted look, which to me seemed almost human.

'S'ip me!' cried Jack. 'If they haven't made her drunk, so that she should come here quiet! Did ye ever see a cat like her?'

When Maggie carried the cat into the cabin, I tramped up and down the deck, more uneasy than I cared to let myself know. It was not (as I told Jack) that I was a believer in the superstitions about cats which many sailors still encourage, but because I knew what desperate work it would be, if anything should happen, to keep in hand a crew that had given themselves up.

It was getting on in the afternoon, and I was still tramping to and fro, when that cat rushed on deck, with Maggie after it. It jumped up on the bulwarks, and, looking and poking its nose over the water, meawed. It leaped back to the deck, and ran along toward the fo'c'sle and round the caboose, and stopped and meawed again. It ran back toward me, and looked round and meawed a third time; and its meawing was loud and distressful, as if it wanted to be let out or let in. Maggie followed, calling 'Puss, puss! poor pussy!' And there was I, and Jack, and farther off all the crew looking on and wondering at the creature's movements and cries. There were peculiar one-sided glances and head shakes, I saw, exchanged by the men. To discourage any notion there might be that I also felt concern, I turned to walk up and down as before, having first lit my pipe. What did that cat do but trot off at my heels, looking up and meawing with a kind of bitter greediness, as if I were the cat's-meat man!

'Catch it, Maggie,' I said, 'and give it something to eat.'

'I've given it something, father,' said Maggie, 'and it won't eat it. But maybe it will now;' and she managed to seize and carry it off.

Now, standing still, I noticed that the smoke of my pipe, instead of being blown away, was curling slowly about my head, rising a little and forming a bit of cloud and then melting away straight up. I did not like these signs. There was a change working round in the weather; of which, let me tell you, the glass had given no warning.

We had been having a clear sky and a fresh breeze; the breeze fell slack, our sails flapped and 'bilged,' like as if in disgust, and the most curious dimness and thickness came down around the ship. I am too old a sailor to make a note of every odd change in the look of the sea or sky, but that was the oddest change I ever saw in mid-ocean. I have read a deal of poetry at sea, and I used to write home pieces to Maggie's mother, when she was alive, God bless her! and so I have always by me a sort of taste and eye for what you would call 'poetic effects.' Well, the effect that day as the sea-west breeze fell dead, and the sun began to go down, I shall never forget. It became very cold and a mysterious-looking haze gathered about the ship in a circle that got always narrower and narrower, till we had not a hundred feet of clear view all round. The sea lost its briskness and ripple; it took on a dull, steely, oily look, and glided and slid about, as if it were the back of a monstrous snake. We seemed at the bottom of a pit of darkness and deviltry; and the bottom we rested on was the fathomless Atlantic! All around us the encroaching haze, and rising behind and above it a dense, dark wall of cloud, touched, in the west, at its lofty broken edges with the dim glory of the setting sun, and showing a little space of pale, pure blue above, and in the east and south appearing like an inaccessible gray cliff. From the depths of this cliff seemed to come by and by faint labored sighs, which gradually became wilder and prolonged themselves into wails of distress and pain. We shortened sail at once down to the lower top-sails.

Between 9 and 10 I tucked my little Maggie safe into her berth, and turned in myself, though I knew it would be only for a little while. That cat I did not see anywhere about.

I was waked suddenly by my head being bumped against the side of my berth. There was a loud report, like the going off of twenty muskets; I felt a sudden spasm as of choking; I caught at my berth and sprang to my feet. You have never been in a hurricane, I dare say? Well, when it first swoops down, it seems to shut you and the ship up with too much breath. In another minute I was on deck; the report had been the noise of a sheet blown to pieces. Jack was roaring through the trumpet, the men were shortening sail—you could just hear the sharp creak of ropes and pulleys through the wind—and that wretched cat was hid somewhere about, meawing its very worst. It was 2 in the morning; hurricane from the northeast with bitter rain, and we lay-to with the lee clew of the lower maintopsail. All on till dawn and through the day it blew and shrieked its loudest. Two men were at the wheel to keep her head up, but I knew that for all that we were driving rapidly back on our track. The drift in the air was so dense that we could not see five yards beyond the ship; and by 5 o'clock it was dark. About 6 o'clock a great sea struck our bows, carried away our head, and let a rush of water like a mill-race over our decks. We recoiled a great distance, and settled heavily in the trough of the sea. But we rose again with a shudder.

On the second day, after daylight, the hurricane abated, though it still blew a stiff gale. But we were able to slacken something of the grim tenacity of our vigilance, and to look at each other again. I liked not the looks I met. We had passed with comparatively little damage through a terrible danger; and that would have been enough, you would have thought, to lead the sailors to think that both weather and ship were under altogether different and better guidance than the witchery of a tabby cat. Yet they looked sullen and hopeless. I could see from the way they eyed the creature, and drew off from it and its dismal meawings, that they were still bound by a dread of what it might bring upon them. I must confess that I myself disliked the cat, though it seemed moved to wander up and down the deck and into the cabin, and to lament as it did more by some kind of distress than from spite. Maggie was the only one who took any notice of it; and she fed it and followed it about with an unwearied devotion to which the creature did not at all respond.

Next day, though the gale continued to abate, our plight was little improved. The Seamew carried herself heavily, though we could not discover she was making water. The wind was still northeast, against which she not only made no head, but kept losing way. I was, therefore, not surprised when Jack came to me in the cabin and said:

'There's something going on for'ard—no end o' talk and tobacco-juice.'

We went on deck.

'Look at them, continued Jack, 'there by the chains. See how they shove their shoulders into each other. When a sailor does that, and pulls his own ear as Dick Sandys is doing, there's something up. And they half-look this way. Ah, here they come.'

There were three of them, headed by Dick Sandys, shyly shouldering their way aft. Dick came pretty straight, pulling at his ear, with his eyes cast down, but with his round, ruddy face shining steadily forward; his comrades lurched about, looking from side to side, and touching things as they passed.

'Well, Dick,' said I, 'you want to speak to me, I suppose, you and your mates?'

'Ay, ay, sir; if you will kindly give us a word. Me and them, sir'—jerking his thumb over his shoulder—'come as a deppytation from the fo'c'sle. We ain't got no notion o' dictating to the caption, but we want to put ye in possession, sir, of what we're a-thinking about. Eh, mates?'

'Ay, ay.'

'We see how it's agoing to be: This here v'yage 'll never come to no good end. The Seamew 'll never again get into no harbor; and some day one on them big steamers 'll come across her all a-rotting, wi' not a sign o' life aboard, but a cursed striped cat in the rigging. It's bound to live some how;—eh, mates? Well, sir, we ain't a-blamin' nobody. It's our luck, and the damned trick o' that Lily. That's bound to be our luck wi' that there cat aboard; but it's not to be expected as how we'll take it meek and mild. Well, ye see, sir, they say "worser luck if ye throw her overboard." Jest so. But now this is what we were a-thinking: Suppose we set her adrift in an old tub.'

This dark suggestion he conveyed in a low voice, with his hand to the side of his mouth, after a glance round to make sure the cat was not within hearing. Then he looked at me with a steady wistful eye; his mates fidgeted and loomed over the ship's sides, as though they felt half-ashamed of the plot to which they had given their adherence.

I considered a moment. I had, of course, no real belief that getting rid of the cat thus would give us a fair wind; yet still it was worth trying; it involved only the sacrifice of the cat, and if it did not change the wind, it would at least change the looks of my crew. But what would my little Maggie say? However, I turned at once to Dick.

'You can try it,' said I. 'I give you full leave—though, mark you, I don't believe in the nonsense. But get hold of it without my little girl seeing you.'

'Ay, ay, sir.'

II.

Ah, it was a bad night. The wind whistled in ropes and cords, and spars and rigging creaked wearily. The broken water every now and then came swash on our bulwarks, and swirling and hissing over us. Ah, my beauties, believe me it's better ashore than at sea! The cat was got and put into the tub, and over she went into the darkness and the rush and hiss of the mighty waters with a dreadful meaw, that made our flesh creep.

I was glad I did not see the men's faces. I felt—I don't know what. Then I went aft a step or two till I was close to the wheel and looking astern. I had stood maybe a minute or more, when, lo and behold! I saw just where the glimmer of the binnacle light fell on the bulwarks, the head and the staring eyes of that cat! I dashed forward just on the impulse. It was clambering on board again.

'Down, you brute!' I cried, pushing at it. 'God! how it clawed into the wood! 'Down, you wretch! you devil!'

It meawed terribly held on with every claw, but—yes, yes! with furious, half-terrified hands—I tore it away and flung it out. I had not noticed that the men had come about me.

'Ah! save and deliver us, sir!' said Dick at my elbow. 'You've done for us now! Lord knows what'll happen!'

In the feeble light I saw his and his companions' faces staring on me with a ghastly terror. I felt now like a fool and a criminal. Dick had barely done speaking, and I had just turned round, when a little white figure appeared. It was my little Maggie.

'Father,' she whispered, 'where are you? I heard my pussy meaw and I can't find her. Where is she? Have you seen my pussy, father?'

'Your father has thrown her into the sea, missy,' said one of the men. 'And what'll come o't, God knows.'

How exasperated I was with that man! 'You'd better go for'ard, you men,' was all I said, however. But, before any of us had time to stir, the crest of a wave, like a great white flying mane, flung itself over and drenched us. I caught Maggie in my arms all dripping, and carried her below. She said nothing, but looked at me in a way that cut me to the heart: her gaze was frightened and half turned away. I had no word to say for myself. I changed her night-gown and put her back in her berth. She shivered and snuggled down with her head under the bed-clothes. After a little she peeped out and said to me:

'When you are some day angry with me, will you maybe throw me into the sea?'

I could not bear it. 'Oh, Maggie, my child, my darling!' I cried, taking her in my arms; 'don't talk and look like that. The cat was a bad cat, and brought us black luck and bad weather.'

'I thought,' said Maggie simply, 'it was God made the weather.' I was silent. After a pause she cried: 'I want my pussy back, father. Get me it back. It was not bad, and I liked it.'

'I wish, my dear,' I said, 'I could bring you it back.'

Was it a meaw I heard, and a scrateling, or was it only the wind above, and the dash of the water at the port-hole? Maggie had heard it too; she sat up, and her eyes were fixed on the port-hole. With some difficulty I pulled it open, and in scrambled the cat!

I was never more delighted by the sight of any living thing than I was by the return of that poor, half-drowned cat. Such a weight of guilt was lifted off me! I felt almost like a little boy again, there, with my little girl beside me. The to-do Maggie and I made over the poor, outraged creature! I confess to you truly the tears came to my eyes. Maggie kissed it and cuddled it, all wet and shivering as it was, the brave little swimmer! I went to the cook and got some hot mess for it to eat, and prepared a snug little bed before the cabin stove, and poor grateful pussy licked my hand.

'Captain! Captain!' I heard eagerly whispered from the top of the cabin steps. I should have been on deck, and I was turning to go—after a glance at Maggie, with a shawl about her sitting down by her recovered pussy—when the cook stumbled hurriedly down into the cabin, whispering in terror, 'They've got at the spirits, captain, and they're mad! They've knocked Dick down for standing up for you, and they're sure, as you threw the cat overboard, the only way to save the ship is to throw you after it! They're coming!'

And before another word could be said, or anything done, they were come. I suppose they at once suspected the cook of being informer: in a moment he was gagged and bound. I stood before them with what calmness I had; though I felt my cheek pale and my blood tingle to see all the desperate crew crowded in before me. They were not drunk; they were only primed to the Dutch courage point: their faces were bloodshot and resolute.

'What is the meaning of this, my men?' I asked firmly. 'Mutiny?'

At the dreaded word they quailed a little; but Bill Bowser—he who had told Maggie I had drowned the cat, and who seemed the ringleader—made a step forward and said (he was an ugly slab of a man, with something like a squint, but he could speak to the point):

'No mutiny, captain, only self-preservation, the first law o' nature. That darned cat has been thrown overboard, and to save the ship and all the rest on us you must follow it, captain, 'cause you done it.'

I was about to speak, when Maggie, who looked very much surprised, but not in the least frightened, said (standing up in her sweet childish beauty, with the shawl slipping from her shoulders) 'Look, pussy was in the sea, but she's come back again;' and she showed them the cat in her arms.

They were dumfoundered, and smitten with confusion. They stared at me, and at Maggie and the cat, and they shouldered toward the stair. Bill Bowser again made himself spokesman.

'I'm blest, said he, 'but that cat has the devil in her, as sure as David! But look a-here, captain, we must just set her adrift again, and tie her in this time.'

'Now,' said I, 'I won't allow a hair of that cat to be touched again. And I advise all you men to clear out of this at once, or I shall take note of it and reckon it an attempt at mutiny.' I spoke in a loud, commanding tone, to rouse Jack, who was in his berth close by.

'Oh, you will, will you?' said Bowser, now snarling out the rebellious spirit natural to him, and suggestively lowering his head and drawing up his sleeve from his right wrist; I felt sure he had his knife handy. 'If it's to be reckoned mutiny, it may as well be made worth the reckoning. Down with him, mates!'

'I caught the gleam of the knife; I had no weapon; I threw my cap in his face, and next instant floored him with my fist. At this juncture, as if in answer to little Maggie's cry, out burst Jack, half-dressed, revolver in hand.

'Hallo! Eh? What's this?' he cried.

I took the revolver from his hand and pointed it among the men, who looked some sulky, some bewildered, but none inclined to follow Bowser's initiative.

'Now,' said I, 'I give you another chance. Be off at once to the fo'c'sle, or—' I clicked the trigger of the revolver.

'Ay, ay, captain,' they murmured, and tumbled up to the deck as fast as they could. 'We didn't mean no harm, sir,' pleaded those who were nearest me, and who were forced to linger.

No, the lubbers! no harm! But if Bill Bowser had struck me down with his knife, they would not have moved a finger or a tongue to save me, or to keep themselves from the crimes of mutiny and murder on the high seas. Yes; that's what your merchant-seamen have come to, nowadays! As for Bill Bowser, he was of course put in irons.

Now, soon after daylight, with a nasty sea still running and the wind in the southeast, the man at the look-out sighted a bark with signals of distress flying. She was about two miles off our larboard quarter. By and by we signalled what was the matter. 'Leaking,' was the answer; 'all hands at the pumps.' Then he set the ship's letters, and we made out the name—what do you think? The Lily! Could it be the same Lily—the Lily of Plymouth—as we had passed on our other quarter nearly a week ago? It might be; for, ye see, these hurricanes often, maybe always, work in a circle, Cyclone, d'ye say? Ah, yes; that's what we call them when met in the tropics. Well, we bore down on each other, and I took the opportunity of having a word or two with my men, to set myself right with them, and to make them, if I could, throw off that superstition about the cat. I called them aft.

'Now,' said I, 'you needn't look frightened. I'm not going to say anything about last night's affair. I agree to call it all a mistake, if you will give up your foolish, old wives' notion about my cat here. I say my cat, because I am determined to take it home with me, and leave it with my little girl here. Now, look at it; hasn't it the nicest little face a cat ever had? How can ye believe there is a devil in the creature?'

'The devil, said one, 'often hangs out the prettiest togs'heads, sir.'

'Well,' said I, 'that's true. But now, you're sailors; you can't refuse shelter, and you can't surely think ill of a poor dumb creature that was twice thrown into that sea and twice came back to the old ship, and that after all licked the hand that threw her out—ay, and—look ye!—licks it now.'

'Hooray for the cat!'

'but, my hearties, said I, 'there's another thing. And this was my strong point. 'You see that bark out there? She's called the Lily, and I believe she's the same as smuggled this cat aboard of us. Now, has she gained anything by losing the cat? When she's been caught in the same hurricane as we have, and she's come worse out of it; she's driven far from her course, and she's leaking dangerously.'

They turned and looked at each other and nodded; they evidently thought there was something in it.

'We keep the cat, then,' said I, 'whether the Lily would like it back or no. Is that agreed?'

'Ay, ay, sir.'

It was a bad sea, but we lowered a boat as we and the Lily approached; I particularly wanted to go aboard of her. I got the basket out in which a pussy had come to us, replaced her as we had found her, and put the empty champagne bottles on top.

The crew of the Lily were dropping with fatigue when we went aboard, but, Lord! to see how the skipper and them about him woke up when they saw us. Astonishment is no word for it.

'Good God!' he exclaimed. 'And you are the Seamew?'

'And you are the Lily,' said I. 'That was a nice present you sent me. I have brought back the bottles and the basket'; and so saying, I uncovered pussy, who, to my amazement, jumped out at once and commenced off. I had only intended to show the skipper she was there. The poor man stared his jaw dropped, and he sank down on a coil of rope, with his head in his hands, uttering a long, hopeless groan.

'Come, my friend, cheer up,' I said.

'We've almost nothing to eat,' said he; 'we've been at the pumps two days, and now that brute has come back! There's no use standing by them any more; our voyage comes to an end here, and down, down we go. We might as well have kept the beast; the old wretch's words have come true, and we finish in the middle, as she said.'

I doubted his mind was wandering. 'Come,' said I, 'bestir yourself and give orders. There's no use staying by the ship any longer; you must abandon her and come with me.'

'What! Leave the Lily? She's a good old ship, and she's my own; no, I'll go down with her and that cursed cat. Take off the crew, sir, however, and I'll thank you.'

I could not make up my mind to think him deranged, and yet—. Just then the cat came bounding along the deck with something in her mouth, and all the hands paused and stared. She put it in the basket at my feet where she herself had lain, and again bounded away. It was a kitten! and alive! The skipper stared stupidly. Presently pussy returned with another.

'That's what's come of!' cried the skipper with gathering fury; 'after I got rid of her, they were here, and I never knew it.' He rose in his rage, and, seizing a crowbar, would have smashed basket and all, but he was easily restrained and disarmed.

'Let me have them,' said I; 'my little girl will like them.'

'What?' he cried in something like an ecstasy of gladness. 'And you will take the mother, too? Then, becoming again despondent, 'but it's of no use now. I feel we are going down.'

Pussy had returned with her third kitten which was dead, and had begun to purr with delight and to run herself round my leg, when he roused himself and ordered all hands to take to the boats. We stood by them in our own boat (with pussy and her brood in the basket on the stern-seat), waiting to give them a towline to our ship. When all the hands were in the boats, there was a pause. 'Was not the skipper coming?' No. 'Cast off.' The Lily was settling down rapidly, and the crew cast off with little concern. The skipper's last act was to launch with a curse a broken pulley-block at the basket in our stern, as we rowed off. It just missed the boat, and slashed into the sea. The Lily went down before we reached the Seamew.

Next day we had a fair wind, and our crowded ship crowded all sail and went merrily racing, dipping and spanking for home. In our new, bright hopes of our voyage we all, I think, felt rather ashamed of our dreadful suspicions of pussy. At any rate, everyone showed the utmost tenderness and solicitude for her and her two kittens.

How had the kittens been kept alive on the Lily all that week? I can not ask. I don't know; but I have heard of a rat playing the part of mother under similar circumstances, and I am certain there were rats in the Lily.—[Belgravia.

BEAUTY IN AMERICA.

From The Boston Courier.

Thanks to a more generous diet, a freer outdoor life, and a larger outlook, the present generation will leave a rich heritage to posterity. It is astonishing to see the improvement in the human form that has accompanied the increase of wealth in this country. Poverty may be, and often is, respectable, but it is the ruin of many a fine physique; and it is matter for jubilation that we have within our borders a large and growing class who can afford to be comfortable.

Of course there is danger of running to the other extreme. The sleek and well-fed business man is sometimes suggestive of a gouty old age, as is the buxom and robustious beauty of the waddling dowager; but, on the whole, there is a most decided betterment. And, although it may not be in our times, we may indulge a reasonable hope for a not far distant future when the toiling race of New-England farmers' wives, that sallow, skinny, saleratus-fed sisterhood, shall be extinct; and in their places shall stand a hale, hearty, and happy following, who live on the fat of the land, and sell only that which they cannot use themselves; who have time and taste to array themselves in something beside a skimp cotton gown, and gladly make concessions to fashion in the matter of coiffure; who read something beside the Bible, and, on the whole, have almost as easy a time as their spouses' beast of burden.

Take it all in all, we believe we have good right to felicitate ourselves in the face of the world, over our fair women. The great and overwhelming advantage that *la belle Americaine* possesses over her foreign compeers is that, although she revels, as a girl, in what the French call *la beauté de diable*, her charm does not fade with the fleeting years of youth, and we are spared the horror of seeing the English transformation of delicate, high-bred loveliness into the semblance of a big, flabby, and somewhat intemperate cook, or the frightful spectacle afforded by our continental sisters, of the shrinking and changing of a pretty, piquant face to the weazened features of an elderly female monkey. Of course, innocent, unconscious beauty is a thing of the past: that we cannot hope to regain. The young woman of the present day knows her good points as well as she does the contents of her pocketbook, and what they will buy in the market a good deal better; but what she has lost in ingenuousness, she has probably gained in practical common-sense.

MACAULAY AS A BOOK-COLLECTOR.

From The Nineteenth Century.

After all, a book stall is only an open shop where you can, without troubling the owner, turn over such volumes as may strike your fancy; and with this additional advantage, that the books are not only generally priced, but the outdoor prices are, as a rule, considerably lower than those pencilled in mysterious symbols, known only to the bookseller, on the shelves of his shop. It is a matter for curious speculation how many of the "*rarissima*" in the famous Roxburghe Library, which sold in 1812 for upward of £22,000, and would in these days have produced three times that amount, had been picked up by the noble Duke from the bookstalls which he delighted to visit. For he did visit them, and, with the view of himself bringing home any rarities he might pick up, he had the hind pockets of his overcoat made large enough to contain a small folio.

A great portion of the library of the late Lord Macaulay had been collected by the same means. I remember meeting him many years since, very far east, and his then telling me that he had been looking over the bookstalls in the neighborhood of the City Road and Whitechapel.

I remember the great historian telling me the curious incident which put him in possession of some French *memoires* of which he had long been endeavoring to secure a copy but without success. He was strolling down Holywell-st. when he saw in a bookseller's window a volume of Maggletonian tracts. Having gone in, examined the volume, and agreed to buy it, he tendered a sovereign in payment. The bookseller had not change, but said if he (Mr. Macaulay) would just keep an eye on the shop, he would step out and get it. I remember the shop well and the civil fellow who kept it. His name, I think, was Hearle, and he had some relatives of the same name who had shops in the same street. This shop was at the west end of the street and backed on to Wych-st.; and at the back was a small recess, lighted by a few panes of glass generally somewhat obscured by the dust of ages. While Macaulay was looking round the shop a ray of sunshine fell through this little window on four little duodecimo volumes bound in vellum. He pulled out one of them to see what the work was, and great was his surprise and delight at finding these four volumes were the very French *memoires* of which he had been in search for many years.

Macaulay spared no pains, no personal exertion, to secure a book he wanted. I remember a bookseller who resided in Great Turnstile telling me, many years ago, that one morning, when he began to take down his shutters, he saw a stout built gentleman stumping up and down with his umbrella, who, as soon as the shop was fairly open, walked in and asked for a book which was in the catalogue which the books-list had sent out the day before. He eventually found out that the purchaser was Mr. Macaulay, who had come all the way from Kensington, thus early, in order to secure the volume in question.

Let me go back for a moment to Holywell-st., and tell another story about Hearle's shop there, outside of which there was always a goodly array of books of all kinds. A dear and accomplished friend of mine, who took special interest in the political history of the closing half of the last century, had long been anxious to secure a copy of a certain collection of political tracts, published either by Almon or Debrett, the precise title of which I do not at this minute recollect. There was not a bookseller in the United Kingdom known to have a large stock who had not been applied to for a copy; and a literary friend of his, who was traveling in the United States to which so many books of this character are consigned, was commissioned to secure a copy at any price. But all was in vain. The anxious searcher after the book in question had given up all hopes of obtaining a copy when, strolling one afternoon through Holywell-st., and casting his eyes on the volumes ranged outside Hearle's shop, he was startled and delighted to see the long-sought-for collection of tracts. I need scarcely add that he at once secured the precious volumes, and, although not provided with the capacious pockets of Lessingham's Duke, carried them away with him in triumph.

YEAR AFTER YEAR.

Year after year the cowslips fill the meadow,
Year after year the skylarks thrill the air,
Year after year, in sunshine or in shadow
Roll the world round, love, and find us we were.

Year after year, as sure as birds returning,
Or fond flowers blossoming above the wintry
mould,
Year after year, in work or in the mourning,
Love was with lovers own youth, that never can
grow old.

Sweetheart and lady—love, queen of boyish passion,
Be our hope of manhood, comfort of age begun,
Lovers in hundred ways, yet in a different fashion,
Yet one and single body, solely, as we were lovers
one. D. M. CRAIK.

GABRIEL MAX AND HIS HOME.

From the Art Journal.

In bodily presence the artist is scarcely so spiritual as his pictures; he is short in stature, his figure is thick set, and he carries his head somewhat forward. His habits of life are those of a student or recluse; an art so esoteric naturally pertains to tastes fastidious; with the common herd there can be but few points of contact; to one but a most intimate friend dares intrude on the seclusion of the painter when secluded in his beautiful villa at Ansacarand, near the Starnbergersee. In this lovely spot his study strung upon finds itself attuned to the music of nature; he looks on, but stands aloof from the crowd and tumult of the world.

When I last visited Munich, forsooth Max was pursuing the golden subjects of antiquity among the hills and woods of the bavarian highlands. But he returned in Munich his own entrance, also two studios and a museum. At one time his inquiries in natural history, anthropology and cognate subjects led him to collect curiosities, both living and dead. Like the Siamese princess, Fatzi, he has about him a menagerie of living creatures—an assemblage of snakes, tortoises, parrots, monkeys; but on surrendering his back or habits these associates were dismissed, leaving only in remembrance a host of bones and debris, now packed away in boxes. Such properties of the painter's studios suitably find a place within his pictures.

TWO QUEER STORIES.

W. J. Thoms in The Nineteenth Century.

But perhaps the most curious and valuable recovery of a book long sought for occurred to the late Mr. Grenville, whose most munificent bequest of his extraordinary library to the British Museum entitles him to the gratitude of all scholars. I mention the fact on the authority of my late honored friend Mr. Amyot, the secretary, friend and biographer of Wyndham, and for so many years treasurer of the Society of Antiquaries and director of the Camden Society. Among the choicest books in his library Mr. Grenville possessed one of two volumes of an exceedingly rare list case, I think, the Mazarine Bible, printed on vellum and magnificently bound. Of course he was very anxious to get a copy of the missing volume also on vellum, but he hoped almost against hope. After many years, however, he had the unexpected and almost unexampled good fortune to get not only a copy on vellum, but the identical copy, as shown by the binding, which had been so long separated from the one in his possession. Mr. Grenville, when showing the books to Mr. Amyot and to Samuel Rogers, who was the guest at the same time, told the history of his good fortune.

Amyot said it was the most remarkable coincidence he had ever heard.

Rogers did not quite agree to this, and proceeded to mention the following, which he thought still more remarkable.

An officer who was ordered to India went on the day before leaving England, to his lawyer's in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The day being wet, he took a hackney coach, and when he got out, as he was paying the driver, dropped a shilling. He looked in the mud and slush for it in vain, and so did the coachman. On his return home after some years' service he had again occasion to go to his lawyer's in Lincoln's Inn Fields. When leaving, he recollected his lost shilling, and by some unaccountable impulse began to look for it, when, strange to say, just at the very spot where he had paid the coachman, and on the very edge of the curbstone, he found—

"The shilling!" was the hasty conclusion of my excellent friend.

"Not exactly," said Rogers, "but twelve-pennyworth of coppers wrapped up in brown paper!"

A PASSION FOR TITLES.

From The Continental Times.

Everybody, from Prince to Peasant, from Duke to Dustman, has his title and insists upon its recognition. Whatever it may be it is invariably preceded by an introductory "Mr.," in itself a levelling and democratic designation, like the French "Monsieur." The highest officer in the army is addressed as "Mr Field-Marshal"—the lowest as "Mr. Corporal." It is equally the correct thing to speak of a nobleman as "the Mr. Count" or of a hangman as "the Mr. Sharp-Judge" (Scharfrichter). If a private person, living upon an income derived from landed property, happens to lack an absolutely distinctive title, he must be addressed, according to the nature of his territorial tenure, as "Mr. Great-Estate-Proprietor" or "Mr. Knight's-Estate-Proprietor." Should, however, his means be in the nature of dividends upon government stock, railway scrip, etc., his proper predicate will be "Herr Rentier," which may be rendered in English, "Mr. Income-Possessor." By that title, if he be your friend, he will expect to be invited to your house and to be introduced to your other guests. It does not, however, convey itself by social convention to his wife, as does almost every other class or professional predicate. This is particularly hard on the spouses of some wealthy gentlemen who, having no special occupation and being content to abstain from the performance of any public function whatsoever, are, from the German social point of view, nobodies. It is, however, open to the better-half of such a low-minded nonentity, satisfied with grovelling in obscure, unhonored comfort, to style herself, "Mrs. Private-Person"—*Germanice*, Frau Privatiere, a title which, to English ears, has quite a romantic flavor of piracy, letters-of-marque, buried treasure and the Spanish Main.

But little joy accrues to the well-regulated German female soul from the right to sport so tamely indefinite a prefix as Frau Privatiere. Better be "Mrs. Tribunal-Assessor" or "Mrs. Manufactory-Inspector" than so meek a thing as "Mrs. Private Person." How blissful, on the other hand, are the feelings of a right-minded, self-respecting Teutonic matron who is entitled by the unwritten laws of social etiquette to exact from her dearest friends that they shall greet her as "Mrs. Upper Privy Government Councillor" or "Mrs. General Army Auditor!"

The passion for titles is so deeply rooted in the German nature that death itself avails not to extirpate it—at least, from the breasts of sorrowing survivors. The following advertisement—one of an enormous and grimly humorous class, in itself an inexhaustible source of amusement to the intelligent stranger within the German gates—which I translate literally from the original, published in a recent issue of a leading Berlin journal:

"Yesterday afternoon fell asleep softly in the Lord the widowed Mrs. Master Chimney-Sweep Pumpkin, born Rosalia Snipe. Her end was Peace! The mourning-ones who are left behind."

BROWN'S BENEFICE.

From London Society.

It is some years now since an old clergyman died—we forget his name, but Brown will do—of whom a story was told which even then seemed incredible; it would seem more so now. Mr. Brown had been in the army, and finding his occupation gone after Waterloo, gladly accepted an offer of a fat living down in Cornwall. "You needn't reside, you know," his friend the patron said, "you can get a curate to do the work for thirty pounds a year or so, and you can live about town on the rest." There was a little difficulty about procuring ordination, but H.R.H. the Duke of York overcame that. He gave the candidate a note to take to the Bishop of Cork: "Dear Cork,—Ordain Brown—Yours, York." In a few days Mr. Brown presented himself before the Commander-in-Chief with a note: "Dear York,—Brown's ordained.—Yours, Cork."

The thing was done. Brown went down to Cornwall, read himself in, and returned to London. He lived some fifty years more, and never visited his benefice again! When such things were, we need not wonder that a Bishop of Llandaff could reside permanently on the banks of Windermere, never visiting his diocese. But happily the absentee is an impossibility in these better days, and the mere sporting parson is a *rara avis*.

EUGENE SUE AND HIS WORK.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

The veteran critic and dramatist, M. Ernest Legouvé, has recently published in the *Temps* some chapters of a forthcoming work, to be entitled "Etudes et Souvenirs de Theatre." Some of these chapters have been devoted to Malibran, others to Berlioz; in the last he tells us some curious anecdotes of Eugene Sue. He and Sue had the same sister, but were no relations. The little genealogical puzzle is thus explained: The original M. and Mme. Sue had one daughter—Flora Sue. They became divorced, and both married again. M. Sue's son by his second marriage was Eugene Sue. Mme. Sue's son by her second marriage was Ernest Legouvé. Thus Flora Sue was sister to two men who were no relation whatever to each other. Neither M. Sue nor Mme. Legouvé cultivated each other's acquaintance; but this girl, a beautiful and charming creature who died young, was equally devoted to both her brothers, and supplied the bond of union which brought them together. M. Legouvé therefore knew Eugene Sue from boyhood to manhood, and was probably the most intimate friend that strange being ever had. The enthusiastic sympathy and admiration for Sue sometimes took str