BOOKS OF THE HOUR

"LESSER DESTINIES," BY SAMUEL GORDON, A STORY OF LONDON LOW LIFE

SERIES OF USEFUL STORIES

"The Living Machine," by Prof. Conn, a Popular and Interesting Treatment of a Deep and Complicated Science—Two New Text Books Issued by the American Book Company—Literary Notes.

"Lesser Destinies," Samuel Gordon. Herbert S. Stone & Co., Chicago and New York.

To the American reader, who must be assumed to be unfamiliar with the life of the humbler classes of London society, this book presents at the outset a most uninviting prospect. The characters in it are all quite evidently drawn closely from life. The writer is familiar with the inner consciousness of the toiling men and women in the charred heart of London society. As its title indicates, the story deals exclusively with such folk. It presents them to view in the factory and in the aching poverty of their homes, as well as in the squalor and suggestiveness of crime which attend upon their places of amusement.

The principal character of the story, indeed its heroine, is Tabitha Jupp. She is as commonplace as her name indicates, but underlying all that might be the product of dubious heritage and irredeemably bad environment the writer reveals in her one of the unsung heroines of the world. She has borne the burden of her life without the slightest deviation from the straight and narrow path, which in lives like hers marks with cruel distinctness the course to be pursued by the decent and self-respecting. She has attained to her thirty-third year and presents nothing in outward semblance which would commend her to the notice of the most observant passer-by, and when she has reached this age she experiences the first divine promptings of love. She essays to enter upon a stage career. She blunders and stumbles helplessly in the course for which nature unfitted her and which her native lack of imagination has succeeded in blinding her to the absurdities of. But she perseveres and her native good sense in time enables her to distinguish the folly of the course which she pursues. Having in vain bestowed upon the unattainable her first affections, she gradually realizes her true mission and awakes from a dream of marital happiness with one wholly beyond her reach to the certainty of contentment as the wife of a hunchback.

This is the unpretentious and, to many, it may seem, the uninteresting story unfolded in these pages; but to the true student of life and character, to him who sees the beauty which lies concealed in the heart of poverty, want and ignorance, the story will appeal not only as a superior work of literary art, but as a deep and loving study made of living, toiling humanity borne down by the evil conditions which society imposes upon its weaker members.

"Lesser Destinies" is a valuable social study. To that class of sociological students who believe that we are fast approaching those conditions of European society from which the ancestors of most of us fled for refuge to the United States in other generations, this book will commend itself as showing the vast abyss which still divides the condition of the intelligent laboring poor in American cities from the degradation which attends every phase of their lives in the great center of modern wealth, the British metropolis.

"The Living Machine."

"The Story of the Living Machine," by H. W. Conn. D. Appleton & Co., New York.

Of the various little volumes composing the "Library of Useful Stories" which have heretofore been issued, or which are likely to be, it is doubtful whether another can be found of the great intrinsic value which this one possesses. Prof. Conn is known to all readers of the literature of science as one of its most luminous disciples. He is able to invest a subject ordinarily beyond the reach of the reader of the average intelligence with the keenest interest. He makes the most abstruse problems of science appear plain to the common understanding, and his work thus far has been of surpassing value in bringing within the popular comprehension the great discoveries in science which distinguish this epoch of the world's progress. This little book is devoted to telling the story of the human machine. It treats of all the most recent discoveries of science in the domain of biology. It is a review of the conclusions reached by modern biology in regard to the mechanism which controls the phenomena of living activity.

Prof. Conn, as is well known, occupies the chair of biology in the Wesleyan university. He has also written the story of germ life, which is one of the present series.

Prof. Conn traces with the profoundest interest in this volume the various steps in the scientific discoveries which bring us to the conclusion that the living body is a machine. It is the story of this machine which he tells. He divides his subject into two great parts, one involving the story of the running of the living machine, and the other the story of the origin of the living machine.

It is a singular and highly instructive fact that in the midst of the great advancement of knowledge among the masses of the people which has been made during the century now drawing to a close there still subsists the densest ignorance, even on the part of the men and women of intelligence, concerning the vital functions of the human body. This is the product in part of a totally false system of education, and in part of a grotesquely false modesty and morality. The reader who has mind enough and the faculty of exerting it to read this book to the end may be said to be the possessor of more knowledge of substantial and enduring value than is possessed by one person in ten thousand.

With infinite pains and in the clearest possible way Prof. Conn takes the reader through the various stages of discovery whereby science has at last reached the commanding eminence from which in time it will be in position to survey the profoundest secrets of nature. In his little book he brings together the discoveries of science in all that relates to human life, and gives to the unprofessional reader glimpses of those grand domains of learning into which it is vouchsafed that only the most conscientious scholar and student shall enter. If this little book is in any sense a test of the value of the fifteen or sixteen other like publications which make up the series, it can truthfully be said that the "Library of Useful Stories," published by D. Appleton & Co., is one of the most valuable libraries which the work of the modern press places within the reach of the every-day reader.

"Mexican Vistas."

"Mexican Vistas." Harriott Wright Sherratt. Rand, McNally & Co., Chicago.

The new volume from the pen of Harriott Wright Sherratt, while designed as a guide to the show places and points of interest in picturesque old Mexico, is so well disguised by an attractive cover and excellent illustrations that the reader is well into it before the purpose is suspected and the text tends even then to convince one that he is reading for interest rather than profit. As a sample of the contents may be cited this description of a Mexican watering place.

"The Grand baths, which are about a half mile east of the station, are open-air baths. They are named for the apostles, and one can take a St. Peter, a St. Paul or a St. Mark, as best pleases him. They are of different temperatures, but all hot. From the spring at the Grand baths runs a steaming brook which is used by the poorer people, both for laundry and bath house. The women are always washing on the stones and sometimes they are sporting in the water. In spite, however, of the glowing romances of the guide books we saw nothing fascinatingly improper in these public baths. For studies of the nude, Mexico, as compared to Cuba, offers few advantages. Indeed, we saw nothing in Aguas Calientes that the traveler cannot see at the springs in Southern France or Italy."

Mrs. Sherratt takes the reader to a great many interesting places. You can walk with her along the Calzada of Marelia, under the great trees, or stop and admire the dome of the Cathedral of Guadalajara, towering above the Plaza de Armas. There is all Mexico to choose from and you may pick as suits your fancy.

Books for Schools.

"Method in Education," Ruric N. Roark; "The Baldwin Primer," May Kirk. American Book company, Chicago.

"Method in Education," the second book of Roark's pedagogical series, is designed for normal schools, teachers' reading circles and for private reading by every teacher who seeks a key to the solution of the problems that continually present themselves in the schoolroom. By its practical application and illustration of sound pedagogical principles it presents a working manual of great helpfulness to all teachers, both to the experienced and the inexperienced.

The lessons in the Baldwin primer have been prepared in accordance with well established principles of mental science and child study. Besides a great number of half-tones and pen-and-ink sketches, the primer contains numerous colored illustrations of birds, flowers, animals, fruit and other familiar objects.

"The Honey Makers."

"Our Native Birds; How to Protect Them and Attract Them to Our Homes." D. Lange. The Macmillan Company, New York.

Mr. Lange, who is also author of a "Handbook of Nature Study," is well known here as instructor in nature study in the public schools of St. Paul, and this book from his pen will receive a warm welcome on account of his personality as well as because of its own merits. He seeks to secure better protection for American birds by other means than legislative enactments. In his opinion "insufficient means to carry out and enforce the provision of the law" are always "the greatest obstacle to the effective legal protection of song birds, game birds, and mammals." He is a believer in education, feeling that proper teaching by the friends of birds will in the future result in much less work for game wardens. Among the subjects discussed are "Causes of the Decrease of Song Birds," "The Decrease of Game Birds," "How Best to Protect and Make Friends of the Birds," and "The Uses of Birds on Hats." Bird day is considered and mention made of the laws on the subject. An interesting school exercise is given which would tend to cultivate love of birds among school children. One section of the book is devoted to game protection from the nature lover's point of view. The entire book is a valuable and entertaining discussion of American birds, with illustrations, and is a tasty specimen of typographic excellence.

"Native Birds."

"The Honey-Makers." Miss Margaret Warner Morley. Illustrated by the author, A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

In two sections this book deals with the bee and with ancient and modern literature of the industrious honeymaker. The structure, habits and intelligence of the busy little insect fill the first portion, while the second portion gives interesting anecdotes and allusions to the bee in the ancient and modern literature of the bee. "The Bee People" was written for children, and "The Honeymakers" for adults, but the bright, simple style of explaining everything in this "grown-up" book makes it of interest to both young and old, while it will be of decided profit to those paying deeper and more business like attention to the subject.

On the Book Table.

A. C. McClurg & Co.—"Moments With Art," compiled by J. E. P. D., $1.50.

Cassell & Co.—"Tempest," edited by Prof. Henry Morley.

The Macmillan Co.—"Our Native Birds," by D. Lange, $1.

James H. West Co.—"Of Making One's Self Beautiful," by William C. Gannett.

The Truth Seeker Co.—"Woman, Church and State," by Matilda Joslyn Gage.

The American Book Co.—"Method in Education," by Ruric N. Roark, $1; "The Baldwin Primer," by May Kirk, 30c.

LITERARY NOTES.

The Successful American, a new periodical containing biographical sketches of prominent men now in the public eye, with half-tone engravings and editorial paragraphs, has made its initial appearance.

The leading article in the January Home Magazine is Wilf P. Pond's "Tales of the Diamond Fields."

Former Consul General Charles De Kay, than whom no American knows Berlin better, contributes to the January Cosmopolitan a most interesting and important article on the impressions he gathered at Emperor William's capital.

The New Amsterdam Book company announces the immediate publication of two novels by popular writers. "Old Convict Days," by Louis Becke, author of "Pacific Tales" and "Wild Life in Southern Seas," and "The Glass Dagger," by Cutcliffe Hyne, the creator of "Capt. Kettle."

D. Appleton & Co. have nearly ready for publication a new standard work entitled "The International Geography."

"La Lettre d'Amour," one of the best love stories Richard Harding Davis has written, with illustrations by Howard Chandler Christy, it is the leading story in the midwinter fiction number of the Saturday Evening Post.

"Health-Culture," which has been published for five years as a quarterly magazine, opens its sixth volume as a monthly under the editorship of W. R. C. Latson, M. D. The January number is a bright one and contains much of interest bearing on practical hygiene.

FIFTY COCKTAILS.

Bartender Says There Is No Limit to Varieties That Can Be Made.

Chicago Chronicle.

"How many kinds of cocktails are there, do you suppose?" said the bartender. One man said six, another ten, while an Englishman hazarded a thousand, but no one paid any attention to him. Finally they all gave it up, and the bartender had the chance he had been waiting for.

"How many are there?" they asked.

"I don't know," said the bartender. "I have only been in the business ten years, but there are very many. Some years ago, when I was in 'Frisco, a man told me I couldn't make one dozen different cocktails. I told him I could make four times as many. Finally we made a bet. He used to come in every morning, and I guaranteed that I would make him a different cocktail every morning for forty days. If I failed I was to foot the bill; otherwise he was to pay. I got through all right. For forty days I made a different cocktail for him every morning, and finally I threw in eight more just as a flourish.

"There was not, of course, much difference between them, but quite enough for an experienced man to be able to distinguish them, and so I won. The truth is there is no limit to the varieties of cocktail, and I should not be surprised to see an experienced man reach the hundred mark."

Small Diamonds Best.

There are more perfect small diamonds than there are perfect large ones, and where a man gets together a collection of perfect diamonds he is most likely to have a collection of small ones. Thus the diamonds owned by Americans are not, as a rule, so large as the ones owned in Europe. Artificial light enables the European diamond wearer to wear his big stones that are not altogether perfect.

Richest Gold Mine.

It is estimated that greater quantities of gold and silver have been sunk in the sea than are now in circulation on earth.

The Ghost of the West Wing.

BY SHIRLEY RAYNARD.

John Strange sat in his chambers in the inner temple. He pushed on one side a pile of papers which he had been examining and turned to mend the fast-dying fire. It was a dreary night, the wind sighed in the keyholes and rain beat heavily against the window. He shivered more from imagination than from cold, as he took up a letter which had been delivered by the last post. He read it, then cast it carelessly on one side. It was of no importance.

"So there is no letter from Jean," he exclaimed. "I suppose I must accept my fate, though I could have sworn she loved me. She might at least have written and told me it had all been a great mistake. No doubt I've been a fool to think a girl of her stamp could care for a man like me, and yet I should have made a position in a year or two; and now—well, I won't stay here for Christmas, at any rate." He drew pen and paper toward him and hastily wrote, accepting an invitation to spend Christmas with his friends, the Belmonts, at their place in Buckinghamshire. Then locking up his papers and his desk he went off to bed, little dreaming of the delicate little note, which was at that moment securely caught inside the door letter box.

Now, it so happened that among other guests the Belmonts had invited both Jack Strange and Jean Graham to The Towers for Christmas. Jack had mentioned the fact of his own invitation, in his letter to Jean, but was hoping to remain in town at her bidding. She, on her part, started for Buckinghamshire with a light heart, after writing to tell Jack she would give him his answer when they met at The Towers.

The next morning Strange packed his bag, called a hansom, and drove off to Paddington. He had slept little, and was feeling fagged and anything but happy. The weather, too, was cheerless and desolute. Snow had fallen during the night, and the streets were in an uncomfortable state of slush. The tradesmen were trying to give to their shops a festive appearance, but the streets looked uninviting, and people were hustling one another about, in their attempts to get through their business at the earliest possible moment. Strange felt a relief as the train steamed out of the station. It was pleasant to see the open country, in spite of the bad weather. Change of scene was a help, though he did carry his trouble with him.

He arrived at The Towers in time for luncheon, and was heartily welcomed by his host and hostess. He found there were several other guests besides himself. The greetings and introductions over, Mrs. Belmont drew him aside.

"I have ventured, Jack, to put you into the west wing," said she smiling: "I hope you don't mind. I cannot fancy you being afraid of ghosts. My other sparerooms are all occupied. The only real objection to the west wing is its being so far away from everybody else."

"Oh, don't trouble for a moment," said he lightly; "it is the proper thing to sleep in a haunted room on Christmas eve."

"I suppose you have seen nothing of Jean Graham by this train. She wrote, saying we were to expect her last evening, but curiously she did not come, and so far, I have received no telegram. No doubt something has delayed her at home, and she will come in by the 5 o'clock train this evening."

Strange went to his room in the west wing. He found it a picture of comfort, but there were long and winding passages between it and the inhabited part of The Towers. It had been built several hundred years ago, by an eccentric owner, who wished to live his life in retirement. Being inconveniently distant, it had become disused, with the inevitable result of being "haunted." No servant could be persuaded to go along those passages alone after dark.

"I could give them the reason why Jean has not appeared," said he to himself. "Of course, she would not meet me, after her scornful treatment of my letter. When she accepted Helen's invitation, she did not know that I was to be at The Towers. No, we shall not see Jean Graham here by the 5 train."

John Strange was a proud and sensitive man, and he felt bitterly the way in which he had been treated by the girl he had honored above all other women. He had poured out his soul to her in a long letter, in which he had asked her to be his wife. True, he had said, in conclusion: "If you cannot love me, I shall know by your silence;" but for all that, he had expected to have some words of regret, and he had hoped, with all the strength of his manly nature, that he had not been mistaken in believing that she loved him. But now it was over; she had taken him at his word—and silence was her only answer to his passionate appeal!

The Towers was a pleasant house to visit. The domestic machinery worked smoothly. Visitors never felt that an effort was being made for their entertainment. You felt free to go and come as you liked, and you seemed to be living in an atmosphere of cherry good nature. The Belmonts were blessed with much of this world's wealth, and they knew how to make use of it, for others, as well as for themselves.

Tea was served in the drawing room on the day of Jack's arrival—a cozy room, with a large log fire and shaded lamps. Helen was in the center of a group of guests, pouring out tea. Strange was chatting with a pretty girl at the other side of the fire. Their conversation was bright and sparkling, and no one noticed his depression of spirits. He was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the 5 train, though he did not believe for a moment that Jean would appear. Presently, wheels were heard on the gravel, and Helen went out into the hall to receive her guest. There was a hurried conversation, in low tones, and then she returned to the drawing room, looking slightly disturbed.

"Miss Graham has not arrived," she said. "We begin to be a little uneasy. We felt certain that she would come in by this train. Of course, something must have prevented her at the last moment; but I don't understand why people do not telegraph at once in such cases."

George Belmont entered, not feeling in the best of humors with his missing guest. He had had various journeys to the station, which was two miles from The Towers, not to speak of the constant turning-out of the horses. A cup of tea soon set him to rights, however, for he was one of the most genial of men.

Strange went to his room about midnight, sat over his fire smoking, for about half an hour, then turned in. He was unusually tired. The day had seemed long, but he flattered himself he had successfully hidden his feelings under a cloak of gayety. It was several nights since he had slept more than an hour or two at once. Now, flinging himself upon the pillows, he went off into a sound and heavy sleep. It must have been some hours afterward that he was aroused by what seemed to be a knocking on a distant wall. He started up in bed, feeling an unpleasing thrill of the nerves, as he remembered all the ghost stories connected with the west wing. He was not naturally a nervous man, but in his present state of tension, small things had a greater effect upon him than would have been the case in his normal state. He sat up and listened intently. The fire had died down to a few glowing embers—only just sufficient to make darkness visible. The wind howled in the wide chimney, and dashed the loose sprays of creeper against the windows. At last he heard a repetition of the knocking, but it seemed at a greater distance, and he fancied he heard a faint cry amid the moaning of the wind.

"Decidedly unpleasant," he murmured to himself. "No wonder the servants have no liking for the west wing."

He listened some time longer, then sleep overpowered him, and he did not wake again until his shaving water was brought to the door. It was late, but the letters had arrived. It was the custom at The Towers to send them round to the bedrooms, so John Strange found one laid upon the top of his hot water can. Seeing the handwriting of his man in the Temple, he broke open the envelope at once, and found an inclosure of a smaller size. The man's note ran thus:

"Dear Sir: Last evening, in looking into the letter box, I found this inclosed letter fastened into the hinge of the lid. I fear it must have come by an earlier post. I hasten to send at once. Your obedient servant. —"James Watson."

John tore open the inclosure, and read:

"Dearest Jack: I received your long and very precious letter. I, too, have had an invitation to The Towers, and am starting at once. I will give you your answer when we meet there tomorrow.

—"Jean."

The note was dated the 23d. Jack read it over twice and then he fully realized the good news that it brought. But with the happiness came the thought that ill must have befallen her whom he loved. Yesterday, when his friends had suggested that harm had come to the girl, he had laughed the idea to scorn, feeling sure in his own mind that he knew the reason of her non-appearance. Now all things were altered, and there was every reason why she should have been at The Towers on the evening of the 23d.

"What a fool I've been," he muttered, "wasting all these hours and my darling heaven knows where!"

Dressing hastily, he sought out Mr. Belmont and explained that he had news from town that Miss Graham had started and he feared that something serious must have happened to prevent her arriving. Mrs. Belmont joined them as they were talking and the three discussed the matter in all lights.

A telegram was sent to town asking whether Jean had really left by the train she intended. Strange considered that his best plan was to go to the station and make all inquiries there. Unfortunately, being Christmas day, things were doubly difficult. The telegraph office only opened for an hour, and the trains ran as on Sunday. There was no time to lose. Jack had a horse brought round at once and made off at full speed.

Arriving at the station, he interviewed the station master first, but with little result. He had not noticed any lady answering to the description leave Maybury station, either on the 23d or the 24th, "but," he added, somewhat carelessly, "she may have come when I was away or in my room. I don't take much notice of lady passengers, as a rule." Jack wired up the line, but could hear no tidings. His fears began to take full possession of him now, and he cursed his folly in having wasted the long hours of yesterday. He was about to leave the station when an old porter hobbled up to him.

"Was you looking for a lady's luggage, sir?" said he, touching his cap. "Because there's some just been put out of the up train. The guard said that it was found in a first-class carriage and nobody to own it. As it was labeled 'Maybury' he has brought it back. It should have come back yesterday, seeing it was found the night before, but there's no telling where things get to at Christmas time."

Jack crossed the line, looked at the luggage, which he found labeled "Graham, Maybury," then, not being able to learn anything further, he rode off to the junction, three miles nearer town. He questioned the ticket collectors there, but could hear nothing. One suggested that the lady had failed to change at the junction, as she ought to have done, for Maybury. "Many people made that mistake," he said, "especially in busy times."

Jack rode back to The Towers to report his unsuccessful efforts, hoping to find further news awaiting him. In this he was disappointed. He snatched a hurried meal, for he thought it wise to husband his strength, then rode to Burton station, two miles further down the line than Maybury. Here the ticket collector seemed to be a man of some observation. He thought quietly for a few moments, then said:

"Yes, I do remember such a lady, now I come to think of it. She stepped out of the train just before it started, looking a bit flurried like. Her ticket was for Maybury, and she paid the difference, then walked out to the station and down the road."

Burton consisted of about fifty houses, some distance apart on both sides of the main road. Any one coming from the station and making for The Towers would leave the main road, after walking about fifty yards, and turn off to the right across several somewhat lonely lanes, and so wind into another road which led directly to The Towers—the whole distance being not more than two and a half miles. Strange left the station, wondering what should be the next move. He was fully convinced now that Jean, having failed to change at the junction, and having passed through Maybury station, had thought it best to walk to The Towers from Burton. She was a good walker, and would know that the distance was not great.

But what had become of her afterward? Jack trembled to think. He walked back to The Towers, stopping at every house on the way to make full inquiries. None seemed to have noticed the girl after she left the station. There seemed nothing else to be done. George Belmont had already put the police upon the track of the mystery, but they had so far learned nothing, not even so much as Jack had himself found out. He could not rest, but wandered about until long after dark, trying to follow up first one clue, and then another. At length, weary and sad at heart, he sought his room. Tired though he was, he felt he could not sleep in his uncertainty of mind. He piled more fuel upon his fire, and, slipping on his dressing gown, sank down in a big chair by the fire. He had spent a strange Christmas day, hurrying about from village to village, and often retracing his steps across the wet fields. The whole household had been in an upset, especially since the arrival of Jean's brother from town. He explained how his sister left home in the best of spirits, making it perfectly clear that something very serious had happened.

All seemed to have been done that was possible to trace the girl, but, so far, without result. Strange sat on, going over in imagination all the hours of the past day, trying to evolve some new plans for the morning, and wondering, in an agony of fear, what could have become of the woman he loved.

The clock in the mantelshelf struck the half hour after midnight and the wind sighed in the trees. The west wing seemed very far removed from the rest of the house. Strange rose from his chair, and began to pace up and down to relieve the nervous strain on his mind. He had only taken half a dozen turns when he was brought to a sudden standstill by a long and muffled sound of knocking, and what seemed like a faint cry, in the distance. He waited, remaining perfectly still, until it was repeated. Yes, they were most certainly the same kind of sounds he had heard on the previous night—the same knocking, the same faint cry. For a few moments a nervous dread possessed him, his hands shook as he pushed his fingers through his clammy hair, then, gripping himself as it were, he decided to follow up the mystery and run to earth, if possible, the ghost of the west wing.

He took up his candle and a thick stick which stood in the corner, and quietly unlocked the door. He turned to the left and made his way down a long narrow passage in the opposite direction from the inhabited part of the house. So far he had heard no sound since leaving his room, but as he opened a door which led to a small staircase the knocks became very distinct, and he decided that he was upon the right track. He crossed a landing, descended about a dozen steps and then—a whiff from a broken pane blew out his candle. John felt for his matches. He had left them in his room. There was nothing for it but to retrace his steps as carefully as possible in the darkness. Nothing daunted he set out afresh, taking care this time to shield the candle with his hand in passing the open window. Arrived at this point he crossed a large room, with deep windows along its southern side, then unlocking a door he found himself at the top of another flight of stone steps. The knocking was once more repeated, this time the sound being quite near. John hurried down the steps, undid an old fashioned latch, opened the door prepared to meet he knew not what, and beheld—Jean, the woman he loved, seated upon an old oak chair.

"Jean, my darling, what has brought you here?" he exclaimed.

The girl struggled to speak, but overwrought feeling checked her utterance. John put down his candle and went to her side. He took her cold hands in his own, but when he looked again into her sweet face she had fainted. The sudden relief from her imprisonment, added to the loss of food, had been too much for her strength. John put his arm tenderly round her, and brushed back the soft brown hair from her brow. He felt at a loss what to do. To fetch water or brandy from his room would mean leaving her with the chance of her waking to find him gone. Gradually, however, he saw signs of returning animation, and in a few minutes she was herself again.

"Have I frightened you, Jack," said she, softly.

"You are better now, darling," said he, helping her to rise. "No wonder you fainted in this lonely cold place," said he, tenderly. "But, come, I will help you back the way I came, and call Mrs. Belmont. You must tell me how it all happened, but not now."

Wrapping her cloak more closely round her he helped her by slow degrees up the stone steps, and along the dreary passages of the west wing. They found the fire not quite out in the drawing room, so Jack led her there, and placed her in the cozy depths of a large chair, then lighted the lamp and went in search of food. He returned shortly with bread and wine, which he made her take slowly.

"You look more like Jean Graham now," said he at length, as he put the glass and plate upon the table. "Now I will go and wake George and Helen, and then you must tell us how you managed to be a prisoner in that cold little vault of a room."

But a few minutes elapsed before he returned, quickly followed by the Belmonts.

"My poor child!" exclaimed Helen, rushing in in her impetuous manner. "Tell us how it all came about."

"Well, to begin at the beginning," said Jean, who had by this time begun to feel something like herself, "I forgot to change at the junction. I was reading at the time, and did not hear the porters call out. After we had passed Maybury station I found what I had done, but just then, as luck would have it, we drew up at Burton. Quick as thought I decided to get out there, and walk across to The Towers. I had never been that way before, but knew it could not be any great distance. As I stepped out at the last moment I had no time to see to my luggage, which was all in the carriage with me. But I did not trouble much about that, as it was labeled all right. It was getting dark, so I hastened across the fields, finding my way after only inquiring once. I rather enjoyed the walk, and laughed to myself as I thought of your surprise when you saw me come quickly in. As I neared The Towers it began to rain rather heavily, and as I had no umbrella I entered at the west gate. The lamps were lighted in the grounds, as it was by that time dark. I entered by the first door, thinking it led into the back part of the house, which I knew a little. Closing the heavy door behind me I crossed a kind of flagged hall, which was not dark, as the lamp-light shone through the window, opened another door, with a curious old fastener, slipped across the threshold, when a heavy spring on the back of the door pushed it to with a bang, and I was a prisoner. The latch would only open on one side, I found, and all my efforts to release myself were in vain."

"My poor darling!" said Helen fondly. "And to think we were so near you all the time."

"I did not enjoy the darkness," Jean went on, "but I knocked away at the door, expecting someone would shortly come to my rescue. But the minutes passed into hours, and still no help came. Of course, I had decided by that time that I had fastened myself into one of the rooms of the west wing. I felt carefully round the walls for another door and found the one by which Jack entered, but only to be again disappointed in finding it fast. Then I sat down and cried, and remembered all the horrible ghost tales I had ever heard. At intervals during the night and following day I hammered away, at first one door and then the other; but as they and the walls are of such an extraordinary thickness I began to despair. The only window in the room is high up, near the ceiling, and that, of course, I could not reach. Hunger attacked me, too," said she, smiling, "and I should have been even worse put to it but I found a cake of chocolate in my coat pocket. It seems ridiculous now, when I look back upon it all, but it was very real then, and very terrible."

The girl shivered, and Helen hurried her off to bed. She did not leave her until she saw her falling into a soft sleep. Jack went back to his room, and was soon sleeping soundly, and was not further disturbed by ghosts from the west wing. He slept for many hours and when he awoke felt better than he had done for many a long day.

Next morning, the snow having disappeared and the weather satisfactory, there was a meet of the hounds at the further side of Burton, but when Jack came down stairs he found he was too late to accompany his host and hostess, who, with their visitors, had left an hour ago. He hung about the house, amusing himself as best he could, but finding it a little dull. Late in the afternoon he was sitting over the hall fire trying to read, when he heard a soft footstep beside him.

"Jean," he said, rising and taking both her hands in his own, "tell me that you are no worse for that terrible time."

"Not the least bit, thank you," said she, lightly, smiling at his anxiety.

"Then, dearest, I can wait no longer for your answer to my letter. Will you be my wife?

She hesitated for a moment, then looked up into his face.

"If you only knew how I loved you, Jack," said she, shyly.

Jean Graham has visited the west wing several times since her imprisonment there, but she always chooses broad daylight for her visits and does not go unattended.

DON'T MISS OUR GREAT

CHALLENGE SALE!

CHOICE FURNITURE at incomparable prices. This certainly is a chance of a lifetime. **The reason why we do this** is, we have a large stock of choice Furniture left over from the holidays that must be disposed of. It was all bought before the advance in prices, and we will give you the benefit of our foresight in securing these bargains.

COME IN AND LOOK AROUND.

COUCHES.

What is more useful and comfortable than a good Couch? **We sell nothing but good Couches,** which are guaranteed to us by the manufacturers, and that we gurarantee to the purchaser. Our show room contains 65 styles, in Leather, Persian Velour, Holland Corduroy, French Tapestries and Muslin, made up on deep oil-tempered springs, with quartered oak, solid mahogany, Rococo or deeply fringed frames. Challenge prices, **$2.95** up.

PICTURES.

Our stock of pictures are up to date, containing photographic reproductions of original copyright studies from life; also of notable Paintings, exhibited in this country and Europe, as well as Pastels, Cameos, Proof Etchings, etc., mounted in fancy and plain frames, finished in ebony, Dutch and Flemish oak, gold and oak, white and gold, all gold, bird's-eye maple, etc.

Beauties at **10c, 25c, 39c** and up to **$12.50.**

BRASS, HALF-BRASS & IRON BEDS

A pleasing design and a neat appearance will make a favorable impression, but a little cheap enamel may cover inferior workmanship. Our Beds are not only of the latest and most artistic designs, but made of the best malleable iron; the enamel is of good quality and properly baked: the trimmings are Scott's Brass well lacquered.

Challenge prices start at **$2.45** for any size.

DRESSERS.

You may buy a Dresser for less money somewhere else, but remember that we don't handle poor furniture. It does not pay us to sell a poor piece of any kind. You should see what we offer in Dressers, in quartered oak, bird's-eye maple or mahogany, full swell or serpentine front, shaped French plate mirror 24x30.

Challenge Price $18.75

We have others as low as.....$7.50

Don't spoil your collection of books for the sake of a few dollars. We have—

Bookcases from.... $2.25 up

Combination Bookcases from .....$12.50 up

CARPETS.

MISFITS.

75 Misfit Carpets in best Brussels, Tapestry Brussels, Flemish Tapestry, All Wool, One-half Wool, Cotton Chain and Granite Ingrain; standard sizes—Carpets for a medium-sized room, **$3.00** up.

REMNANTS.

We have a lot of short ends, some of them are large enough for one room; others for two or three rooms; this lot we will close out at from **29c** up.

On our regular line of Carpets, ⅓ off.

SECOND-HAND DEPT. Top Floor. Always Bargains in Chamber Suits, Folding Beds, Sewing Machines, Parlor Furniture, Cook Stoves, Steel Ranges, Heaters, Etc. Old furniture taken in exchange for new. Telephone 1150-2

STANDARD HOUSEFURNISHING COMPANY,

Complete Housefurnishers. 49 and 51 East Seventh St.

EXTREMELY SO.

Dramatist—Don't you think my play is very realistic?

Critic—Very; the church scene in the third act was so natural that I went to sleep.

MAD WITH DRINK.

Victim of Alcoholism Runs Amuck in St. Louis.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 13.—James House, a patient at a private sanitarium here, today assaulted his nurse, Albert Dehrin. House then jumped from a second story window and died from his injuries a few hours later. It is feared that Dehrin's wound may prove fatal. House was a merchant of Blue Mound, Ill. He was brought to St. Louis recently to be treated for alcoholism.

Wood Tar.

It is curious to notice that wood tar is prepared just as it was in the fourth century, B. C. A bank is chosen and a hole dug, into which the wood is placed, covered with turf. A fire is lighted underneath and the tar slowly drips into the barrels placed to receive it.

Old Children

Many children look too old for their years. They go about with thin faces and sober manners not in keeping with robust childhood. If it's your boy or girl, give Scott's Emulsion. 'Twill fill out the hollow places, increase the weight, and bring a healthy color to the cheeks. The improvement continues long after they cease using the Emulsion. Get Scott's.

50c. and $1.00, all druggists.

SCOTT & BOWNE, Chemists, New York.