H B Miller Jan 83


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Fifth---We warrant the Stove to give perfect and entire satisfation in Price, Quality, Operation, and Every Other Particular, or at the end of 60 days we will take it back and refund the purchase money.

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# NEWS AND CITIZEN.

VOL. X. NO. 44. MORRISVILLE AND HYDE PARK, VERMONT, THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 1883. TERMS $1.50.


### *A LOVE SONG.*

Ah! swan of slenderness, dove of tenderness,
Jewel of joys arise!
The little red lark, like a rosy spark
Of song, to his sun-burst flies;
But till you are risen, earth is a prison,
Full of my captive sighs,
Then wake, and discover to your fond lover
The morn of your matchless eyes.
The dawn is dark to me; hark, oh! hark to me,
Pulse of my heart, I pray,
And gently gliding out of thy hiding,
Dazzle me with thy day!
And oh! I'll fly to thee, singing, and sigh to thee,
Passion so sweet and gay,
The lark shall listen, and dewdrops glisten,
Laughing on every spray.

ALFRED PECEVAL GRAVES.

### *CHARITY.*

I meet her coming from the church
And in the crowded thoroughfare,
With downcast eyes, a modest mien,
And tangled locks of sunny hair;
With calm blue eyes that speak of truth,
Full honest in their grave intent,
A face where purity and youth
Has left its stamp of sweet content.

With her, life is a goodly thing,
Well spent in raising some poor heart,
About whose home the sombre wing
Of sin and sorrow finds a part.
Her greatest pleasure is to-day,
Where'er her wandering footstep trod,
Out of the worldly mire and clay
To lift some creature near to God.

## Santa Claus in the Mines.

A California mining town, away up amid the snow-clad, rock-bound peaks of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

The town was irregularly laid out, and was scattered along a creek which emptied into the Consumnes River several miles below. Both the dwellings and business houses—or, more properly speaking, cabins—were constructed of unhewn pine logs, the crevices between the timbers being "chinked" and plastered with mud. The town contained at least a dozen saloons, or saloons and gambling houses combined, and in these bells much of the hard-earned money of the miner parted company with him to take up its temporary abode in the saloon till or the pocket of the professional gambler. The dwellings of the town were scattered along the creek or built on the side of the adjacent mountain, the majority of them being rough "bachelor dens," for women were scarce in the newly discovered diggings.

In a small cabin near the upper end of the town sat a woman, in widow's weeds, holding upon her knee a bright-eyed, sunny-faced little girl about five years old, while a little chemb of a boy lay upon a bear skin before the open fire-place. It was Christmas Eve, and the woman sat gazing abstractedly into the fire. She was yet young, and as the glowing flames lit up her sad face they invested it with a weird beauty.

Mary Stewart was the widow of Aleck Stewart, and but two years before they had lived comfortably and happy in a camp on the American River. Aleck was a brawny miner, but the premature explosion of a blast in an underground tunnel had blotted out his life in an instant, leaving his family without a protector, and in straitened circumstances. His daily wages had been their sole support, and now that he was gone, what could they do?

With her little family Mrs. Stewart had emigrated to the camp in which we find them (all Western mining towns are called "camps"), and there she earned a precarious livelihood by washing clothes for the miners. Her's was a hard lot, but the brave little woman toiled on, cheered by the thought that her daily labors stood between her darling little ones and the gaunt wolf of starvation. Their clothes were patched and shabby and their food plain, and sometimes scant, yet they were never reduced to absolute suffering.

Jack Dawson, a strong, honest miner, was passing the cabin this Christmas Eve, when the voice of the little girl within attracted his attention. Jack possessed an inordinate love for children, and although his manly spirit would abhor the sneaking practice of eavesdropping, he could not resist the temptation to steal up to the window just a moment to listen to the sweet prattling voice. The first words he caught were:

"Before papa died we always had Christmas, didn't we, mamma?"

"Yes, Totty darling, but papa earned money enough to afford to make his little pets happy at least once a year. You must remember, Totty, that we are very poor, and although mamma works very, very hard she can scarcely earn enough to supply us with food and clothes."

Little bright-faced Benny raised his curly head from its soft nest in the warm bear-skin and cheerfully said:

"Des' wait till I dit to be a man, mamma, an' 'oo won't have to wort. I'se doin' to be a dreat bid miner, like papa was, an' dit 'oo ever so much money, but I won't do near 'em hateful blastin' fings an' dit tilled 'ike papa did."

(Jack Dawson still lingered upon the outside. He could not leave, although he felt ashamed of himself for listening.)

"Why bless my little man, what a brave future he has planned! I do hope and pray, darling, that you will grow up a strong and a good man, and one who will be a blessing and a comfort to m am ma when she gets old."

"We hung up our stockings last Christmas, didn't we, mamma?" questioned the little girl.

"Yes, Totty, but we were poor then, and Santa Claus never notices real poor people. He gave you a little candy then, just because you were such good children."

"Is we any poorer now, mamma?

"Oh, yes, much poorer. He would never notice us at all now."

Jack Dawson detected a tremor of sadness in the widow's voice as she uttered the last words, and he wiped a suspicious dampness from his eyes.

"Where's our clean stockings, mamma? I'm going to hang mine up, anyhow; maybe he will come like he did before, just because we try to be good children," said Totty.

"It will be no use, my darling. I am sure he will not come," and tears gathered in the mother's eyes as she thought of her empty purse.

"I don't care, I'm going to try, anyhow. Please get one of my stockings, mamma," pleaded the little girl.

"Your clean stockings are on the line outside, and I cannot go out and hunt for them this bitter cold night. You may hang up your old ones; but oh, darling, I fear you will be so terribly disappointed in the mording! Please let it go till next Christmas, and then we may be richer!"

"No, mamma, I'm going to try anyhow."

Jack Dawson's great generous heart swelled until it seemed bursting from his bosom. He heard the patter of little bare feet upon the cabin floor as Totty ran about hunting hers and Benny's stockings, and after she had hung them up heard her sweet voice again as she wondered over and over if Santa really would forget them. He heard the mother, in a choking voice, tell her treasures to get ready for bed; heard them lisp their childish prayers, the little girl concluding: "And, oh, Lord, please tell good Santa Claus that we are very poor, but that we love him as much as rich children do, for dear Jesus' sake—Amen!"

After they were in bed, through a small rent in the plain white curtain he saw the widow sitting before the fire, her face buried in her hands, and weeping bitterly. On a peg, just over the fire place, hung two little patched and faded stockings, and then he could stand it no longer. He softly moved away from the window to the rear of the cabin, where some objects fluttering to the wind met his eyes. Among these he searched until he found a little blue stocking which he removed from the line, folded tenderly and placed in his overcoat pocket, and then set out for the main street of the camp. He entered Harry Hawk's gambling hall, the largest in the place, where a host of miners and gamblers were at play. Jack was well known in the camp, and when he got up on a chair and called for attention the hum of voices and the clicking of ivory checks suddenly ceased.

Then, in an earnest voice, he told what he had seen and heard, repeating every word of the conversation between the mother and her children. In conclusion he said:

"Boys, I think I know you, every one of you, an' I know jist what kind o' metal yer made of. I've an idee that Santy Claus knows jist whar thet cabin's sitiwated, an' I've an idee he'll find it afore mornin'. Hyar's one o' the little gal's stockin's thet I hooked off'n the line whar' I heard the widder say she'd hung 'em with the washin'. The daddy o' them little 'uns was a good, hard workin' miner, an' he 'crossed the range' in the line o' duty; jist as anyone of us is liable to do in our dangerous business. Hyar goes a $20 piece right down in the toe, an' hyar I lay the stockin' on this card table—now chip in much or little, as ye kin afford."

"Hold them checks o' mine on the ace-jack," said Brocky Clark, a gambler, and, leaving the faro table, he picked the little stocking up carefully, looked at it tenderly, and when he laid it down another twenty had gone into the toe to keep company with the one placed there by Dawson.

Another and another came up until the foot of the stocking was well filled, and then came the cry from the gambling tables:

"Pass her around, Jack."

At the word he lifted it from the table and started around the hall. Before he had circulated it at half a dozen tables it showed signs of bursting beneath the weight of gold and silver coin; and a strong coin bag, such as is used for sending treasure by express, was procured, and the stocking placed inside of it. The round of the large hall was made, and in the meantime the story had spread all over the camp. From various saloons came messengers saying:

"Send the stockin' 'round the camp; the boys are a waitin' for it!"

With a party at his heels, Jack went from saloon to saloon. Games ceased and tipplers left the bars as they entered each place, and miners, gamblers, speculators, everybody, crowded up to tender their Christmas gift to the miner's widow and orphans. Any one who has lived in the far Western camps and is acquainted with the generosity of Western men will feel no surprise or doubt my truthfulness when I say that after the round had been made the little blue stocking and the heavy canvas bag contained over $8,000 in gold and silver coin.

Horses were procured and a party dispatched to the larger town down on the Cosumnes, from which they returned near daybreak with toys, clothing, provisions, etc., in almost endless variety. Arranging their gifts in proper shape and securely tying the mouth of the bag of coin, the party noiselessly repaired to the widow's humble cabin. The bag was first laid on the step, and the other articles piled up in a heap over it. On the top was laid the lid of a large pasteboard box on which was written with a piece of charcoal:

"Santa Claus doesn't always Giv poor fokes The shake in This camp."

* * * * * * *

Christmas morning dawned bright and beautiful. The night had been a stinging cold one, ane when the rising sun peeped over the chain of mountains to the East and shot its beams upon the western range, the sparkling frost flashed from the snow clad peaks as though their towering heads were sprinkled with pure diamonds.

Mrs. Stewart arose, and a shade of pain crossed her handsome face as the empty little stockings caught her maternal eye. She cast a hurried glance towards the bed where her darlings lay sleeping, and whispered: "Oh, God! how dreadful is poverty!"

She built a glowing fire and set about preparing the frugal breakfast. When it was almost ready she approached the bed, kissed the little ones until they were wide awake, and lifted them to the floor. With eager haste Totty ran to the stockings, only to turn away, sobbing as though her heart would break. Tears blinded the mother, and clasping her little girl to her heart she said in a choking voice:

"Never mind, my darling; next Christmas I am sure mamma will be richer, and then Santa Claus will bring us lots of things."

"Oh! mamma!"

The exclamation came from little Benny, who had opened the door and was standing gazing in amazement upon the wealth of gifts there displayed.

Mrs. Stewart sprang to his side and looked in speechless astonishment. She read the card, and then, causing her little ones to kneel down with her in the open doorway, she poured out her soul in a torrent of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Jack Dawson's burly form moved from behind a tree a short distance away, and sneaked off up the gulch, great crystal tears chasing each other down his face.

The family arose from their knees, and began to move the stores into the cabin. There were several sacks of flour, hams, canned fruits, pounds and pounds of coffee, tea, and sugar, new dress goods, and a handsome warm woolen shawl for the widow, shoes, stockings, hats, mittens, and clothing for the children, a great big wax doll that could cry and move its eyes for Totiy, and a beautiful red sled for Benny. All were carried inside amidst alternate laughs and tears.

"Bring the sack of salt, Totty, and that is all," said the mother. "Is not God good to us?"

"I can't lift it, mamma, it's froze to the step!"

The mother stooped and took hold of it, and lifted harder and harder, until she raised it from the step. Her cheeks blanched as she noticed its great weight, and breathlessly she carried it in and laid it upon the breakfast table. With trembling fingers she loosened the string and emptied the contents upon the table. Gold and silver—more than she had ever thought of in her wildest dreams of comfort, and almost buried in the pile of treasure lay Totty's little blue stocking.

We will not intrude longer upon such happiness, but leave the joyful family sounding praises to heaven and—Santa Claus.

The whole story soon reached Mrs. Stewart's ears. She knew Jack Dawson by sight, and when she next met him, although the honest fellow tried hard to push by her, she caught hold of his coat and compelled him to stand and listen to her tearful thanks. The tears shed were not all hers, for when Jack moved away there were drops of liquid crystal hanging to his ruddy cheeks.

Four weeks from that "Merrie Christmas" Mrs. Stewart became Mrs. Jack Dawson, and every evening, when the hardy miner returns from his daily labor to his comfortable and happy home, Totty and Benny will climb upon his strong knees and almost smother him with kisses, while they lovingly address him as "Our Santa Claus Papa."—*Williamsport Breakfast Table.*

### Another Great Lake in Africa.

The existence of another equatorial lake in Central Africa, far to the west of Albert Nyanza, rumors of which have reached Europe from time to time since Sir Samuel Baker's first journey, is again reported, this time in a much more definite form. Mr. F. Lupton, Governor of the Egyptian province of Bahr el Ghazal, writes to the London *Times* from his station, Dehm Siber, on the 27th of July, to the effect that Rafai Aga, an employee under his command, on his return from an expedition toward the Uelle, told him that he and some of the members of the expedition had seen a great lake in the country of the Barboa, a powerful copper-colored tribe clothed with a peculiar grass cloth (of which Mr. Lupton sends a specimen in his letter). Mr. Lupton gathered that the position of the lake was in about 3 degrees 40 minutes north latitude and 23 degrees east longitude, and that it was quite as large as Victoria Nyanza. When the weather permits, the Barboas cross the lake in large open boats made out of a single tree, the voyage taking three days, and they obtain from the people living on the western side (their own country being east of the lake) articles of European manufacture, such as blue beads and brass wire.

Mr. Lupton adds Rafai Aga's own account of his route to the lake: "Started from Dehm Bekeer, marched six days southwest to Zeriba el Douleb, then four days south-southwest to Bengier; four days southwest to Zeriba Warendema; six days southwest by west to the Bahr el Makwar, which he crossed after visiting several very large islands inhabited by a people who call themselves Basango. The Makwar is called by the Arabs Bar el Warshal, and joins the Uelle, but is a much larger stream; both flow in a west southwest direction. After crossing the Makwar, Rafai marched ten days south southwest and reached the residence of the Sultan of Barboa, by whom he was well received; the lake is situated four days' march to the southwest of the Sultan's residence. Mr. Lupton concludes by saying: "I feel I should not be doing right in keeping dark this information, which, when looked into by competent persons, may throw some light on the famous Congo and Uelle Rivers. I believe that the Uelle flows into the lake discovered by Rafai Aga, and that the stream which is said to flow out of the lake probably joins the Congo." Mr. Lupton further informs the *Times* that he is engaged in preparing a map of his province, and that he is about to start in a few days on a journey to a country called Umbungu, about fifteen days' march to the west of Dehm Siber.

### A Barren Waste.

The coast of Newfoundland and the shores and headlands of the Bay of St. Lawrence are described in a Canadian official report as being not only dangerous, but so desolate and barren that sailors wrecked there are in danger of perishing from hunger and cold, if they escape the fury of the waves. Many have frozen or starved to death before they could penetrate to the interior or were rescued. The region is full of such traditions, and the superstitions see ghosts in every storm. Life-saving stations are to be established.

"WHAT is the meaning of the word 'tantalizing?'" asked the teacher. "Please, marm," spoke up little Johnny Holcom, "it means a circus procession passing the school-house, and the scholars not allowed to look out."

"SAMBO, me bhoy," exclaimed Pat, a rollicking Irishman, to a jolly darkey, "tell us what makes your nose so flat?" "Dunno, Mars' Pat," answered the darkey, "but I 'spec it's to keep me from pokin' into odder people's business."

### TAKING COLIC MEDICINE.

**How Ben's Wife Forced Him into Smashing the Demijohn.**

[From the Virginia Chronicle.]

A butter peddler from Honey Lake relates with great glee how a neighbor of his was cured of too frequently tipping the gin bottle. This neighbor married a young, handsome and spirited lady, and for a month or two all went well in the house and about the farm; then the husband fell back into his old tricks. The wife remonstrated, and for a time the husband reformed.

Presently, however, she became satisfied that the "bottle tipping" was again going on. When she spoke to her husband about the matter he swore that the aroma she detected was that of a colic medicine he was taking, he having developed a most obstactable colic, for the relief of which he had brought home and paraded a bottle of medicine.

The wife was confident that there was kept somewhere about the premises a considerable store of a very different kind of medicine.

She kept her own counsel and at the same time strict watch. In a day or two she discovered under a manger in the barn the secret hoard. She said nothing of the discovery to her husband.

Soon after the husband had business at a neighbor's some two miles away. On his return home he was somewhat surprised at seeing a note pinned upon his front door. Hastily advancing he read as follows:

"BEN:—You will find the key of the house where you kept your colic medicine. I have taken Kitty and gone home to my mother. Father and brother Bob will come to-morrow for the trunk in which I have packed my things.

"NELLIE."

The husband rushed to the barn. At a glance he saw that Kitty, his wife's mare, and the side-saddle were gone. Darting to the manger he hauled out his corpulent demijohn of gin, and suspended from its neck found the key of the house.

Securing the key he sent the demijohn whizzing and crashing against a post of the barn.

Bounding forth, he ran to and mounted the horse he had left standing in front of his house.

Away he dashed.

It was ten miles to the house of his father-in-law, and he was determined to overtake his wife before she could reach it, or kill the horse in the attempt.

Said the butter man: "Now, I see'd Ben's wife come over the hill half a mile south of my house on her little mare, Kitty, and begin to perform some queer ablutions.

"After she'd got over the brow o' the hill she paced up and down the road for a time; then she rid up and looked over the brow of the ridge for awhile. After looking a bit she seemed about and rid up and down the road a few times, and went up to the brow o' the hill again. So she kept doing, and once or twice she got off and led Kitty to the top of the hill.

"I was puzzled as to whether she was waitin' for somebody or had lost something while on the way to her father's place, some four miles beyond my house. I was just about to walk out that way when I see'd her wheel Kitty around from the brow o' the hill and begin to ply her whip.

"In half a minute she was flyin' past my place like a wild woman. I stood at my front gate by the roadside ready to holler out at her to know what was up, but bless you, she never looked toward me. Her eyes seemed sot in her head, her face was pale, and at every jump she let into Kitty with her whip. I swar her ridin' skirt fairly cracked as she bounded past me!

"Just then I heerd a tremendous clatter behind me. Turnin' about I seed Ben a comin' over the pitch of the hill on his big black horse like a wild Comanche. He was ridin' with loose reins, leanin' away to for'ard, and diggin' his big spurs into his horse like he'd rip his insides out.

"He passed by with his hair and coat-tails sailin' back in the wind, and never turnin' his head to right nor left. I thought I seed murder in his eye. I tell you, a million thoughts ran through my brain in a second. All the stories I ever heard about jealous husbands and insane husbands went through my head in a lump, an' I do believe if I'd had my gun in my hand I'd have taken awing shot at him on suspicion.

"I seed Nell look back once, and then lay the whip to Kitty hott'n ever. Ben was goin' like the wind. I knowed Nell was headed for her father's, and I seed plain as day that Ben would get her 'fore she was safe landed.

"At last he was upon her. It was then neck and neck for a time, with Ben reachin' out for Kitty's bridle. At last he got it, and the two horses gradually slowed up till they finally stopped. I mounted my gatepost all of a tremble, expectin' to see somethin' dreadful happen.

"They stopped in the road talkin' nigh one half an hour; then I seed Ben lean over and Nell lean over, till thar two heads came together.

"'What the mischief!' says I, 'kissin' instead of killin'. Well that sort of fracas gits me!'

"After the headbumpin' the pair turned about and came slowly joggin' along back.

"As they passed me, I called out to Ben to know what in the livin' jingo it all meant. Ben began to stammer something, 'bout half of which never got out through his big beard, when Nell sings out to me: 'Only a race for a kiss,' and givin' Kitty a cut that made her bound ten feet, she called out to Ben, 'Come on! A race to the top of the hill for another!' and away they both went.

"That was five years ago and I never knowed the true meanin' of that wild, harum-scarum ride till about three months ago, when the story 'bout the ie medicine leaked out among the wimmen folks. For a good while after the ride, howsumever, I remember one of the neighbor men wonderin' what had come over Ben that he had shut down on his gin all of a sudden and wouldn't so much as take a glass of o' Oregon cider.

"To this day, no doubt, Ben thinks he had a desperate chase after Nell, and a narrer escape o' her gettin' into the home den 'lone with her big brother, her father and his mother-in-law; and I've never said a word to him 'bout how she fooled 'long under the brow of the hill."

## WILLIAM TRIPP'S MOTHER.

William was wicked.

When I pick out one man from a mining camp made up of 300 runaways, debt-jumpers, cut-throats, gamblers, horse thieves and murderers and call him wicked, I mean for the reader to infer that he was right up and down bad.

Which was exactly the case with William Tripp.

Nobody seemed to know when or how William settled himself down in our midst. For all I know he was the founder of White Dog Diggings, and perhaps it was the rest of us who settled down in his midst. Be that as it may, he was there and there he remained, notwithstanding several broad hints to the effect that he would look handsome at the end of a rope.

Wicked! Well, he was that!

Such a swearer as William was! He would begin as soon as his eyes were open in the morning and keep up a steady fire until 10 o'clock at night. He spent more time in inventing new oaths than some of the men did in digging for gold. He swore by every saint ever heard of. He swore by the heavens and earth—the angels—whales—sharks—wild-cats—pirates—preachers and even pork and beans. I think his greatest anxiety was to find something new to swear by, but he found enough to make any man's flesh creep.

And he was a cheat and a liar.

There wasn't a man in camp who would believe him under oath, and no man ever played cards with him and escaped his knavish devices. He was quarrelsome, over-bearing, hasty and inclined to shed blood, and, although shot at a dozen different times, he always escaped without a scratch.

You wonder that we didn't run him out or hang him.

Well, somehow we always intended to, but always put it off to a more convenient date. The success of bouncing a man depends a good deal on who the man is. On our first gentle hint to William Trip that unless he was packed up and out of camp inside of thirty minutes his anatomy would be ridd'ed with bullets, he produced a couple of revolvers, backed up against the Red Eye Saloon and calmly observed that he was aching for a little excitement. I think his action at that particular time had something to do with our giving him rope and seeking to get along with his eccentric traits of character.

"I move," said Elder Beacon one night when we were talking about William's bad ways, "that the committee get the drop on him and then run him into the hills."

Just so, but who were the committee? That was another point we could never satisfactorily determine, and that was another reason why William continued to abide with us.

Shoot! Well, you never saw such an eye and such nerve. Just as far as he could see the bowl of a pipe in a man's mouth he could smash it with a bullet. Almost every hat in camp had an air-hole made by one of his bullets, and though I was prejudiced against William, I had to admit that he respected men's heads in shooting at their hats. No doubt he would have felt real bad had his bullet carried too low.

One day when a sort of a parson came over from Turkey Creek to wrestle with William and entreat him to turn from the wrath to come, what happened? Why, William backed off fifteen paces and cut every button off the parson's coat with bullets, and as a grand winder-up he made a long shot after the flying victim and left his mark on the man's ear in order to know him again.

But there came a halt in William Tripp's mad career, and it happened in a curious way. A fire in his tent one night burned up a lot of his traps, and he had to make a ride of thirty miles on Col. Cooper's old mare to replace them with new. The morning he rode out of camp was the last time we saw him, but we heard from a dozen different ones just what happened. About twelve miles from our camp was the Overland Trail, and just where our own trail struck in was a pretty little valley with plenty of water and wood. It was a favorite camping spot with immigrants, and the day William Tripp reached it he found half a dozen wagons and as many families halted for a breathing spell.

The devil try in William's nature bubbled over when he struck that valley and beheld such a scene of peace. Children were playing around, women were washing and mending, and the brawny men were repairing wagons and harness and whistling over their work. William drew rein and gazed upon the scene for a few minutes. Then he out with his revolver. Seated before one of the fires was an old woman with her knitting in hand and a pipe in her mouth. It was a long shot, but the evil one urged William to try it, and try it he did.

"What happened?"

Something even worse than murder. The bullet went straight for the old woman's head and crashed into her brain. Then something awful followed. She rose to her feet, whirled around to face the shooter, and true as you live, she seemed to look at him for thirty seconds before she tottered forward and shrieked out:

"William! Oh! my son William!"

Then she pitched forward on the grass and was dead in a second, and the red blood oozed out and made a terrible stain on the green grass.

And William—what did he do? He was like one turned to stone. The woman's words plainly reached his ears, and he must have recognized her face. In the one awful moment in which he sat gazing at the corpse on the grass it must have flashed across him that his poor old mother had made that long journey with neighbors for no other purpose than to hunt him up—he, the boy who had left her years before and had been the subject of her nightly prayers ever since. Wicked as he was, he must have felt her devotion and sacrifices.

And then?

He sat there in his saddle, his eye fastened on his mother's corpse, and the revolver still in his hand. The situation had petrified him. While he sat thus one of the immigrants, who believed that the camp was to be attacked by a force, leveled his rifle over the wheel of a wagon and sent a bullet plowing through William's heart.

Ah! well; it's years and years ago, and the twin graves in the valley have long since been trampled out of sight, and White Dog Diggings can be found no more, but the day the news of that awful tragedy came back to us we dropped spade and pick and could work no more for that day. And after a long period of silence among the men, who had instinctively gathered around Judge Desire to hear his opinion, the Judge arose and said:

"Feller citizens, the wicked don't live out half his days, and don't you forgit it!"

### POOR OSCAR WILDE.

**The Young Æsthete Taken in by a Banco Steerer.**

A short time before he left New York Oscar Wilde walked up Broadway. When near Union Square a hatchet-faced young man accosted him and introduced himself as a son of Mr. Drexel, the banker, of Drexel, Morgan & Co. He had seen the poet in his father's office and took the liberty, etc., etc. Mr. Wilde was delighted. He had been in Mr. Drexel's office, and though he did not remember the junior Drexel he was glad to see him. The two went together to a restaurant, where Mr. Wilde's new-found friend ate as if he were hungry. The poet remembered this with a grim smile when informed by Captain Williams later in the day that his alias was Hungry Joe, the name of a noted banco-steerer and confidence man. During the meal Mr. "Drexel" incidentally mentioned that he had won a prize in a lottery and suggested that Mr. Wilde go with him and get it. It was a very old and worn bait, but the victim bit on it; swallowed it whole, in fact. He accompanied his friend to a house in Fifteenth or Seventeenth street, which he could not remember or afterward discover, and there found some men throwing dice. "Drexel" threw once for Mr. Wilde in fun, and won him quite a sum; he then easily persuaded him to join in the game. Soon he began to lose, and when a settlement was made found that he was $50 out. Not having the ready money he gave a check for the amount and played on. Soon he had lost $100 and gave a check for that sum at the solicitation of the men who played with him.

Once more, now thoroughly excited, he plunged into the game and came out a loser by $1,000. This sobered him. While slowly signing a check on the Madison Square Bank for the amount, he weighed in his mind a suspicion that he had been swindled, and formed a plan for getting the best of the swindlers. He arose to go, and shaking off Mr. "Drexel," who lamented his ill fortune, and insisted on going with him, made a beeline for the Bowery (the house in which he had been playing was between Second and Third avenues).

Hailing a cab (of course the Bowery is always full of cabs) he told the driver to go on a dead run to the Madison Square Bank. His scheme was successful; he got there before the thieves, and calling the cashier, told him to stop three checks, representing a total sum of $1,160, which he had just signed. The thieves doubtless followed him and saw where he went.

They did not present the checks at all, but on the following Monday Captain Williams received them by mail, doubtless from Mr. "Drexel."

Having made sure of the money Mr. Wilde visited the Thirtieth Street Police Station and confessed his folly to Captain Williams.

In the Rogues' Gallery he recognized his friend Drexel in the picture of "Hungry Joe," otherwise Joseph Sellick. He expressed a determination in no event to go to court, and when the checks were returned without any attempt having been made to cash them, expressed great relief.

Now that he has left the city "Hungry Joe" is at liberty to try his tricks on some other poet, as there is no charge against him. The tale is interesting if not novel, but it may be as well to wait till Mr. Wilde is heard from before believing it.—*New York World.*

### Too Savage.

Many people are surprised, says the London *Truth*, that the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess Vladimir should be such wanderers on the face of the earth. The fact is the Grand Duchess, who is young and imprudent, has long been amusing herself by making merry at the expense of the ladies of the St. Petersburg palace, and even of her imperial female cousins. A letter, addressed by her to a Russian princess living in Paris, and in which she roasted most unmercifully the "cat," the "mouse," the "toad," and the "glow worm" (nicknames which designate some of the aforesaid ladies), was intercepted by one of the Generals attached to the *Cabinet Noir*, who handed it over to the Czar. The Empress was terribly angry, and insisted on the Grand Duchess Vladimir being sent for some time out of the country.

### The Debt Question.

Senator David Davis is fond of encouraging worthy and aspiring young men, but toward idlers and fortune-hunters he turns the chilliest kind of a cold shoulder. A short time ago a young lawyer asked his permission to pay court to a young lady of wealth, his ward. Senator Davis took the case under consideration for a day, and then rendered a decision. "I cannot give my consent," it ran, "not because you are poor and dependent upon your profession, but because you are in the habit of incurring needless debts, without knowing or caring how you are to pay them."

### Breaking Up.

The exclusion of marriage insurance companies' letters from the mails has broken up that form of speculation, which had assumed astonishing proportions throughout the Southwest. Men who ought to have known better invested largely in the swindle, and with few exceptions lost every dollar. Affianced husbands thought that by taking out a policy and then getting married without delay they could get the sums which the insurance managers promised them on their wedding day, but the collapse came too soon for a reliazation of their plans.

### A SUDDEN FREAK.

**The Story of a New York Girl and Her Sudden Disappearance.**

The New York correspondent of the Baltimore *American* tells this story of a sad descent: Fifteen years ago a daughter of a rich and properous man, living in fine style on Fifth avenue, went out in a carriage, ostensibly on a shopping expedition. At Stewart's store she left the carriage, and her coachman waited for over two hours, until finally, becoming anxious, he made inquiries. The young lady had disappeared, and though a great deal of money was spent and much effort made to discover her, there was no trace. Ten years passed, and the detective who had worked on the case very faithfully and axiously rose by degress to the rank of police captain. One cold night, just after Christmas, four or five of his officers entered the station with eight or ten intoxicated women in their custody. One or two were crying over their arrest and the prospects of a prison; others were fierce in their oaths at the interference of the police with their orgie, while others again were sulky. Standing a little apart from the group of prisoners the Captain noticed a tall woman of about thirty, and he saw that once she had been beautiful, though now her face was disfigured by a bruise on the cheek and a black welt under one eye. There was, however, an air of refinement about the woman that attracted the police captain, and he eyed her curiously while the sergeant recorded the names of the prisoners. Suddenly the women beckoned to him. "Captain, do you know me?" was her question. "No." "Didn't you once try to find Miss Grace——?" "Yes." "Well, I'm her! I ran away just out of pure deviltry, and I have had my full share of it?" "Good heavens! Why did you do it?" "Oh, I don't know. The notion came into my head and I obeyed the impulse." "And where have you been all this time?" "Right here in the ward, under your nose. You never suspected me, though I saw you often enough." "And have you not repented of the step?" "Repented!" and the word thrilled in the Captain's ear like the wail of a lost soul. "Repented! Oh, God, yes! But it was too late." "It's never too late." "Yes it is. But its not too late to die." And before the captain could prevent she had drawn a small pistol and shot herself. The poor creature lived for two days, and when she died it was in the arms of her father. The mother had died a few years before of grief. These are all true stories, and show how much stranger real life is than fiction.

### Danger in Stored Electricity.

The Edison Electric Light Company look with alarm upon the Brush project of storing electricity so that it can be used as occasion may require. The president of the Edison company in speaking of the matter says: What then is the Brush storage battery and where will the householder locate it? That battery is described as a coffin-shaped box, eight feet long, sixteen inches wide and sixteen inches high. This box is filled with lead plates, is of great weight, and must be placed where it can be got at for occasional treatment. Every house would need to have its own separate battery, and many consumers will require a number of these boxes, varying with the amount of light required. In some cases they may be put in the cellar, in others in a closet with a strong floor; but place them where you will, the wires leading to them carry the death current. Although every effort be made to keep the covering of these wires unbroken and their location intact, still innumerable occasions will happen, such as house repairs, etc., by which they will be exposed to contact. Whoever touches those wires—it may be a curious child, a stupid servant, a fireman, a workman engaged in plumbing, carpentering or carrying coal—whoever touches them so as to receive the current will be killed. The public, as I have stated, will not discriminate. If deaths happen from such contact with electric wires, a storm of undiscriminating public indignation will attack all methods of domestic lighting by electricity. It is for this reason that the Edison Company views with deep alarm the possible advent of the Brush-Swan storage batteries, fed in the manner described by Mr. Brush in recent newspaper articles.

SUPERSTITIOUS.—"If I was an actress, instead of an actor," said a well-known professional, "I would not play the part of Eleanor Vaughn, in 'Davy Crockett,' for a thousand dollars a week. Venie Claney traveled with Frank Mayo several years ago in that role, and she died of consumption. Then Laura Claney, her sister, was engaged, and now she is dying of the same disease in Southern California. A third Eleanor was Laure Don, and a few days ago she sailed for southern France, and her last remark to me as I bade her good bye was that she would not live to come back to America. Her physician had pronounced her disease consumption. People say that we of the dramatic profession are superstitious, but these are facts that ought to make everybody afraid of acting Eleanor Vaughn."

MAKING A TEMPERANCE TOWN.—Gov. Stanford has offered to purchase the entire town of Vina, Tehama County, Cal., on these conditions: He will buy all the real estate and improvements thereon for a nominal sum—say $1—and immediately sell and reconvey the same property to the owners, provided that he is allowed to insert a clause in his deeds that no intoxicating liquors shall ever be sold in the town of Vina. He will further obligate himself to build a fine two-story school-house large enough to accommodate all the children of the town. He will further agree to import 100 German families to work his extensive vineyard and orchard, and will exclude from his premises all Chinese labor.

A SAD STORY.—A most extraordinary and painful phenomenon has lately occurred in Warsaw. A lady died under somewhat peculiar circumstances, which gave rise to a report that her death had been caused by her husband's ill treatment. Hence, several weeks after the interment her body was exhumed for post-mortem examination, when it was found that in the grave a perfectly healthy child had been born.

EVERY great example of punishment has in it some justice, but the suffering individual is compensated by the public good.—Tacitus.

### WIT AND WISDOM.

THE reason why there are no female bill collectors is that "woman's work is never dun."

IN some portions of the West the only observance of Christmas is to trim the trees with horse thieves.

AFTER describing the different degrees of weather, the Detroit *Free Press* says "it could not do any more if paid for it."

THE small boy who reached up the chimney for another Christmas present said he found something there that sooted him.

HE who courts and goes away may live to court another day; but he who weds and courts girls still, may get in court against his will.

NANTUCKET has a girl pilot only seventeen years old.—*Boston Advertiser.* And we'll wager that she is familiar with every buoy in the Sound.

WHEN Dr. Bliss received the $6,000 offered instead of the $25,000 demanded, his "respiration was slow, his pulse rapid, and his pus cavity extended" with bile.

SIGN for a hotel—inn digestion. An apartment to let to a lady—room it is, 'm. Hint to a bore—g' out. The cry of a disconcerted house-holder—liver complaint.

"WHAT are clouds?" asked the *Popular Science Monthly.* Well, one kind is when you call to see your girl and find that the other fellow is in the parlor with her.

SAID a farmer who was given to long drinks, to a brother agriculturist, "What breed of cattle would you advise me to adopt?" "Short horns," was the significant reply."

A THING is said to be transparent when you can see through it. A German paper gives us two very good illustrations—first, a pane of glass, and second, a keyhole.

WHEN a young man in Patagonia wants a wife he rides out and lassoes one, but in this country when a girl wants a husband and her fellow doesn't come to time, the lass-sues him—for breach of promise.

YOUNG noblemen are becoming numerous on the London stock exchange. One of them said recently that he felt like an orchid in a turnip field, and the noble members are henceforth to be known as "the orchid squad."

THE St. Louis brewers are going to start a newspaper to be run in the interest of the business. The idea is, we suppose, to make it such dry reading that you must resort to beer to quench your thirst.—*Wilmington News.*

PROFESSOR (explaining the influence of different densities of air on sound)—"If, now, from here we should hear the steamboat whistle down in the harbor, what would we infer?" Bright junior—"Steamboat coming in."—*Yale Record.*

A FAMILY HISTORY.

There was old Sam Simons
And young Sam Simons,
Old Sam Simons's son;
And young Sam Simons
Is still Sam Simons,
Though old Sam Simons is gone.
—*Boston Globe.*

CAPTAIN (to two soldiers practicing with their rifles)—"Come, let me have one of your rifles. You shoot wretchedly." (He shoots and misses.) "There," he says, "that's the way you shoot." (Shoots and misses again; to second soldier:) "And that's the way you shoot." (Shoots again and hits:) "And that's the way I shoot."

A GENTLEMAN who had tarried late at his club, found his wife awaiting his return in a high state of nervousness. She said: "Here I've been waiting and rocking in the chair till my head spins round like a top." "Jess so, w