PAPA'S LETTER.

I was sitting in my study,
Writing letters, when I heard,
"Please, dear mamma, Mary told me
Mamma mustn't be 'isturbed.

But I'se tired of the kitty,
Want some ozzea fing to do,
Writing letters, is 'ou, mamma?
Tan't I write a letter, too?"

"Not now, darling, mamma's busy:
Run and play with kitty now."
"No, no, mamma, me wite letter—
Tan if 'ou will show me how."—

I would paint my darling's portrait
As his sweet eyes searched my face—
Hair of gold and eyes of azure,
Form of childish, witching grace.

But the eager face was clouded,
As I slowly shook my head,
Till I said, "I'll make a letter
Of you, darling boy, instead."

So I parted back the tresses
From his forehead high and white,
And a stamp in sport I pasted
'Mid its waves of golden light.

Then I said, "Now, little letter,
Go away, an I hear good news;"
And I smiled as down the staircase
Clattered loud the little shoes.

Leaving me, the darling hurried
Down to Mary in his glee,
"Mamma's witing lots of letters;
I'se a letter, Mary—see!"

No one heard the little prattler,
As once more he climbed the stair,
Reached his little cap and tippet,
Standing on the entry stair.

No one heard the front door open,
No one saw the golden hair,
As it floated o'er his shoulders
In the crisp October air.

Down the street the baby hastened,
Till he reached the office door,
"I'se a letter, Mr. Postman;
Is there room for any more?

'Cause dis letter's doin to papa;
Papa lives with God 'ou know,
Mamma sent me for a letter;
Does 'ou fink 'at I tan go?"

But the clerk in wonder answered,
"Not to-day, my little man."
"Den I'll find anozzer office,
'Cause I must go if I tan."

Fain the clerk would have detained him,
But the pleading face was gone,
And the little feet were hastening—
By the busy crowd swept on.

Suddenly the crowd was parted,
People fled from left to right,
As a pair of maddened horses,
At the moment dashed in sight.

No one saw the baby figure—
No one saw the golden hair,
Till a voice of frightened sweetness
Rang out on the autumn air.

'Twas too late—a moment only
Stood the beauteous vision there,
Then the little face lay lifeless,
Covered o'er with golden hair.

Reverently they raised my darling,
Brushed away the curls of gold,
Saw the stamp upon the forehead,
Growing now so icy cold.

Not a mark the face disfigured,
Showing where a hoof had trod;
But the little life was ended—
"Papa's letter" was with God.

—*Liverpool Weekly Mercury.*

A TROUBLESOME YOKE.

He was a spare man, and, physically, an ill-conditioned man, but at first glance scarcely a seedy man. The indictions of reduced circumstances in the male of the better class are, I fancy, first visible in the boots and shirts, the boots offensively exhibiting a degree of polish inconsistent with their delapidated condition, and the shirt showing an extent of ostentatious surface that is invariably fatal to the threadbare waistcoat that it partially covers. He was a pale man, and I fancied still paler from his black clothes.

He handed me a note.

It was from a certain physician; a man who had devoted the greater part of his active life to the alleviation of sorrow and suffering; a man who had lived up to the noble vows of a noble profession; a man who locked in his honorable breast the secrets of a hundred families, whose face was as kindly, whose touch was as gentle in the wards of the great public hospitals as it was beside the lace curtains of the dying Narcissa; a man who, through long contact with suffering, had acquired a universal tenderness and breadth of kindly philosophy; a man who, day and night, was at the beck and call of anguish; a man who never asked the creed, belief, moral or worldly standing of the sufferer, or even his ability to pay the few coins that enabled him (the physician) to exist and practice his calling; in brief, a man who so nearly lived up to the example of the Great Master that it seems strange I am writing of him as a doctor of medicine and not of divinity.

The note was in pencil, characteristically brief, and ran thus:

"Here is the man I spoke of. He ought to be good material for you."

For a moment I sat looking from the note to the man, and sounding the "dim perilous depths" of my memory for the meaning of this mysterious communication. The "good material," however, soon relieved my embarrassment, by putting his hand on his waistcoat, coming toward me, and saying, "It's just here; you can feel it."

It was not necessary for me to do so. In a flash I remembered that my medical friend had told me of a certain poor patient, once a soldier, who, among his other trials and uncertainties, was afflicted with aneurism caused by the buckle of his knapsack pressing upon the arch of the aorta. It was liable to burst at any shock or any moment. The poor fellow's yoke had indeed been too heavy.

In the presence of such a tremendous possibility I think for an instant I felt anxious only about myself. What I should do; how dispose of the body; how explain the circumstance of his taking off; how evade ubiquitous reporter and the coroner's inquest; how a suspicion might arise that I had in some way, through neglicence, or for some dark purpose, unknown to the jury, precipated the catastrophe, all flashed before me. Even the note—with its darkly suggestive offer of "good material" for me—looked diabolically significant. What might not an intelligent lawyer make of it.

I tore it up instantly, and with feverish courtesy begged him to be seated.

"You don't care to feel it?" he asked a little anxiously.

"No."

"Nor see it?"

"No."

He sighed, a trifle sadly, as if I had rejected the only favor he could bestow. I saw at once that he had been under frequent exhibition to the doctors, and that he was, perhaps, a trifle vain of this attention. This perception was corroborated a moment later by his producing a copy of a medical magazine, with the remark that on the sixth page I would find a full statement of his case.

Could I serve him in any way, I asked.

It appeared that I could. If I could help him to any light employment, something that did not require any great physical exertion or mental excitement, he would be thankful. But he wanted me to understand that he was not, strictly speaking, a poor man; that some years before the discovery of his fatal complaint he had taken out a life insurance policy for $5,000 and that he had raked and scraped enough together to pay it up, and that he would not leave his wife and four children destitute. "You see," he added, "if I could find some sort of light work to do, and kinder sled along you know—until—"

He stopped, awkwardly.

I have heard several noted actors thrill their audiences with a single phrase. I think I never was as honestly moved by any spoken word as that "until" or the pause that followed it. He was evidently quite unconscious of its effect, for as I took a seat beside him on the sofa, and looked more closely in his waxen face, I could see that he was evidently embarrassed, and would have explained himself further, if I had not stopped him.

Possibly it was the dramatic idea, or possibly chance, but a few days afterward, meeting a certain kind-hearted theatrical manager, I asked him if he had any light employment for a man who was an invalid. "Can he walk?" "Yes." "Stand up for fifteen minutes!" "Yes." "Then I'll take him. He'll do for the last scene in the 'Destruction of Sennacherib'—it's a tremendous thing, you know; we'll have two thousand people on the stage." I was a trifle alarmed at the title and ventured to suggest (without betraying my poor friend's secret) that he could not actively engage in the "Destruction of Sennacherib," and that even the spectacle of it might be too much for him. "Needn't see it at all," said my managerial friend, "put him in front, nothing to do but march in and march out, and dodge curtain."

He was engaged. I admit I was at times haunted by grave doubts as to whether I should not have informed the manager of his physical condition, and the possibility that he might some evening perpetrate a real tragedy on the mimic stage, but on the first performance of "The Destruction of Sennacherib," which I conscientiously attended, I was somewhat relieved. I had often been amused with the placic way in which the chorus in the opera invariably received the most astounding information, and witnessed the most appalling tragedies by poison or the block without anything more than a vocal protest or command always delivered to the audience, and never to the actors, but I think my poor friend's utter impressiveness to the wild carnage and the terrible exhibitions of incendiarism that were going on around him transcended even that. Dressed in a costume that seemed to be the very soul of anachronism, he stood a little outside the proscenium, holding a spear, the other hand pressed apparently upon the secret within his breast, calmly surveying, with his waxen face, the gay auditorium. I could not help thinking that there was a certain pride visible even in his placid features, as of one who was conscious that at any moment he might change this simulated catastrophe into real terror. I could not help saying this to the doctor, who was with me. "Yes," he said, with professional exactitude, when it happens he'll throw his arms up above his head, utter an ejaculation, and fall forward on his face—it's a singular thing, they always fall forward on their face—and they'll pick up the man as dead as Julius Cæsar."

After that, I used to go night after night, with a certain hideous fascination, but, while it will be remembered the "Destruction of Sennacherib" had a tremendous run, it will also be remembered that not a single life was really lost during its representation.

It was only a few weeks after this modest first appearance on the boards of "The man with an Aneurism" that, happening to be at a dinner party of practical business men, I sought to interest them with the details of the above story, delivered with such skill and pathos as I could command. I regret to say that, as a pathetic story, it for a moment seemed to be a dead failure. At last a prominent banker sitting next to me turned to me with the awful question: "Why don't your friend try to realize on his life insurance?" I begged his pardon; I didn't quite understand. "O, discount, sell out. Look here—(after a pause.) Let him assign his policy to me—it's not much of a risk, on your statement. Well—I'll give him his five thousand dollars clear."

And he did. Under the advice of this cool-headed—I think I may add warm-hearted—banker, "The man with an Aneurism" invested his money in the name of and for the benefit of his wife in certain securities that paid him a small but regular stipend. But he still continued upon the boards of the theater.

By reason of some business engagements that called me away from the city, I did not see my friend the physician for three months afterward. When I did I asked tidings of The Man with the Aneurism. The doctor's kind face grew sad. "I'm afraid—that is, I don't exactly know whether I've good news or bad. Did you ever see his wife?"

I never had.

"Well, she was younger than he, and rather attractive. One of these doll-faced women. You remember, he settled that life insurance policy on her and the children; she might have waited. She didn't. The other day she eloped with some fellow, I don't remember his name, with the children and the five thousand dollars."

"And the shock killed him," I said, with poetic promptitude.

"No—that is—not yet; I saw him yesterday," said the doctor, with conscientious professional precision, looking over his list of calls.

"Well, where is the poor fellow now?"

"He's still at the theater. James, if these powders are called for, you'll find them here in this envelope. Tell Mrs. Blank I'll be there at seven; and she can give the baby this until I come. Say there's no danger. These women are an awful bother! Yes, he's at the theater yet. Which way are you going? Down town? Why can't you step into my carriage, and I'll give you a lift, and we'll talk on the way down? Well, he's at the theater yet. And—and—do you remember the destruction of Sennacherib? No? Yes you do. You remember that woman in pink, who pirouetted in the famous ballet scene! You don't? Why, yes you do! Well, I imagine, of course I don't know; it's only a summary diagnosis; but I imagine that our friend with the aneurism has attached himself to her."

"Doctor, you horrify me."

"There are more things, Mr. Poet, in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy. Listen. My diagnosis may be wrong, but that woman called the other day at my office to ask about him, his health, and general condition. I told her the truth—and she fainted. It was about as dead a faint as I ever saw; I was nearly an hour in bringing her out of it. Of course it was the heat of the room, her exertions the preceding week, and I prescribed for her, Queer, wasn't it? Now, if I were a writer, and had your faculty, I'd make something out of that."

"But how is his general health?"

"O, about the same. He can't evade what will come, you know, at any moment. He was up here the other day. Why, the pulsation was as plain—why, the entire arch of the aorta—What, you get out here. Good-bye."

Of course no moralist, no man writing for a sensitive and strictly virtuous public could further interest himself in this man. So I dismissed him at once from my mind, and returned to the literary contemplation of virtue that was clearly and positively defined, and of sin, that invariably commenced with a capital letter. That this man, in his awful condition hovering on the verge of eternity, should allow himself to be attracted by—but it was horrible to contemplate.

Nevertheless, a month afterward I was returning from a festivity with my intimate friend Smith, my distinguished friend Jobling, my most respectable friend Robinson and my wittiest friend Jones. It was a clear, starlit morning, and we seemed to hold the broad, beautiful avenue to ourselves, and I fear we acted as if it were so. As we hilariously passed the corner of Eighteenth street, a couple passed by, and I suddenly heard my name called from its gloomy depths.

"I beg your pardon," said the doctor, as the driver drew up on the sidewalk, "but I've some news for you. I've just been to see our poor friend ——. Of course I was too late. He was gone in a flash."

"What, dead?"

"As Pharaoh. In an instant, just as I said. You see the rupture took place in the descending arch of——"

"But doctor?"

"It's a queer story. Am I keeping you from your friends? No! Well, you see she, that woman I spoke of, had written a note to him based on what I had told her. He got it, and dropped in his dressing-room, dead as a herring."

"How could she have been so cruel, knowing his condition; she might with a woman's tact have rejected him less abruptly."

"Yes, but you're all wrong. By Jove she accepted him! was willing to marry him!"

"What?"

"Yes, don't you see! it was joy that killed him. Gad, we never thought of that! Queer, ain't it. See here, don't you think you might make a story out of it?"

"But, Doctor, it hasn't any moral."

"Humph! That's so. Good morning. Drive on, John."—*Bret Harte in the New York Sun.*

HEAVY SALARIES.

The New York correspondent of a western paper says: Take a walk with me any day in the centers of the financial, insurance, commercial and manufacturing interests, and I could point out a score or two of men whose salaries are over $50,000, many more who receive $25,000 per year, and hundreds whose income from salary alone runs from $5,000 to $20,000. Not by any means does the remuneration depend upon educational advantages. On the contrary, some of the highest priced officials are self-made men, with good common, "cart horse sense." Away up town is the superintendent of a refinery who gets $50,000 per year. Many years ago he came here a poor German sugar refiner, and worked for day wages. He was fertile in genius, experimented a great deal, and made valuable discoveries in the refinery process. He was rapidly promoted in salary and position, and, when he received and was about to accept a salary of $25,000 from a rival refinery, he was offered $50,000 to remain. In the brewery interests I recall persons whose salaries run away up into the thousands. Two managers of large breweries in this city and neighborhood are paid $25,000 each, five are paid $15,000 each, and seven receive $10,000 per year. Many of our railroad officials receive princely salaries. Jewett, receiver of the Erie, gets $50,000; Toucey, superintendent of the New York Central and Hudson River railroad, it is said, receives $20,000; the general manager of the Pennsylvania railroad is credited with receiving $75,000; the "head man" of the New York and Boston is paid $35,000, while few general managers of leading eastern roads receive less than $20,000. The bank presidents receive enormous sums. At least six receive $50,000 per year each; nine range from $25,000 to $30,000, and a number get from $10,000 to $15,000. The same is true of the steamship interests—a large number of the higher officials pocketing all the way from $10,000 to $30,000 per year for their services to the corporations which they represent. Life and fire insurance furnishes a field for great expectations on the part of those who aspire to become presidents and secretaries of companies. The companies have always been shy of exposing the sums paid to their chief officials. Fortunately our legislature took the matter into consideration, and forced the leading companies to give the information desired. Eighteen companies responded very reluctantly. Three presidents received $30,000 or over per year, three $15,000 or over, three $12,000, and the balance ran from $3,000 to $11,876. Mr. Hyde, of the Equitable Life, has had a "rich placer" since 1859, when he began at $1,000. In the past eighteen years he has received $485.905.

In February last the commissioner of internal revenue applied for troops to assist in raiding the illicit distillery districts of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee. The president indorsed the application, and, directed the general of the army to order the necessary troops. Congress, at the last session, appropriated forty thousand dollars for the employment of extra deputy-collectors to perform this service. Orders have been issued, in accordance with the policy of non-interference of the military, and the troops are withdrawn.

RELAXING AUSTERITY OF THE SHAKERS.

The Shakers, though unquestionably a very earnest people, are not so austere in their conversation and manners as many suppose. On the contrary, they seemed to us to be quite as fond of banter and by-play of a genial, innocent kind, as people generally. They are ready to laugh at a joke. When our lady companion possessed herself of the quaint Shakeress cap and confined her curls under it, they seemed as gleeful as we were over her sudden demureness. As the Shakers are not so austere in their manners, neither are they so ascetic in their life as many might imagine. Without being luxurious, they live very comfortably. Their members travel occasionally, and in summer little parties of them sometimes go a distance of fifty miles to recreate on the sea-shore.

The Shakers have not given so much attention to regulating their diet as have some communities, but still they may be said to be quite fairly hygienic. Graham and Indian breads are constantly on their tables, and they eat some fruit and but little meat. If we might be allowed to make a suggestion to them in regard to their table, we should perhaps say that they ate too much pie. May be they don't know that some foreigner has said that "all Americans die of pie." We could not help wishing further that they would let the Turkish bath into the noble new building into which steam has pushed its way; but, doubtless, they will open their doors to it some time. "Cleanliness next to godliness."

As we were walking between the various buildings, over the neat stone walks, we stopped with a sudden start on perceiving that we were about to put our foot down on what appeared to be a grave. There in the walk was a plain flat stone, bearing the age and other rude memorials of a departed soul.

"Why!" we exclaimed with sudden awe, "some one seems to be buried here."

Our Shaker companions explained that in remodeling their cemetery they removed all the old stones and put marble slabs in their places. The stones had been used for repairing their walks, and we soon got quite accustomed to them. We afterward visited the Shaker cemetery. It was situated on a high and pleasant knoll and was surrounded with a low and open iron fence, the heavy posts of which were sunk into a stone foundation. The marble tombstones were all of the same size, and were placed in straight rows, giving an appearance of perfect uniformity. A Shaker burying-ground is an interesting place to visit, on account of the uniformly great age to which its memorials bear witness. They prove the truth of Nordhoff's assertion that "Communists are long-lived."

THE BASTINADO.

"T. H." writes: "I am boiling over with indignation while reading the account of the fearful bastinadoing of the unfortunate Ali Nasmi, narrated in your Pera correspondence. A few days ago I was reading an account of this punishment inflicted many years since on an unfortunate Englishman. As many of your readers may not be fully aware of the horrible nature of this punishment, I give the account in the victim's own words. I am led to ask how it is possible in our day such barbarous cruelty can be perpetrated for so small an offense as the poor student was guilty of, and which he so magnanimously owned? The writer say: 'The victim was thrown flat on his face and his leg bent up, so that the soles of his feet were horizontal; the feet were held in this position by a long staff and chain. At first the blows were moderately dealt, then they were laid on more roughly, and every stroke felt like the application a red-hot poker. At first the pain was excruciating, but the feelings in time became numb, and it was like beating a bag of wool. It was six weeks before he could walk, even with crutches, and for more than three years his feet and ankles were very much swollen, and, though twenty years had elapsed when he published this account, he still suffered.' He mentions instances of the bastinado having been applied for three days successively, and, if the person survived, the feet were rendered useless for life; but in general, he obeerves, when between five and six hundred strokes were inflicted death was the consequence."—*London Times.*

..The Tichborne claimant is still at ordinary work at Dartmoor prison, and is likely to remain there for the next seven years. His general health has been better since he was cured of the boils by which he was troubled six months ago, but he is neither allowed to receive nor reply to all letters that are sent to him.