QUESTIONINGS.

"Come and kiss me, dimple-cheek;
Tell me what you think about."
"Will the angels come next week?"
"Yes, to you, dear, past a doubt."

"Will they tell me stories?"
"Yes."
That I cannot answer you;
Often when you sit and smiled
I have thought they talked with you."

"Don't the angels tell you things?
What's the reason? It must be
They don't like the big folks. Wings,
Willie said, would grow on me.

"When? Next year?"
"I hope not."
"Why?"
"Well, because I love you so."
"Don't you love folks when they fly?"
"They fly beyond our sight."
"Oh, oh!

"Can't you call them back here?"
"No.
"Sweet my child, they stay
Always out of sight."
"I know
I'd come back to you some day."

"Ah, I fear you would forget.
Let me clip your little wings."
"Why, mamma, your cheek is wet.
Did you cry?"
"For vanished things."

"What is 'vanished?' I don't know."
"Something lost or gone away.
Where's the rosy? You saw it blow."
"Did it vanish yesterday?

"Something vanished made you cry.
Was it roses?"
"What I miss
One low grave hides."
"Ah, I know.
That is where the baby is.

"If he wakes, will he be 'frail?'
But one day my grandma said
Baby's gone to stay with God,
God, you know, lives overhead.

"If he did, is must be nice
Living way up among the stars.
I'd like to."
"Oh sing, my bird.
Yet awhile behind the bars."

—*Ellen E. Roxford, in Christian Union.*

THE GHOST OF A CHANCE.

A Strange Story.

THE whole affair sounds like the wildest romance. Granted. It is not for me to go into the question of its probability; I simply record certain facts which have come under my notice.

Here is a young fellow, like scores of others, with just enough property to live on and to deprive him of the spur to exertion. A barrister, quite briefless, dabbling in art, literature and music, and doing nothing with either. Among other things he has one for quaint jewelry—not for his own adornment, but he collects it and possesses many curious specimens, ancient and modern. I know him very well, and he has often shown me these treasures. One day I call on him after a long vacation, and find him throwing off slip after slip of manuscript.

"Excuse me five minutes," he says, "and I shall have finished. I have made a wonderful addition to my collection, and in the oddest manner. I am writing a story about it, and—there—that's the end of the first part." He has been scribbling away while speaking; and now lays down his pen. "You shall read for yourself," he goes on, gathering up his manuscript, "how it came about, and you will understand why I am rather excited at recalling this, the narrow escape and the strangest adventure I ever had in my life." Then, lighting a cigar, and giving me another, he settles me in an easy chair by the fire, and begins pacing the room, while I read as follows:

I left King's Cross by the night mail on the 16th of last August. I was out of health, tired, and wanted to sleep; so, settling my traps on the seat to my satisfaction, I suddenly remembered that I had nothing to read, and I called the guard to the window that he might get me a book. Returning in a minute, he put into my hands Bulwer's "Strange Story;" and as I gave him the money, he said, "Now we're off in one minute, sir; I hope you'll like my choice." Leisurely turning over the leaves by the light of the carriage lamp, I very soon found that the work my friend had selected was utterly distasteful to me, and I regretted having wasted my money upon it. It was a story, as most people know, treating of spiritual influences, a subject on which I was thoroughly skeptical. I soon got tired of it, but it served its purpose, and sent me to sleep; and sound asleep I remained till the train stopped at Peterborough.

Only partly awake, I remember letting down the window, and that several persons in the crowd on the platform tried to get into the carriage; one fellow, just as we were starting, thrust his head so far in that I thought he was going to make a harlequin's leap for it. Drowsily congratulating myself on having had the door locked. I was dropping off to sleep again when I suddenly discovered I was not alone. Who was that seated in the opposite corner of the carriage? A young lady, assuredly. The dim light from the lamp enabled me to discern that she was in evening dress, with the hood of her opera [illegible] her head. She appeared to [illegible] stening her ear-ring into her [illegible]

[illegible] d," I thought, "that I [illegible] ve seen her get in!" Here [illegible] ll stretched across the [illegible] rug over them, and [illegible] e known if she passed [illegible] had certainly never [illegible] y angry and puzzled, [illegible] onstrate with the [illegible] ation. What an [illegible] for travelling. I [illegible] ke it out. The [illegible] quiet and still, [illegible] to notice me, [illegible] any conversa- [illegible] her till sleep [illegible]

[illegible] ning of speed [illegible] ollow danger [illegible] rain disturbed [illegible] lazily look- [illegible] prise we were [illegible] don, and that [illegible] seen. A dark- [illegible] as all that met [illegible] the open win- [illegible] damp air an- [illegible] the midst of the [illegible] of the night [illegible] far off. Neither [illegible] ngs were to be [illegible] oom. A furtive [illegible] e showed the [illegible] sitting there [illegible] g, and not the [illegible] ruption to our [illegible] guard as he [illegible] stopped, and, [illegible] e window, in- [illegible]

[illegible] cheerily: [illegible] blocked, [illegible] nal us to [illegible] 's be- [illegible] in a [illegible] low [illegible] place [illegible] hen I [illegible] eep it [illegible] in," [illegible] "A [illegible] pringing [illegible] back, he looked into the carriage and exclaimed, "Why, there's no lady there, sir!"

I turned, and imagine my confusion—she was gone! "This passes my understanding," said I, "for though I'll swear she was there before I spoke to you, there is certainly nobody there now, she must have got out." I crossed to the further door, and tried it; it was locked, sure enough. I let down the glass and looked out, but in the darkness, of course, could see nothing. "Why, you've been dreaming, sir," said the guard, as I, looking somewhat small, resumed my seat.

"Don't tell me," cried I, indignantly, and disgusted at the absurdity of the position; "I'm perfectly convinced that she was in the carriage! Why, here is positive proof." I went on, as I perceived, and immediately picked up, a gold ear-ring from the floor between her seat and mine. Amazement, mingled with doubt and distrust, was plainly depicted on the guard's handsome countenance, as, regarding me with a puzzled, half-comical expression, he said, after a minute, "Well, sir, if you really believe you saw her, I should advise your changing your carriage." "Why so?" I demanded, in surprise. "Because it's well to be on the safe side, sir, for I've heard something of this kind before. They say an accident is almost certain to occur when an apparition has been seen."

So, opening the door, he began to collect my bags and traps, while I, perplexed and not without some feeling of alarm, alighted, and followed him hastily along the side of the line. "You might have seen some ladies and gentlemen, all dressed for a party, get into the compartment in front of your's at Petersborough," resumed the man, as he steered me by the light of the lantern over the rough ground; "and fine and merry they were; they were going to a ball at Grantham. I fancy you must be dreaming, sir, for certainly none of them got into your carriage, though one did try, and as to apparitions, well" — He did not finish the sentence, for just then we found an empty compartment at the rear of the train; and the engine's whistle at the same moment announcing the line clear, with but few more words I was very soon again locked in and left to myself.

My first act when the train was once more in motion was to examine carefully the ear-ring so unaccountably found. The shape struck me as curious. It was a wheel suspended from a bird's claw, which turned when touched. Surely, as I told the guard, this trinket was a proof that I had not been deceived or dreaming; at least, this was not the apparition of an ear-ring, at any rate. What could it mean? The more I thought of it the more I was perplexed; and finally I put it away in my portemonnaie; and, with a mind wearied with puzzling over the strange occurrence, I at length fell asleep once more—but not for long. Suddenly I was rudely awakened by a terrific crash and a shock which threw me violently forward, while the carriage lurched over and nearly capsized.

I knew at once an accident had happened—the accident half prophesied by the guard. As soon as I could collect my scattered senses and found myself unhurt, I clambered out of the carriage and ran down the line to the front of the train, to ascertain the extent of the catastrophe. It was difficult to make one's way in the darkness and confusion; but what were my feelings of horror and amazement, joined to intense thankfulness, when I discovered, after some light had been obtained from a hastily-kindled bonfire, that the carriage I had previously occupied was lying a complete wreck! I knew it by its color and the number, which I had remarked, still visible on the battered panel. Then I learned that several passengers in the other compartments of it had suffered fearfully, and I was so overcome that I felt quite dizzy.

Here was a wonderful and miraculous escape, indeed. All the events of the last half hour rushed through my troubled brain. On that smashed and splintered seat I had sat, and but for the presence of my mysterious companion there I should be lying—crushed, maimed, perhaps dead. Horrible! The bead broke out on my brow as I thought of it. When my nerves had recovered a little I sought out the guard, who, pale and grave, was endeavoring to reassure the frightened passengers assembled on the bank. He was comforting them with the intelligence that a special train would arrive shortly from Grantham and take them from the scene of the disaster.

"My good fellow," said I, "you must explain to me what you meant respecting that young lady—the apparition, I mean, as you chose to call it. You said an accident—" "Lor' bless you, sir," he interrupted, sadly, "'twas only my chaff. I never heard anything about a young lady; but I thought as you seemed a bit scared it would make your mind easier like, and that's why I shifted you. I can't give any reason why such a fancy came into my head; but it's well it did, sir, for it just saved your life, saved it by 'the ghost of a chance,' as one may say;" and there was a faint return of the odd humorous twinkle in the man's eye as he thus aptly made a play upon the words. "It was the carriage you were in that suffered most." "Well, there's many a true word spoken in jest," returned I. "Are there many hurt?"

"About seven, I fear, sir, and four or more killed. We don't know the cause at present, sir; 'twasn't a collision, and don't appear to have anything to do with the stopping of the train awhile ago. These things do turn one up more than a bit, sir," added the man, as he was called away. The lamps of the special train were now sighted, and we, the unscathed, were speedily in our places, and arrived at our destination without further hurt or hindrance. But what perplexed ideas whirled in rapid succession through my mind as we were hurried along.

Here was I, saved from dreadful and untimely death by—what? Not a dream, certainly; but, whatever it was, by a most marvelous interposition, or, perhaps, as the guard said, "by the ghost of a chance." How could I call it a dream or entertain the notion of ghostly influence, when the ear-ring picked up by my own hand was now safe in my pocket? Was it safe? I looked. Yes, safe enough, the wheel suspended from the bird's claw. A wheel of fortune it had indeed proved to me.

"And do you mean to tell me this is a fact?" I asked, ironically, as I finished my friend's manuscript. "Every word of it, as I am a living man," he answered. "See, here is the ear-ring," and he handed me the trinket. "Well," I continued, after examining it, "what are you going to do? How are you going to finish your story?" "Oh, I don't know. Can you give me a notion?" He knows I have an eye for dramatic situations. "Not I, indeed; you will have to invent that, I suspect." And we talked a good deal more, of course, about the strange affair before I left him; and equally, of course, at the end of two years the story was not finished. My friend is only a dabbler, and seldom brings any of his efforts in art or literature to a fruitful issue. I little thought that it would devolve on me to take up the thread of this one, and finish it for him.

Before parting, however, I asked: "Did you see the girl's face?" "Not very clearly. The light was dim. I could not distinguish her features precisely, nor the color of her eyes, nor any details exactly, you understand; yet there was a look"—he went on after a pause—"which reminded me of somebody, or I thought it did, I could not tell whom, that I had seen before. It was a mere impression, quite unformed, vague to a degree. I had forgotten, even, that anything of the kind crossed my mind until you asked the question." "Would you know her again?"

"Humph!"—he hesitated—"I hardly know. I think I should if she were similarly dressed and posed." Then he said good-by; and for two years I do not think we have mentioned the subject above twice—once, when I inquired if he had finished the story, and once later on, when, if I did not clear it up, I at least threw a weird light upon the mystery—the light by which I am enabled to make a sort of second part to the first which I found him writing.

My friend's rooms again; looking much as usual, save that he is at his easel instead of at his desk. Again, as usual, keen for the time being upon what he is doing, he does not rise when I enter, and I stand talking to him for awhile behind his chair. We have not seen each other lately, and he rallies me good-humoredly about dropping the acquaintance of careless bachelors like himself since my marriage—for that momentous event has happened within the last six months. He was abroad at the time, and does not know my wife yet. Soon we passed from this interesting topic, and I said something about the water-color drawing he was working at, as I still stood watching its progress over his shoulder. It was a small study, done the previous evening at a life-school, as he told me, from what artists call the draped model—a rustic figure of a girl seated on a stile.

"But stay," he cried, "you should see it under a white mount. I have one here cut out to the size. Wait, let me get it." He rose and went to the other end of the room. An idea struck me, and taking from my pocket a certain cabinet sized photograph, which I had brought to show him, I stood it on the easel in front of his picture, which it exactly covered. Returning with the mount and talking volubly about what he was going to do in painting, he automatically put the hollow center of the white cardboard just over the photograph, but without, for a moment, noticing the change I had made. Suddenly he saw it, and, with an exclamation of wonder, started back.

"How came that here?" he went on, pale and agitated, as he looked inquiringly from the picture to me. "Did you put it there? Do you know the lady?" "You recognize it?" "Yes, certainly. I haven't see her for some years now; but I should know that likeness anywhere." He bit his lip and paused, and then added: "I didn't know you knew her." "I don't," I answered; "and I never knew that such person had ever lived till yesterday." "Then how do you come by her portrait, and why do you bring it to me?" "To ascertain if it really was the same person." "Same person as who?—what? I don't understand!"

"Why, whether, by any strange coincidence, this lady—my wife's friend and schoolfellow—might happen to be the lady you once—well, shall I say once knew under very peculiar circumstances?" He looked at me now somewhat angrily as he said: "See here, old fellow, there are matters sometimes in a man's life that he doesn't care about having raked up again. I tell you honestly this is one of them, and I don't quite like this kind of a joke." "No joke, on my word," I continued; "and if I am touching on anything unpleasant, please forgive me; for I have a purpose. Not that that I imagined you were so sensitive on the subject, especially as you contemplated turning it to literary account."

"I?—literary account? What do you mean?" he asked, indignantly. "I should as lief think of turning cannibal as of turning anything connected with that young lady to account, as you call it." I was a little puzzled now; so I said: "Well, but who do you say the young lady is?" "Her name—if you mean that—was Miss Naughton, Rose Naughton when I knew her; but I confess I don't see that because she happens to be a friend of your wife's you are warranted in referring thus abruptly to my acquaintance with her." "My dear fellow," I cried, "I had no idea of this, believe me. I hadn't a notion that you knew her name, and we are evidently a little at cross-purposes. But bear with me a minute longer. Admitting that this is a portrait of the Miss Rose Naughton whom you seem to have known, though I never could have guessed that, just look at it carefully again and see if it does not remind you of some one else—some one whom you once saw, I repeat, under very peculiar circumstances."

He bends forward to examine the photograph, and presently says, "No." Then I say, "Will this help your memory?" and while he is still looking at the portrait, I put down on the ledge of the easel, just under his eyes, an ear-ring. "Good Heaven's!" he cries, "what are you up to? What have you taken this out of the cabinet for?" "I have not been near the cabinet, if you mean the place where you keep your jewels." "Then what on earth—" He hesitates, and taking up the ear-ring, walks with it across the room to his treasure store. I cannot help, with my dramatic instincts, watching him eagerly; and it is as good as a play to see his surprise and wonder when, opening the cabinet, he takes forth the ear-ring he picked up in the railway carriage, and finds that he has the fellow to it in his other hand.

Yes; there they are, clearly the pair—two birds' claws, each holding a revolving wheel. "Now look at the portrait again," I say, when he had stood for a minute regarding me with blank amazement. "I don't say that you will, because it is mere speculation, but do you not see in the portrait of Miss Naughton something to remind you of the young lady, your mysterious traveling companion?" He is examining the photograph again. "Well, it is very absurd, but really, now you put it to me, there might be something of the same look in it, and—" He ponders. "Was it she, then—Rose—after all, that I in a measure was reminded of that night? On my honor I seem to think it must have been." Then, turning to me, he asks: "But what is the meaning of all this? Why do you want to know whether I can see any resemblance in this photograph to that girl, and where, above all, did you get this other ear-ring from? Explain yourself, for heaven's sake!"

"Because, as I say," I replied, "it seems to me just possible that, if there be such a thing as ghostly influence, or spiritualism, or clairvoyance, or whatever one may choose to call such mysteries—because, I say, if such things exist, you may have received the warning to leave your seat as you did through the mysterious influence of Miss Naughton herself, for she was in that railway train that same night, and those ear-rings belonged to her."

Again the wonder in his face would have been amusing had it not been mingled with an expression of pain. "Incredible, preposterous!" he said at length. "You say Miss Naughton is a friend of your wife's?"

"Yes; and I will explain how I came upon the fact forthwith. Yesterday, as my wife was dressing, she asked me to fetch her a brooch from the drawer in the dressing-case. On opening it the first thing which caught my eye, among a lot of little trinkets, was that ear-ring, and a moment's examination showed it to be the counterpart of the one you had so mysteriously come by. The device was not easily to be forgotten. You may judge of my surprise, and how it led to my telling her about your strange adventure. Then we went into the matter, and she on her part told me how the ear-rings had belonged to a schoolfellow of hers, Rose Naughton by name, who had lately gone abroad; and how, two years ago, she had been in a fearful railway accident one evening, while on her way from Peterborough to a ball at Grantham—how two of her party had been killed while sitting beside her; how she escaped by a miracle, uninjured; and how, amongst the trifling events connected with the terrible circumstances, she had lost one of her ear-rings—one of a pair which had been given her that night by the man to whom she was engaged, and who was himself killed."

My friend's face, with a strange perversity, seemed for a moment to lose its pained expression as I uttered these last words. I resumed: "When Miss Naughton went abroad she gave my wife her photograph—that on the easel—and among other souvenirs that odd ear-ring; for it appears the tragical accident brought about one good result for her—it cut short an engagement entirely distasteful to her, and into which she had been forced—well, I didn't hear exactly how; at any rate, she never loved the man—disliked him, in fact, my wife says, and had no compunction about giving the ear-ring to my wife, who was struck with the quaintness of the device. You will readily understand how this story instantly associated itself with you in my mind. A comparison of dates and other circumstances left no doubt. I was bound to come and tell you; and I hope, my dear fellow, you will acquit me now of an idle intrusion upon your affairs. I assure you I had not the faintest idea that you knew Miss Naughton by name. I thought you might have seen her, as I believe you did; for assuredly her presence—either in the flesh or in the spirit, whichever it was—saved your life." My friend, full of amazement, held out his hand, and, in shaking mine warmly, evinced more feeling than I had ever given him credit for.

"Of course, of course, old man," he said, "I know you didn't mean anything; only I was taken by surprise, as well I might be, for I was tremendously fond of Rose Naughton once—am so still, for the matter of that—and the sight of her face rather took me aback. We were half engaged once, only her old mother broke it off; and I was angry and hasty, and—and I dropped them, and have been sorry ever since; and then I was too proud, and, in short, have made an ass of myself. Do you know where she is now? Do you know where she is gone?"

"No; but I can find out." "I wish you would; for after all you tell me, I have a strong inclination to follow her, and try my luck again—try if fortune will turn her wheel for my benefit."

"Most certainly do so; you would be flying in her face if you did not; for really this is the most astounding thing, on the whole, that ever happened to a fellow. There must have been some mysterious agency at work when you were thrown so close together that night without either of you knowing it. Say that the appearance was but a vapor of the brain, partly due to ill health and uneasy sleep, still its aspect and nature are clearly traceable to Miss Naughton's presence hard by; and mere coincidence is not sufficient to account for all that happened."

"Very marvelous, truly," said he; "and we can only call it, as the guard did, 'the ghost of a chance.' Still, whatever it was, it hardly accounts for the earring being in my compartment; that, as I originally wrote, was not the ghost of an earring; how do we get over that?" "Ah," I answered, "we are as far off in the solution of that as ever. Never mind; be thankful that things are as they are. I will ascertain from my wife Miss Naughton's present address, and do you go and see if she can explain the mystery."

He followed my advice, and he finally married Rose Naughton, of course; but still it was a long time before any light was thrown on the earring side of the mystery. This eventually came, however, thuswise: In the course of the whirligig of society in which my friend and his wife move, there has turned up a young man, who was one of the ball party of that fatal night, and he thus explains the enigma. He says he was late, and was hurrying along the platform at Peterborough when Miss Naughton and her friends were trying to find seats. They were a little ahead of him, and in the confusion she must have dropped one of her earrings, for he picked it up, and fearing to be left behind—for the whistle was sounding—he made a dash at the nearest carriage.

The window was open, but the door was locked; and on precipitately thrusting in his head to see if there was room, his elbow struck against the edge of the door, and the blow jerked the trinket out of his hand to the further side of the carriage, and across the legs of a recumbent passenger half asleep. There was no time to arouse the passenger or call the guard, the train being actually in motion; and it was only by jumping into the next compartment that he managed to save himself from being left behind. Of course he concluded that he should recover the earring when they stopped at Grantham; but then came the accident and the loss of the earring was held of little account—albeit it was a potent factor in saving my friend's life.—*Time.*

FEW people realize the fact that America widens at the north until it reaches out into the ocean so as to be within thirty-six miles of Asia. In severe winters Behring's Straits are frozen over, and animals frequently pass on the ice from one country to another.

Something About the Heirs Apparent to the Throne of Russia.

THE title of Czarewitch, or, more properly, Cesarewitch, was invented by Peter the Great, who claimed for himself an equality with the Cæsar of the West, the holy Roman Emperor. But the heir apparent to the Russian throne, dating back to the earliest ages in the history of the Empire, is now referred to as the Czarewitch.

As far back as the fifteenth century there are instances wherein the Czar and Czarewitch have had serious differences, which in some cases resulted not only in the Czarewitch being put under lock and key, but in his being put out of the way altogether.

In the old days of the Czars of Moscow the despot on the throne regarded his presumptive heir with much the same degree of jealousy as does the King of Burmah at this day the whole group of his blood relations.

It seems now, as it has always seemed, to be necessary for the Czar and his heir to be antagonistic in their opinions. If the Czar was conservative his son was sure to be a reformer; if he had Western ideas, the Czarewitch was impressed they were wrong.

Ivan the Terrible, who reigned from 1533 to 1584, accused his son of forming a conspiracy to dethrone him, and in his anger struck the blow for which he afterward invoked Heaven and earth, and promised treasures and titles to any one who would conjure back the life of his son.

Peter the Great and his son Alexis entertained different opinions in regard to the reforms introduced by the father. The Czar loved what he called "progress" and "European fashions," while Alexis hated both, and on more than one occasion intimated in public that when he came to the throne he would do away with all Western fashions.

The result was that Peter excluded his son from the succession. Alexis appeared satisfied with the decision, and declared his intention of spending the remainder of his days in a monastery. In 1717 he escaped to Vienna, and thence to Naples, but was induced to return to Russia, where by the ukase of February 2, 1718, he was disinherited. Later he was formally accused of conspiring against his father's life and throne, and on the confessions of his mistress, his pot companions and his confessor, all upon the rack, he was condemned to death.

According to one version the agitation caused by the trial so seriously affected his health that he soon after died in fits, June, 1718. There were rumors current at the time that his death was not a natural one, and the Czar, to avoid scandal, ordered the trial to be published.

Another version of the death of Alexis, that given by Peter Henry Bruce, an Englishman, who, after speaking of the imprisonment and trial of the Czarewitch, by his father, says: "On the next day his Majesty, attended by all the Senators and Bishops, with several others of high rank, went to the fort and entered the apartments where the Czarewitch was kept a prisoner. Some little time thereafter Marshal Weyde came out, and ordered me to go to Mr. Bear's, the druggist, whose shop was hard by, and tell him to make the potion strong which he had bespoke, as the Prince was then very ill. When I delivered this message to Mr. Bear he turned quite pale, and fell a shaking and trembling, and appeared in the utmost confusion, which surprised me so much that I asked him what was the matter with him, but he was unable to return me any answer. In the meantime the Marshal himself came in, much in the same condition with the druggist, saying the Prince was very ill of an apoplectic fit. Upon this the druggist delivered him a silver cup, which the Marshal himself carried into the Prince's apartments, staggering all the way as he went like one drunk."

The wretched Czarewitch struggled out of one convulsion into another, until he expired in great agony at five o'clock in the afternoon.

The Czar then ordered his corpse to be laid in a fine coffin and a pall of rich gold tissue to be thrown over it. "Very few," says Bruce, "believed he died a natural death, but it was dangerous for people to speak as they thought."

Of the death of this young man, Motley, in his "Peter the Great," says:

"It was not believed by many people in Europe at the time, and it is not believed by the Comte de Segur and the Marquis de Custine now, that the Prince died a natural death—unless the cataleptic convulsive fit, consequent upon extreme and protracted mental agony which finally ended his life, can be called a natural and not a violent death. All sorts of stories were told at the time, each more incredible than the other, and each disproving the other. The Czar was said to have knouted him to death with his own hands; to have poisoned him with a poition which he sent Marshal Weyde to an apothecary's shop in broad daylight to procure; to have cut off his head, and then to have had it privately sewed on again by Mme. Cramer; in short, to have made way with him by a variety of means, all of which could not well have been true, and all of which are, under the circumstances, extremely unlikely. To us it seems ridiculous to add a new horror to this terrible tragedy. We are not sure, either, that the supposed assassination makes the matter any worse. 'Murder most foul, as at the best it is,' we are unable to see that the private murder is a whit more atrocious than the public, solemn and judicial murder, of which the Czar stands accused and condemned to all eternity."

The Czar Paul and his son, Alexander I., did not agree. The same is the case with Nicholas and Alexander II., the present Emperor, who succeeded to the throne in 1855. Nicholas threatened to disinherit Alexander and leave the throne to his brother Constantine. The past few years have shown that Alexander and his son, in both public and private affairs as well as in political matters, are opposed to each other, and it is no secret at the present time that their relations are not pleasant.

The lack of harmony between father and son has been the occasion of numerous rumors, not a few of which are evidently without foundation. Not long ago it was reported that the Czarewitch was imprisoned in his palace by order of his father, but it is said the Czar lately has been trying to remove this impression by paying his son public honors on occasions of great parades. The heir to the throne is said to belong to what is called the "old Russia" party, which is bitterly opposed to the emancipation of serfs, and does not favor any measure for bettering the condition of the Russian people. In regard to foreign affairs, this party is still more aggressive. It believes that Russia will finally conquer and hold Constantinople, make further advances into Asia and control the commerce of the far East.

The Czar's attachment to the Germans is probably another cause of disagreement with the Czarewitch. Alexander's mother was a German Princess, and he was educated under German professors, and spent some of his early life in Berlin. He has been on intimate terms with Emperor William, and this friendship has doubtless influenced the turn of European affairs in the last twenty years. On the other hand, the Czarewitch is said to hate the Germans and to be partial to the French, and also to be in sympathy with a great number of the Russians who look upon the Germans as probable foes in the future.

The Czar is studious and domestic in his tastes; he loves peace and tranquility, and dislikes anything pertaining to War, while his son is a soldier by instinct. The Czar is a cultivated European; his son resembles the old type of Muscovite warriors.

It is not surprising that the occupant and heir of the Russian throne should be at logger-heads, as it has been the rule for centuries, and Alexander, in giving the title of Czarewitch to his son, seems to have also given him that heritage of opposition to the state which in most cases, has been a characteristic of his predecessors.—*St. Louis Republican.*

Committees of the Whole.

IT is one of the rules of the National House of Representatives that every bill involving the levy of a tax, or an expenditure of money, shall be first discussed in what is called the Committee of the Whole. As a Committee of the Whole is made up of precisely the same persons as the House itself, the reasons for this rule are not apparent to persons who are unacquainted with parliamentary usages.

What is chiefly gained, when the House goes into a Committee of the Whole, is that then the rules of the House only apply in part, and those which take their place are more favorable to free discussion and amendment, and to the rapid transaction of business.

We can only give one or two illustrations to show this. When the House is transacting business a member may move the previous question, and thus prevent amendments from being offered or voted upon. In the Committee of the Whole, amendments may be offered without limit, and there is only one way of stopping a debate, which we shall presently mention.

Again, in the House, one-fifth of the members may order the yeas and nays to be taken, and this often makes progress very slow. In Committee of the Whole the yeas and nays cannot be taken at all. Votes are taken by rising, or by the members passing between tellers.

When the House votes to go into committee—say on an Appropriation bill—the Speaker leaves the chair, and calls to it some member who is addressed as "Mr. Chairman," and who usually acts as Chairman when the House is in Committee of the Whole on that bill until it has been disposed of.

In Committee of the Whole the member who reports the bill from the Committee on Appropriations has charge of it, and first makes a speech in explanation. He is followed by other members, who discuss the measure generally, and not in reference to particular items.

When this general debate is ended the bill is taken up in detail. The Clerk reads it, clause by clause. If a member wishes to offer an amendment to any clause, he interrupts the reading and proposes it. The usual practice is to allow the mover of each amendment, and those who support or oppose it, so many minutes each, and to limit the time that can be given in all to one amendment. Sometimes a member will move to strike out the last word of an amendment for the sake of making a few remarks.

The reading of the bill, the moving of amendments and the voting continue until the members are tired, when the motion is made that the committee "rise." When this is carried the "Chairman" leaves the chair, the Speaker of the House takes it, and thus the House resumes its session. The Chairman then says to the House that the committee has come to no resolution, and asks leave to sit again.

Sometimes, however, it happens that a long time is wasted in talk and in repeated amendments to the same clause. As the Committee of the Whole have no power to stop the debate, the object is accomplished in this way:

The member who has charge of the bill first moves that the committee rise. When this is carried, and the Speaker has taken the chair, and the Chairman has reported, as we have stated above, a motion is made that when the committee resumes its session, all debate on the pending clause shall be closed in one minute, or in five minutes. The motion having been adopted, the House immediately goes into Committee of the Whole again.

When the consideration of a bill has been finished the committee rises. The Chairman then reports the measure and amendments to the House, which at once votes on the amendments, either separately or as a whole, and then votes on the passage of the bill.

In the Senate bills are considered "as in Committee of the Whole," but without so many formalities.—*Youth's Companion.*

Festive English Soldiers.

AMONG the many "dangers of the streets" to which Londoners are exposed is that of being knocked about and ill-used by drunken and disorderly soldiers. A very bad case of this kind came before the Magistrate at Westminster Police Court this week. A soldier was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the Buckingham Palace road. At about one o'clock last Wednesday a police constable on duty saw the prisoner, who was very drunk, push off the pavement two women, one of whom had a child in her arms. For this act alone he deserved to be taken into custody, but the policeman merely "spoke to him," and such were the good effects of the few words of counsel so feelingly uttered, that the prisoner actually "went on quietly for thirty or forty yards" without committing any further outrage. Here, however, the "old Adam" reasserted itself; and seeing a gentleman approaching, the prisoner could not resist the temptation of knocking his hat off. He then, in a military parlance, "retreated," or, in other words, ran away; but happening to see a gentleman and lady going into a house he could not refrain, even during his flight, from knocking the gentleman's hat over his eyes. He ran away again; but the police, thinking the time had arrived for interference, pursued and captured him. On being caught he excused his conduct by saying that he had "only bonneted the swell for a lark." The Magistrate fined him forty shillings, or one month's imprisonment with hard labor; but if "larks" of this description continue they will have to be repressed by a stronger hand.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

The Aged-Greenback Destroyer.

EVERY afternoon at four o'clock seventy-five female scrubbers and sweepers are let loose on the halls and rooms of the Treasury building. Prior to this charge of the broom brigade, they are massed in one of the lower halls with their brooms, buckets, brushes, squilgees and swabs. They are of many colors and nationalities. Their pay is fifteen dollars per month, and occasionally among them may be found women who once came to Washington in quest of positions more lucrative. But bread is as pressing a necessity in Washington as elsewhere, and scrubbing is better than starvation.

In company with the matron, Mrs. Seidmore, I reviewed the broom brigade the other day in the basement after the hours alloted to Treasury visitors. Seventy-five dusters and sweepers seem an imposing number, but when scattered about the halls of the vast building at their work their are few and far between. The waste paper collected is sorted and placed in three bins, for there are grades even in waste paper. Going to the top floor I found myself in lanes, passages, highways and byways of Treasury accounts, ledgers, records, big books, little books and millions of packages in millions of pigeon holes, all red taped and tagged. It's frightful to contemplate this avalanche of financial reckoning from all the States, embracing Custom-House, Army and Navy affairs, and all other business since our Government saw the light. There isn't room for it. Piles of accounts and well-worn ledgers encumber the landings and hallways. From the Treasury garret I was taken once more to the Treasury cellar. Here are the carpenters' and blacksmiths' shops, for the Treasury makes all its own desks and pigeon holes, and paints and varnishes them. But the chief anxiety was to show me the "macerator." The macerator was at work. The macerator is the mill wherein is ground to a soft, nasty pulp the called-in and condemned greenbacks. It grinds to utter paste and impossibility of recognition from $100,000 to $500,000 daily. It has a ten-horse power engine all to itself, and grinds about two hours daily. The money goes into a huge, round cauldron-like hopper into which open three small dials secured by three separate locks. The obsequies of the condemned greenbacks are daily observed with a rigid and precise formality. Three separate United States Treasury officials, men of known trust, probity and honor, "highly respected by all who know them," carry the condemned bills to the sacrificial hopper, unlock the sacred doors, chuck them in, lock them up and carefully watch each other to see that none of this Government paper sticks to their clothing or to the tar on their heels. Then hot water is let on, and the cogs of the Government coffee-mill rend the tens, hundreds and thousand dollar notes to atoms. You may look through a little window in the top of the hopper and see this process of liquidation going on. The engineer scooped up a handful of the ground-up currency from a mass and put it near my nose and eyes for inspection. It is a nasty muck. Yet, since it has been money, one gazes at it with grief, curiosity and even respect. The Washington people get hold of this financial filth developed from rags, which, after a circulation of years in greasy pockets and pocket-books, passing from dirty hands to dirtier, from den to dive, from disease-infected clothing, hospitals and dead men's clothes, until it returns to its birthplace, whence once it started so crisp and clean, laden with every variety of infection, disease, small-pox, yellow-fever, the plague, the itch, scrofula, consumption, battle, murder, sudden and slow death; they take this ground-up filth, mold it into statuettes, heads of Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, or into the semblance of bird and animal, and keep these as household deities, to be reverenced, since they are made of money.—*Washington Cor. N. Y. Graphic.*

A Pen-Picture of Queen Victoria at the Opening of Parliament.

HER MAJESTY acknowledges the grave greeting of her lieges by scarcely more than a glance of the eye. The head bent slightly, perhaps, but I am not sure. She, too, walks slowly; there is no vulgar hurry about any part of the business. As she rounds the corner of the dais her face is turned full toward our gallery. It is the business of courtiers to say that the Queen looks always well. For my part, I thought she had grown old since last I saw her, and that the lines of the temples and about the mouth were cut deeper than ever. It can never have been more than a comely face, and there is nothing, strictly speaking, in its contour, and nothing in the figure, which can be called beautiful or noble. What strikes you, nevertheless, is the air of authority and the air of stern sincerity which sits upon this royal brow and marks the least gesture of the Queen. The sadness of the face is profoundly touching; the dignity with which the burden—the all but intolerable burden of her life—is borne, appeals to your respect. She is here, they say, to mark once more her sympathy with the First Minister of the Crown; and with the party which, under his guidance, has been leading this country so strange a dance these three years past. But politics are forgotten in such a presence; and any criticism one has to offer is put decently aside so long as the woman and Queen is here.

When she had seated herself upon the royal robes spread over the throne—which she might have worn one would think—there is again a pause, almost solemn, and there is time to observe the gown which the Majesty of England has on. The Majesty and Beauty of England are face to face, for the Princess sits nearly opposite, and as the Princess is perhaps the best-dressed woman in the room, so is the Queen almost the worst. Her gown is of velvet, with broad, longitudinal streaks of miniver or ermine running down the skirt and horizontal trimmings to match about the body. But you need not stop to look at it; the Koh-i-noor glows in her corsage, and a miniature crown of diamonds shines above the stony head. The Princess Beatrice, in blue velvet, stands by her mother's side, with traces of the womanly attractiveness which belongs to her sister Louise, now reigning over the hearts of our Canadian friends. There was some maneuvering with footstools and arrangement of trains, and the Queen's veil had to be extricated from the netted work of the throne. Then the Queen said, "Pray be seated," and once more came silence.—*London Cor. N. Y. Tribune.*

HERR WICKERSCHIMER, of the Zoonomical Museum of Berlin, has invented a process for preserving plants and the bodies of animals, which, it is said, is of such value that the Prussian Government has procured the patent and given it to the public.