THE SEVERED HEAD.

An Involuntary Crime.

I was born in Constantinople. My father was dragoman of the port, and carried on a profitable business in silks and perfumes. He gave me a good education, and as I showed ability I was sent to Paris to study medicine, where I remained three years and learned all that a good physician must know. I made few friends, and was finally overpowered by homes'ckness. As I heard nothing from my father, I seized the opportunity to return as surgeon in the train of a French embassy.

I found my father dead, and the priest said: "Your father died a holy man, for he bequeathed us his money for alms.' This was inoomprehensible, yet what could I do? I had no witness against him, and must be glad he did not look upon the house and my father's merchandise as legacies also. I gained no reputation as a physician, because I was ashamed to make a mountebank of myself. I sorely missed my father, who would have led me among the rich and great, who now had no thought for the poor Zalenkos. My father's goods found no sale either, for his patronage had departed elsewhere after his death, and new trade comes slowly. Discouraged, I was once meditating over my situation, when it occurred to me that I had seen my countrymen traveling in France with goods which sold at a great profit because they were foreign. So I sold my family mansion, left half the proceeds in charge of a faithful friend, and with the remainder bought things which are rare in France, such as shawls, silks. salves, and oils. I then embarked again for France.

My luck changed at once. The voyage was quick and prosperous. I traveled through the large and small French cities and found ready customers for my wares. My friend sent me a fresh stock of goods, and I made money. So success encouraged me to go to Italy. My medical knowledge aided me greatly. On reaching a town I would announce the arrival of a Greek doctor who had cured many people, and my balsams and medicines brought money. So I came at last to Florence. I decided to remain there a long time partly because I liked the city, and partly to recover from the fatigue of travel. I hired a shop in the St. Ceroc quarter, and two rooms opening on a balcony in a hotel near by. I then distributed circulars, advertising myself as physician and merchant, and had scarcely opened my shop before it was thronged.

I had been in Florence four days, when one night, after closing my shop and waiting only to take my usual account of stock, I found in a little box a note which I did not remember having put there. I opened it and found an invitation to be on the bridge called Ponte Vecchio that night punctually at twelve. I resolved to go, and, as precaution, to take my sabre.

When it was nearly midnight I started, and soon reached the Ponte Vecchio. I looked down on the shimmering waves of the Arno. The church-bells rang twelve. I looked around, and before me stood a large man wholly enveloped in a red cloak, a corner of which he held before his face. At first I was startled at his sudden appearance behind me, but I collected myself, and said:

"If you called me here, state what you desire."

The red cloak turned, and exclaimed in a low voice: "Follow!"

Uneasy at going alone with the unknown, I stood still and said: "Not so, dear sir, until you first show me whither. Can you not show me your face?"

But the red cloak replied, with coldness: "If you will not go, Zelankos, stay here," and turned to depart.

This angered me. "Do you think," I cried, "a man like me allows himself to be humbugged by any fool, and do you think that I have waited this cold night for nothing?"

In three bounds I had reached him. I grasped his cloak and laid my other hand on my sabre; but the cloak remained in my hand and the unknown had vanished round the next corner. My rage gradually cooled. I still had the cloak, and it should give me the key to this astonishing adventure. I put it on and went home. When I was scarcely a hundred steps distant from my house some one brushed against me and whispered in French: "Be careful, Count, there can be nothing done tonight." Before I could look around the person was already gone, and I saw only a shadow shifting along the houses.

I examined the cloak more closely. It was of heavy Genoese silk, purplish red, bordered with astrachen, and richly embroidered with geld. It's magnificent appearance gave me an idea which I resolved to carry out. I took it to my shop and exposed it for sale, but set so high a price upon it that I was sure to find no purchaser. My desire was to scrutinize sharply every one who asked its price, for the distinct though fleeting glimpse I had of the stranger's figure after he lost the cloak would enable me to recognize him among a thousand.

It remained in my window all day, admired by all. At last, toward evening, a young man came in who had often been there, and who had that day talked much about the cloak. He threw a purse of zechins on the counter, and cried:

"I must have that cloak if it beggars me!"

He began at once counting out his gold pieces. I was greatly embarrassed. I had exhibited the cloak merely to catch the eye of the unknown, and here came a young fool to pay the exorbitant price. What could I do? I yielded, for, at all events, I was glad to get such payment for my night's adventure.

The young man put on the cloak and departed; but, on the threshold he turned, while he loosened a paper fastened to the cloak and threw it to me saying:

"Here, Kalenkos, hangs something which does not belong to the cloak."

I languidly picked it up, but, behold. there was written:

"Bring the cloak to-night, at the same hour, to the Ponte Vecchio. Four hundred zechins awaits you."

I was thunderstruck. But I did not reflect long. I gathered up the two hundred zechins and ran after the young man.

"Take your money again, good friend," I said, "and return me the cloak. I can not possibly let it go."

At first he thought it was a joke; but when he saw I was serious, he flew into a passion, and called me a fool. We came to blows, and I tore the cloak away and would have run off with it, but he called the police, and we were taken to court. The judge was astonished at the complaint, and adjudged the cloak to my foe.

I offered the young man twenty, fifty, eighty, yes, a hundred zechins above his two hundred, if he would let me have the garment. What my prayers would not accomplish my gold worked. He took my money, and I triumphantly carried away the cloak. I waited impatiently for midnight. At the same hour as on the previous night I carried the cloak under my arm to the Ponte Vecchio. At the last stroke of twelve a form emerged from darkness, unmistakeably the man of yesterday.

"Have you the cloak!" he asked.

"Yes," I replied; "but it cost me a hundred zechins, cash."

"I know it," he answered. "See, here are four hundred."

He stepped with me to the broad railing of the bridge, and counted down the gold pieces. There were four hundred. They shone splendidly in the the moonlight, their glitter rejoiced my heart. I pocketed the money, and tried to look more closely at the unknown, but he wore a mask, from which dark eyes darted sinister glances.

"I thank you, sir, for your goodness," I said. "What do you want now of me? But, as I told you before, it must be nothing wrong."

"Your fears are unnecessary," he answered, while he threw the cloak round his shoulders. "I require your help as a physician, yet not for the living, but for the dead."

"How can that be?" I cried, in amazement.

"I came with my sister from a distant land," he said, beckoning for me to follow him. "We resided here with a friend of our family. My sister died suddenly yesterday, of an illness, and the relatives want to bury her to-morrow. It is a rule with our family that all shall repose in the ancestral vault. I shall let my relatives retain her body, but I must carry my father his daughter's head, that he may once more see her."

The idea of decapitating a woman was terrible to me, but I dared not to object for fear of offending the unknown. So I told him I was familiar with the process of embalming, and begged him to lead the way. Still, I could not help asking why this must all be done so secretly and at night.

He said his purpose was abhorrent to the relatives, who, if it were done by day, would prevent it. But only once have the head removed, and they could say no more. He would have brought the head to me, but a brother's scruples restrained him from severing it.

At last we reached a splendid mansion, which my companion pointed out as our destination. We passed the main entrance, entered a small door, which the unknown carefully closed behind him, and in darkness, climbed a narrow stairway leading to a dimly lighted hall. Passing through this, we arrived at a room lighted by a lamp suspended from the ceiling. In this room stood a bed, on which lay the corpse. The unknown averted his face to conceal his emotion. He pointed to the bed, and telling me to do my business well and quickly, left the room.

I drew out my knife, which, as surgeon, I always carried with me, and approached the bed. Only the head of the corpse was visible, but this was so beautiful that the deepest compassion seized me. The dark hair hung down in long braids, the face was pale, the eyes closed. I first made an incision in the skin, after the manner of surgeons when they amputate a limb. Then I took my sharp knife, and with one blow cut through the throat.

But, to my horrer, the woman opened her eyes, immediately closed them again, and, in one deep groan, breathed her last. At the same instant a torrent of hot blood shot toward me from the wound.

I had killed the poor creature! I stood some minutes in frightful anxiety. Then, overpowered with terror, I rushed shuddering from the room. But the hall was dark, the light was extinguished no trace of my companion was discovered, and I groped hap-hazard along the wall to find the stairs. I reached them at last, and descended, half falling, half sliding. There was no one below. I found the door only latched, and at once gained the street. Spurred by fear, I ran to my home, and buried myself in bed to forget my horrible deed. But sleep was out of the question, and soon morning warned me to deliberate on my situation. It seemed likely that the man who had persuaded me into committing what now appeared a madman's deed, would not accuse me. I resolved to open my shop, and, as far as possible, appear unconcerned.

But, alas! a new circumstance increased the hedge of difficulties. My cap and my belt, as also my knife, were missing, and I was uncertain whether I had left them in the chamber of the dead, or lost them in my flight.

I opened my shop at the usual time. A neighbor, passing by, exclaimed:

"Oh! what do you think of the terrible murder that occurred last night?"

I feigned ignorance.

"What! Don't you know that the Fower of Florence, Bianca, the governor's daughter, was assassinated last night? I saw her only yesterday, going gaily through the streets with her betrothed, for to-day was to have been her wedding-day."

Each word was a stab. All my acquaintances in town came and told me the same story, each version more dreadful than the last, but none so awful as what I had seen. About noon an officer came and took me aside.

"Signor Zalenkos," he said, drawing forth the articles I had missed, "do these things belong to you?"

I considered whether I should deny it, but as I saw through the half-open door my landlord and other acquaintances who could testify against me, I decided not to make matters worse by a lie, and therefore acknowledged the ownership. The officer took me to prison. Two hours after my arrest I was led from my cell, down many stairs to a great hall. Twelve old men sat around a long table draped in black. Seats around three sides of the hall were filled with the most distinguished people of Florence. The upper galleries were crowded with spectators. When I approached the table, a man with a grave, sad demeanor arose; it was the governor. He spoke to the assemblage, saying that he, as father of the murdered girl, could not act as judge on this occasion, and would therefore yield his position to the oldest of the senators. This man was at least ninety years, but his eyes were fiery, and his voice was strong. He began by asking me if I committed the murder, I begged for a hearing, and related boldly and distinctly what I had done and what I knew. During my story the governor grew alternately pale and red, and, as I concluded started up in a frenzy:

"Monster!" he cried; "so you would lay a crime that you committed from avarice upon some else?"

The senator rebuked him for interposing, since he had voluntarily resigned his rights. It was not shown that I acted from covetousness, for by his own statement nothing had been stolen from the dead. He went further, and declared that the governor must give an account of his daughter's early life, for only thus could it be decided whether I had told the truth or not. He adjourned court to examine the murdered girl's letters, delivered to him by her father. I was led back to prison, where I passed a sad day, only hoping that some connection might be discovered between the dead woman and the man of the red cloak.

Next day I hopefully entered the court-room. Many letters lay on the table. The old senator asked me whether they were in my handwriting. I looked at them found thew were written by the same hand who wrote me the two notes. I told the senators this, but they did not heed, and said I must have written them, as the signature was "Z," the initial letter of my name. But the letters contained threats against the life of the dead girl, and warnings against her approaching wedding.

The governor seemed to have some mysterious information concerning me. They dealt with me suspiciously and rigorously. To vindicate myself I called for my papers, which must be in my room, but was told they had sought there and found nothing. So all hope vanished.

The third day I was convicted of premeditated murder, and the death-sentence was read. I had come to this—forsaken, far from home, to die in my prime by the axe!

The evening of the dreadful day that decided my fate I sat in my solitary cell, thinking on my coming death, when the door opened and a man entered who contemplated me in silence for some time.

"Is it in this plight I find you again, Zalenkos?"

I had not recognized him by my dim lamp, but the sound of his voice revived old memories. It was Valetty, one of the few friends I knew during my student-life in Paris. He said he happened to come to Florence, where his father resided, who was a man of great respectability. He had heard my story, and came to see me once more, and learn from me how I could have committed so awful a deed.

I told him all about it. He was amazed, and adjured me to tell him, my sole friend. everything, and not pass away with falsehood on my lips. I swore to him by the holiest oaths that I spake the truth, that my only error was in being so blinded by the glint of gold that I had not seen the improbability of the unknown's story.

"So you never knew Bianca?" he asked.

I assured him I had never seen her. Valetty now told me that a deep mystery shrouded the affair. The governor had hastened my trial, and there was a rumor that I had long known Bianca, and had murdered her from revenge for her marrying another. I told him this all fitted the red cloak, but I could not prove his share in the deed. Greatly moved, Valetty embraced me, and promised to do everything to save my life.

I had little hope, but I knew Valetty was wise and understood law, and would do all he could to rescue me. I was in suspense two long days. At last Valetty appeared.

"I bring encouragement, yet of a painful sort. You will live, and be set at liberty, but with the loss of one hand."

Overcome with emotion, I thanked my friend for having saved my life. He said the governor had been inexhorable and would not allow another trial; but finally, not to appear unjust, he had agreed that if a similar case might be found among the Florentine archives, my punishment might be the same which had then been inflicted. Valetty and his father had been reading the old records day and night, and at last had found a precisely similar case, where the sentence ran:

"His left hand must be cut off, his property confiscated, and he himself forever banished."

So ran my sentence now, and I was to prepare immediately for the fearful ordeal which awaited me. I will not describe the horror of the scene when I stood in the open market-place and laid my hand on the block, where the life-blood leaped from me in torrents.

Valetty took me to his house until I recovered, and then generously provided me with money for traveling expenses, since all my property had been seized by law.

I went to Sicily and took the first ship for Constantinople. My hope now lay in the sum I had given my friend. I begged him to let me reside with him, but he astonished me by asking why I did not go to my own house. He said a strange man had bought in my name a house in the Greek quarter, and told the neighbors I was coming soon. I went immediately with my friend and was welcomed by old acquaintances. One of the merchants gave me a letter, which the man who bought the house left for me. I read:

ZALENCOS: Two hands are ready to work without ceasing that you may not feel the loss of one. The house and all in it are yours, and each year you will receive enough to place you among the richest of your people. Forgive one who is more unfortunate than you.

I could not imagine who had written it. The merchant answered my questions with: "He appeared to be a Frenchman; he wore a red cloak."

I knew enough to understand that the unknown was not quite lost to all honorable feeling. I found everything in my new house arranged in the best manner, and a shop stocked with goods finer than I ever had.

Ten years have passed, and more from habit than necessity, I go on my journeys with my wares; but I have never again seen the land of my great misfortune. Every year I receive a thousand gold pieces. But the burden on my soul can not be lifted. The terrible picture of the murdered Bianca is forever in my mind.—Translated from the German for the Argonaut.

England's Newest Fighting Ship, the Warspite.

A naval officer who returned from duty in the European squadron a few days ago visited the naval establishment of England before starting for home. He said yesterday: "At no time has there been so much activity at the Chatham dockyard at this season of the year as now. The British Admiralty are for some reason, perhaps because of the present Irish troubles, pushing forward the armored vessels which are building, and will have them completed at an early date. The mechanics are employed on extra time. The greatest amount of attention is being given to the powerful twin screw, steel-armored steamer Warspite, which is altogether an exceptional type of vessel. It is intended that she shall be the fastest armored vessel afloat, and, while she is to be employed on cruising duty, her offensive and defensive equipment will be equal to that of any vessel she will probably ever meet. She is over 300 feet long, with a displacement of 7,390 tons. Her armor plating will be steel-faced, ten inches thick and carried five feet below the water line. Her armor is laid on a ten-inch backing, with the usual iron skin plating, thus presenting a solid thickness of nearly two feet of steel, iron and timber against the compact of shot and shell.

"Above the fighting deck will be a tower, protected by a steel armor, while her weather deck will be protected by a steel-faced armor. The armament will be unusually heavy, consisting of four 18-ton breech-loading rifles, besides the usual machine guns and torpedoes. The rifles will be capable of piercing sixteen inches of iron armor, or thirteen inches of steel armor at a distance of 1,000 yards. She will also have a number of six-inch breech-loading rifles for effective work at a range of five miles. Her cost, when completed, will be about $3,750,000, her hull and machinery alone costing about $2,500,000. This, together with the other armored vessels will be completed during the present year."—N. Y. Sun.

A recent whirlwind caused a water spout fifteen feet high on the Piscataqua River, near the Portsmouth bridge, in New Hampshire.

The famous chestnut tree on Mount Ætna measures 210 feet at its base. Its age is at least 800 years.

There are in London ninety-three recognized clubs having over nineteen thousand members, who, on the average, pay an annual subscription of $25. The total income of these clubs is estimated to reach $3,000,000 a year.

An inventor has obtained a patent in England for the manufacture of what he dignifies by the name "wine." It is a mixture of cane-sugar and glucose, colored with certain dyewoods, orchella weed; soroel paste, etc., according to fancy, and subjected to fermentation. Similar mixtures are made abroad, and made so cunningly that upon analyzing they show no products but what are found in the genuine juice of the grape.

The Spanish army consists of 134,000 men, of whom 94,000 are in Spain, and the rest in the Spanish West Indies.

A disagreeable comparison is presented to the English people by the Irish Register General's returns of illegitimate births, which are but 0.8 per cent. of the total number in Connaught; 1.8 in Munster, and 2.2 in Leinster, while in the strong Protestant county of Down the highest figure, over 6 per cent., is reached. In Lancashire, in England, the pes centage of illegitimacy is over 20.

To show that country people may be too sharp for city folks, the Richmond (Va.) Religious Herald adduces the following; "The other day a pastor and several of his head men went out to take a collection at a country church for the new church in the city. Pretty soon after the city clique reached the country church some of the country sisters besieged them for a contribution to buy a new suit of clothes for their pastor. The upshot of it was that the finely dressed city brethren had to borrow money to get back home."

"I had one insane man under nearly incessant observation," wrote the late Dr. Leserques, the famous French doctor. "He was a cultivated patient, seemingly quite sane and highly intelligent. I visited him three times a day. He implored me to have him set at liberty. One minute with the most persuasive eloquence and the next with irrefutable logic—so irrefutable that at the end of eight months I gave the certificate of freedom. Two days after with one stroke of the knife he killed his wife."

The value of the chief art collections of Paris is estimated as follows: The Duc d' Aumale, $15,000,000; the Baron de Rothschild, $10,000,000; Sir Richard Wallace, $8,000,000; M. Secretan, $2,000,000, including thirty pictures by Meissonier; M. Defoer-Bey and the Count de Greffuhle, each $600,000; Madame Cossin, $1,000,000; and M. Edouard Andre and Mr. William Stewart, $400,000 each.

The mayor of Chicago is perfectly satisfied with that city. He said in a speech lately that "Chicago is one of the grandest cities in the world, and is yet destined to be the centre of enlightenment as well as of industry. The various nationalities present by intermarriage would yet produce a type of manhood unequaled in the world." Disclaiming the idea of Chicago's wickedness, the mayor continued: "It is a newspaper lie. It is the best and most moral city to be found on earth, because its citizens are so busy that they have not time to do anything wrong."

One of the most painful phases of Washington life, according to a correspondent, is the presence of "old, battered wrecks, that the waves and winds of politics have cast ashore from time to time." Forced out of public life, these ne'er do wells" settle in Washington and drift from bad to worse. Ex-Senators, ex-cabinet officers, ex-generals are seen "so seedy and dilapidated that they will cross the street rather than meet an old friend," so poor and helpless that they are often hungry, without a cent to buy food." In spite of the pathos of the fact, one cannot help feeling that men who are capable of such degradation are better out of office than in.

Cornell university resents the imputation of some of its alumni that it is not expending its rich heritage for the promotion of "the higher education," etc. The defense offered by two of the trustees seems conclusive. The property of the university is said now to be worth $7,000,000, and its annual income $400,000. Appreciation of western lands has in a very short period made it one of the richest institutions of learning in the world.

SAVED ONLY TO BE LOST.

A Story that Ends so Sadly as to Cause the Heart to Drop With a Dull Thud.

From the Chicago Tribune.

"Kiss me, darling."

Richard Irwin has toiled slowly and wearily up the two flights of stairs which led to the poor abode and looked long and lovingly into the pale but beautiful face of the girl who had given up parents, home and everything that had made life happy to become his wife. As she stood there, her soft white arms twined lovingly around his neck and her deep hazel eyes upraised to his, he saw that she had been weeping, and around the wan, drooping lips that in the happy bygone days were so often raised, pouting merrily the while, to be kissed by his own, there were traces of pie. Richard Irwin shuddered as he drew the lithe, yielding form still more closely to him, and he wept bitter, scalding tears of pain to think that his wife, Clytie Stiggins, Boston born and bred—a girl who habitually read Emerson and whose essay on the theory of historical cleavage in red sandstone was only excelled by her paper on the fauna of the policene period—should be reduced to eating pie in the morning. And while he was wrapped in these painful reveries Clytie raised her head from his bosom. One glance told her all.

"You are suffering my darling," she said. "Can you not tell me, your wife, of your sorrow?"

"It is nothing," Richard replied, kissing her tenderly.

"Lemon pie, too," he murmured in hoarse agonizing tones, as his lips left hers. "My God! this is terrible."

Just then a noise as of some one dragging himself slowly and wearily up the stairs was heard. Presently it ceased, and a messenger-boy kicked open the door, and walking to where Richard Irwin sat handed him a telegram. He fore open the envelope with trembling hands and read the message, the boy looking over his shoulder to see that everything was all right.

"We are saved, Clytie," he said, in low, broken tones. "Your father is dead, and all his mackerel fishery is yours."

"Yes," murmured the girl, kneeling beside the chair on which her husband sat. "We are saved, Richard—saved by a canthopterygian fish of the scomberoid family. Its body is fusiform, its first dorsal fin continuous, and its branchiostegal rays are seven in number"—and then, looking up suddenly, she saw that the man she loved so well, and for whom she would have sacrificed her life, was lying cold and pulseless across the chair. She had talked him to death.

We have spoken of the Countess Edmund de Talleyrand, nee Princess de Sagan, as the great lady of Prince Tallyerand's household. The French Embassy had need of her redeeming qualities to render the prince's soirees tolerable to the high-class members of Viennese society. Talleyrand had been accompanied to Vienna by Mme. de Talleyrand, whose eccentricities were hardly compatible with perfect soundness of mind. The adventures of this lady before she became Mme. de Talleyrand have been the subject of much discussion, and we do not regard the well-kuown story of her having confounded the celebrated French traveler Denon with Robinson Crusoe as anything more than a laughable blunder on her part, resulting from her having hastily skimmed the wrong book of travels preparatory to her reception of M. Dinon at the prince's table, But, however stout a champion Mme. de Talleyrand may have had in M. Amedee Pichot, who contends that the story of Robinson Crussoe is the only evidence of the sottise or beties of Mme. de-Talleyrand, she had some very odd moments while he did the honors of the Prince's salons during the congress. We shall content ourselves with citing two anecdotes on the faith of a most trustworthy eye-witness. The Princess had two young nieces in her suite who had not yet entered their teens. Her practice was on the evenings of her receptions, when a sufficient company had assembled, to direct a pair of folding doors to be thrown open, through which the two young ladies made their entree into the salon with their arms encircling each other and proceeded to execute a series of pirouettos round the room ending at last with a graceful corutesy before Mme. de Talleyrand. This was comparatively an innocent oddity on her part, although it bored her guests. Her second oddity was more mischievous and caused great offense. She would frequently during her evening receptions ring the bell and order her groom of the chambers to say that she was not at home, and after the lapse of a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes she would ring the bell again and give a counter order. The consequence was that husbands who called for their wives had to go home without them, and wives who came in search of their husbands could find no admittance; and all that Talleyrand could say, when a diplomatist of the highest rank remonstrated with him, was "Mais mon cher, que voulez-vouz que je fasse, ma femme est si bete." We take the truth of the matter to be that Mme. de Talleyrand was at times a little crazy. She was a native of the East Indies, and Bonaparte, who was annoyed with her Robinson Crusoe story, which went the round of the Parisian salons, pronounced her to be "une sotte et d'une grossiere ignorance," and shortly after forbid her appearance at his Court because she had received a douceur from the merchants of Genoa. Had she not been a little crazy she would never have ventured on the bold step by which she made the aquaintance of Talleyrand, at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Directorate, and subsequently nearly compromised him as her husband with Bonaparte by accepting 4000,000f, from the Genoese, who hoped thereby to obtain some commercial advantages through her influence.—Temple Bar.

How He Caught His Clerks.

A merchant who kept three clerks, each one of whom made his own change and had free access to the money-drawers, was the other day asked by a commercial traveler why he did not keep a cashier to receive all moneys? "Cost too much," was the reply. "But are your clerks honest?" "Perfectly honest." "Have you any objection to my trying them?" "Certainly not; go ahead in any way you wish." The traveler went away, but in about three hours he returned, and said in a loud voice so that all might hear: "When I was here this morning I paid you a bogus quarter by mistake. In case you find it in counting up to-night, lay it aside, and I'll redeem it." Then the traveler, accompanied by the merchant, took position where the back door and the alley could be kept in view, and in less than ten minutes out came the head clerk and emptied a handful of silver on the head of a barrel, and pawed it over. The bogus quarter was not there. He returned to the store and out came a second clerk, and went through the same programme. He was followed by a third, and after he disappeared the merchant calmly observed: "I've been waiting thirteen years for trade to pick up, and I rather guess I'll try the cashier system."

Daniel Webster's Legal Acumen

"Towle" in Polton Traveler.

An anecdote of Daniel Webser was told me, the other day, which will bear repeating. Soon after Webster had started out as a lawyer, a blacksmith called upon him for advice concerning the title to a small estate bequeathed him. As the terms of the will were peculiar, and the kind of estate transmitted doubtful, an attempt was made to annul the will. Webster carefully examined the case, but found that he was unable to give an opinion, for the reason that he did not have the proper legal authorities in his possession. He was very much interested in the case, however, and at his own expense purchased the necessary law books, and in his leisure time studied, and came to the conclusion that his client had the right of the contest. He argued the case when it came to trial, and won it, charging the blacksmith fifteen dollars for his services. Years afterwards when Webster's name was upon every lip, he was traveling from Boston to Washington and stopped over at New York city. Aaron Burr was at that time engaged in arguing a very important case before the state court, and he sought Webster's opinion. Webster heard the facts, and upon being asked if he could mention the law applicable to the case, instantly replied that he could, and then began to quote decisions bearing upon it from the time of Charles II. Burr was amazed, and said: "Mr. Webster, have you been before consulted in this case?" "Most certainly not," he replied. "I never heard of your case until this evening." "Very well," said Mr Burr, "proceed." Webster concluded his quotation of authorities, and received from Burr a handsome fee. The secret of Webster's knowledge of the law applicable to Burr's case was that precisely the same principle was involved as in the blacksmith's case of many years before, for which he had received but fifteen dollars.

Frogs as a Table Delicacy.

From the Boston Post.

Within the past few years the demand for frogs as an article of food has steadily increased and many people to-day rate frog legs very highly as a table delicacy. Many of these persons a few years ago would have hesitated some time before accepting the delicious batrachians in their bill of fare. Within the past winter this demand has been with difficulty met, and from all appearances the coming season will be a very prosperous and profitable one for the already opened, and Mr. A. A. Beck, the largest dealer in the state and probably in the country, has engaged nearly one hundred men in the several New England states to catch for him the coming season, and he estimates that the demand this summer will be double that of the last year. Many hotels that formerly had frogs only during the summer are now making contracts for them the year round.

An attempt was made last summer to send live frogs to England and the first attempt was watched with considerable interest, as it was doubtful if the attempt would result successfully. The frogs were properly selected and special attention was given to their care and feeding during the long sea voyage. The first lot of animals sent arrived in England in the best of condition, having stood the voyage remarkably well, and the mortality was very slight. During the summer several other attempts were made and the results of all were very successful. These lots were designed for hospitals and were sent on special orders for surgical experiments. Some were dressed and eaten and a demand in a small way was immediately started, The green frog, or, as he is generally known, the bull frog, is not a native of England, and it is now desired to introduce and propagate him in sufficient numbers, so that they can be used for food. To this end a novel attempt will be made next month to send to England the spawn of the bull frog to stock a pond and rear the frogs in English waters.

Great Conversers.

The practice of expressing one's ideas before the public is so near of kin to conversation that it might readily be supposed the two talents would go together. Generally they have done so. Sheridan was a most brilliant and fascinating speaker, and his conversation was of the same kind. It was said of him that he used to lie abed of a morning and think up puns, repartees and smart things generally for the day, carefully refraining them in mind and then leading up the conversation to a point at which one or more good things could be let off, like fire-crackers. But Sheridan was a notable man in every respect, One night, while the House of Commons was crowded to suffocation to hear him speak on an announced topic, one London theater was giving the "School for Scandal," another "The Critic," and a third "The Rivals," and no other author ever enjoyed so much popularity in his own day as he; Burke was as great in the drawing-room as on the opposition bench. He was Johnson's leading opponent in whatever topic might come up, and was almost sure to take the other side just for the sake of the argument. He could hardly be said to converse, however; he rather harangued, and was fond of going into the depths of the subject, and when it is remembered that he knew nearly everything, and insisted on telling all he knew, the terrors of starting him on a down-grade with the throttle valve wide open, are easily seen and appreciated. The elder Pitt talked as well as he spoke, but his son was not so gifted, and used to say he had no time to spend in idle words. He did not seem to share the opinion of Napoleon, that conversation was the best means of getting at the truth. The little corporal was no great talker himself, but whenever he wanted to study out any subject, he always assembled a number of men who understood it and in one way or another got them to wrangle over it, when the truth was bound to come out. Whenever Napoleon did talk he said something worth remembering. Fox spent more time in talk than in anything else, and talked for the love of it. But talkers have not always been orators, though orators have generally been talkers. Macauley was no orator, though a talker of the purest water. Sidney Smith called him a "bock in breeches," and was not far wrong, since Macauley's gift in conversation somewhat resembled those of Burke.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Cutting Heads Off.

You probably know that, in Berlin, when they wish to deprive a criminal of his life they cut him in two at the neck. The executioner that wields the sharp ax is called upon to exercise his functions on an average about once a month. His name is Krauts, a mild-faced old fellow, with a soft, gentle voice, a dandy manner, and white hands, and on these occasions he usually smokes a cigarette. He has four assistants, a quartette of cruel, hard-looking men, whose duty it is to strip the victim. In the case under notice the culprit was suffering the extreme penalty of the law for no less a crime than the murder of his wife and two children. When he had been stripped to the undershirt, the collar of which was cut down to the level of his shoulders, his feet pinioned, and his hands tied behind him he was led out and his head placed upon the block. In the meantime Krauts, the executioner, had stood among the few spectators of the scene, quietly puffing his cigarette, and without anything in his demeanor indicative of his office. When the platform was reached he threw aside his cigarette, grasping the ax in his white, sinewy hands, gave it a swing upward, and struck with a force sufficient to detach the head from the body instantly. The remains were covered with black cloth, and the witnesses, having signed their names, were escorted out of the jail.

I have seen many executions by hanging, and a number by ball and shot, and have witnessed one or two poor victims being keelhauled, but it seems to me that decapitation must be the most brutal—certainly it is the most hideous to contemplate.—London Correspodence Chicago News.

Indigestion and Disease.

Dr. Henry Reynolds has an article in the Phrenological Journal on indigestion, which seems to define the nature and symptoms of the complaint very closely.

Many suffering from dyspepsia will find their own feelings described in the following extracts taken from Dr. Reynolds' paper, and we hope some will derive benefits from his hints.

The important relation of indigestion to many diseases which people suffer is not sufficiently realized. Difficulty in breathing, occurring spontaneously, or on slight exertion, may be caused by indigestion.

Indigestion causes alteration in the general nutrition of the body which are manifested in various ways, among which are the following: Anæmia, or a depraved state of the blood, involving a deficiency of the red globules of the blood, and causing persons thus affected to be unnaturally pale, especially about the lips; decay of the teeth; grayness of the hair; excessive liability to inflammation from slight causes, of the muccous membranes, especially the eyes and throat; to which may be added, in cases of those predisposed to such affections, liability to gout and rneumatism, and affections of the lungs or kidneys. Consumption has frequently been regarded as due in many cases to long-continued derangement of the digestion, whereby the general nutrition of the system has become impaired.

[illegible] man's sore throat," is a product of indigestion, and the removal of the cause by the adoption of a suitable dietary, exercise in the open air, and observance of the laws of health generally will be the best treatment of it.

Indigestion is the cause of various alterations in the skin, manifested by general coldness or chilliness, especially of the extremities, by changes in it color or texture, which may be earthy or sallow in tint, or dry and coarse, and by various eruptions, among which are the well-known eczema, acne, impetigo and nettle rash. Most of the cases of skin diseases affecting children are best treated by attention to the diet, making the diet easily digestible and sufficiently limited to insure complete digestion.

The causes of indigestion may be due to the food or condition of the stomach. The food may be defective in quality. There may be excess or deficiency of the normal ingredients, saccharine, starchy, albuminous, or fatty, or some of the naturally indigestible materials which form a part of all food. The food may be introduced in an indigestible form on account of the defects in the cooking of it, or imperfect mastication, or from its having undergone putrefaction or fermentation, which arrests the functions of the stomach. Imperfect mastication of food is a very common cause of indigestion among Americans.

Eating too much is probably the most common of all causes of indigestion. The secretion of the gastric juice in the stomach seems to be proportioned to the amount of material required for the nourishment of the system. Food taken in excess of this amount acts as a foreign substance undergoing fermentation and putrefaction, and occasioning much disturbance in the system.

Much may be done for the cure of indigestion by eating very abstemiously of suitable food, thoroughly masticated, taking exercise in the open air, and observing the laws of health generally. The amount of food should be reduced until the quantity is reached with the stomach and can digest without evincing symptoms of indigestion.

How to Treat Consumption.

Dr. Felix Oswald begins in the May number of the Popular Science Monthly a series of papers on "The Remedies of Nature for the Principal Disorders of the Human Organism." The first paper treats of "Consumption," and the writer says much of importance on the subject of this dreadful disease. He defines consumption as essentially a house disease, and says:

"Irrespective of race differences and special dietetic habits, the habitual breathing of vitiated air leads to the development of pulmonary scrofula. And science has furnished the rationale of that result. Physiology has demonstrated that air is gaseous food, and respiration a process of digestion. The atmosphere furnishes the raw material of the pulmonary pabulum; at each inspiration the organism of the lungs imbibes the oxygeneous or nutritive principal of the air draught, and excretes the indigestible elements. By breathing the same air over and over again, the atmospheric element becomes azotized; ie,, depleted of its life sustaining principle, and therefore unfit to supply the wants of the animal economy. The continued inhalation of such vitiated air fills the respiratory organs with indigestible elements, which gradually accumulate beyond the dislodging ability of the vital forces, and at last corrupt the tissue of the congested organ and favor the development of parasites. Consumption is one of the diseases that seem to confirm the tenets of the germ theory. A tubercular diathesis is favored by stagnant impurities of the circulatory system, by a warm and humid climate, and counteracted by cold air and other antiseptics. Six years ago a German physician demonstrated that the progress of pulmonary scrofula can be arrested by a pectoral injection of carbolic acid; and one of his countrymen lately ascertained that the tubercle veins are alive with microscopic parasites that multiply like the spores of a prolific mushroom. The first development of these lung devourers would seem to amount to a sentence of speedy death; yet their fecundity hardly exceeds that of certain intestinal parasites and the vis vitæ has methods of her own for dealing with such foes, is ever to begin the battle for life on the sole condition that we do not complicate the difficulties of the undertaking by counteracting her efforts or by perpetuating the influence of the original cause. Cease to feed the lungs with azotic gases and Dr. Kock's animalcules will starve and disappear as surely as man worms will starve and disappear if we change a pork and sour kraut diet for bread and water.

In all latitudes the disease known as pulmonary consumption is caused by the breathing of vitiated air and can be subdued by outdoor exercise, says Dr. Oswald, and while he does not say cured, yet in all stages the progress of the disease can be arrested by outdoor exercise alone. The writer believes that outdoor life will cure the human organism of any disease not to deep rooted. An hour's walking each day wilking will keep the lungs catarrh proof. The night air superstition is to be abandoned and all bedrooms should be kept well aired night and day. A rain shutter should be at hand so that in stormy weather the air can be admitted. After the prejudice against open windows has been cured, the repugnance to outdoor exercise in winter must be overcome. The best lung food is good air, and after that fresh, sweet cream. Salt pork is the worst, and salt meat, pickles, pungent spices, cheese and all kinds of intoxicating liquors are to be avoided. The diet recommended for those troubled with pulmonary disease is composed of graham bread, honey, beans baked with butter instead of pork, and a liberal dessert of sweet fruit, as sweet grapes, pears, strawberries and stewed prunes. Dr. Oswald says it is fallacy to suppose that the night is an unfavorable time for the assimilation of a hearty meal. Animals rest after repletion, and some of them never sleep until they have a good meal to digest. He prescribes a glass or two of sweet red cream just before going to bed, not as food, but as a medicine. It is an established fact, he adds, that fat counteracts a tuberculous diathesis. Consumptives should sleep much in pure air, avoid exciting emotions and stay out of crowded assemblages. If the danger is recognized in time the virus can be worked off by outdoor exercise.

What Startled Some Miners.

Down in Flowery District, recently, some miners, who were prospecting two miles north of the Lady Bryan mine, had quite an astonishing experience. They were drilling a hole into a quartz vein on the side of a mountain, preparatory to putting in a blast. One of the men were holding and turning the drill, while the other was striking. Suddenly a blow of the hammer sent the drill out of sight. Instantly a stream of water spouted up to the hight of forty or fifty feet. The water came out the full size of the drill hole, and was spouted for over an hour, and it gradually failed and ceased to flow. The men finally put in a blast, and, blowing off the top of the quartz vein, discovered some four feet below the surface a large crevice or cavity, which extended up the hill as far as they were able to probe it.—Virginia City (Nev.) Enterprise.