EUGENE CITY GUARD.

I. L. CAMPBELL. - - Proprietor.

EUGENE CITY, OREGON.

PATAGONIAN BIRDS.

Many of Them Indulge in Exceedingly Eccentric Performances.

The black-faced ibis of Padagonia, a bird nearly as large as a turkey, indulges in a curious mad performance, usually in the evening when feeding time is over. The birds of a flock, while winging their way to the roosting place, all at once seemed possessed with frenzy, simultaneously dashing downward with amazing violence, doubling about in the most eccentric manner, and when close to the surface rising again to repeat the action, all the while making the air palpitate for miles around with their hard metallic cries. Other ibises, also birds of other genera, have similar aerial performances.

The displays of most ducks known to me take the form of mock fights on the water; one exception is the handsome and loquacious whistling widgeon of La Plata, which has a pretty aerial performance. A dozen or twenty birds rise up until they appear like small specks in the sky and sometimes disappear from sight altogether, and at that great altitude they continue hovering in one spot, often for an hour or longer, alternatingly closing and separating, the fine, bright, whistling notes and flourishes of the male curiously harmonizing with the grave, measured notes of the female, and every time they close they slap one another on the wings so smartly that the sound can be distinctly heard, like applauding hand claps, even after the birds have ceased to be visible.

The rails, active, sprightly birds with powerful and varied voices, are great performers, but, owing to the nature of the ground they inhabit and to their shy, suspicious character, it is not easy to observe their antics. The finest of the Plartan rails is the ypecaha, a beautiful, active bird about the size of the fowl. A number of ypecahas have their assembling place on a small area of smooth, level ground, just above the water, and hemmed in by dense rush beds. First, one bird among the rushes emits a powerful cry, thrice repeated, and this is a note of invitation, quickly responded to by other birds from all sides as they hurriedly repair to the usual place. In a few moments they appear, to the number of a dozen or twenty, bursting from the rushes and running into the open space and instantly beginning the performance. This is a tremendous screaming concert. The screams they utter have a certain resemblance to the human voice exerted to its utmost pitch and expression of extreme terror, frenzy and despair. A long, piercing shriek, astonishing for its vehemence and power, is succeeded by a lower note, as if in the first the creature had well nigh exhausted itself; this double scream is repeated several times, and followed by other sounds, resembling, as they rise and fall, half-smothered cries of pain and moans of anguish. Suddenly the unearthly shrieks are renewed in all their power. While screaming, the birds rush from side to side, as if possessed with madness, the wings spread and vibrating, the long beak wide open and raised vertically. This exhibition lasts three or four minutes, after which the assembly peacefully breaks up.

The singular wattled, wing-spurred and long-toed jacana has a remarkable performance, which seems specially designed to bring out the concealed beauty of the silky, greenish-golden wing quills. The birds go singly or in pairs, and a dozen or fifteen individuals may be found in a marshy place feeding within sight of one another. Occasionally, in response to a note of invitation, they all in a moment leave off feeding and fly to one spot, and forming a close cluster and emitting short, excited, rapidly-repeated notes, display their wings, like beautiful flags grouped loosely together; some hold the wings up vertically and motionless, others half open and vibrating rapidly, while still others wave them up and down with a slow, measured motion.—Longman's Magazine.

Center of the United States.

Do you know the exact location of the center of the Union? Never thought any thing about it probably. Well it is marked by a grave—that of Major Ogden, of the United States Army, who died at Fort Riley, Kas., in 1855, during the cholera epidemic of that year. The remains of the Major were removed to Fort Leavenworth and buried in the National Cemetery there, but his monument still stands upon a little knoll to the northeast of the fort—Fort Riley—and it lifts its head towards the clouds in the exact geographical center of the United States. Of the thousands of men who have been located at Fort Riley during the past forty years, perhaps not one in a hundred knew or cared anything about the oddity of his situation. The post is a few miles east of Junction City, Kas., and was formerly one of the most important in the United States.—St. Louis Republic.

A Cat with Six Legs.

T. Kenney, of Hamlin, N. Y., is the owner of a most extraordinary cat. In addition to the four feet usually allowed to cats this feline glories in two more. Branching outward from each front leg is a smaller leg, terminating in a perfectly formed foot. As she walks toward one with those four feet abreast she creates a curious impression. Her surplus feet are evidently of no inconvenience, as she is an unusually good mouser. She is very domestic in her habits and will grab for a ball or string as quickly as her more common sisters.—Rochester Post-Express.

An Editorial Episode.

"Here's a question," said the Information Editor, "I can't answer. This man wants to know 'how long girls should be courted.'"

"Just the same as short girls," returned the Obituary Editor.

And the staff humorist stole the joke and sold it to the editor-in-chief for $1. —N. Y. Herald.

Blackmail.

Angry Citizen—How much will you take, and leave the neighborhood at once?

Leader of Little German Band—Fifty cents.

Angry Citizen—You ask too much.

Leader of Little German Band—Ish dot so? Vell, I blays von more tune, und den you see if dot's too mooch—Puck.

THE SOCIETY WOMAN OF TODAY.

Those That Are Sought After Are Not the Girls, but Women of 30 or Over.

"The buds," says Rustan, "are a nine days' wonder, and are much talked of for that space of time, but it is the women past 30 who are the most interesting in America. They seem to have the gift of eternal youth, and at 50 are more agreeable looking than the women of any other country."

Rustan's observation will surprise people whose sole knowledge of fashionable society is derived from the chroniclers of a quarter or half century back; but to the onlooker, as well as to the foreign traveler, it is patent that there is a great physical change in the American society woman as exemplified in New York. They hold their age in an astonishing and unprecedented manner and seem not to attain the zenith of their beauty till a point beyond which they are hopelessly passe. Men say that the women of today are at 35 no older than they formerly were at 25, and that there is a corresponding difference all along the line; that consequently they dress younger without incongruity, and that beyond and above all this they have learned to grow old with grace, which means that they have at least recognized that it is futile to sham youth and have set themselves to develop wit, style and other attributes which are permanent and may grow instead of lessen with time.

In the time of our mothers and grandmothers, if the society chroniclers are a guide, a woman was considered old after 25. If she did not marry in her first season she was called a "relic" and made to feel in the way. And there was some reason for the raillery.

Between then and now two things have happened. Health has become the fashion and is sought for passionately and successfully. Clear skins, natural color, firm muscles, bright eyes and elastic steps are now the order of the day, and a woman who was once as transient as snow has become as permanent as her husband. That pretension to youthfulness is not now the common weakness is evidenced by the fact that the humorous papers, which once found this the most fruitful subject for jests, have turned their attention to other foibles. With this change men's taste regarding women seems to have altered somewhat.

Where once he admired the beauty of youth alone and was satisfied with dumb response to emotion, he now demands a great deal more. The woman of today must make herself agreeable, not passively, but actively; she must be brilliant and witty, possessed of tact and able to entertain; must have the art of dressing, the knowledge of men, the art of flattering, must be, in short, a woman of the world with the liberal education which that implies. The day of the doll has passed away; the debutante is in no flurry to get married, and the yearling pasture is not the wife market it was.

It might be supposed that women who keep up a continuous round of dinners, operas and balls would look dragged out and weary and old before their time, but in reality they are in the most splendid physical condition. They are up, it is true, till the small hours of the morning, drinking champagne, dancing, conversing and flirting, but this is their sole occupation, and it does not begin before 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The remainder of their time is spent in the pursuit of health. After a noon breakfast they drive, twice a week, to the Turkish baths, and are steamed, pounded, plunged and showered, shampooed and manicured, and turned out as if new made from the hand of God. No other creature, unless it be thoroughbred racers, have such care given to their bodies as these women whose business is society.

Whatever science and art have discovered and invented, or nature allotted, to give health and beauty, is commanded by them, until it is now beginning to be said, curiously, that the women are outlasting the men.

The society woman depends greatly on luxurious bathing to renew her strength. The Turkish bath has been taken outside the home, but the bathrooms in some of the wealthy houses give evidence by their costliness and beauty of the part they play in the daily economy.—New York Mail and Express.

Be Prompt in Appointments.

The Manufacturer's Gazette thinks there is nothing more damaging to a business than to be found wanting in the matter of promptness in filling orders. A great many firms will promise to have an order at a certain time, when they are confident in their own minds that it will be almost an utter impossibility to do so. This is done to secure the orders, but they cannot fail of a damaging effect in the future. It is just as important that an order be filled at the time agreed as that any other engagement or appointment be kept. The man who arranges for a meeting with another at a certain time is expected to be on time. In these days of great enterprise and push, every one has time fully taken and promptness in keeping an appointment is an important matter to him. Just so it is in filling orders. Promptness is as much to the credit of a concern as is the quality of the work or the material used.

The Prescription.

There was, some time ago, a doctor whose morning levees were crowded beyond description. It was his pride and boast that he could feel his patient's pulse, look at his tongue, probe at him with his stethoscope, write his prescription, pocket his fee, in a space of time varying from two to five minutes. One day an army man was shown into the consulting room, and underwent what he supposed to be the instantaneous process. When it was completed the patient shook hands heartily with the doctor and said: "I am especially glad to meet you, as I have often heard my father, Col. Forester, speak of his old friend, Dr. L." "What!" exclaimed the doctor, "are you Dick Forester's son?" "Most certainly I am." "My dear fellow, throw that formal prescription into the fire and sit down and tell me what's the matter with you."—Murray's Magazine.

Good Against Odds.

Patterson—When I was in London a friend of mine, Charley Ferguson—

Barrow—Charley Ferguson! Why, I know him!

Patterson—Well, he's a good fellow all the same.—Harper's Bazar.

The literary production of Mexico is quite wonderful. One of her latest bibliographical lists mentions no less than 12,000 volumes by 3,000 native Mexican authors. The first book printed on this continent was published in Mexico.

NAMES OF NEGROES.

Curious Nomenclature That Originated in the Old Plantation Life.

Of course, on every plantation there were several negroes of the same name, and the negroes, who are apt at such things, used various and peculiar sobriquets to distinguish them. On my father's place there was an' Taller Liza, an' Black Liza and an' Pop Eyed Liza, an' Unker Big Jake, Unker Little Jake and Unker Knock Kneed Jake. There were in one family three generations of Bens, all possessed of a mental or physical infirmity. The old man, who had been kicked in the head by a mule, was crazy. He spent his days and pretty nearly all his nights standing under a broad China tree preaching of the judgment day. He was Unker Fool Ben. His son, a middle aged man, afflicted with an ulcer that made him lame, was Unker Hoppin' Ben. The grandson who trembled with the palsy and besides was simple minded, was Unker Chilly Ben. Though able bodied, he was never required to do any work and wandered about the place without let or hindrance.

At the close of the war a large majority of the southern negroes assumed the name of the family to which they belonged, getting it fearfully twisted sometimes, as, for instance, Grim for Graham, Buskey for Arowbuski, etc. Some went back in search of names to their former owners in Virginia or Carolina, who had lost them either through debt or raised them to be sold to the negro speculator, who brought them further south to be sold again to work the cotton and rice plantations. In this way you will now find the grandfather of a family bearing the name of his old master in Virginia, his son that of his owner at the close of the war, while the grandson assumes some fanciful name suggested by circumstances. So I know an old man calling himself Jim Sanders. His son is Jim James, Jr. There is not nor ever has been a Jim James, sr. His son, again, is Jim Grandson. Upon the plantations you still occasionally come across the once familiar names of Sambo, Cuffee, Dinah, Sukey, etc., but very rarely even there. Grandisons, Mortimers, Leilas, Nathalies, etc., have taken their places.

Bible names, with explanatory prefixes and suffixes, are great favorites among the devout portion of the negro community. The man who works my garden is King David Jonsing. My woodcutter is Rev. Solermon Wiseman, who, like St. Paul, does not disdain with his own hands to minister to his necessities. Besides these, I number among my acquaintance Rev. Simon Surrender and Holy Tabernacle, Brother John the Baptist Tubbs. Among the more secular are Mr. Jack Hyena and Prince Albert Hardtimes, a happy equality between the aristocrat and the plebeian. The lusty young negro man who, with Webster's spelling book and a hickory, teaches the colored idea how to shoot, has chosen the name of Professor Sam Cape of Good Hope. A black vulcan, hammering sparks from his anvil, dubs himself Sampson Lightning. The butcher's boy, who comes whistling into the yard with his basket upon his arm and has a face as black as ebony, answers to the name of Ivory Temple. A little colored female tramp from the country, who comes to me once a week, totin' a bundle of ligther'd on her head, which she offers to exchange, announces herself as Miss Annerlizer Purse. An empty purse, evidently, for she never fails to wind up the trade by asking: "Ain't yer got nuthin' t'eat yer kin give me!"—Cor. Philadelphia Times.

The Fashionable Avenue.

Beyond the Arc de Triomphe is the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne leading to the park of that name. It is a thoroughfare that grandly shows to what beauty avenue gardening is capable. It was made entirely through private lands, half the expense being borne by the state under the conditions that an iron railing of uniform design was to be constructed along the whole length of the road; that a strip of about forty feet in breadth be left for a garden between this railing and the houses, and, further, that no kind of trade or manufacture should be carried on in any of the buildings adjoining. Its total length is 1,350 yards and its width is 130. It consists of a central roadway 80 feet wide, of two sidewalks each 40 feet wide, of a "Rotten Row" for riders, of two long pieces of garden with grass, shrubs and flowers, and of two lateral roads for public vehicles. Some of the most magnificent private mansions in Paris face on this avenue, and it is the chief fashionable route to and from the bois.—Cor. Chicago Herald.

William as He Was.

The name William was not at first given to children; it was a name conferred upon a man as a reward of merit. When the ancient Germans fought with the Romans, the Germans were armed only with light weapons, swords, spears, shields, etc., and if a German killed on the field a well armed Roman, wearing a gilded helmet, the helmet was set on the head of the brave German who had slain its owner, who ever after was known as Gildhelm, or, as we would say, Golden Helmet. Among the Franks the name was Guildhelme, and afterwards the French, Guilheaume, afterwards Guillame, and with the Latin speaking nations, Guilelmus. Finally the French Guillame became Williame and soon evolved into William.—St. Louis Republic.

Confusion of Tongues.

A five-year-old boy has been spending the afternoon at the house of one of his playmates, says the Boston Transcript.

The little fellow came home full of stories about Jeanie's wonderful nurse, who, as it appeared, had said many curious things during the afternoon.

"Well, well," said the boy's father at last, "what is the nurse—French, German, or what?"

"I don't know," answered Harry, "but I guess she must be broken English; it sounded like it."

REMODELING DRESSES.

Hints for Ladies Who Desire to Make Use of Last Year's Dresses.

Almost any dress made within the last two or three years can be made over in the simple styles now in vogue with straight skirts and trimmed bodices. For instance, the plaited skirts of woolen gowns, if faded, can be turned, and their voluminous breadth will furnish ample material for an English skirt with plain front and sides and pleated back, and for full sleeves. If this skirt is too short for the present elongated breadths, it can be lengthened by adding a border of striped, plaid or spotted wool, or else a bias fold of silk four inches wide, lined with crinoline, can be set below the edge, and simply stitched on—a fashion seen on many of the new English gowns. Another plan is to trim the skirt with three or four rows of velvet ribbon of graduated widths, the lowest row three inches wide, falling below the edge of the skirt and lengthening it. Should the skirt be long enough, but frayed at the edges, a binding of thick watered ribbon three inches wide will freshen it, and give "a weighter" to the skirt. The foundation skirt, after having the bustle and steels removed, should be faced with the material of the dress, or with that added to lengthen it.

The full skirt of a summer silk dress can be lengthened by insertions of ribbons, of white or black French lace, with either a hem or scalloped lace at the foot, and may be slightly draped as a long over-skirt, with a trimming of gathered lace or ribbon showing below it on the foundation skirt. A white muslin dress can have insertions of tucked muslin or of embroidery let in above its hem, or else it can be lengthened by a border of embroidery at the foot. The bunched-up back breadths of gingham or other cotton dresses made two years ago are usually straight, and merely require to be cut off at the top and gathered full to a belt. The front plaited breadths need not be altered; but if the apron drapery is very long, it should be shortened, and simply draped from hip to hip.

The bodices of wool dresses can retain the fitted back by making the basque part more simple, in habit fashion without postilion plaits, or by cutting it into four square-cornered tabs, or, if quite long, the Louis Quinze coat back may be made. The front of the waist can then have a blouse of plain, striped or checked silk set upon it to cover it, and the slight jacket fronts of wool can be made from pieces left from the full skirt. The coat sleeves can be widened at top by inserting a pointed puff of the silk, or caps of draped folds of the material can be added, or else entirely new sleeves can be made of the silk used on the front of the waist. If the bodice is so worn that it must be abandoned altogether, a pretty blouse of India silk or surah can be used with the remodeled skirt, and this skirt should be sewed permanently to a Swiss belt, or a whalebone corselet made of many small pieces left over from the skirt, well whaleboned, and laced at the top in three or five places in front and on sides.

Other bodices faded or worn about the neck and shoulders can have the soiled parts removed, and a round yoke or one in V shape, or a succession of vandyke points can be set on of surah, of repped silk, or of velvet, while for light materials ecru embroidery can be used instead. A square-cornered Spanish jacket, cut from any large pieces left from the skirt, will cover a badly-fitted waist, or one worn out about the armholes. A corselet, or else pieces of embroidery or silk or velvet, sloped from the under-arm seams to a point in the middle of the front, will also renew soiled waists. High collars can be covered with two pieces of ribbon, each folded over from the top, or with a single wide ribbon, or else with ecru embroidered muslin, which is now used on silk and wool as well as on cotton gowns. A basque of last summer can be shortened to a slightly pointed bodice, and finished with ribbon folded along its edge and hooked behind under a rosette.—Harper's Bazar.

SAVED FROM ROBBERS.

A Contractor's Forgetfulness Proves of Great Value to Him.

Some years ago a prominent railroad builder of Warsaw, Poland, experienced one of the most remarkable "narrow escapes" on record. He was employing several thousand laborers along the line of a railway then under construction, and as there were few banks in the provincial towns of Poland in those days, he was compeled to carry with him large sums of money from headquarters on his regular trips, to pay off his workmen. He usually drew the amount he needed from the Bank of Poland on the day before his departure, keeping the money over night in his own safe, which he considered a perfectly secure depository for these funds, as the art of safe cracking was not yet very extensively known at that time.

One afternoon, as he was engaged in counting and arranging the money he had just drawn from the bank, some one called him into the outer office on some urgent business. Mr. —— threw a newspaper on the bank notes which he had spread out on his table and stepped out, expecting to be back directly. On his return a few minutes later he very carefully locked his safe and went home.

When he entered his office about six o'clock the next morning to get the money from the safe, he was terror-stricken on finding that the safe had been broken open and its valuable contents were missing. Detectives were called at once, but when they arrived and started to make a careful survey of the premises, they found all the money lying intact on the table, still covered by the newspaper which the contractor had thrown over it the day before! He had forgotten to put the money into the safe before locking the latter, and the burglars never thought of looking anywhere else for it, taking with them the few hundred roubles they found in the safe as they departed. His forgetfulness saved the contractor 80,000 roubles.

—At Rome, Ga., recently, while a horse was loose in the stable, one of his hind feet got caught in his mouth. It is supposed that the animal was rubbing the flies from his nose with his hind foot, when by accident the foot passed into the mouth. The hoof was shod with a heavy iron shoe, and the sharp corners of the shoe and hoof cut very painful wounds in the mouth. The poor animal fell to the ground and continued to struggle without relief. When he was discovered he was covered with foam and showed every sign of a fearful struggle. His master came and succeeded in extricating the foot.

COLONEL QUARITCH, V.C.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

"Everybody misses sometimes," answered that gentleman, looking uncommonly sickly. "I shall do better this afternoon when it comes to the driven partridges."

"I don't believe you will," went on Ida, laughing maliciously. "I bet you a pair of gloves that Col. Quaritch will shoot more driven partridges than you do."

"Done," said Edward Cossey, sharply.

"Now, do you hear that, Col. Quaritch?" went on Ida. "I have bet Mr. Cossey a pair of gloves that you will kill more partridges this afternoon than he will, so I hope you won't make me lose them."

"Goodness gracious," said the colonel, in much alarm. "Why, the last partridge driving that I had was on the slopes of some mountains in Afghanistan. I dare say that I shan't hit a haystack. Besides," he said, with some irritation, "I don't like being set up to shoot against people."

"Oh, of course," said Edward, loftily, "if Col. Quaritch is afraid—"

"Well," said the colonel, "if you put it in that way I don't mind trying, but I haven't got a gun and you have two."

"Oh, that will be all right," said Ida to the colonel. "You shall have George's gun; he never tries to shoot when they drive partridges, because he cannot hit them. He goes with the beaters. It's a very good gun."

The colonel took up the gun and examined it. It was of about the same bend and length as his own, but of a better quality, having been once the property of James de la Molle.

"Yes," he said, "but then I haven't got a loader."

"Never mind. I'll do that. I know all about it. I often used to load my brother's second gun when we drove partridges, because he said I was so much quicker than the men. "Look," and she took the gun and rested one knee on the turf, "First position, second position, third position. We used to have regular drills at it," and she sighed.

The colonel laughed heartily, for it was a curious thing to see this stately woman handling a gun with all the skill and quickness of a practiced shot. Besides, as the loader idea involved a whole afternoon of Ida's society, he certainly was not inclined to negative it. But Edward Cossey did not smile; on the contrary, he positively scowled with jealousy, and was about to make some remark when Ida held up her finger.

"Hush," she said, "here comes my father, and he hates bets, so you mustn't say anything about our match."

Luncheon went off pretty well, though Edward Cossey did not contribute much to the conversation. When it was done, the squire announced that he was going to walk to the other end of the estate, whereon Ida said she should stop and see something of the shooting, and the fun began.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE END OF THE MATCH.

They began the afternoon with several small drives, but on the whole the birds did very badly. They broke back, went off to one side or the other, and generally misbehaved themselves. In the first drive the colonel and Edward Cossey got a bird each. In the second drive the latter got three birds, firing five shots, and his antagonist only got a hare and a pheasant that jumped out of a ditch, neither of which, of course, counted anything. Only one brace of birds came his way at all, but if the truth must be told, he was talking to Ida at the moment, and did not see them till too late.

Then came a longer drive when the birds were pretty plentiful. The colonel got one, a low flying Frenchman, which he killed as he topped the fence, and after that for the life of him he could not touch a feather. Every sportsman knows what a fatal thing it is to begin to miss and then get nervous, and that was what happened to the colonel. Continually there came the welcome cries of "Mark! mark! over" followed by the apparition of half a dozen brown balls showing clear against the gray autumn sky, and sweeping down toward him light lightning. Whizz in front, overhead, and behind, bang, bang; bang—again with the second gun, and there they were away—vanished, gone, leaving nothing but a memory behind them.

The colonel swore beneath his breath, and Ida, kneeling at his side, sighed audibly, but so it was, and presently the drive was done, and there he was with one wretched French partridge to show for it.

Ida said nothing, but she looked volumes, and if ever a man felt humiliated Harold Quaritch did at that moment. She had set her heart upon his winning the match, and he was making an exhibition of himself that might have caused a school boy to blush.

Only Edward Cossey grinned as he told his bearer to give the two and a half brace which he had shot to George.

"Last drive this next, gentlemen," said that universal functionary as he surveyed the colonel's one Frenchman, and then, glancing sadly at the tell tale pile of empty cartridge cases, added: "You'll have to shoot up, colonel, this time, if you're going to win them gloves for Miss Ida. Mr. Cossey has knocked up four brace and a half, and you have only got a brace. Look you here, sir," he went on in a portentous whisper, "keep forward of them, well forward, fire ahead of them and fire quick. You're a better shot than he is, a long way. You could give him 'birds,' sir, that you could, and beat him."

Harold said nothing. He was sorely tempted to make excuses, as any man would have done, and he might with truth have urged that he was not accustomed to partridge driving, and that one of the guns was new to him. But he resisted manfully, and said never a word.

George placed the two guns and then went off to join the beaters. It was a capital spot for a drive, for on each side were young larch plantations, sloping down toward them like a V, the guns being at the narrow end and level with the ends of the plantations, which were at this spot about a hundred and twenty yards apart. Then came a large stretch of open fields, lying in such a fashion that the birds were bound to fly straight over the guns and between the gap at the end of the V shaped covers.

They had to wait a long while, for the beat was of considerable extent, and this they did in silence, till presently a couple of single birds appeared coming down the wind like lightning, [illegible] sprung up. One went to the left over Edward Cossey's head, and he shot it neatly, but the other, catching sight of Harold's hat beneath the fence, which was not a very high one, swerved and crossed, an almost impossible shot, nearer sixty than fifty yards from him.

"Now!" said Ida.

"Now!" said Ida, and he fired, and to his joy down came the bird with a thud, bounding full two feet into the air with the force of its impact, being, indeed, shot through the head.

"That's better," said Ida, as she handed him the second gun.

Another moment and a covey came over, high up. He fired both barrels and got a right and left, and snatching the second gun sent another barrel after them, hitting a third bird, which did not fall. And then a noble enthusiasm and certainty possessed him, and he knew that he should miss no more. Nor did he. With two almost possible exceptions he dropped every bird that drove. But his crowning glory, a thing whereof he still often dreams, was yet to come.

He had killed four brace of partridge and fired twelve times, when at last the beaters made their appearance about two hundred yards away at the further end of a rather dirty barley stubble.

"I think that is the lot," he said, "I'm afraid that you have lost your gloves, Ida."

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth when there was a yell of "mark," and a strong covey of birds appeared swooping down wind at him.

On they came, scattered and rather "stringy," and Harold gripped his gun and drew a deep breath, while Ida, kneeling at his side, her lips apart, and her beautiful eyes wide open, watched their advent through a space in the hedge. Lovely enough she looked to charm the heart of any man, if a man out partridge driving could descend to such frivolity, which we hold to be impossible.

Now is the moment. The leading brace are something over fifty yards away, and he knows full well that if there is to be a chance left for the second gun he must shoot before they are five yards nearer.

"Bang!" down comes the old cock bird. "Bang!" and his mate follows him, falling with a smash into the fence.

Quick as thought Ida takes the empty gun with one hand and passes him the cocked and loaded one with the other. "Bang!" Another bird topples head first out of the thinned covey. They are nearly sixty yards away now. "Bang!" again, and oh, joy and wonder! the last bird turns right over backward and falls dead as a stone some seventy paces from the muzzle of the gun.

He had killed four birds out of a single driven covey, which shooters well know is a feat not often done even by the best driving shots.

"Bravo!" said Ida. "I was sure that you could shoot if you chose."

"Yes," he answered; "it was pretty good work," and by the time he had collected the birds, for by now the beaters were across the field. They were all dead, not a runner in the lot, and there were exactly six brace of them. Just as he picked up the last George arrived, followed by Edward Cossey.

"Well, I never," said the former, while something resembling a smile stole over his melancholy countenance. "That's the masterest bit of shooting that ever I did see. Lord Walsingham couldn't beat that himself—sixteen empty cases and twelve birds picked up. Why," and he turned to Edward, "bless me, sir, if I don't believe you've lost them gloves for Miss Ida after all. Let's see, sir, you got two brace this last drive and one the first, and a leash the second, and a brace and a half the third, six and a half in all. And the colonel, yes, he has seven brace, one bird to the good."

"There, Mr. Cossey," said Ida, smiling sweetly, "I have won my gloves. Mind you don't forget to pay them."

"Oh, I will not forget, Miss de la Molle," said he, smiling also, but not pleasantly.

"I suppose," he said, addressing the colonel, "that that last covey twisted up and you browned them."

"No," he answered quietly, "all four were clear shots."

Mr. Cossey smiled again an incredulous smile, which somehow sent Harold Quaritch's blood leaping through his veins more quickly than was good for him, and turned away to hide his vexation. Edward Cossey would rather have lost a thousand pounds than that his adversary should have got that extra bird, for not only was he a jealous shot, but he knew perfectly well that Ida was anxious that he should lose, and desired above all things to see him humiliated. And then he, the smartest shot within ten miles round, to be beaten by a middle aged soldier shooting with a strange gun, and totally unaccustomed to driving! Why, the story would be told over the country—George would see to that. His anger was so great when he thought of it that, afraid of making himself ridiculous, without another word he set off with his bearer toward the castle, leaving the others to follow.

Ida looked after him and smiled. "He is so conceited," she said; "he cannot bear to be beaten at anything."

"I think that you are rather hard on him," said the colonel, for the joke had an unpleasant side which jarred on him.

"At any rate," she answered, with a little stamp, "it is not for you to say so. If you disliked him as much as I do you would be hard on him, too. Besides, I dare say that his turn is coming."

The colonel winced, as well he might, but looking at her handsome face, set just now like steel at the thought of what the future might bring forth, he reflected that if Edward Cossey's turn did come he was by no means sure that the ultimate triumph would rest with him. Ida de la Molle, to whatever extent her sense of honor and money indebtedness might carry her, was no butterfly to be broken on a wheel, but a woman whose dislike and anger, or, worse still, whose cold, unvarying disdain, was a thing from which the boldest hearted man might shrink aghast.

Nothing more was said on the subject, and they began to talk, though somewhat constrainedly, about indifferent matters. They were both aware that it was a farce, and that they were playing a part, for beneath the external ice of formalities the river of their devotion ran whither they knew not. All that had been made clear a few nights back. But what will you have? Necessity, overriding their desires, compelled them along the path of self denial, and, like wise folk, they recognized the fact, for there is nothing more painful in the world than the outburst of hopeless affection.

And so they talked about painting and shooting and what not, till they reached the gray old castle towers. Here Harold wanted to bid her good-by, but she persuaded him to come in and have some tea, saying that her father would like to say good night to him.

Accordingly he went into the vestibule, where there was a light, for it was getting dusk, and there he found the squire and Mr Cossey. As soon as he entered Edward Cossey rose, said good night to the squire and Ida, and then passed toward the door, where the colonel was standing, rubbing the mud off his shooting boots. As he came, Harold, being slightly ashamed of the shooting match, very sorry to have humiliated a man who prided himself so much upon his skill in a particular branch of sport, held out his hand, and said, in a friendly tone:

"Good night, Mr. Cossey. Next time that we are out shooting together I expect I shall be nowhere. It was an awful fluke of mine killing those four birds."

But Eward Cossey took no notice of the friendly words or outstretched hand, but came straight on as though he intended to walk past him.

The colonel was wondering what was best to do, for it was impossible to mistake the meaning of the oversight, when the squire, who was sometimes very quick to notice things, spoke in a loud and decided tone.

"Mr. Cossey," he said, "Col. Quaritch is offering you his hand."

"I observe that he is," he answered, setting his handsome face, "but I do not wish to take Col. Quaritch's hand."

Then came a moment's silence, which the squire again broke.

"When a gentleman in my house refuses to take the hand of another gentleman," he said, very quietly, "I think I have a right to ask the reason of his conduct, which, unless that reason is a very sufficient one, is almost an insult to myself."

"I think that Col. Quaritch ought to explain," said Edward Cossey.

"I know of no reason," replied the colonel, sternly, "unless, indeed, it is that he is so unfortunate as to get the best of Mr. Cossey in a friendly shooting match."

"Col. Quaritch must know well that is not the reason to which I allude," said Edward. "If he consults his conscience he will probably discover a better one."

The colonel and his father looked at each other in surprise, while the colonel by a half involuntary movement stepped between the squire and the door, and Ida noticed that his face was white with anger.

"You have made a very serious imputation against me, Mr. Cossey," he said. "Before you leave this room you will be good enough to explain it in the presence of those before whom it was made."

"Certainly, if you wish it," he answered, with something like a sneer. "The reason why I refuse to take your hand, Col. Quaritch, is that I consider you guilty of conduct which should exclude you from the society of gentlemen, and, therefore, not a person with whom I desire to be on friendly terms."

"Most certainly you will go on," answered the colonel.

"Very well. The conduct to which I refer is that you were once engaged to my aunt, Julia Heston, that within three days of the time of the marriage you deserted and jilted her in a manner that drove her mad, and she is now an inmate of an asylum."

Ida gave an exclamation of astonishment, and the colonel started and colored up, while the squire, looking at him curiously, waited to hear what he had to say.

"It is perfectly true, Mr Cossey," he answered, "that I was engaged twenty years ago to the woman whom Miss Julia Heston, though I now for the first time learn that she was your aunt. It is also quite true that that engagement was broken off under most painful circumstances, within three days of the time fixed for the marriage. What those circumstances were I am not at liberty to say, for the simple reason that I gave my word not to do so, but this I will say, that they were not to my discredit, though they are not to be aware of that fact. You are one of the family, Mr Cossey, my tongue is not tied, and I will do myself the honor of calling upon you to-morrow and explaining the whole matter to you. After that," he added significantly, "I shall require you to apologize to me for what you have accused me."

"You may require, but whether I shall apologize is quite another thing," said Edward Cossey, and he passed out.

"I am very sorry, Mr de la Molle," said the colonel, as soon as he had gone, "more sorry than I can say, that I should have been the cause of this most unpleasant scene. I assure you I feel that I am in no way to blame for it, and until I produce Mr Cossey's written apology, that position must to some extent continue. If I fail to obtain that apology, I shall have to consider what course to take. In the meanwhile I can only ask you to suspend your judgment."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BLOW FALLS.

On the following morning, about 10 o'clock, while Edward Cossey was still at breakfast, a fly stopped at Col. Quaritch.

"Now for the row," he said to himself. "I hope that the governor was right in his tale, that's all. Perhaps it would have been wiser to say nothing till I had made more sure," and he poured out some more tea a little nervously, for in the colonel he had, he felt, an adversary not to be despised.

Presently the door opened and "Col. Quaritch" was announced. He rose and bowed a salutation, which the colonel, whose face bore a particularly grim expression, did not return.

"Will you take a chair?" he said, as soon as the servant had left, and, without speaking, Harold took one, and presently began the conversation.

"Last night, Mr. Cossey," he said, "you thought proper to publicly bring a charge against me, which, if it were true, would go a long way toward showing that I was not a fit person to associate with those before whom it was brought."

"Yes," said Edward, coolly.

"Before making any remarks on your conduct in bringing such a charge, which I give you credit for believing to be true, I propose to show to you that it is a false charge," went on the colonel, quietly. "The story is a very simple one, and so sad that nothing short of necessity would force me to tell it. I was, when quite young, engaged to your aunt, Miss Heston, to whom I was much attached, and who was then 20 years of age, and though I had little besides my profession, she had some money, and we were going to be married. The circumstances under which the marriage was broken off were as follows: Three days before the wedding was to take place I went unexpectedly to the house, and was told by the servant that Miss Heston was up stairs in her sitting room. I went up stairs to the room, which I knew well, knocked and got no answer. Then I walked into the room, and this is what I saw: Your aunt was lying on the sofa in her wedding dress (that is, in half of it, for she had only the skirt on) as I first thought, asleep. I went up to her and saw that by her side was a brandy bottle half empty. In her hand also was a glass containing raw brandy. While I was wondering what it could mean she woke up, got off the sofa and began to stagger round the room, and I saw that she was intoxicated."

"It's a lie," said Edward, excitedly.

"Be careful what you say, sir," answered the colonel, "and wait to say it till I have done. As soon as I realized what was the matter, I left the room again, and going down to your grandfather's study, where he was engaged in writing a sermon, I asked him to come upstairs, as I was afraid that his daughter was not well. He came and saw, and the sight threw him off his balance, for he broke out into a torrent of explanations and excuses, from which in time I extracted the following facts: It appeared that ever since she was a child, Miss Heston had been addicted to drinking fits, and that it was on account of this constitutional weakness, which was of course concealed from me, that she had been allowed to engage herself to a penniless subaltern. It appeared, too, that the habit was hereditary, for her mother had died of the effects of drink and one of her aunts had become mad from it. I went away and thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that, under these circumstances, it would be impossible for me, much as I was attached to your aunt, to marry her, because, even if I was willing to do so, I had no right to run the risk of bringing children into the world who might inherit the curse. Having come to this determination, which it cost me much to do, I wrote and communicated it to your grandfather, and the marriage was broken off."

"I do not believe it; I do not believe a word of it," said Edward, jumping up. "You jilted her and drove her mad, and now you are trying to shelter yourself behind a tissue of falsehood."

"Are you acquainted with your grandfather's handwriting?" asked the colonel, quietly.

"Yes."

"Is that it?" he went on, producing a yellow looking letter and showing it to him.

"I believe so—at least it looks like it."

"Then read the letter."

Edward obeyed. It was one written in answer to that of Harold Quaritch to his betrothed's father, and admitted in the clearest terms the justice of the step that he had taken. Further, it begged him, for the sake of Julia and the family at large, never to mention the cause of his defection to any one outside the family.

"Are you satisfied, Mr. Cossey? I have other letters if you wish to see them."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]