The Sun.

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WORSE THAN THE HEATHEN.

THE DEGRADED TRIBE THAT DWELLS WITHIN A HUNDRED MILES OF US.

Among them Marriage is Unknown—Dwelling in Wretched Huts amid squalor—An Offensive and Defensive Alliance—The Outcome of It—A Visit to the Tribe's Mountain Home

"Is—is there a dog around there?"

The question was put to the keeper of a deserted summer boarding house about two miles from Cornwall Landing, on the Hudson. The speaker was a man about five feet six inches tall, who presented a semi-barbaric appearance. His hair was matted, and fell upon his shoulders; his face was dirty, and bore that weak, restless expression that often characterizes persons of infirm intellect, and his clothes hardly served to cover him, and by no means served to protect him from the cold. He had a starved look, and the cautious manner in which he glanced around the house as he inquired about the dog seemed to indicate that his experience with the canine tribe had not inclined him favorably toward it. Assured that there were no dogs on the premises, he advanced slowly and suspiciously, as though half expecting a blow from the landlord, who was standing on the veranda, and offered a small common market basket for sale. As the landlord's hand was stretched out to take the basket, the man started back. The simple action of raising the arm was to him significant of an assault.

"Who is he?" asked the reporter, who stood beside the landlord, and noticed the faint gleam of joy that for an instant shone in the otherwise dull and semi-idiotic eye of the vagrant as he received the small sum tendered him for his basket, and shuffled away as fast as one tattered top boot, and one low shoe, that had a tendency to fall off at every step, would allow him.

"Oh, he is one of the Babcocks, and not a bad specimen either," said the landlord.

"Who are the Babcocks?"

The landlord turned round quickly and looked at his questioner as though doubtful whether this inquiry was serious. Then he said:

"The Babcocks have been the pests of these mountains ever since I came here, and that was sixteen years ago. They live entirely alone on the hills, and never do any regular work. They are not farmers, and though the wild land where they have their homes, just outside the improved ground, would give them sufficient crops in the summer to support them all the winter, they never raise anything. They make splint baskets, such as this that I have bought, and come down to sell them. They live almost entirely on nuts, which are very plentiful on the hills in the summer, but they make no provision at all for the winter, neglecting even to lay in a stock of nuts and fruit, or to supply themselves with wood for burning, which might be had for the cutting. The first frost, therefore, finds them cold and starving, and they go in a body to the Poor Master; but he can do nothing for them, and they are driven back into the mountains to face the winter. No doubt many of them die of cold and exposure in that terrible season, for, however mild a winter may be down here, it is always bitterly cold and stormy up there. Occasionally a few of them make their way down through the snow, and beg for food and clothing, which they carry up to their friends above. In the summer they appear among us again, with their baskets, nuts, and berries for sale; but they never say anything about the way they lived through the winter, and seem to dislike talking about their domestic affairs. When one of their number dies in winter they scrape a hole in the frozen ground and bury the body without any religious formalities. Indeed, they have no religion, and they live like wild animals, without a thought of a future state. They never send any of their children to school, and, as far as I know, not one of them can read or write. Their houses are not worthy to be called by such a name. They are built of logs, planks that they beg or get in some way or other, bark torn from the trees, mud, and leaves. They offer hardly any protection from the wind, and a moderately heavy fall of rain or snow penetrates the flimsy roof as though there was no covering there at all. It is a common saying among the Cornwall people that when a cat gets into a Babcock house there is no occasion to open the door to hunt her out. It is only necessary to chase her, and she will speedily find an exit through one of the chinks in the wattle walls. The houses have no fireplaces, and when a fire is to be kindled the occupants about to treat themselves to this unwonted luxury simply pile up a heap of partially dried wood in the corner, get a light by the South Sea Islander plan of boring a hole about half way through a rotten stick, then fitting the point of another stick into the orifice, and twirling the pointed stick around rapidly by the backward and forward motion of both hands, until the friction causes the rotten stick first to smoulder and then to burst into a small flame, which is communicated to a piece of paper. When the fire is kindled the smoke is allowed to escape through the crevices.

"It is not thought necessary to go through any marriage ceremony when a Babcock selects his wife, nor have they ever been known to marry out of their own connection. Babcocks form alliances with Babcocks, and the children growing up are married to other Babcocks. The result of this is apparent. Their faces for the most part bear an expression of semi-idiocy, and morally, mentally, and intellectually they are an inferior people. They are cowardly to the last degree, and have an especial aversion to dogs, a fear that springs from a brutal practice of some of our people of setting their curs at them when they go to beg. Years ago a man was badly torn by a brute urged to attack him by a greater brute still, and from that time, periodically, outrages of the same kind have been committed; but the Babcocks were never known to seek legal redress, and when one goes before a Justice it is not to ask for a warrant for the arrest of another, but to beg piteously for relief for himself.

"Only once have I heard of a Babcock using an expression that showed that he had the slightest conception of social distinctions. The story was told to me by a Mr. Valentine of Cornwall. He said that some years ago, when old Ike Babcock, the founder of the family, was alive, he and a party of his friends went up the hills one Sunday morning to visit the settlement. They reached it after a couple of hours of toilsome and, in some instances, dangerous climbing. The party stood on the side of a small hill before a house, and a man was lying on the grass near them. Forty yards away was another hill, on which stood a woman watching them and listening to what they said. Mr. Valentine asked the man if old Ike lived with him, and the person addressed shook his shaggy head and, without a word, pointed toward the house on the other hill.

"'Oh,' said Mr. Valentine, looking doubtfully across the little valley, 'that woman takes care of the old man, does she?'

"The man raised himself upon his elbow, and replied angrily: 'That ere leddy, sir, she takes keer on him. We ain't got no women among us, we ain't.'

"Mr. Valentine looked at the lady in question, and recognized her as a person known in the valley as 'Old Ab.' She was about forty years of age, her hair was knotted around her throat, her face was swollen and battle scarred, and her dress, all told, consisted of a tattered waistcoat, and a pair of trousers, and part of a flour sack.

"'But,' said the man, in conclusion, 'there is no use of my telling you any more about the Babcocks. I will take you up the hills to-morrow, and you can judge for yourself.'

Before starting on the proposed expedition the reporter learned something further about the singular people he was going to see. About the year 1815 a man with a military appearance came into Cornwall. Nobody had ever seen him before, but it soon became known that he was a soldier who had come from West Point. He had been through the war of 1812, and wore a medal, but he said he did not like fighting, and desired to live in peace for the future. He was asked what employment he desired, and he said he could do almost anything when hard pushed, but that having a constitutional objection to work he desired at present to do nothing. His father had been a gentleman of wealth and culture, and never worked. He had neither wealth nor culture, but being thus dissimilar to his father in these two particulars, he longed all the more intensely to resemble him in his habit of not working. He was told that such a course would undoubtedly bring him to the County House, but he replied that if nothing better offered he would be content with that.

There arose at length a suspicion upon the part of the neighbors that Ike was a deserter, and information of his whereabouts was sent to the authorities at West Point; but, without saying whether he was a deserter or not, the authorities replied that they had no further use for him, and the people of Cornwall were welcome to keep him as long as they liked.

For six months Ike Babcock pursued the even tenor of his way. He was comfortably clad, he seemed to have enough to eat, for he was constantly seen picking his teeth, and he was generally more than half drunk. Yet in those days nobody ever saw him in a barroom or a restaurant, and where he got his clothes from was a marvel to the neighbors. He was not a large man, but he was muscularly built, and when he said he was an expert swimmer everybody believed him and it was proposed to establish a swimming bath and school on the banks of the Hudson and install Ike as teacher. Not, indeed, that the people of Cornwall wanted particularly to learn to swim, but they disliked to see any man idle and penniless in their community. Ike entered warmly into the scheme, and gave a glowing account of his prowess in the water that finally induced his admirers to back him to swim across the Hudson and back in a given time.

It was a fine, sunny afternoon when Ike Babcock entered the Hudson to perform his task. He was confident of success, and his backers wagered their money on him in a way that indicated a preponderance of faith over reason.

"Don't be a bit afeared boys," were his last words as he waded into the water. "I'll do it or I'll drown."

He very nearly kept his promise. He struggled out about twenty yards into the Hudson, with contortions of arms and legs that would not generally be accepted as the highest type of skill and grace in swimming, and then he went out of sight. His friends at first thought that he was taking a dive, but the bubbles that arose and the commotion of the water just over the place where he had gone down quickly dispelled that illusion. He was fished up with the greatest difficulty, and as he came to the surface he was understood to mutter something about a cramp; but he afterward admitted that it was many years since he had been in the water before, and he supposed he had forgotten how to swim.

Ike was at this time about 35 years of age, but looked much younger. He had been in Cornwall about eight months when its population was increased by the arrival of a young woman of twenty, who said her name was Clara and she was never known by any other title. She came from a direction opposite to that from which Ike had arrived, and, like him, she was indisposed to work, and willing to go to the county house. She was very pretty, but her arrival did not create any marked sensation, except in the mind of the Poor Master, who, as he himself expressed it to a resident of Cornwall still living, "Shinned around until he was sick, sore, and sorry, trying to find the woman's antecedents, and finally made up his mind that both Ike and Clara would have to be supported at the expense of the county." He went one morning to bring them this cheering intelligence, and found that the places that had known them knew them no more. They had formed a defensive and offensive alliance, and fled to the mountains. They built a rude hut on the Schunemunk, lying between the East and the Woodcock Mountains, five miles from Cornwall, and close to a place called Dark Hollow.

It would be difficult to find a drearier spot in all the Highlands of the Hudson. In winter the place is almost inaccessible, and when the first snow appeared on the mountain tops the people of Cornwall expected to see Ike and Clara among them again. But through all the rigor of a merciless winter the young couple lived in their lofty home, and when spring again appeared they had a little boy to care for.

The years went on, and children were born who grew to men and women on the mountain top. They had no idea of morality, and as they became in time a sort of tabooed race, and found it impossible to form matrimonial alliances with the people in the valley, they gradually accepted the situation, and lived in and for themselves alone. Ike came to be known as "Old Ike," and Clara was spoken of as "Old Aunt Clara." In 1844 Clara was stricken down with paralysis, and from the time she was placed in bed she never rose from it for thirty-six years. Six years ago she died, and was buried on the mountains. She was 84 years old at the time of her death, and her husband, who survived her only three years, had almost seen his 100th birthday when he died.

The Babcocks now number about sixty, and there does not seem to be any prospect of their dying out. Basket making is the only trade they follow, and they rarely buy anything in the way of provisions, but live upon the nuts and berries gathered by the women.

"They are not a criminal class," said Justice Amos M. Hollett of Canterbury, "and I have very little trouble with them so far as extensive robberies are concerned. They steal the growing corn and occasionally rob a hen roost; but beyond this they rarely go. Only once have I known anything serious to follow from their carousing. A year ago, after an election in Newburgh, five or six of the Babcocks started to walk to their home in the mountains. They were all very drunk, and on the road they got into a quarrel in which David, the oldest of the band at present, had his skull fractured by James. I committed James, but as David recovered, the Grand Jury refused to indict the prisoner, and he was discharged.

"When I first came to this office I knew I was going to have trouble with the Babcocks. Winter was closing in and stormy weather threatening. One morning going to the door I saw a party of them coming down the street. They pushed into the office, and said they were starving and wanted relief. Of course I had no power to do anything directly for them. They ought to have applied to the Poor Master. All the service I could render them was to commit them either to the jail or the County House, so I sent them to the latter. But the keeper refused to receive them, saying he had no authority to take in so many strong men and women, amply able to earn their own living. They came back to my office, and I then told them that if they applied to me again I would send them to the jail. Now, if there is a prospect to which the Babcocks object more strenuously than that of working for their living it is that of going to jail, and they have never applied to me since that time, though they go to the Poor Master every winter.

"The Babcocks are hard drinkers, but they care for nothing but whiskey. The proprietor of a liquor saloon in Cornwall told me that some years ago he got up at 3 o'clock one bitterly cold winter morning to attend to some business. He opened his saloon door, and there crouching outside was old Ike, half dead with the cold. The proprietor, whose name was Shadon, pulled him in, and asked him what he was doing there. Ike said he was going into the woods to cut branches to repair his house, but he thought he would take a 'nip' before starting. Shadon looked at the man, who was then upward of 90 years of age, and asked him how he expected to live through such a day as this was in the woods. Old Ike laughed contemptuously.

"'Why,' he said, 'I'm in the woods every day, but its so all-fired cold this mornin' that I thought I'd ask you for a nip. Mister, afore I set out.'

"It is supposed that Shadon had no whiskey open, but he had some fine French brandy up stairs, and, thinking to give the old man such a treat as he had never had before, he brought it down and poured him out half a tumblerful. Old Ike swallowed it at a draught.

"'How do you like it?' asked Shadon.

"Old Ike shrugged his shoulders. 'It's poor stuff,' he said. 'Can't you give me somethin' that I can feel as it goes down?'

"But, inveterate drinkers as they are, they are generally peaceable and quiet in their cups. One of them, with a bottle of whiskey, will sit for hours singing and enjoying himself as thoroughly as though there was a party of a hundred with him. A few nights ago my daughter and her husband were stopping at a friend's house some distance up the mountains. At about midnight a man began to sing in front of the house, but as he made no other disturbance they did not disturb him. He sang until 3, or made short speeches, proposed incomprehensible toasts, and returned thanks sleepily. They thought at first that he had company with him, but looking through the blinds they were able not only to see that he was alone, but to recognize him as a Babcock by his matted hair and ragged clothing. On the following morning they found the grass pressed down where he had slept upon it, but he had gone away early leaving behind him nothing but an empty whiskey bottle."

The next day the reporter went up the Schunemunk Mountain, and got to the stronghold of the Babcocks. There are, it appears, two settlements, the one on the Schunemunk consisting of three houses, built in the most primitive fashion. Standing inside, one can easily look out through the boards and logs. The roofs were covered with branches, which in winter time are piled up to a height of several feet, a practice that once very nearly resulted in the destruction of a whole family, for, the snow falling heavily, the roof, already weighted down with branches, gave way and fell, a mass of ruins, upon the floor below, breaking the leg of one of the women, and more or less injuring everybody in the room. Neither then nor upon any other occasion was a surgeon summoned, for these singular people, utterly stupid otherwise, have a curious sort of knowledge of medicine, and seem, apparently by a kind of animal instinct, to know what to do when any of their number are ill or injured.

Half a dozen children, wild looking in dress and feature, stopped playing to stare at the strangers, and several men who were lounging about looked at them with a vacant gaze. The women came out from the three huts, and, with their arms folded across their bronats, stared at the visitors. The clothing of all had evidently been picked up piecemeal, and in many instances tall men were going around with ludicrously short coats, but without making an effort to effect an exchange with the small men, who were obliged to hold up the tails of their garments to prevent their tripping them up. Sack cloth entered largely into the attire of the women, and the children were protected from the cold by pieces of rough horse blanket.

Nobody was inclined to give any information as to their mode of living, and they rather resented, in a weak, undemonstrative way, the intrusion of strangers. One man only was induced to speak. He was lying in bed, and through the open door he answered the reporter's question as to whether he was ill by saying that he was in perfect health, but he had no wood cut, and for the past three days it had been too cold for him to get up.

"These people," said Justice Follett in the evening, "are not dangerous, and give but little trouble, but they are a disgrace to the county, and something ought to be done with them."

Seidlitine Seidlitz Powders.

As pleasant as lemonade. Five cents each. All drug stores.—*Adv.*

OUT OF SING SING PRISON.

THE ESCAPE OF A 15-YEAR CONVICT AFTER ONE MONTH'S TIME.

Leaving a Dummy to Personate him in his Cell—Conjectures as to the Manner of his Escape—Recaptured Last Night in this City.

James Holland, alias George Coppinger, a notorious English professional thief, escaped from Sing Sing prison on Friday night. Holland was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment, and had served just one month of his time, having been committed on Oct. 20. His offence was burglary in the first degree, committed in the house of Edward S. Ely, at 26 West Twenty-sixth street, in this city, to which he confessed his guilt, for fear that the penalty, upon his conviction, would be still more severe. Recorder Smyth sentenced him. Holland had been in Sing Sing prison before. On the 11th of July, 1877, he was sentenced by Judge Gildersleeve to two years and six months' imprisonment on conviction of being a receiver of stolen goods. At that time he made no attempt to escape, but behaved himself in prison for two years, at the end of which time he was discharged, being entitled to the usual drawback now allowed to convicts who deport themselves well.

Holland is only an inch over five feet tall, and he weighed only 111 pounds at the time of his last commitment. He is 30 years old. A few weeks ago he was relieved from breaking stones in the quarry on account of sickness. He was examined by the prison physician, who found his lungs to be weak, although it is now thought by some that the prisoner was only feigning sickness. Holland was mustered into the corps of hall boys, in which capacity he had to serve rations to the other prisoners, sweep and scrub the halls, and make himself generally useful. He was quick, active, and intelligent. Holland had always given his occupation as that of waiter, and his aptness at pouring coffee, &c., made the keepers and others about the great prison think that the prisoner had really worked honorably in that position at some time of his life.

The 1,500 and odd convicts who work in the quarry are marched into the prison each afternoon at about 4½ o'clock. As they pass through a certain part of the prison each is given his allowance of food, which he takes to his cell. About fifteen minutes later the hall boys bring cans of coffee from the mess room and pass it in to the prisoners, about a pint for each man. Holland did his work as usual on Friday, but it is now recollected that he was in a little more of a hurry than usual. When he was nearly through pouring coffee he said to another hall boy, "I want only six more cups for my gallery. If you will give them to the men out of your can I will take this empty can back to the mess room for you."

The other hall boy assented, and Holland started off with the empty can at a quick gait.

The cell doors are all locked each evening at about 5 o'clock. Holland's cell was in gallery 13, on the ground floor, and on the side of the prison nearest to the railroad. The keeper for that gallery was Jesse Nickerson. There are fifty cells to each of the twenty-four galleries of the prison, and forty-six cells in gallery 13 were occupied. Nickerson, when he came time to lock up, went from cell to cell, and closed the iron doors. It is the duty of the keeper to make sure that each prisoner is in his cell before locking the door. Sometimes the rule that each occupant of a cell must come up to the iron grating and hold up his hand has been rigidly enforced, but out of mercy for the convicts the keepers usually pass by if they see a prisoner asleep on his cot, or moving about.

Nickerson found nothing amiss when he locked his forty-six doors on Friday night, and the four watchmen who noiselessly pace the prison corridors all night in their slippers reported everything all right when they went off duty. But when the early breakfast was served it was found that one man was strangely indifferent as to bread and coffee. That man was, apparently, James Holland. After vigorous pounding on the heavy iron door, without getting any response, the door was opened, and it was found that what appeared to be a man in the was cell a bundle of rags with a pair of old shoes skilfully adjusted at the end nearest the cell door. A blanket was found rolled up and placed upon the cot lengthwise. A convict's coat was connected to the upper end of the rolled blanket, and at the lower end of the cot a pair of empty shoes stood up as though they were on the feet of a man who was lying on his back. Another blanket had been deftly spread over the cot so that it had the appearance of covering a living man. An old hat had been so placed that it seemed to be lying over the convict's face. Warden Brusch then sent his detectives to this city as speedily as possible with a minute description of the escaped convict, and offered a reward of $50 for his apprehension. The prisoner was recaptured in this city last night by Detective Sergeant Ryan of Sing Sing and Sergeant Meakim of Inspector Murray's staff.

Holland's escape seems to be easily explained. The keeper in charge of gallery 13 says that for the past week Holland had been in the habit of retiring early to his cell, and placing himself on his cot as though asleep. Nickerson thus got accustomed to this, and being under the impression that the prisoner was sick, passed by his cell without disturbing him. Holland, after ask ing his fellow waiter to deal out the rest of the coffee, promising to take the empty can back to the mess room, must have gone down and slipped out of the prison door while the procession of convicts was being marched in. Once outside the prison walls, he easily concealed himself until the "All right" bell had sounded. As soon as that bell rings all the sentinels in the watch towers take their carbines and hasten away, which leaves the prison yard and all its surroundings unwatched. Escape from the prison yard under cover of the night is easy. It is not supposed that Holland was assisted by outside confederates. He did not need such assistance, as there are half a dozen ways by which he might have escaped independently of the outer fortifications.

Keeper Nickerson was discharged by the Warden as soon as the circumstances of the escape were made known to him.

MME. GERSTER AT A FAIR.

She Sells Innumerable Roses and Chats Incessantly for Two Hours.

Last night closed the first week of the fair at St. Francis Xavier's Church in West Sixteenth street. There was a very large attendance. The great attraction of the evening was the presence of Mme. Etelka Gerster, who presided at the floral temple. Toward this every one made his way on entering the vestry. The prima donna arrived shortly after 8½ o'clock, accompanied by her husband, Dr. Gardini. She was escorted to the floral temple by Gen. Milhau, and assigned the arch facing the east side of the vestry. She was dressed in a robe of dark purple, with a large plush hat of the same shade, trimmed with a shaded purple plume and silver ornaments. She wore large solitaire earrings. The general effect of her costume was very plain, and it formed a striking contrast to the gay costumes of the other attendants.

So great was the rush about Mme. Gerster that the aid of a policeman was necessary to keep the throng back. Mr. Donahue bought the first bouquet—a small bunch of roses—for $10, and presented it to Mme. Gerster, who fastened it in her corsage. The other ladies, if the truth must be told, were ignored, and no flowers were bought except through her hands. During the two hours that she presided there was a steady line of customers. She laughed and chatted gayly as she sold the flowers and fastened the bouquets in the coats of the purchasers. She shook hands with nearly everybody in the hall, wrote innumerable autographs, and was tireless in her affability.

The fair promises to net a large sum toward the building of the church. The voting for the pair of pistols at the table of Mrs. Gen. McQuade stands 154 for Capt. Healy, 55 for Inspector Byrne, 40 for Capt. Brogan, and 8 for Capt. Williams. The Sixty-ninth Regiment heads the list in the voting for a set of national and State colors.

Women and Men of America.

It is a noted fact that the women and men of America dress better than those in Europe. Paris not excepted. The only cause for this is that dress goods can be bought as cheap in this country and paid for as it may suit the customer, without interest.

The splendid stock of Thos. Kelly is sold on this favorable plan (weekly), and will be found to be as cheap as if paid for in prompt cash.

The stock consists of gents' overcoats and sisters, silks, satins, velvets; cashmere silk, and cloth cloaks, sealskins, dress goods of all descriptions, silk dolmans, walking jackets, housekeeping goods, hosiery, lace curtains, piano covers, blankets, and quilts. Thomas Kelly, 22 Park place, and 17 Barclay st., New York. Barclay st. entrance through the bookstore.

No name on his delivery wagons.—*Adv.*

Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt.

To Messrs. W. B. Rixon & Son—Gentlemen: I take your "American Face Powder" very much. It is delicate and pure, and makes the skin to look as natural. Permit me to congratulate you on your great success.

Very sincerely,

SARAH BERNHARDT.—*Adv.*

Seidlitine Seidlitz Powders. As pleasant as lemonade. Five cents each. All drug stores.—*Adv.*

FIVE LIVE NAUTCH GIRLS.

Manager Daly's Importation of Dancers, Jugglers, and Snake Charmers from India.

Five real Nautch girls disembarked from the steamer City of Brussels, at the foot of Charlton street, yesterday morning. They had rich olive complexions, and this was observable not only in their faces, but as far down as their belts, for they wore just such costumes as they do at home in India. These clothes consisted of satin jackets which did not come together in front, loose satin trousers reaching to the ankles, and wraps of a gauzy material. Their bare ankles and feet were loaded with silver bangles and rings. Their hands and wrists were similarly adorned. Many strings of pearl beads encircled their necks, and in their noses were large silver rings. They all had striking faces, and the youngest, aged 12, was undeniably a beauty of the Oriental type. Their dress was not comfortable for a chilly November morning, and they were hastily wrapped in cloaks, placed in carriages, and whirled off.

These girls were accompanied by ten male natives of Hindostan. The men are necromancers, jugglers, and musicians, and the entire company are an importation for Daly's Theatre, where they are soon to perform in the Nautch dancing and feats of snake charming, juggling, and necromancy about which travellers have told wonderful stories. The girls are Oomdabai, Valgerbai, Ala Bundi, Bhorribai, and Shanjan, and the men bear names of equal strangeness. In their baggage were two cobras, a scorpion, and other interesting things for customs inspectors to fool with.

Abdoolally Esmatijee, the native manager of the troupe, and Esoofally Hiptalla, a wealthy Bombay merchant, sat in a box at Daly's Theatre last evening, wearing their red East Indian caps. Harry W. French, a Yankee East Indian from Boston, but wearing a red cap from Bombay, was there too. Esoofally Hiptalla is here as a tourist, though he has taken a friendly interest in the venture, and it was through him that the girls were inspired with sufficient confidence to undertake the journey. Mr. French got them together and brought them over.

"Oh, they're the Simon pure article," he said, "and you'd think so too if you had seen the trouble it cost me to get them started. The guarantee of salaries wasn't enough; it took a great deal of persuasion and strategy. The Nautch girls, you know, are superstitiously religious, though they are the only educated persons of their sex in India. Their dancing, which you may have seen very feebly imitated on the stage, is really a semi-religious performance. There is anything else the matter with a god, a Nautch dancer, with all its graceful movements and posturing, is gone through with before him, and that fixes him up. There is a great deal of pantomime—of symbolism—in their dancing. I've got the best exponents of it to be found in India, and no mistake. I was several months in Bombay dickering and sending into the interior; and, after I had finally got them ready for the voyage, somebody told them they were going to be sacrificed in some sort of Christian festival, and they wouldn't have come at all if it hadn't been for my friend Hiptalla. The men are all high caste Hindoos except two, and they are Mohammedans. Hindoos won't eat Mohammedan cooking, Mohammedans won't eat Hindoo cooking, and neither will eat Christian cooking. So we had to let them manage their own food on shipboard. The ladies came as first-class cabin passengers, and the men had a room by themselves below. The ladies were terribly frightened during the first part of the voyage, but gained courage after a while, and altogether enjoyed the trip. Their health was good; but yesterday Ala Bundi had a slight attack of illness, and they burned some incense over her. The cure was instantaneous. Three of them are wives of men in the company, Bhorribai and Shanjan are the finest Nautch dancers in India, and I wouldn't mislead you on a vital point like that. They have appeared before the tallest and ugliest idols in the world, say nothing of the Prince of Wales and other illustrious travellers. Their dancing is inconceivably graceful, something like—well——"

Mr. French stood up to illustrate, but kindly changed his mind.

"Well," he continued, "their costumes have something to do with the light and airy effect. Clad in fine jewelry, and tinkling ornaments of silver, and some clothes, they dance right up to the most interesting descriptions that tourists have given us. As for the men, they do all those wonderful feats—making trees grow from the ground in a few minutes, handling deadly cobras, juggling with sharp knives, and all that sort of thing. Several are exquisite musicians, and the ladies are singers. They're the first unconverted Hindoos, I think, that have ever come to America. Certainly, they're the first performers that ever quitted India. I'm proud of them, sir, proud, of them."

STRANGELY POISONED.

The Story Told by Two Young Women who Live in a Henry Street Tenement.

Two young women engaged a room on the second floor of the rear tenement at 74 Henry street several months ago. They said that they were sisters, and that they came from an Eastern town. The elder sister gave the name of Mrs. Nellie Winterbottom, and said that her sister's name was Sarah Walsh. Mrs. Winterbottom and her sister were doll dressmakers. On the evening of the 1st inst. they heard a peculiar noise outside of the door of the house, and saw two men lowering clocks into the area, and carefully carrying them away in the dark. One of the men, Charles Smith, alias Pat McGuire, who proved to be an ex-convict, was arrested, and the young women identified him. He was committed to the City Prison to await trial. "From that time," said Mrs. Winterbottom, last evening, "the neighbors began to show a great deal of ill-feeling toward us. I did not wish to incur their resentment, so I went to the store of the jeweller from whom the clocks were stolen and told him that I did not want to be a witness against Smith. He hurried to Capt. Petty, and I was taken to the police station in the rain, but was released on my promise to testify when called upon. I caught a severe cold from my wet clothing. A woman who lives on the first floor expressed great sympathy, and, when she heard of medicine by her little girl, who said that her mamma wanted me to take a large dose, I took a teaspoonful and I was very ill. A druggist gave me an emetic, and I recovered. Some of Smith's friends called upon my sister and myself, and offered me $50 and my expenses to Canada if I would quit the city. But I declined, reminding them of my promise to Capt. Petty. Smith was tried on Monday, and sentenced to State prison for five years.

"My sister went to the hydrant in the yard for a bucket of water at 9½ last evening. As she passed the door of the woman who had sent me the medicine, that woman stepped out, and passed her hand quickly over the surface of the water. My sister and I drank some of the water, and in a few moments she was seized with violent pain in the stomach, and retching. I was similarly attacked, but not so violently. My sister grew worse, and was sent to the Chambers Street Hospital. I brought her home to-day, against the advice of the physicians."

Sarah Walsh, a comely young girl, who lay in bed groaning as though she was in great pain, confirmed her sister's statement.

The woman whom the sisters accuse denies that there is any truth in what they say of her.

The house physician of the Chambers Street Hospital, Dr. Wolfe, said that Sarah Walsh was, beyond question, in opinion, suffering from a dose of poison when she was taken to the hospital. A bottle of water, said to have been taken from the pail in Mrs. Winterbottom's room, was in his possession. It appeared to contain a strong admixture of what was probably an irritant poison. An analysis will be made.

Capt. Petty will investigate the story told by the young woman.

Thankful to Die in a Free Country.

Among the immigrants who landed at Castle Garden from the German steamship Gellert, on Friday, was Eliza Dost, an elderly woman, who was so feeble that she was carried from the vessel to the hospital in the Garden, where she died six hours after being admitted. She was in her 76th year. The attending physician certified that she died of old age. When asked that in all probability she had only a little while to live, she said that she was a native of Lottz, in Pomerania. Her language showed that she had been well educated. She said that she had long cherished the desire to come to America, and her son, a resident of Rochester, had at last been able to gratify her wish, and had sent for her, that she might pass the rest of her life with him. In her last words she fervently returned thanks to the Lord that she had been able to reach the United States and die in a free country. Those who witnessed the death on Friday night say that the scene was so touching that many of them shed tears. Communicator Hansel is expected to arrive in New York from Lottz, of 101 Main street, Rochester, that his mother was dead.

A Useful Justice.

Justice Rusch of Hoboken saw a thief steal an overcoat from in front of a store in First street on Friday evening. He chased the thief, arrested him, and took him to the court room. There he dropped the character of policeman and, assuming his judicial functions, committed the prisoner, who gave the name of Peter McLaughlin, to jail to await examination.

Humphreys's Parisian Diamonds

Last forever, and are for sale only at Humphreys's jewelry store, 889 Broadway, corner 13th st., New York. Also a large stock of solid gold jewelry at less than cost of manufacturing. Send for catalogue.—*Adv.*

The Child Wife,

One of the most pathetic stories ever written, cut to-morrow in the *New York Family Story Paper*. For sale at all news stands.—*Adv.*

SNATCHING A DIAMOND PIN.

A BOLD ROBBERY BY DAYLIGHT IN WEST FORTY-FIFTH STREET.

A Retired Merchant Assaulted by Footpads While Many Persons were in the Street—His Story of Meeting with the Robbers.

George Post, a retired merchant, 74 years of age, who, with his son, occupies a suite of apartments at 1,519 Broadway, was robbed of a diamond pin valued at $1,200 while he was walking in West Forty-fifth street yesterday morning, at about 9 o'clock. Mr. Post and his son take their meals in Forty-fifth street, within a block of their rooms, and they usually walk together in going and returning. Yesterday the son had finished his breakfast and returned to their rooms before his father started to go to breakfast, and the footpads, who had apparently laid their plans for the robbery, made the most of this circumstance. Both Mr. Post and his son are connoisseurs in diamonds, and wear them in the form of pins and rings. The pin that was stolen is composed of seven brilliants, no one of which is less than a carat in weight, and its value when first bought was $1,500.

Mr. Post said last evening: "It was about 9 o'clock, when little children are toddling off alone to school and when domestics throw open the doors and windows to give the house an airing, and I walked right into the arms of two thieves who have undoubtedly been watching me for many a day. I don't care about the stones; I can easily afford to lose them; but I want to lay my hands on the villains who attacked me. I arose late, and sauntered around the corner with my coat open. When I had passed a short distance west of Broadway I saw two men walking toward me, one on the side of the walk near the gutter, and the other close to the fence. I did not notice them particularly, but remember that the inside man had on a light brown coat, with dark trousers and a Derby hat, and that the other was taller than the first, and dressed neatly, though not showily.

"As I approached them the outside man went over close to the gutter, and I, thinking of anything else but danger, turned inside, and thus brought myself between the men. Just as I passed them I felt a tap on my chest, and wheeled about expecting to see one of my neighbors, or that my son was tapping me over the shoulder to arrest my steps. I never thought of my pin at all. Just as I turned there came a sharp twitch on the right side of my shirt bosom, and rip went the chain and pin. Like a flash the big fellow started toward Broadway, his friend close on his heels. I put a bullet in my thigh while gunning about twenty years ago, and am a little lame; but I hurried after them, shouting for the police. Two neighbors were walking toward Broadway when the highwaymen came running up behind. One of the gentlemen jumped to one side, and, swinging his umbrella around, brought it down on the head of the fellow who had my pin. When the two men reached Broadway, one turned up and the other down, and they were soon out of sight. The two neighbors can identify the men.

"The diamonds were genuine Old Mine, and remarkably brilliant. I bought them about ten years ago. Immediately after the attack I walked to the Forty-seventh street police station and reported my loss. In the afternoon I went down to the Police Central Office and saw Superintendent Walling, and he promised to do everything in his power for me."

THREE SUITS FOR SLANDER.

An Extensive Prospect of Litigation Opened Up to the Hon. Moses Pierce.

NORWICH, Nov. 20.—City Attorney George C. Ripley has, through his counsel, the Hon. Jeremiah Halsey and States Attorney Walker of New London, notified the Hon. Moses Pierce that unless he retracts certain statements made by him, a suit for slander will be instituted against him. Mr. Pierce is President of the steamboat line running between here and New York, and is one of the wealthiest manufacturers in New England. He was formerly an abolitionist of the Garrison type, and is now as radical and uncompromising a prohibitionist. The alleged slanders are said to have been uttered at a chance meeting of Mr. Ripley, in the Second National Bank of this city, on Monday last, and consisted in reflections upon the motives of Mr. Ripley in favoring the appointment of Joab B. Rogers for Deputy Sheriff. Mr. Pierce is said to have declared that Rogers was favored by Mr. Ripley because he would be another pet of Ripley's like Deputy Sheriff Batchelder, whom Pierce charged with notifying liquor dealers of contemplated seizures, thus giving them time to secrete their stock in a building in Market street owned by Mr. Ripley's father. Mr. Ripley indignantly denied the accusations, and is said to have given Mr. Pierce the lie on the spot. Messrs. Rogers and Batchelder have engaged counsel to press supplementary suits for slander. Mr. Pierce is at present out of the city. What course he will take is not known. He is a man of great firmness and determination. The affair has caused great excitement.

COLLECTOR LANIER'S COMPLAINT.

He Declares that his Life is Unsafe in his District—Mr. Raum's Reply.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20.—Internal Revenue Collector Marks at New Orleans has forwarded to Commissioner Raum a letter received from Deputy Collector B. H. Lanier, who has charge of the upper parishes of Louisiana bordering on the river. The letter is dated Lake Providence, Nov. 10, and says:

In consequence of my candidature for Congress upon the Republican ticket, a spirit of intolerance prevails here, and attempts have been made to assassinate me. Dr. W. B. Jones, editor of my paper, has already been assassinated because of his active support of the Garfield electors and myself. It is utterly impossible for me to properly discharge my duties as deputy collector of internal revenue for this district. In addition I have to inform you that I am at this moment a prisoner in my own house, and dare not go out for fear of immediate assassination. I therefore request the appointment of medical officer in this district, at least for the present, to secure my personal safety. Please advise me what to do in the premises.

In reply to this letter Gen. Raum this afternoon telegraphed Collector Marks at New Orleans as follows:

I do not intend to allow our office s to be intimidated and driven from their districts. Employ five competent, courageous men, and arm them well, to accompany Deputy Collector Lanier in policing his division and enforcing the laws.

Instruct them to defend themselves at every hazard. I will furnish you breech-loading carbines if necessary.

St. Vincent Ferrer's Fair.

Last evening completed the first week of the fair at St. Vincent Ferrer's Dominican Church. The young ladies were very energetic in soliciting chances, and few went from the church without putting their names in a book held insinuatingly before them. There are eight tables, presided over by Mrs. Margaret Stafford, the Misses Devereaux, Miss Frances Dolan, Miss Farley, Miss Moran, Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Carroll, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Dunn, Miss McGovern, and Mrs. Delaney. A handsome miniature altar, a $100 gold piece, a $100 bond, a parlor billiard table, a large gold cross and chain, and several other valuable articles are the articles to be raffled. Twin Rebeccas, in costume, dainty enough to have come from a decorated wall near the table of St. Vincent Ferrer, and a shooting gallery in charge of D. P. Murphy, are among the attractive features of the fair, which will be continued next week.

Why Policeman Vail is Accused.

Justice Wandell's holding court in a vacant lot on Friday night made considerable work for the police. The law requires that all prisoners held at police stations be taken before a magistrate as soon as court opens. It being supposed that Justice Wandell would hold court, as usual, in the court house in Fifty-seventh street, the prisoners in the different up-town stations were taken there, but no Judge was found.

Capt. Robbins yesterday charged Policeman Vail with disobedience of orders in not taking Daniel Lamey, the prisoner for whom Justice Wandell held court, to the court house, as he had been commanded by the sergeant on duty. As it was in obedience to Justice Wandell that Vail failed to carry out the sergeant's command, the question to be decided by the Police Commissioners is whether it was proper for Justice Wandell to hold court in the open air.

Another Raid Upon Indian Territory.

WICHITA, Kan., Nov.