

Winter.

'Tis now upon the windy slope
The russet leaves repose;
Now languid fades the heliotrope,
The daisy and the rose,
And the gauze under skirt. —Puck

And now the season's elements
From polar seas take passage,
And once around the griddle makes
Acquaintance with the "sausage,"
And eke with the flap jack. —Yonkers Gazette

Where erst we heard the insect hum,
Now plaintive pipes the quail;
From loaves of white chill breads come
With wintry moan and wail;
So does the tramp. —Burlington Hawkeye

The farmer puts up his fence;
His wife in jars and cups,
Has put up fruit of all sorts. Hence
There's everything put up—
Except the stovepipe. —Graphic

THE OPEN VERDICT.

It was a very pleasant feeling, that of liberty from all business care of whatsoever kind, if only for a few weeks, when one's vocations for the remainder of the year confine one to a busy brain-devouring city like this mighty London of ours, and there, for it was with no slight degree of anticipated enjoyment that I accepted an oft-repeated invitation to visit an old school-chum, Dr. Henry Gladden, at the village of Claystone, in one of our northern counties.

I arrived, however, at an unfortunate period, and found that what I had pictured to myself as being a happy, jolly country-house, was at that time a house of mourning; Gladden's uncle and predecessor, old Mr. Williams, had died only a few hours before my arrival. I would willingly have gone on my way; but this my friend and his wife would not hear of, and everything was done to render my visit as cheerful as circumstances would permit. I attended the funeral; and as we turned to leave the churchyard, I was struck by an expression of Gladden's, which appeared to be uttered without any knowledge of it on his part. It was: "The grave has closed over the last." I felt greatly tempted to ask for an explanation, but for obvious reasons checked my curiosity.

A few mornings afterwards, while accompanying my friend on his round of visits, we came before an old, large red-brick house that stood close beside the road, being separated from it merely by a hedge and small lawn.

"Why, what's this?" exclaimed Gladden, as we saw a number of workmen engaged in erecting scaffolding, digging up the lawn and otherwise demolishing the place. "What are these men about?—Hi! (calling one of the people) What is it you are doing here?"

"Pulling down 't'house for railway," was the laconic response.

"Then the final link is being broken," mused my companion as we drove on.

My curiosity was again aroused, and this time I resolved to satisfy it, so I came to the point at once by thus addressing my friend, "Hal, you are not generally given to ambiguous or unsatisfactory sentences, and therefore—if I am not presuming too much—would you mind telling me what you alluded in your last remark, and the equally strange one uttered at your uncle's funeral?"

"Well, Dick," he replied, "it is a strange story, and one perhaps, that does not reflect much credit upon my poor uncle; but as the actors of this little drama have passed away, and even the very scene of action will, in a few days, be plowed up, I may and will set your mind at rest on the subject. You remember that after I had walked the hospitals in town, I came down here partially to study under my late uncle. But I found a later attraction than any I had anticipated, in the person of my cousin Lucy, with whom I soon fell over head and ears in love. Her father was not averse to it, and things were shortly in a good train for our marriage. I was to be taken into partnership by my uncle when that event took place; and the day before the deeds were signed, the old gentleman called me into his room, and narrated the following story which I will tell you in his own words.

"Harry," said my uncle, "as you are to be my son-in-law and partner, I think it but right you should become acquainted with an adventure which befell me in my younger days, and for my share in which—justifiable as then appeared to me—I have never ceased to reproach myself. At this time I am speaking of, I was studying medicine at Manchester, but while on a visit to a distant relative, a Dr. Seyton, who occupied this very house—" ("You see Dick this is quite a family practice," parenthesized Gladden)—"I was one night awakened by a shake of the shoulder, and looking up, saw, by the light of the moon, which streamed in at my window, Dr. Seyton standing by my bedside. 'Come, get up,' said he. 'I have been sent for; and, as Poor (his assistant) was out last night, I'll get you to accompany me now.' While he descended to the surgery and stables, I speedily donned my habiliments; and by the time I reached the front gate, the doctor was seated in the gig waiting for me. It was a most magnificent moonlight night.

"Along the clear white road, as fast as the horse could draw us, on we went; past cottage, farm and mansion, past pond and park and stream; beneath long avenues of trees that bordered the roadside and drooped over us, now veiling all in shadow, now showing some stray moonbeam that danced upon the quivering boughs to the soft cadence of the night-breeze. Sharp and crisp rose the echo of our horse's tread; and as we came within sight of our destination, we heard the gallop of another horse; and, as we sped past a turning, saw a horseman riding up—as we imagined, the messenger who had been dispatched for the doctor, and who has said he must return by way of Merlton. We stopped before Maze-

borough House, the residence of the Hon. Frederick Wellester, presumptive heir to the title and estate of the Earl of Caultdale. There was great commotion in the house; for its owner, who had been ailing for some time past, had that night been taken seriously ill; and while the doctor ascended to the sick chamber and our horse and trap were put up, I lit a cigar and stood under the veranda, looking out upon the night and musing. Presently, one of the domestics emerged from the house and passed out into the road, walking briskly on; and just as my cigar was out, I heard Dr. Seyton's voice inquiring for me.

"Take this," said he, handing me a paper, "and ride home as fast as you can." Get Poor to make it up; and come back with all the speed; it is life or death. Here is one of Mr. Wellester's horses for you." I then perceived a groom standing with one ready saddled at the gate, on which I mounted and galloped off.

For upwards of a mile the road lay open and clear enough; but beyond that it was darkly shaded by copses and plantations, through which the moon's rays found little space to shine. I had barely penetrated a dozen yards into this dark and lonely spot before I received a summons to "stand and deliver." My horse, being very fresh, quite entered into his rider's feelings, and had not the least intention of checking his speed, but continued his journey; while behind came he who bade me "stand," threatening to put a bullet in me if I did not draw rein. This only made me urge my animal to greater speed; but my pursuer did his best to keep his word, for he fired and the bullet just grazed my left arm; and at the same instant a hand was laid upon my horse's bridle so suddenly as to throw him on his haunches and cause me a speedy and ignominious dismount. But be that as it may, it served me a good turn, as I was enabled, not being at all hurt, to slip away in the darkness and conceal myself in the plantation.

"Where is he?" inquired the horseman, riding up.

"Stunned, I s'pose, close by," was the reply.

"The fiend take him for a plagued horse-dealer," rejoined the first speaker, as I fancy they searched for me. At last, the same voice said: "Here, Stevens; I can't see him. Take this note to Walters and Garforth, and bring me back an answer sharp. Take my horse; that other brute might get you recognized."

"Besides," said the other, "the animal has trotted off;" which was true and much to my regret.

"I will wait for you at the corner of Deadman's-lane," said the first speaker, as his companion mounted and rode on; and he continued his search for me, little thinking I was creeping away from him through the plantation, out of which, at length I emerged, and, crossing some fields, regained the road, and had the unspeakable gratification of seeing the horse I had ridden fastened to a gate. This, I suppose, had been done by Stevens when he overtook him. I was once more in the saddle, and away we went as fast as horse could go. About three miles from here the road to Garforth branches off to the right; and as I came down the hill towards the turning, I perceived Stevens riding along it. Quick as thought, I threw myself flat on the horse's back, thinking it just possible he might hear the galloping, turn round and try his hand as a marksman; fortunately he did not; and I arrived at my destination without any further adventure. To call up the assistant, have the prescription made up, and attend to the horse, were things speedily done; and, ere long, I was again in the saddle.

"Now I looked before, beside and behind me; but all was peaceful. I neared the plantation where I had been stopped; but no one barred my progress; so on I rode, not quite reassured though, for I had not forgotten my pursuer was to wait at the corner of Deadman's lane, and I did not know where that was. And now the open road, shining in the clear moonlight; lay bright and untenanted before me. I could distinguish Mazeborough House, and nearer, the lane up which, when coming with Dr. Seyton, we had seen a horseman riding. When it struck me that as that horseman was not the messenger who had been dispatched for the doctor, that functionary having arrived before us, it might have been the one who had stopped me, and that that was Deadman's-lane. There was no help for it; I must pass the spot; so, feeling for the pistol I had taken the precaution to bring with me this time, I pressed the horse's sides and urged him on. I was not four or five yards from the lane when a man started into the roadway and stood directly in front of me; his figure was slight and his face concealed by a mask; but when he spoke, I recognized the voice that bade me "stand and deliver."

"Not quite so fast, young sir," said he, as he perceived my intention to draw on one side. We don't part quite so easily as time. I must have the medicine."

"What medicine?" I asked.

"Oh? none of that stuff for me. I want that physic you have been sent for; and that bottle I must and will have. So take your choice; that bottle and life; or," producing a pistol, "this barrel and death!"

"It was a serious moment; but my plan was at once decided on; so putting my hand in my breast as if for the bottle, I reined close up beside him and as he eagerly stretched forth his hand for the expected prize, I drew my pistol and fired. I saw him stagger, and in a few moments after, as it seemed, I was at the gate of Mazeborough House.

Once inside and safe, I had no sooner delivered the medicine to the servant, to be taken up stairs to Dr. Seyton, than the state of tension to which my nerves (not of the strongest) had been strung, gave way, and but for some stimulant from the steward I should have fainted away. However, I soon recovered sufficiently to narrate my adventure to him; but he only

laughed at my attributing a literal meaning to the robber's demand for the bottle, and suggested it might be slang for plunder; so I held my peace on that head, feeling one force of the lines:

A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still.

The conversation with the steward soon changed to the family, and I learned from him that the Hon. Fredric Wellester had a half brother Ernest, a very wild, dissipated person, who had been a favorite with the Earl until his character was found out. This Ernest used to live at Caultdale Place, one of the Earl's seats, some fifteen or sixteen miles off; but owing to heavy gaming debts, he was compelled to break up his establishment, and only retained one servant, whom, after a time, he also discharged. This servant, Mr. Fredric had engaged, "and," continued the steward, "a very decent servant Stevens was."

"Stevens!" I ejaculated very loudly, I dare say, for a man looked into the apartment and inquired: "Did you call, sir?" I was struck dumb; a thousand ideas rushed through my brain. "No; it was nothing," replied the steward; and the man disappeared, but not before I had recognized in him one of the men concerned in my late adventure. Just at this moment there was a great disturbance in the house, I found Dr. Seyton standing on the staircase interrogating Stevens, the other domestics being grouped around.

"How is this?" exclaimed the doctor, "How came you to bring me this? It contains a slow poison."

"The gentleman brought it, sir, and, of course, I gave it to you."

"But, surely, Poor could never have made this up. Look at it, Frank; what do you say?" and Dr. Seyton held out the bottle; and before I could reach it: Stevens had taken it, and the vial was dashed to pieces on the ground. The doctor looked annoyed at what appeared to him to be an accident; but to me there was design in it; so as he descended the stairs I called to Stevens, who followed me and the steward into the latter's apartment; when, shutting the door and placing my back against it, I thus addressed him: "How did you come possessed of that bottle you let fall just this minute?" (for I could see it was not the one I brought), "and for what motive did you stop my horse a few hours since, and who was your companion?" These queries poured out rapidly, not giving time for any distinct reply; but when I paused for a moment he answered with a look of the utmost astonishment: "Sir, I really do not understand you. The bottle you brought I gave the doctor; and to stopping your horse and about a companion, I am quite at a loss to know what you allude to."

"But I need not enumerate the answers by which he fenced off my inquiries. Suffice it to say he denied all knowledge whatever of my adventure, and stoutly affirmed he had not left the house the previous day. What annoyed me still more was the conduct of the steward, who appeared to regard my statement as proceeding either from a weak intellect or a too free use of the means supplied for my recovery.

"There was nothing to be gleaned from Stevens, so of course he went his way, and I remained with the steward. Soon after daylight, Dr. Seyton rejoined us; the invalid was sleeping, and all immediate danger was over, so orders were given for our horse to be put up to. In a few seconds news was brought in of some of the farm laborers having discovered the lifeless body of a man lying in the road; the remains had been removed to one of the outhouses, whither we proceeded. It was a dreadful spectacle; the features were quite undistinguishable, and presented the appearance of having some firearm discharged close to them. The steward and Dr. Seyton minutely examined the body; and after holding a whispered conversation together, the doctor drew me on one side and advised me not to mention any of the circumstances connected with my late adventure, but to wait until the inquest; then, as medical aid was perfectly useless, we took our departure and drove home.

"Two days afterwards a letter was received desiring our presence at Mazeborough House; and, immediately on our arrival, I was ushered into Mr. Wellester's private room. Our interview was a lengthened one; we then descended to where the inquest was being held. The best report of the proceedings was given in a local paper published a day or two afterwards; which, if I remember rightly, ran thus: "As some farm-laborers in the employ of the Hon. Frederick Wellester of Mazeborough were proceeding to their work early on Tuesday morning, they discovered the dead body of a man on the highway. The remains were at once removed to one of the farm-buildings, where they remained till Thursday last, when an inquest was held upon them. No satisfactory evidence was produced tending to throw any light on either who the unfortunate person was, or by what means he met his death, although it is conjectured, owing to the frightful spectacle the face and head presented, that some pistol or gun must have been discharged close to him; but whether by himself or by some one unknown, no clue could be obtained. A pistol, ready loaded and capped, was found in one of the deceased's pockets but no papers or other means of identification. A strange fact in connection with this case is the disappearance on the same morning the body was found of one of the domestics, named Stevens, formerly in the service of the Hon. Ernest Wellester (half brother to the proprietor of Mazeborough House), a gentleman who for some years has resided on the continent. This occurrence has only tended to throw greater obscurity upon this mysterious affair. In consequence of the utter want of all evidence, the jury returned an open verdict—'Found Dead.'"

"Such," continued Gladden, "was my uncle's story. You have followed him to the grave, and seen the preparations for razing to the ground Mazeborough House; the Caultdale title has become extinct; the Hon. Fredric Wellester, who succeeded to it, died a few months afterwards without issue; and, although diligent search was made for the next of kin (his half brother Ernest), no tidings could possibly be obtained of him."

"But," said I, "surely your uncle—" "Lived at a time when wealth and interest could influence everything and almost everybody."

"I see," I rejoined; "it is what is called 'hushed up.' But I suppose the body that was found was that of the half-brother Ernest?"

"Precisely."

Brief Biography of a Clergyman and Soldier.

From the Pittsburg Post.

The sad intelligence was received in the city last evening, that Rev. Father Richard C. Christy, the well-known Catholic clergyman, had died at Columbus, Ohio, yesterday. The announcement of his death will cast a gloom over Western Pennsylvania, throughout which he was so well known as the fighting chaplain. He was attached to the Seventy-eighth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, commanded by Col. Wm. Sirwell, of Kittanning, which belonged to Nogley's Brigade in the army of the Cumberland. Well does the writer remember the day that the brigade embarked from the wharf of this city on a steamboat, and the crowd attracted to witness their departure. Much to their horror the hurricane deck of one of the boats broke and a number of soldiers were injured. The Catholics on that occasion were proud to know that the faithful priest was on hand to give spiritual consolation to the wounded, and cheer the afflicted. Through the entire war Father Christy was devoted to the cause of the Union, always on hand to give religious counsel to the wounded, and equally ready to take his gun to make common cause against the enemies of his country.

When the war was over the "fighting chaplain" returned with the Seventy-seventh, Seventy-ninth and Seventy-eighth Regiments, and resumed charge of his old congregation near Kittanning. When the annual reunion of the heroes of the war was held throughout the country the fighting chaplain occupied a prominent place in the front ranks with his comrades, Gen. Phil. Sheridan and others, and has on several occasions enlivened the assemblage with his happy anecdotes of camp life and the trials attendant upon long sieges.

After a short stay at Kittanning, Father Christy took charge of the church at Ebsenburg, the county seat of Cambria, where he was stationed for many years, and built a fine church and pastoral residence and established a pastoral school or young children. A few years ago he was assistant at St. Patrick's, where his health failed, and for a time was stationed at Mercy Hospital. Afterwards he was called to take charge of a church at Columbus, and thus he hands over his flock to the keeping of the Lord, who has relieved him of his good work.

Father Christy's life is a lesson for the rising generation. He was one of the five brothers and two sisters, viz: Dr. Christy, of Oil City, John A. Christy, Mrs. Andrew Butler and Mrs. Wm. J. Bonner, whose ancestors are among the pioneers of Cambria County. Father Christy was about 50 years of age, and during the half century he lived he contributed as much of the milk of human kindness to those he came in contact with as the most noted philanthropists.

Singular Superstitions.

Virginia, Nev., Chronicle.

Sailors are generally considered the most superstitious men of any calling, and indeed it would be strange if in the mysterious ways of the deep, with its wonderful phenomena, something was not found to base superstition upon. It is the same way with miners. There are wonderful things to be studied in the vast laboratory where Nature has stored her treasures. The men who toil in the caverns of the ground and tread the endless windings of the drifts have their presentiments of coming calamity, and at times feel the touch of death in the very air.

A Chronicle reporter was talking with an old miner a few days ago, who implicitly believed that no death ever took place in the mines without a warning of some kind.

"You see," said he, "death never comes of a sudden upon the men in the mines. You reporters write up accidents, and tell how something gave way or fell quick and killed somebody. Now, this ain't so. There's always some warning. When I see my lantern begin to burn low down and blue, I know that there is danger ahead. If it keeps on for a few days, and then begins to waver and flicker, I'll watch it close to see where it points. Now, you may set me up for a fool, but what I'm telling is gospel truth. When the flame leans over, as if its being worked by a blow-pipe, and points to a man, death has marked him."

"Some years ago when Bill Hendricks was killed in the Savage, the flames of my lantern pointed right to him for over an hour, and when he moved the flames would turn just as if Bill was a loadstone and the flames was a mariner's needle. I know he was gone, and told him to be careful about the blast. Well, he got through that all right and got on the cage. As we went up the candle kept acting strangely, and at times the flame would stretch out long and thin toward Bill. At length it gave a sudden flicker, and Bill reeled to one side and was caught in the timbers. I heard his dreadful cry as he disappeared down the shaft, and while he was bounding from side to side, dashing out his brains and scatter-

ing his flesh down to the bottom, my light went out.

"I never lit that lantern again. It hangs up in my cabin now, and it always will. There's more in a candle flame than people think. I'd rather see a cocked revolver pointed at me than a candle flame; a revolver sometimes misses, but a candle flame is sure to kill when it starts toward a man."

"I must start for my shift now. Don't give my name to anybody. There are some who would laugh at me."

The man here picked up his bucket and walked away. There are plenty of miners on the Comstock who have just such superstitions. Some nail up horseshoes over the entrance of a drift "for luck." Others believe that good and bad luck come in streaks just as quartz and porphyry. For three years past there had been no accident in the North Consolidated Virginia until a few days ago, when Champion had his thigh crushed. The miners said at once that a "bad streak" had been struck, and more accidents might be expected. Yesterday two more men were injured by falling thirty feet into the sump. This was caused by the breaking of a two-inch plank that seemed able to bear a dozen men.

Wit and Humor.

Wax figures do not lie.

Made of awl work—shoes.

A taking person—The policeman.

Who can understand a cornstalk?

The chap with the glass sigh—The top.

Fruit for the poor-house—The paw-paw.

The tramp's favorite sweetening—Loa sugar.

Man proposes, but—he is not always accepted.

Purple and fine linen—Huckleberries and a napkin.

Mr. — was son-struck yesterday—weight, 8 pounds.

An orange peel—the yell of a crowd of Orangemen.

Song of the cheese: "Will you love me when I mould?"

Dumas has written 300 novels. He must have a large ink-com.

What is it that a man with two eyes cannot see with one? T'other eye.

Puck thinks that the dollars of the novelists should be called storied ears.

Any American in Paris may say: "I was a stranger, and ye took me in."

Why is it, do you suppose, that a cow always laughs when she meets a milkman?

Positive, wait; comparative, waiter; superlative, get it yourself.—Boston Transcript.

If a classical Greek were illad be likely to try a Homoeopathic physician, would he?

Now let the wild charge on the oyster beds begin. Hip! hip!—a raw!—New Haven Register.

A Western paper advises lightning-rod agents and book-canvassers to try their luck in Memphis.

When may a man's friends naturally suppose that he has gone amissing?—When he has gone a courting.

A Louisville reporter of the old school once wrote of a man who had been "over-taken by the bitter pill of adversity."

Young Swell—"I should like to have my moustache dyed." Polite Barber—"Certainly; did you bring it with you?"

A Hartford man says he started thirty years ago to make \$1,400,000. He has got the fourteen, but the ciphers bother him.

A pair of Sunday pants, and the soft side of a painted stoop don't seem to assimilate with any marked degree of success.

Irish innkeepers (to boots, etc.) "H" where's Biddie? Out is she? Bad luck to the hussy! She'll go out twenty toimes for once she'll come in!"

A California Chinaman who found a nugget of gold was at once declared a heretic, robbed of his wealth, and run out of the neighborhood.

You can get a very good idea of "natural selection," in its practical workings by viewing a celery glass after it has been once around the table.

An honest Hibernian, in a company who blamed the clergy for taking a tenth of the people's property, exclaimed, "Aye, they would take a twentieth if they could."

A woman hearing a great deal about "preserving autumn leaves" put up some, but afterwards told a neighbor they were not fit to eat, and she might as well have thrown her sugar away.

The "Age of Man" furnishes an interesting field for speculation but by common consent the age of women is a matter which is left entirely to faith.—New Haven Register.

Eli Perkins gives an account of the conversation between a male and female idiot. Eli does not mention the name of the woman he was talking to.—Louisville Courier Journal.

The government now proposes to weigh whiskey instead of gauging it, and individuals will now be heard calling to barkeepers: "Another half pound of that 'ere Bourbon."

The peach crop this year has been a failure, but some men won't realize it until they are called upon a few months later to pay twenty-five cents for a drink of peach brandy.—Philadelphia Chronicle.

A sleight-of-hand performer named Wyman (not the original Wyman) astonished the people of Waco by his clever feats. He made many wonderful things appear and disappear in mysterious ways; but his greatest trick was not known until after he had departed. It was found, that he had substituted the village landlord's daughter for his wife and assistant, eloping with the former and leaving the latter behind.