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"THE MONOLOGUE OF DEATH."

[These lines, spoken by the Spirit of Death, in the guise of a White Pilgrim, are altered from a tragedy called "The White Pilgrim," and printed for the first time in their present form.]

Miscall me not! Men have miscalled me much;
Have given harsh names and harsher thoughts to me,
Reviled and evilly entreated me,
Built me strange temples to an unknown God;
Then called me idol, devil, unclean thing,
And to rude insult bowed my godhead down.
Miscall me not! for men have marred my form,
And in the earth-born grossness of their thought
Have coldly modelled me on their own clay,
Then fear to look on that themselves have made.
Miscall me not! ye know not what I am,
But ye shall see me face to face, and know.

I take all sorrows from the sorrowful,
And teach the joyful what it is to joy;
I gather in my land-locked harbor's clasp
The shattered vessels of a vexed world;
And even the tiniest ripple upon life
Is, to my sublime calm, as tropic storm.
When other leechcraft fails the breaking brain,
I, only, own the anodyne to still
Its aidless into viseless repose;
The face, distorted with life's latest pang,
I smooth, in passing, with an angel-wing;
And from beneath the quiet eyelids steal
A new and nobler beauty to the rest.
Miscall me not! the plagues that walk the earth,
The wasting pale, the sudden agony,
Famine and war, and pestilence, and all
The terrors that have darkened round my name—
These are the plagues of Life—they are not mine;
Vex while I tarry, vanish when I come,
Instantly melting into perfect peace,
As at His word, whose Master-spirit I am,
The troubled waters slept on Galilee.

When I withdraw the veil that hides my face,
So meek I with a look the iron lands
Of the soul's jailer, hard Mortality.
Gently—so gently—like a tired child,
Will I infold thee; but thou durst not look
Upon my face, and stay. In the busy haunts
Of human life—in the temple and the street,
And when the blood runs fiercest in the veins—
Unseen, undreamed of, I am often by,
Divided from the giant in his strength
But by the thickness of this misty veil.

Tender I am, not cruel; when I take
The shape most hard to human eyes, and pluck
The little baby-blossom yet unblown,
'Tis but to graft it on a kindlier stem,
And leaping over the perilous years of growth,
Unswept of sorrow, and unscathed of wrong,
Clothe it at once with rich maturity.
'Tis I that give a soul to Memory,
For round the bodies of the dead I throw
The mantle of a kind forgetfulness;
While, canonized in dear love's calendar,
I sanctify the good for evermore.
Miscall me not! my generous fullness lends
Home to the homeless; to the friendless, friends;
To the starved babe, the mother's tender breast;
Wealth to the poor, and to the restless—Rest.
—*London Spectator.*

A BAD LOT.

On a June morning in the year 1875, Maj. Cyril Palmer and his friend, Amos Maxwell, sat in the bay window of the former's country house, discussing a certain weighty and private family affair.

The Major—or rather ex-Major, for he retired from the army after serving in the late war—was a man of 40, bronzed, wrinkled, a trifle gray, stern-featured and leaden-eyed. Though quite wealthy, he affected a disorderly poverty of dress, and indulged in those habits of cheap dissipation which mark the decadence of so many scions of old and influential country families.

Maxwell—a small attorney, of political aspirations—was a very different man in outward semblance to the ex-officer, though their characters were quite similar. In place of the Major's brown and toughened face, ornamented with a coarse nose, a thick bristly mustache and those side whiskers which define the lower line of the inferior maxillary bone, the lawyer presented a pale, sharp countenance, smoothly shaven, and almost devoid of character. The habits which had left the Major's cheeks and nose empurpled by tiny veins, which remained injected with blood, had increased the pallor of the attorney's face and made it more striking by sundry black specks and pimples, which were horribly suggestive of mortification. In place of the Major's bull neck and rotund chest, his friend exhibited a throat like that of a turtle, and a cavernous thoracic region. Their dress, too, was almost at opposite extremes. The officer sported his clothes, and the lawyer was merely covered by his. The former wore a dark-blue frogged frock coat, gray pantaloons, a small glazed cap with gilt buttons, and carried a heavy malacca cane; while the latter wore a conventional suit of rusty black, and a silk hat, half covered with bombazine in lieu of crape.

"If I had the whole property," remarked the Major, "I could live very comfortably. It is not enough for two, however; and the sooner I can get Liz married off the better."

"But she won't marry against the provisions of your excellent father's will," replied Maxwell. "You can't make her marry young Davis unless she wants to. If I understand it, she is to marry the one you approve of, or lose her half of the estate."

"Yes."

"Well, the chances are—you'll excuse me—the chances are that she will outlive you twenty years. If you die, the whole goes to her, don't it?"

"Yes."

"Then what are you going to do about it? I don't see how you can gain anything by her marrying."

"I can't, unless I make her marry somebody I disapprove of."

"She isn't a fool. She won't marry for love in a cottage, and lose her property by it."

Maj. Palmer was forced to confess that he didn't think it likely. No one who had ever seen the cold, still, dispassionate, totally selfish beauty of Elizabeth Palmer could have suspected her of any such weakness.

"I know," said the Major, "that she would give her right hand to marry Bill Davis, but——"

"But she wouldn't give $30,000."

"No; she's fond of him—very fond of him—but she has sense with it; and, what is worse, thinks that she will only have to wait a couple of years to see me turn my toes up; then she'll marry whom she likes, and have the whole pile to herself. Can't get ahead of these women. There isn't any such thing in the book."

"Not unless you come to life after she marries, and object to her choice."

"By Jove! Amos, I believe you hit it. Can't I fix that?"

"What do you mean?"

"Go off and leave a will; get some fellow to swear I'm dead; let her marry Davis, and then turn up unexpectedly and raise thunder with the whole thing!"

"Too risky. It might pay to let on that you are dying, and trust to luck for her to anticipate your death. You might lie unconscious—non compos mentis, or something of that sort—for a few weeks, and be unable to say anything about the marriage. Then, just before the ceremony, you can get well enough to express an opinion against it, and, by virtue of your guardianship, claim that she has forfeited all right to the estate. She needn't hear of it, though, till the knot is tied."

"Can that be put through legally?"

"Yes, by the aid of a little money!"

"It will be worth five thousand dollars to you if you can do it."

"I can try it, anyhow."

"Amos, you're a trump! You and I were always good friends, even when I used to lick you at school; and we ought to give each other a life whenever we can—eh?"

"Yes; I will do all I can. It will be a slippery business, but I think I can do it."

"Good! Let us have a glass of brandy and water on it. My hand isn't very steady this morning, and I need a little something to regulate my nerves."

A few days after this, Cyril Palmer informed his sister that he felt "very queer," and was going to New York to consult a physician. He had been threatened with an attack of mania a potu, and she naturally supposed that, as he still drank excessively, this tendency was returning. It is humiliating to my humanitarian instincts to be obliged to confess that her only thought was of the probability of her speedy acquirement of her own liberty and her brother's share of the property.

A letter from the city—received a fortnight later, and signed by a somewhat-celebrated, though unscrupulous, medical practitioner—conveyed her news of the Major's severe and perhaps dangerous illness. She was warned that he might not live but a few days longer; and, although he could not see any one save his nurse and physician just then, she must hold herself ready to visit him at any time.

She immediately began making preparations for her marriage, as privately as possible, with young Davis, who had squandered his own wealth, and desired to squander that of the Palmers.

Before long, another missive from the doctor announced that the Major lay in a state of apathy, unable to recognize any person, and evidently beyond the reach of science. If his sister wished to see him alive, she had best come at once. She did so, for the sake of the world's opinion, and found him in bed, in a darkened chamber, apparently unconscious. In a period of previous lucidity he had arranged all his affairs, and left her sole heir to and mistress of the entire property.

Once assured of this fact, the young lady had no hesitation in prosecuting her plans. Amos Maxwell showed her the greatest friendliness, and finished by advising her to marry young Davis, if she wished, immediately.

"You will pardon me, Miss," he said, "if I speak plainly, but it is my habit. No one had a greater regard for your brother, the Major, than I. We were fast friends from boyhood, though our paths differed widely. But he is now gone, as far as practical results are concerned, and I do not see why his prejudices should be respected, when they are of such an unjust nature. I have often tried to reason him out of his dislike to Mr. Davis, but in vain. I drew up his testament, and can assure you that, at the moment of his death, you will be entirely free in this respect. Now, if you wait till then, it will seem in bad taste to marry before you have left off your mourning. My advice is for you to marry before you put it on."

This was apparently sound counsel, and Davis seconded it with all his might. Miss Palmer thought it over, coolly and collectedly, weighing all the chances, and finally decided that she had best follow the suggestions of her lawyer and her lover.

In a very short space of time all the arrangements for the wedding were completed. The Major, who was enjoying a loose sort of life in town, and really bringing himself nearer to his feigned condition than he would have liked to acknowledge, was kept well informed of all the movements of Davis and Miss Palmer by Amos Maxwell, who acted as legal adviser on both sides.

On the eve of the marriage, the lawyer suggested the possibility of a partial failure to the Major.

"When they find you've recovered, they will use every exertion to retain possession of their half of the estate," said he; "and, though the terms of the will are explicit in commanding Elizabeth to marry according to your wishes, yet it is very difficult to keep a legal heiress out of her property by any such provision in this country. If they choose to go to law and fight hard, you will be likely to lose the suit."

"The deuce I will!"

"Yes; and the court may suspect a conspiracy, too—in which case you will suffer. It would be safest for you to get all your property out of your hands before you attempt such a stroke."

"How shall I work it?"

"Oh, it is easy enough; make over all your real estate to some friend, for the time being; then, if you fail, you will at least have lost nothing."

The Major, too ignorant of law to know whether this was sound or not, but placing implicit confidence in Maxwell, made over every cent he possessed to that gentleman; and expressed himself, in the presence of several witnesses, as greatly opposed to the match his sister was about to make—asserting that he would either prevent it or keep her out of her share of the estate.

Just after the ceremony had been performed, Elizabeth Davis, nee Palmer, received a telegram from New York, as follows:

NEW YORK, Oct. 8, 1855.

ELIZABETH PALMER: Don't marry Davis. I am recovering, and forbid the marriage.
CYRIL PALMER.

The message fell like a thunderbolt upon the newly-married couple, who had fancied Cyril dying. Before they had recovered from their alarm and astonishment, or decided what to do, the Major returned—looking a little worn out, perhaps, but by no means so emaciated as they had reason to expect. His first communication with his sister was a declaration that he should never consent to the match, and, if possible, should not allow her a farthing.

Legal steps were immediately taken, and the ex-officer, having seen nothing of his crony, Maxwell, for some days, called upon him for advice as to the best mode of procedure.

"I am sorry, my dear Major," said the cadaverously respectable little lawyer, "but I really cannot act in your behalf any further."

"What!"

"I have discovered that our proceedings were illegal, and I cannot go on with them. Indeed, I have been retained by Mr. Davis to conduct his side of the case!"

The Major was the thunderstruck party now.

"Why, you infernal little rascal," said he, getting dangerously purple in the face, "what do you mean? Are you going to betray me?"

"Don't use hard words, sir. I know my business, I believe; and this is my office."

"I know it is; and I take this opportunity of kicking you out of your own premises!" replied the Major, with a terrific oath. The next moment Maxwell was sprawling on the walk, outside of his office door, and Palmer was standing over him brandishing his cane.

"Assault and battery! You shall sweat for this!" cried the lawyer.

"And you smart for it now, don't you?" said the Major, laughing grimly as he strode away.

He did not laugh long, however. On sending to get the titles, etc., to the property which had been made over to the attorney, the latter returned word that he knew nothing about Maj. Palmer's affairs, and cared less than he knew. The property had been assigned in due form, with all the necessary precautions, and Amos Maxwell could keep it as well as not, if he chose. The fact dawned upon the Major's mind, gradually, that he had been a dupe and was now a beggar. In trying to overreach his sister he had been overreached himself, just as she had nearly fallen victim to her own covetous desire for his share of the parental legacy.

The Character of Hannibal.

Almost as wonderful as Hannibal's victories over nature or his enemies, were his victories over his own followers. Under the spell of his genius, the discordant members of a motley Carthaginian army—disaffected Libyans and Numidians, barbarous and lethargic Spaniards, fierce and fickle Gauls—were welded into a homogeneous whole, which combined the utmost play of individual prowess with all the precision of a machine. No whisper of disaffection or of mutiny was ever heard in Hannibal's camp. Italians deserted by thousands to Hannibal; but no Hannibalian veteran, even when his star was on its wane, ever deserted to Rome. Politic as he was brave, and generous as he was farsighted, Hannibal could arouse alike the love and the fear, the calm confidence and the passionate enthusiasm of all the various races who served under his standard. The best General, a high authority has said, is he who makes the fewest mistakes; but what single mistake can the keenest critic point out which marred the progress or checkered the success of these three first extraordinary years? They are years, moreover, any one of which might have made or marred the reputation of any lesser General. Unfortunately we know Hannibal only through his enemies. They have done their best to malign his character; they have called him cruel, and happily every specific charge of cruelty supplies us, even with our imperfect knowledge with the materials for its own refutation. They talked of "Punic ill-faith" till they came themselves to believe in its existence, or to think that the name proved itself. * * * We know Hannibal, let us repeat it once more, only from his enemies; but in what character, even as painted by his friends, can we discern such vivid and such unmistakable marks of greatness? The outline is commanding, imperial, heroic; and there is no detail with which our materials enable us to fill it in at all, which is not in perfect harmony with the whole.—*Rome and Carthage.*

A Fearful Visitor.

The bane of the beautiful island of Martinique is a serpent called the "iron lance." This reptile, with venomous taste, chooses the coolest and most delightful places in the garden for his retreat, and it is literally at the risk of one's life to lie down on the grass, or even to take a rest in an arbor. The wounds inflicted by these serpents are very apt to be fatal unless immediately cared for. The whole island is infested with this dangerous reptile, and it is said that on an average nearly 800 persons are bitten every year, of which number from sixty to seventy cases prove fatal, while many others result in nervous diseases which are almost as bad as death. A few years ago, when Prince Arthur of England visited this island, a grand fete was given in his honor in the Jardin des Plantes. In the evening the grounds were brilliantly illuminated, and thousands of people sauntered through its cool and shady avenues. A large number were bitten by the "iron lance," and many of them never recovered from the effects of the poison. The fondness of this terrible reptile for cool and shady places is a serious drawback on the pleasure of rambling through the charming groves of Martinique. A rest on the grass under the shadow of some spreading tree is always haunted by the dread of unseen dangers, and one cannot even cross a field without exercising extreme caution.

Dumas' Generosity.

The son, then a lad of 18 or so, met a friend on the boulevards. They had not seen each other for some time, and Dumas suggested that they should dine together. "It's far from home," he observed, "but I've just 15 francs in my pocket, and I dare say we can manage pretty well on that." As a matter of fact, there are restaurants in Paris where you may get a pretty little dinner for two, and a sound bottle of wine into the bargain, for that sum. Still it is rather a tight fit, and great was the joy of Dumas when they had proceeded a few paces to behold his father on the other side of the street. "Wait a moment," he exclaimed to his companion. "I'll run across and get some money from him." The friend beheld him in earnest conversation for three minutes, then Dumas the younger returned, looking rather crestfallen. "Well, has he paid up?" "No; and, what's worse, he's gone and borrowed my 15 francs. I'm afraid there's nothing left for it but to go home." To do the papa justice, he was extremely generous with his money when he had any. He loved to change his notes into gold and pour the coins into a wooden bowl which lay on his writing-desk. Everybody who came to ask for coin was then bidden to help himself.—*London Truth.*

Spiders on Telegraph Wires.

One of the chief hindrances to telegraphing in Japan is the grounding of the current by spider lines. The trees bordering the highways swarm with spiders, which spin their webs everywhere between the earth, wires, posts, insulators and trees. When the spider-webs are covered with heavy dews they become good conductors, and run the messages to the earth. The only way to remove the difficulty is by employing men to sweep the wires with brushes of bamboo; but, as the spiders are more numerous and persistent than the brush-users, the difficulty always remains a serious one.—*Scientific American.*

No Tact.

People without tact do a great deal of mischief. They seem actually merciless at times. They never know what is best to say or do. They tread upon people's toes, and open the closets where family skeletons are kept so often that they earn the reputation of being spiteful. They ask over and over again questions which are obviously unpleasant to answer, and make remarks that are seen at once by all save themselves to be offensive.

FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

AT Cape Island, N. J., the sea has gained on the shore fully a mile since 1776. The tides on the eastern shore of the State are observably growing higher.

DURING the reign of Napoleon I. a book of birds for children was suppressed because it contained the phrase: "The cock is rather the tyrant than the chieftain of the farm-yard."

EVERY shell fired by an army during siege operations costs, with the powder with which the mortar is charged, the sum of eight dollars—enough to support a poor family for a fortnight.

THE lead used in sounding from a vessel usually weighs about fourteen pounds, but in deep-sea soundings a weight of not less than 150 pounds is frequently employed. Wire has been largely used for a line, as it makes less friction in sinking through the water. With hemp rope a sinker of 300 weight is sometimes twenty minutes in reaching the bottom in 1,500 fathoms of water, so great is the friction of the line.

THE oldest monument in the world is in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. This is the lintel stone of a tomb which formed the last resting-place of an officer who lived in the time of King Sent, of the second dynasty, whose fate is fixed by M. Mariette more than 6,000 years ago. The stone is covered with that delicate and finished sculpture which distinguished the early periods of Egiptian history, and was immeasurably superior to the stiff and conventional art of the latter ages of Egypt, which we are accustomed to see in European museums.

THE Japanese are remarkably exempt from deformed feet. The reason of this is to be found in the shoes they wear. The wooden sandals worn in Japan have a separate compartment for the great toe, and make a clanking noise on the streets. Straw slippers are also worn, and a traveler setting out on a journey will strap a supply of them on his back, that he may put on a new pair when the old is worn out. They cost but a cent and a half a pair. They are rights and lefts, and leave the foot free to the air. They are never worn in the house, being left outside the door; passing down a Japanese street long rows of them are seen at the doors, old and new, large and small. It is surprising to see how rapidly the Japs step out of them, and pick them up again with their feet without stopping when leaving the house.

AS THE most valuable wealth a country can possess is its healthy population, the tables of mortality are worth study; and from these we find that on the first day of life seventy-eight boys die, to sixty-three girls. In the first week of life 168 boys die, to 153 girls. In Prussia the mortality among females is the greatest from 10 to 13 years of age; and from the 25th to the 40th it is greater than at other periods of life, and yet at all periods of life the census of females compares favorably with that of males. In England, taking a period of seven years, there were eight men to fifteen women who were alive at 101 years; three men to five women at 102 years; two men to three women at 103 years of age, and no man to one woman who lived to 104. It is observed that only one person in 1,000 born lives beyond 94 years.

FROM a comparison of the results of recent deep-sea soundings, it appears that the following are just generalizations: 1. The water of the South Pacific is in its whole mass cooler than that of the Atlantic. 2. The water of the South Pacific is, down to 4,225 feet, somewhat warmer than that of the Atlantic, but below that depth cooler. 3. The bottom temperatures are generally lower in the Pacific than in the Atlantic at the same depths and in the same degree of latitude; but nowhere in the Pacific are found such low bottom temperatures as in the Antarctic portion of the South Atlantic, where temperatures of —0.3 centigrade to —0.6 degrees have been measured. 4. In the western parts of the Pacific and the adjoining parts of the East India archipelago, the temperature of the water reaches its minimum at depths between 1,787 and 8,937 feet, remaining the same from this depth to the bottom. In the whole of the Atlantic the temperature from 8,937 feet to the bottom gradually though slowly increases.

North and South.

And this reminds me of another fact; it takes five times as much transportation to supply a grain country as a cotton country, as it takes from six to twelve times the area to produce a ton of cotton as a ton of grain. And this is the main reason why the South was and is so far behind the North in building railroads—she really did not need them. Another reason is that the South has so many navigable streams. Alabama alone has 1,200 miles of navigation for five months in the year, and about 600 all the year. Thus it was that she did not need railroads and telegraphs, and so did not build them: thus her development was along a different line, so her civilization and society were different, and, in conclusion, her ideas were different. The people are more sentimental and less practical than at the North; rather more polite and less acute, somewhat more stately and ceremonious, considerably more reserved as to their inward natures, though very communicative in common things, and far slower to adopt new ideas. In other respects it resulted that the Southerner was somewhat more stately and punctilious, and much more sensitive on personal matters—as each man here was something of a little lord on his own domain. These characteristics show plainly in the criminal statistics; in the South the proportion of personal encounters and killings in sudden heat is vastly greater than in the North; in the North the embezzlements, druggings, abortions, seductions, frauds and speculations are ten to one in the South. The crimes of the South have their origin in prejudice, rashness and hot blood; those of the North are most frequent in the cases where calculation, cool malice and petty meanness come in. If the Southerner is generous, he is too apt to be profuse with his liquor and provisions; the Northerner stints himself and his guests in order to give liberally to church, school, railroad and public works. The Southerner loses a day and spends some money to entertain you; the Yankee dines you in brief time on baked beans, and gives $2 to the preacher. The Yankee's way is the wiser, but the other way is not altogether unpleasant. The Western man is a happy compound of the two, and of Western men the Hoosier is at the top.—*Rockville (Ind.) Tribune.*

MOST of the advocates of cremation are people over whom it would be useless to erect a monument, and their ashes may possibly do some little good in the garden.

The Spoopendykes A-fishing.

"Say, my dear," said Mr. Spoopendyke, with a social sort of grin, "how would you like to go fishing?"

"Wouldn't that be perfectly lovely?" squealed Mrs. Spoopendyke. "I never was fishing in my life, and I always wanted to try it."

Mr. Spoopendyke smiled pleasantly upon his wife, and started out into the yard to get some worms, while Mrs. Spoopendyke rigged herself up for the pending excursion.

"Got any fish-sticks?" she asked, as Mr. Spoopendyke returned, rather warm from his exercise.

"I've got some fishing-rods, if that's what you mean," replied Mr. Spoopendyke, "but I could only find four worms."

"Can't we break 'em in two?" inquired Mrs. Spoopendyke, anxiously.

"Could if we had a buzz-saw," grunted Mr. Spoopendyke. "Come along, if you're coming;" and, thoroughly equipped for the expedition, Mr. and Mrs. Spoopendyke set out for the State street pier.

"How long before they bite?" asked Mrs. Spoopendyke, hoisting her hook out of the water, and examining the point of a worm her husband had impaled thereon.

"They'll probably bite at that as soon as they can borrow a step-ladder," retorted Mr. Spoopendyke, eying the dangling hook. "If you calculate to get any fish, you'd better let that thing down in the water."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Spoopendyke, dropping the hook. "Do you think I could catch a goldfish?" she inquired, after a pause.

"Hi! hold on! There, I lost him!" ejaculated Mr. Spoopendyke, firing his hook up toward the heights.

"So did I!" chimed Mrs. Spoopendyke, as she fell over backward and shot her sinker into Mr. Spoopendyke's ear; "I declare we both lost him!"

"What yo doing?" demanded Mr. Spoopendyke. "What did ye lose? When I'm pulling in fish, you just sit still, will ye? Think my head's a fish-pond? Drop it, I tell ye! drop it in the water. There! Now sit still and fish. Another time I'm pulling in a Spanish mackerel, you let things alone. You made me lose that fish."

"You ought to have caught him," said Mrs. Spoopendyke, soothingly; "you fished splendidly for him."

"I understand the business," rejoined Mr. Spoopendyke, somewhat mollified. "You see he didn't even get the bait, big as he was."

"I'm glad of that, because we've only got three worms left. How I'd like to catch an oyster! Do you know, I——"

"Hist! Sh-h-h! Quiet now! I've got him! See me play him! Now, I'll fetch him!" and Mr. Spoopendyke reeled in until he landed an old boot.

"I didn't know that fish had burrs on, like a chestnut," said Mrs. Spoopendyke, quivering with excitement. "Crack him, and let's see what he is."

"Crack your grandmother!" snorted Mr. Spoopendyke, shying the boot up the pier. "He wasn't good to eat anyway. I'll get something——"

"What's the matter with my stick? Let go, you nasty thing! Here's another one! Quick!"

"Pull him out, can't ye? You've got a bite. Haul up!" cried Mr. Spoopendyke, trying to untangle himself from his line and help his wife. "Lift him out of the water!"

"He won't let me," squeaked Mrs. Spoopendyke, holding both arms out full length. "Take him off! Scat! Go 'way, you monster!"

"Lift your pole straight up in the air!" shouted Mr. Spoopendyke. "Hoist the dod-gasted thing right up!"

Mrs. Spoopendyke exerted herself and disclosed an eel, dangling.

"It's a rattlesnake!" she yelled. "Don't go near him! Fire! fire! murder! police! police-e-e!"

"Hold your yawp, will ye?" bawled Mr. Spoopendyke. "Get him over the dock so I can catch him! What ye holding him out there for? Waiting for him to dry? Stick that pole straight up in the air, I tell ye!"

Mrs. Spoopendyke threw the pole over her shoulder, and flopped the eel into Mr. Spoopendyke's countenance.

"Dod-gast the measly eel!" he howled, as he spit it out. "Stop waving that slambasted lightning-rod like a flag, will ye? Hold it still, I say! Think you're a tree?"

"Don't touch him! Throw him overboard! He'll sting you to death!" gurgled Mrs. Spoopendyke, and, forgetting that the pole still exercised an influence over the eel, she gave it a jerk, and it slipped through Mr. Spoopendyke's fingers. That gentleman made a spring for it, and swashed into the water.

"Hen! blab! ban! waggle, hic, ga, gaggle!" spluttered Mr. Spoopendyke, as some lightermen fished him out.

"Did you catch cold, dear?" inquired Mrs. Spoopendyke with solicitude, as they made their way home.

"If I did, I landed it," growled Mr. Spoopendyke, blowing mud like the exhaust of a tug.

"Anyway, I caught an eel, didn't I?" asked Mrs. Spoopendyke, carrying out the woman's idea of comforting a man with the only thing he don't want to hear about.

"O, you caught it!" ripped out Mr. Spoopendyke, "You're a fish woman, you are. All you want now is some glass sides and some bubbles running through you to be an aquarium! Another time we both go fishing, you stay home! You hear?"

And, with this novel mathematical suggestion, Mr. Spoopendyke hunted himself to his domicile, and took a rum sweat.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

"Ah! Then."

He rapped at the chief clerk's window and put on a brow of sixteen years in State prison as he began:

"Sir, several days ago I dropped a letter into this office directed to Pontiac—to John Smith, of Pontiac."

"Yes, sir, I presume so."

"That letter contained a ten-dollar bill."

"Yes, sir."

"And it never reached Pontiac."

"Ah! it didn't?"

"No, sir! That letter, sir, was doubtless sto—"

"Wait a minute," replied the clerk, as he stepped away. When he returned he exhibited the letter, which was not only unstamped, but simply addressed: "John Smith, Michigan."

"Is that it?" he asked.

"Yes, sir—that is—ahem, sir—yes, sir, that's the letter, and I'm an ass, sir, and good-day, sir!"—*Free Press.*

IN 100 years no three consecutive Januaries in England were so cold as the three last.