NERVE IN POKER PLAYING.

BLUFFERS WHO ACHIEVED SUCCESS AGAINST STRONG HANDS.

Raising a Pot on Pairs of Deuces and Trays with Deuces Winning—The Young Bookkeeper Who Begged for Mercy from the Boss Gambler—How a Settlement Was Made with a Widow.

A few weeks ago, about the time the police authorities were raiding the gamblers, a party of lawyers, police authorities and others were gathered in one of the lower rooms of the court house engaged in a conversation about public morals and the suppression of crap joints, poker rooms and other pit-falls. Finally some one gave his personal experience in an Indianapolis gambling room. It was but a comparatively short time before it became known that more than one gentleman present had had an experience of his own in the lair of the tiger.

"Talking of big bluffs," remarked a well-known lawyer, "I believe I can tell the king story. It was in Yankton, Dak., about ten years ago. I had dropped into Yank Thomas' room, just to see what was going on, and found a couple of friends who wanted to play a little poker. I was agreeable and we sat down. The cards had not been dealt when some one was heard to say: 'Hold on there! S'pose you fellers ain't goin' to 'bject if another feller wants to drop a little money learnin' how to play, are yer?' We turned around and saw an innocent, green looking and simple-minded individual. We exchanged glances and invited him to take a seat at the table. He seated himself and the deal was made. We agreed upon a jack-pot and made it a fat one, worth about $40 to start out with. The gentleman on my right winked his eye and opened the pot for $10. All went in, including our hayseed friend. I felt quite comfortable for I held a pair of kings, which I drew to and caught a third. The player on my right drew one card and the one on the opposite side of the table called for three. The innocent stranger said he believed he could get along with two cards, and they were given him. The first bet was $10 and our innocent friend said he guessed he could go a little better than that and laid down a couple of ten-dollar bills. We looked first at him and then at our cards. He kept his eyes on his cards and never smiled. I saw his raise, for I had a hand that nothing less than a first-class one would beat. The next man also planked down his extra ten and his next neighbor astonished the crowd by raising the countryman a cool five. The green one studied his hand for fully five minutes and then slowly arose to his feet and said: 'I don't know but mighty little about this game, pards, but if you will wait a bit I'll try and come down with a little more stuff.' He then slowly drew from his pockets, one after the other, paper money, in various denominations, silver dollars, halves and quarters, and even 10-cent pieces and half dimes, and finally a few pennies. He piled up the stuff and it was found to be exactly $177.54 'That's my level best, gents,' he said, 'and if you think you can get it, why, jist pitch in and git it.'

"My three friends studied for a few moments and then laid down their hands. I did the same thing. The innocent young man shoved his hand into the deck, raked the stakes into his big side-pocket, arose from his chair and said:

"'I b'lieve I've found out a darned sight about this 'ere game, and I've got to be goin'. Good eve, pards.'"

"He walked out and that was the last seen of him. As soon as he was out of the room a gentleman whom we all knew well, and who had seen the stranger's hand, broke into lusty laughing.

"'What did you fellows hold?' he asked. When he found that the hands were three kings, a six full on queens, and tens and jacks, he simply said: 'You little boys had better go home to your mammas. That was a measly bluff, and if ever three suckers were easily hooked you are those suckers. That country boy whom you thought you were going to bleed held just a pair of trays; not another thing in his hand. About six months afterward that 'country boy' came into my office at Yankton and retained me in a case. Before we got through with it he paid me over $600. He had a half interest in one of the best herds of cattle on the Henrietta ranges, and also owned sheep almost without number in the northern part of the state. It was John Hardmon, and he had been born on the plains and besought up on the ranges."

"I know of a story of bluff better than yours," here remarked another of the party. "It happened in a gambling room in this city, not more than a month ago. There was a fellow in a game with two others, and he had been trying his bluffing right along, until finally another individual, who didn't look as if he had sense enough to go in when it rained, asked to come in. It was not a half hour until two men, one of them the last comer, had raised the other two out of the game. Then the two who remained in went at it and raised each other back and forth until there was not less than $150 on the table. At last it came to a show-down, the bluffer winning, and all he held was a pair of deuces. The other player held a pair of trays."

"Boss gamblers, as a rule," said another person present, "do not give up money lost in their places, but I know of one instance where this was done about two years ago in a North Side room in this town, and it wasn't a forced surrender of stuff either. There was a young bookkeeper in a wholesale house who was a regular visitor, and for about three months he had been playing in desperate luck. One night about 11:30 o'clock he came up to the room and seemed unusually nervous, for he walked back and forth for fully half an hour without saying a word to anyone, although he was well acquainted with nearly everyone in the room. At last he sent an order down stairs for a brandy and when it came tossed it down. He went up to a table where a game was just being started and said he would play a few dollars' worth. The game after a time dwindled down to the young man and an individual known as one of the worst crooks with cards who ever skinned a man out of hard-earned cash. In the course of an hour and a half the young bookkeeper arose from the table with a face as pale as any dead man's, staggered over to where the boss gambler was talking with a couple of friends and said: "I have lost the last cent I have on earth and its worse, a d—d sight worse than that, John; let me tell you something." He took the gambler aside and they talked for about ten minutes, and then both went down stairs. That young man has never since that night to my knowledge played another card in a gambling room. For more than three months he had been playing with his employer's money and was in for several hundred. The boss gambler made him pledge not to play again, and then gave him all the money he had lost. He remained in his position as bookkeeper and about six or seven months ago married. He is living a quiet, respectable life.

To those acquainted with gamblers, and especially some of the boss gamblers of this city, this story may seem to have some extra amount of fringe on it, but it is a fact nevertheless."

"I know of a case that happened not so many months ago," said a lawyer, "where a gambler put up to a considerable extent for money lost in his place, but he probably did so for reasons entirely different from those which actuated the individual to whom you referred. A man came here with his wife from a northern city over a year ago. He had a passion for gambling and the bosses of the leading gambling rooms, as long as he had money, did not worry themselves about keeping him away from their places. Inside of nine months he dropped about $3,500. He afterward died leaving a penniless young wife. Under the laws of the state the widow could recover in the courts what her husband had lost in the gambling rooms from the proprietors. The boss gamblers who were interested knew this, and two of them paid all the funeral expenses, gave the widow about $200, and have been paying her rent ever since."

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WAS CHARMED BY A RATTLESNAKE.

An Abled-Bodied Man Made Helpless by the Serpent's Subtle Spell.

J. W. Felts, a prominent and reliabl citizen of the adjoining county of Cheatham, says a Clarksville (Tenn.) correspondent of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, relates the following extraordinary story of the influence exerted upon him by a rattlesnake a short time ago:

"I started out one day in company with a colored man to cut some timber, having a measuring pole in hand, the negro carrying an ax. After a time we separated, and I had not gone far before I noticed a large rattlesnake in the path ahead of me. Apparently we discovered each other about the same time, and both stopped. My first thought was to kill the reptile, but he threw himself into a coil, and I concluded, as the space around was open, and not fearing his escape, to wait and see what the snake would do. I was soon intently watching his movements. He cut up more antics than I had ever seen performed by a snake. To me it was a picture calculated to attract and rivet attention, and my purpose of destruction was soon forgotten.

"Ere I was aware of it I stood, or rather stooped, spellbound, as if transfixed to the spot, without the power of speaking or moving, save in obedience to the will of my captor. I felt the distance between us continually lessening, and, although I was conscious of my perilous position I seemed powerless to change it, and, what may seem to be more strange, had no desire to do so, only to approach nearer the the object that, under different circumstances, would have been one of terror rather than attraction. I knew we were nearing each other, but how I could not tell, not being conscious of moving, and the snake appeared to occupy the same position relatively as at first. I only know that in the beginning I stood erect, now I was in a kneeling position, my body inclining forward, my right hand extended, gradually nearing the snake, not in a straight line, but oscillating, and at each moment lestening the distance. From the first moment that I caught the eye of the reptile there seemed a line extending from each of his eyes to mine, about the size of ordinary sewing thread, which seemed to exert a power over me sufficient to hold me and make me subservient to his will.

"How long I remained in this position I know not. The colored man becoming uneasy at my prolonged absence commenced calling me. I could distinctly hear him, but had no power to answer. Finally searching for me he found me in the attitude described. He again called to me, but as before I paid no attention to him. Then he came nearer and discovered the huge reptile within a few feet of me coiled for the deadly spring, my right hand within a few inches of his mouth, each gazing intently into the other's eyes. He comprehended the situation at once, took hold of me violently and threw me backward from the snake, thus partially breaking the spell. No effort was made by the snake to escape. The negro at once killed the snake, while I all the time was begging him not to do so. It measured about six feet in length and fourteen inches in circumference and had eight rattles.

"I was so completely under the influence of the snake that I could not shake it off, nor in fact, had any disposition to do so. The hallucination was not only pleasant, but exhilarating, and there was only lacking one undefinable something—I could not tell what, but it seemed almost within my grasp—to make my happiness complete. So powerful was the effect upon my system that I was striken down with a severe spell of sickness."

Abner Got the Girl.

[Kansas City Times.]

Abner Taylor, a six-foot-two hack driver of Joplin, arrived in Wichita in search of Ethel Thomas, who ran away from Joplin three weeks ago with John Burnett. The pair came direct to Wichita. Her father, who is reputed to be a prominent citizen of Joplin, engaged Taylor to come here and get his erring daughter. The big hack driver located the girl and went to her rooms at 7 o'clock tonight. Burnett was there and fired two shots at Taylor, both of which took effect. However, Burnett was overpowered by the hack driver, who directed the girl to pack her trunk. Burnett was released, and made an assault on Taylor with a knife, inflicting two ugly wounds on the throat. Taylor again overpowered him and turned him over to the police. The hack driver's wounds were dressed, and he left for Joplin on the night train with the girl in charge. Neither bullet wound is dangerous, but both are painful.

The Grave of "Camille."

Over two score years have passed since the woman who was the original of "Camille" died, writes Lucy Hamilton Hooper in a very interesting article on "How Dumas Wrote 'Camille'" in the January *Ladies' Home Journal*. She sleeps in the cemetery of Pere la Chaise. As is well known, it is the custom in France for all persons who have lost a relative or friend to go on the anniversary called "the Day of the Dead" to decorate the graves of the departed with flowers. Every year, on that day, an unknown hand deposits on the tomb of Marie Duplessis a superb wreath of white camelias. It is generally conjectured that the author of this touching act of homage is Alexandre Dumas.

A TEST CASE.

[Longman's Magazine.]

The following story, I know, is not told as it ought to be told. Everything should be narrated in the historical present, and I should pay compliments to my own beauty. To be orthodox, as I am a young woman writing about myself, I should begin thus: "The down train, Parliamentary, is starting from Reading. A girl who has been waiting on the platform trips along in search of a carriage. She is tall, slim, the feet which move so quickly are arched and bien bottes (sic); she is deeply veiled, yet admiring male passengers, looking back at her golden locks, get an impression of a blonde. Reader, that girl is myself—me, Rachel Brinton, M. D., spinster. I am traveling first-class, but without a maid. I have come up to Basingstoke, and am hurrying on my way to a professional appointment at a country house near X."

That is the humor of it; but though I have sins enough to confess, this kind of writing is odious to me, and I must be permitted to tell my story in my own way. The fashionable statement already set forth may be taken, however, as practically accurate.

The train, when I tried to enter it at Reading, was very full, and at last I did the best for myself that I could by getting into a first-class smoking carriage. Apparently it had but one occupant, and he, judging by an elaborate traveling bag, a pile of literature, a salmon rod in the rack, other appliances of sport or comfort, was a wealthy and probably a young man. Some women dislike traveling with a solitary stranger of the opposite sex. I do not prefer it myself, but we were in a slow train, which stopped at many stations, and after all a man is not necessarily a beast. It was better to take my chance with the unknown than to wait for a couple of hours in Reading—a town famous chiefly for its biscuits. Besides, I had business on hand. So I settled myself down with an air of proprietorship, and, by way of discouraging familiarity, began to read a copy of "David Grieve," which I carried about for that purpose. People are known by their railway literature, and I saw with pleasure that there were no frivolously pink and no society papers in the multitude of journals on the opposite seat. Nay, I noted the *Athenæum* and the *Academy*.

As I was drawing these and other inferences the guard came up and, begging my pardon, assured me that the carriage was one destined for the consumers of tobacco. I replied that this was matter already within my knowledge. He next informed me that the carriage was "engaged" and that there was room for one in the compartment for ladies only. I made answer that I disliked a back seat, remote from the window, in a vehicle already occupied by three old maids, a nurse, a baby, a matron, a canary in a cage, a pug and a mongrel. The guard was still engaged in the controversy when the occupant of the one seat in the smoking carriage arrived. He was a young man of about twenty-eight, tall, dark, a gentleman, and in his hand he held a paper bag of buns and one of those little photographic cameras, at that time a favorite toy.

"I told the lady that the carriage was engaged, Sir Walter," said the guard, and when I heard the name of "Sir Walter" I privately determined to stay where I was in spite of any effort to dislodge me.

No adventuress—and at that time I was an adventuress—would neglect such a chance, but my reasons were stronger and more particular than the mere desire to make a fresh acquaintance in the ranks of a hybrid order of noblesse.

I said nothing, but sat still and smiled sweetly behind by veil.

The young man looked decidedly annoyed and murmured something to the guard, who had no time to answer, but sped to his post. Bells, whistles, flags, played their usual part, and the train slowly moved out, the stranger jumping in at the last moment.

"I am aware that this is a smoking carriage," I said; "but if you will permit me to keep my window open, I assure you that smoking does not annoy me."

He bowed, and threw his cigar, which he had held in ambush, out of the window.

I kept my eyes firmly fixed on "David Grieve." We passed one or two small stations, at which we stopped. He had been looking at me all the while in a respectful and even shy, but observant, manner. In his hands he had a green review which at first I thought was *Bailey's*. I was mistaken—it was a volume of the "Proceedings of the Psychical Society."

We passed a third station. He looked at his watch; I looked at mine—it was 8:15. I felt that he was going to speak.

"Can you tell me the exact time?" he said. "I fear my watch is fast."

What could he want with the exact time?

"It is precisely seventeen minutes past three," I replied. "I set my watch by the station clock."

He thanked me, hesitated, and then left his seat at the opposite end of the carriage and sat down next me.

"I am extremely sorry," he said, "that I have unluckily been compelled to share your carriage."

I looked at him steadily, and his eyes fell, though he could see little of mine.

He blushed, smiled and went on:

"That is one of the things that we wish we had expressed otherwise. I mean I am sorry for your sake—"

I began to be uncomfortable, but merely looked inquiringly.

"I do implore you to believe that I am naturally the last person to want to—to make a lady the—the partner in an unusual—adventure."

"This to an adventuress!" I thought, rather bitterly, but I only bowed. We must be nearing a station. Was he going to ask me to look out of the window while he changed his clothes? Was he a runaway offender? And if so, why was he traveling by a slow train between Reading and X?

"It's—it's horribly inconvenient," he said; "but I must first entreat you to credit my statement that, in spite of appearances (which have not nearly come to the worst), I am perfectly sane. If you wish to be convinced of the lucidity of my intellect I will enumerate all the kings of Egypt from the eighteenth to the twenty-second dynasty."

"It will suffice to tranquillize me," I answered, "if you will recite the dates of the Norman conquest, the discovery of America, and the battle of Prestonpans," and I could not help smiling as I spoke.

He smiled, too, and obliged me with the information which I demanded.

"Now," I said, "I am quite easy about your sanity, though the test may not be scientific. You have excited my curiosity—pray go on."

The train was "slowing."

"I can not possibly do what must be done at a station," he said; "and, by the way, two ladies, a pug dog and a canary are alighting. You may still—"

"Still exchange your society for that of a baby," I said; "and my curiosity—is that not to be satisfied? Believe me, it is acute. You are fond of photography, I see," I added, as the train began to move on again.

"A little," he said; "and now I think of it, you may even assist me if you please. It is only a kind of scientific experiment, after all. But," he looked at his watch, "It is 3:45. I must begin. Would you mind just snapping the machine at me when I give the signal? I'll drop my handerchief."

"With pleasure," I said, and waited for "developments of the situation."

They came.

He deliberately emptied his paper of buns, put the paper bag on his head, placed one whole bun in his mouth, took his handkerchief in his hand, and suspended himself by his feet from the rack for light luggage overhead. In this unconventional attitude he dropped the handkerchief, and I drew the trigger of the little photographic machine.

He instantly disengaged his feet from the rack, showing a good deal of agility, and reappeared with a scarlet face, as was natural.

Then he looked at me very gravely, I looked at him, and he smiled in a manner rather sheepish. He had a very pleasant smile, with his ruffled hair and reddened cheeks.

"Your character for sanity is established, as far as I am concerned," I said; "but as we are nearing a station, may I suggest that you might remove your present headdress?"

He put up his hand, found the paper bag, blushed again and threw it out of the window.

"I am more than ever obliged to you," he said. "You are quite certain that you are not frightened?"

"Not yet," I answered, and as soon as the train was in motion again he began to undo his salmon rod from its cover and to fit in the joints. He then fixed on the reel, and I ran the line through the rings. To do this and affix an angle minnow and cast to the end of the line is no easy task in a railway carriage. Finally he trolled out of the window of the rushing train as out of the boat, and by his request I again photographed him while thus engaged.

"There!" he said, when he had replaced the rod in the case, and suddenly diving under the seat of the carriage he sang, "Charlie is my Darling" in a very sweet and touching manner.

"There," he went on, "that will do. I can never tell you how much I am obliged to you for not clutching at the cord outside the carriage on the left side and giving me into custody as a raving maniac. And now let us be ordinary human beings again. You are neglecting your 'David Grieve.'"

"Truth is so much stranger than—I beg your pardon," I said. "I mean that in no romance, however imaginative, have I previously——"

"Encountered a gentleman, perfectly sane, who trolls for salmon out of a railway carriage, and trolls Jacobite songs under the seat. And yet King Cœsus of Lydia——"

Here I really began to fancy that his mind was wandering. Afterward I discovered his line of thought, which is, perhaps, already obvious to persons who have enjoyed (or at all events received) a classical education.

We traveled together for only a quarter of an hour longer, and in that period he displayed no traces of what many would consider eccentricity. On getting out he bowed, and expressed a sincere wish that we might meet again in circumstances less unusual. He then thanked me for what he kindly called my scientific courage and coolness, and we parted.

On reaching my destination at a place which need not be mentioned, some dozen miles beyond that which Sir Walter had alighted, and for which I myself had taken my ticket, I first paid the extra charge and then went in a cab to an obscure inn where my luggage was awaiting me.

Here my own appearance might, had there been an observer present, have seemed as eccentric as those of my late companion. I went into a bedroom, arranged a number of bottles and boxes taken from my dressing case on the table, changed my dress, provided myself with a kind of elegant jointed crutch from my trunk, and so arranged my appearance that she who had entered as an English woman of light complexion emerged as a lady with dark hair, dark eyebrows and a dusky skin, distinguished by a limp and an American accent. Rachel Brinton was now Mrs. Schuydam, the celebrated transatlantic telepathist and clairvoyant. For that was my professional name, and it was in this field of adventure that I earned my livelihood and supported my dear mother. Veiled and cloaked, Mrs. Schuydam paid her bill, and, taking another cab, drove to the nearest station on the line from London, about six miles from the town of X. Here I waited till the 5:45 train from town stopped at the little station, when a hand holding an umbrella out of the window of a carriage guided me to the compartment where my agent and hypnotist, Dr. Puygre, was waiting for me.

"Find out anything?" he said, as soon as the train started.

"A little," I said; "enough for Schropff to work on."

Now Schropff was the name of my spirit of divination who spoke through me when I was "in the trance state." Schropff gave himself out for the shade of a German army surgeon shot at Sedan. He spoke in a gruff Teutonic accent. My medical studies at Zurich years ago were useful to Schropff. By dint of private information, conjecture, a habit of swearing in German, and other devices, Schropff had acquired rather a favorable reputation in psychical circles, and the great question was debated as to whether Schropff was my sub-conscious self or was really feu Schropff, or merely a casual spirit unattached, who, perhaps, had never been anybody in particular.

My present business was a test case. At the house of an old Mr. Lindsay, I, or rather Schropff was to find out what an inquirer, unnamed, had been doing at a particular hour on that very day. By private inquiries and inferences we had arrived at the conclusion that the unnamed was to be a certain Sir Walter Welmore of the Barrow. I had run down, at very short notice, and in my own habit and aspect, to pry and spy about the Barrow. As the intelligent reader surmises, I had been lucky indeed, and had learned from the chance word of the railway guard quite as much of Sir Walter's performance as was necessary for my purpose.

"Find out anything?" Puygre had asked and I had replied, "A little." I had no mind to take Puygre into my confidence. He was detestable. He made my loathsome business more hateful yet. A smatterer from some wretched little Yankee college, Puygre was an ignorant quack, who despite his ignorance, and his consciousness of being an impostor, was a conceited pedant. He believed, if in nothing else, in his own knowledge of "occultism," and reveled in a slang compounded of "the patois of Zion," and the newest coinage of sham scientific language. Puygre was necessary to me, and he had more than once remarked that he "could give me away." But this liberality was less in his power than he supposed, for he knew me only as Mrs. Schuydam, and had no more idea that I was Rachel Brinton, than my mother had that Rachel Brinton, M. D., being destitute of patients, practiced divination as an American medium. My changes of costume and personality (I really had two personalities) were made at my private chambers.

"Did you get into the mansion?" he asked. "I hear it is open to the citizens on Tuesdays and Thursdays."

"I never went near the house," I said; "and now here we are at X," where, indeed, we stopped, and found Mr. Lindsay's carriage waiting to take us to his house, Ardley Court.

I had made Puygre bring evening dress—raiment against which his whole soul rose in republican rebellion. We met in the drawing room before dinner. There were about a dozen people present, and among them—Sir Walter! Our host himself led Mme. Schuydam, limping and gracefully using her crutch, in to dinner.

The innocence of these psychical people is amazing. Next me, on my left, was a learned Oxford professor. On the opposite side was my friend, Sir Walter, to whom I was not introduced. In fact as part of the "test," I was introduced to nobody, and no names were mentioned, but I knew the professor and one or two others as old researchers. It was plain to me, from a dozen undesigned hints, that my railway companion was the person whose employment of his time was to be accounted for by Schropff. I knew that I was about to make a wonderful hit, that success and advertisement were to be mine, and yet I did not feel elated. Sir Walter looked so thoroughly honorable; he had been so courteous; he was, in brief, so handsome, his manner so friendly, I had so enjoyed being myself and being treated as myself while we traveled together, that Schropff and all his works and ways were hateful to me. "Why can not I live with these people as one of themselves," I asked, "and in the rank to which I was born?" Needs must, however, when somebody drives; and somebody, aided by a broken bank, agricultural distress, a batch of young, helpless brothers and sisters, and by a mother who believed me to be practicing as a lady doctor, had driven me to this.

"Well," I said to myself in a passion of shame, grief and envy, "I am what society has made me." This is the modern equivalent for the old excuse, "the devil tempted me," and with this I hardened my heart.

After dinner the men joined us soon. We were only three ladies—old Mrs. Lindsay, the professor's sister (a hardened skeptic), and myself.

Let me hurry on. Puygre, after talking a flood of nasal American nonsense about "currents," "influences," "percipients," and the rest, "hypnotized" me, and after the usual "business" I went into "the trance condition," and began to talk gruffly and in a German accent. This was Schropff invoking thunder and lightning and asking what was required of him, which, of course, he ought to have known, if he knew anything.

"You are invited to say," read old Mr. Lindsay from a written paper prepared beforehand and attested, "how the owner of this object" (here a New Zealand ear ornament of jade was placed in my hand; I knew it by the feel) "was occupied between 3:45 and 4:45 today?"

"Something small and smooth; it is stone, it is pierced, it is green," grumbles Schropff. "Ach, it is foreign, an ornament; it is Maorisch, ja!"

That is Schropff's highly agreeable style of conversation. I suppress the German expletives, which he uses when annoyed.

Mrs. Lindsay.—"Wonderful!"

The Professor—"Hush!"

All Schropff's remarks, be it noted, were taken down in shorthand for purposes of science.

Schropff—"I see something moving, it is large, it is oblong. (He pauses. Movements of expectation.) It is a railway carriage!"

Mr. Lindsay—"Who, if any one, is in the railway carriage?

Schropff—"I see a woman." (Titters from a young man of the class known as "Johnny.")

The Professor's Sister—"Hush!"

Schropff—"She is young, she is beautiful. What for do you laugh? (impressively.) She is nod the berson!"

The Professor (in a whisper)—"Hush, sir"—(he mentions a name which I fail to catch.)

Schropff—"She is nod the person. I see him coming in. He is angry. His luggage is here before. What is that in his hand? He has a bag in his hand. He takes out gakes out of the bag. He is going to eat the gakes. He puts the bag on his head. He hangs himself up by the heels. Oh, he will dumble down. (A wild explosion of laughter, clearly from the Johnny. They are remonstrating with him. I hear him say, 'But, my dear fellow, I was'—here he is suddenly silenced. I hear him being led to the remotest end of the long room; some one is whispering to him. I catch the word 'must' and 'honor bright,' and chuckles, with more remonstrances.)"

The Professor's Sister—"All this is very irregular."

Puygre—"If people laugh, the odylic currents are disturbed, and the trance medium ceases to be a lucid percipient."

Mr. Lindsay—"Go on, please, Dr. Schropff."

Schropff (sullenly)—"What for they laugh? if he make a fool of himself, is that my fault? (The professor, Mr. Lindsay, and others propitiate and mollify Schropff. He goes on.) Then I see him take a bag out of the rack. It is a long, thin bag. He takes a stick out of the bag. There are several sticks. He joins them together. What for is this? He runs a piece of string along the stick. What does he do? I do not understand.

The Johnny—"Perhaps he's putting up a fishing rod." (He explodes and is bottied.)

The Professor—"Dr. Schropff while alive was not a sportsman. Perhaps the explanation just volunteered is correct."

Schropff—"He fastens a leedle metal fisch to the string. Now he is fishing out of the window. He is a very foolish man. Now he gets under the seat of the railway carriage. Ach, I hear him sing; it is so as this:

"Ach, Jarley is my darling!"

I see no more. I go away. Good night, the company."

Here Puygre went through the farce of awakening me from my trance; as he did so he made a secret sign that I had blundered terribly, that Schropff had made a gross series of errors. This had been Puygre's inference of what he saw of the company. For myself, I felt that if Schropff were wrong he was very wrong, indeed. It was no question of half measures on his part or of "fishing inquiries." Schropff, for once, had spoken out.

The hypnotic hypothesis, of course, is that I, as the percipient or "subject" knew nothing whatever of what Schropff had been saying. I was only his unconscious mouth-piece. I waited humbly to hear what the company thought of the performance.

Presently Mr. Lindsay came up, leading the young man whom I have permitted myself to speak of as the "Johnny."

"Dear Mrs. Schuydam," Mr. Lindsay remarks, "this is, indeed, a triumph! Skepticism is silenced at last!"

Ah! how happy I felt!

"Since Cœsus, king of Lydia, boiled a lamb and a tortoise in a chaldron of bronze, to test the telepathic lucidity of the oracles (a test from which Delphi alone emerged triumphant, as Herodotus informs us), psychical research has had no more signal victory. Dr. Schropff, you will be delighted to learn, correctly described the very unusual occupation which engaged Sir Walter Welbore today between 3:45 and 4:45. Permit me to present you to Sir Walter."

And he introduced me to the Johnny!

Somehow the rest of the evening went by. I withdrew as early as possible, pleading extreme fatigue. What had happened? Could two men have gone through the same insane performances? Were there two Sir Walters? Puygre, though puzzled, was radiant; but words cannot describe my own perplexed anxieties. Oh, if I could only hear what they say in the smoking room, by themselves! I thought as I got rid of my limp, my crutch, my dark whig, and my American accent before going to bed, and even to sleep, for I was worn out with contending emotions.

Next day Mrs. Schuydam breakfasted in her own room, and took leave of her host and hostess in the most unassuming manner. At the station Puygre was about to enter my carriage, when Sir Walter—my friend I mean; not the genuine Sir Walter—spoke a few words to him on the platform, and Puygre, with a white face, told me that he would travel in a smoking carriage. My companion of the day before entered mine, got me a newspaper, procured another for himself, and read it till we were well on our way. This time we were traveling in a fast train. I asked a few of the questions which an intelligent American traveler might be expected to ask; he answered as well as he might, and then producing a pocket handkerchief he presented it to me, saying, "You dropped this yesterday when I got out."

Now, the handkerchief was marked in a very legible hand, Rachel Brinton. When one has a double personality, one cannot be too careful as to how one's double set of things is marked. I was reflecting on this, when he said:

"Perhaps I am not mistaken in thinking that you would like some explanation of what occurred last night?"

"What did occur?" I asked. "I only saw that you all seemed satisfied with Dr. Schropff, but you know I am only a sleeping partner, and have no idea of what Dr. Schropff may have been revealing."

He looked steadily at me, and I felt that Mme. Schuydam was blushing through her dusky complexion. I could keep it up no longer.

"I am at your mercy," I said. "What are you going to do? Why did you not expose me last night?"

"It is not my business," he said, "to expose people. I wish you would let me be your friend. * * * I am not speaking to Mrs. Schuydam. I am speaking to the lady with whom I traveled yesterday."

"Nobody shall ever speak to Mrs. Schuydam again as long as I live," I said, and I threw that lady's crutch out of the window of the railway carriage, and I suppose I exhibited other signs of emotion for he seemed deeply interested in the landscape on the other side."

"Do you really mean that?" he asked, after a long pause.

"Yes, whatever happens. Mrs. Schuydam is dead; my name is Rachel Brinton."

"Then, Miss Brinton, I am delighted to explain what occurred. I had often been at Mrs. Schuydam's seances; I was going to attend that of last night, and when you spoke at Reading I recognized your voice. Your Pennsylvania accent is not bad, but I never thought it was genuine."

"Do tell!" I exclaimed, in the voice of Mrs. Schuydam.

"That was better," he said, "but you were not always so happy in your imitation. I detected you, as I said, and when the guard called me 'Sir Walter' I saw your expression change, and I knew you took me for Walter Welbore, and I had spotted him as your 'subject.' Now I am called Sir Walter Bethune, and I was on my way to visit Welbore and go with him to the Lindsays. So I played these antics. Afterward I arranged with Welbore that he should pretend that Dr. Schropff was correct in his revelations. To oblige me (for I once did him a good turn) he consented, but he laughed dreadfully during the performance and nearly spoiled the whole affair."

"And what had Sir Walter Welbore been doing?" I inquired with a natural curiosity.

"Counting his pairs of boots and reading *Ruff's Guide to the Turf*. Mrs. Schuydam might—I mean Dr. Schropff might—almost have guessed."

"And why," I asked, "did you let me off when you had such a chance of exposing Mrs. Schuydam?"

"Do not let us argue about motives," he said, "nor speak ill of the dead; Mrs. Schuydam is dead, you know."

And, indeed, he managed so well and arranged matters so cleverly at Westbourne Park station that when Puygre got to Paddington no Mrs. Schuydam was to be discovered. Nay, not a trace of that lady has been found to this day. After Schropff's most remarkable triumph, the woman who had that spirit of divination vanished utterly to the extreme bewilderment of the society for psychical research. Some incline to believe that she was disintegrated; others aver that she is to be looked for in Thibet; but no one recognizes her in Lady Bethune.

Language of the Umbrella.

An American, after lenghtened study of the subject, gives the following definition of the language of the umbrella: "To place one in a rack at a club indicates that it will shortly change owners; if a cotton one is substituted for a silk, it means that 'exchange is no robbery.'" writes Angela C. Boyce in the January *Ladies' Home Journal*. "A man getting all the raindrops from the points of the umbrella, which he holds over a lady, signifies courtship, but when a man keeps a lion's share of the article, giving the lady the raindrops, it denotes marriage. To carry an umbrella under the arm at an angle implies that the individual following will lose an eye while to hold it just high enough to injure passers' eyes and men's hats signifie, 'I am a woman.' Lastly, the loan of an umbrella is synonymous with an act of egregious folly."

Starving Our Children.

When we see our house plants looking stunted, putting forth few leaves and no flowers, we stir the soil in the pots and enrich the earth, writes Elizabeth Robinson Scovil in a helpful article on "The Children's Luncheon" in the January *Ladies' Home Journal*. When we see a child looking pale and thin we say, it we know something of physiological chemistry: "Too little nitrogenous food." If we are simple folk, averse to long words, we remark: "That child seems half starved." It is the truth, however we express it, and a wrong is being done to the child that the fact is not recognized and remedied by whoever has the daily oversight of its meals. The unconscious victim may seem to eat a sufficient amount of food, while it does not get enough of the proper kind to furnish the nourishment the body requires.

Maintaining the Court's Dignity.

[Davenport Democrat.]

Judge Ryan of the Sixth Iowa district has made a departure which is attracting attention. He has prohibited smoking in his court and ordered that lawyers keep their feet off the table while examining witnesses. In most court rooms smoking is prohibited during the sessions of court. But when it comes to compelling a lawyer to keep his feet on the floor and his hands out of his pockets, that is quite another thing. It savors strongly of the blue laws. Judge Ryan has started a revolution. He is in danger of being waylaid by the lawyers of his court and called a czar or something worse.

Couldn't Afford to See the Serpent.

[London Globe.]

There was a captain of a Cunarder once who was called on to the bridge by his first officer to see a supposed sea serpent.

"Sir," said he, "I once knew a man who saw one, and put his name to a document to that effect. He was a captain, too, and when he came into harbor his employers dismissed him because they said they couldn't have a skipper who got so drunk as that. He was the sport of the press for a month, and his friends all put him down for as big a liar as Capt. Drake's great-grandfather. I'm going below. I can't afford to see sea serpents."

R. R. R.

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