THE INDEPENDENT.

CREEPING UP THE STAIRS.

In the softly-falling twilight
Of a weary, weary day,
With a quiet step I entered
Where the children were at play;
I was brooding o'er some trouble,
That had met me unawares,
When a little voice came singing,
"Me is creepin' up a stairs!"

Ah! it touched the tenderest heart-string,
With a breath and force divine,
And such melodies awakened
As mere words can ne'er define:
And I turned to see your darling,
All forgetful of my cares,
When I saw the little creature
Slowly creeping up the stairs.

Step by step she bravely clambered
On her little hands and knees,
Keeping up a constant chattering
Like a magpie in the trees,
Till at last she reached the topmost,
When o'er all her world's affairs
She, delighted, stood a victor;
After creeping up the stairs.

Fainting heart, behold an image
Of man's brief and struggling life,
Whose best prizes must be captured
With a noble, earnest strife;
Onward, upward, reaching ever,
Bending to the weight of cares,
Hoping, fearing, still expecting,
We're creeping up the stairs.

On their steps may be no carpet,
By their side may be no rail,
Hands and knees may often pain us
And the heart may almost fail;
Still above there is the glory
Which no sinfulness impairs,
With its rest and joy forever,
After creeping up the stairs.

EXPOSING A FRAUD.

"I smell a rat," sentententiously remarked Miss Patty Pry; "I do most certainly smell a rat of immense proportions."

Young Mrs. Wrinkfield dropped her crotchet work in her lap and started like a frightened little bird.

"What rat?" she exclaimed. "Patty, I don't know what you are talking about."

She was a beautiful little blonde, with big, wondering eyes, a gentle, pleading face, and a voice as soft and sweet as the cooing of a ring dove.

Her friend, Miss Patty Pry, was her perfect opposite. A tall, grenadier-like figure, with a perceptible beard on her upper lip, high cheek bones, and elbows so angular that no dress goods could long confine them. Her newest dresses always bore patches in the region of the elbows.

"My dear child," continued Miss Patty, sinking her voice to a low whisper, "the thing looks decidedly suspicious. Wrinkfield seems so very anxious that you should choose this evening of all others to visit your mother, who lives ten miles from here."

"Because he thinks it would be an agreeable change for me," replied Mrs. Wrinkfield, eagerly.

"Exactly," was the ironical reply, "and a very agreeable change for him, too."

"What do you mean?" breathed Mrs. Wrinkfield, as she turned her eyes anxiously upon Miss Patty.

That lady gazed silently and sadly at her companion and shook her head.

"You are a timid little goose. He wants to get you out of the way so that he can have a jolly time, invite his friends here, turn the house upside down and all that. That is his real purpose, you can rely upon it. I have it from reliable authority that Dollabee, the caterer, has received an order for a hundred oysters on the half-shell, a dozen bottles of champagne besides other wines, and a corresponding quantity of lobster salad, for this evening, my dear child! So you can easily see why your husband should be anxious for you to visit your mother this evening. Well, well, it takes me to find out the men. They are all alike, every one of them."

Mrs. Wrinkfield began to cry. "I won't go," she sobbed; "I won't go. I'll stay at home.

"No, my dear child; that won't do at all; you will at once proceed to make yourself as pretty as possible and then take the children and go on your visit. Who knows when you will have another such a chance? You can leave it all to me; nothing that goes on here during your absence shall escape my ears and eyes."

"Yes; but how will you do it?" asked the young wife, whose head felt as if it was all in a whirl.

"Oh! nothing easier in the world. When you have left, I will steal into the house by the back stairway, to which you must give me the key, and then conceal myself in the big dining-room cupboard. There I can sit and quietly watch all that goes on in the dining-room; I will hear all the nice stories this hypocritical male sex spice their banquets with; all those spicy secrets they keep so carefully from us; and when you get back I will tell you the whole story from beginning to end."

"But—will that be honorable?" queried Mrs. Wrinkfield.

"Honorable!" sneered Miss Pry, with a shrug of her shoulders. "My dear child, don't you know that we must make use of every means in our power to hold this tyrannical male sex in check."

"Yes! yes! you must be right," nervously murmured Mrs. Wrinkfield, "but I never thought my dear Charles could play me such a trick."

"Oh, the men are all alike, every one of them," reiterated Miss Pry, "and we women must keep a close watch on them. I wouldn't marry one of them, if forty were to go down on their knees to me. No, indeed! I value my independence too highly;" and she elevated her head, half triumphantly, half defiantly.

Mrs. Wrinkfield was a good-natured, unsuspicious, trusting, confiding, credulous little body, who entertained an immoderate amount of veneration for the advice of those older and, she thought, wiser than herself.

But, as her husband, coming home an hour later to see her off, helped her so tenderly and carefully into the carriage, and bought oranges for the baby and little Minnie, her heart misgave her, and she would have told him all had not Miss Patty been so close by.

"I shall count the seconds till your return," said Mr. Wrinkfield, as he kissed her good-bye.

"Oh! the deceiver," whispered Miss Patty from the other side of the carriage.

"You can't think," continued the unsuspecting man, "how lonely I shall be without you and Minnie."

"Oysters and champagne!" whispered Miss Patty, viciously, with her lips so close to Mrs. Wrinkfield's ear that every word sounded like a drum-beat. "Oh yes! very, very lonely!"

The carriage drove off and Mr. Wrinkfield returned to his office. Having seen Mrs. Wrinkfield, with the baby and little Minnie safely aboard the train that was to convey them to their destination, Miss Patty hurried back to the house, let herself in by the back way with the key Mrs. Wrinkfield had given her, slipped noiselessly up stairs into the dining-room, ensconced herself in the big china closet, and prepared to wait and watch.

"Dollabee always furnishes his own glasses and dishes," she soliloquized, "so there's no danger of anything being wanted out of this closet and I shall not be disturbed."

Then having nothing else to occupy her mind with, Miss Patty constucted a sort of mental diving-bell by which she descended in imagination down into the very substratum of her motives, and picked up one by one the principles which generated them. Having done this she came to four conclusions:

First—That her only object in concealing herself in another man's house and spying upon his actions was to open the eyes of his wife, a dear friend of hers, to the rascally character and double dealing of her husband.

Second—That such duplicity ought to be exposed.

Third—That, under such circumstances, the course she had adopted was perfectly justifiable and in strict accordance with the golden rule.

Fourth—That, being justifiable, it was a duty, and being a duty, it was the proper course for a self-denying, upright, pious and high-minded woman like herself to pursue

The clock in the dining room struck four.

"It is still quite early, and I shall have a long time to wait," mused Miss Patty, "but it's better to be too early than too late. If I had delayed longer I might have encountered Wrinkfield somewhere. It is not well to be too venturesome."

The clock ticked monotonously, and the minutes dragged on, one by one, till two more hours passed by.

At 6 Mr. Wrinklfield came in alone and sat down to the solitary meal which Barbara, the active little maid, had prepared for him, while Miss Patty was obliged to crouch as low as possible in the darkest and most uncomfortable corner of the big closet to avoid being discovered by the little maid as she brought out and replaced the tea things.

"Patience now," thought Patty. "It cannot be long now before the guests begin to drop in."

Little Barbara put coal on the fire, adjusted the curtains and withdrew.

Left alone, Mr, Wrinkfield lit a cigar, thrust his feet into slippers, took a book from the centre-table, drew his arm-chair up to the stove, and having fixed himself in a comfortable attitude, proceeded to read.

Will he not soon go to his room and dress up a little?" queried the astonished Miss Patty. "I had no idea he would take things so coolly."

The clock struck seven—eight—nine—ten—still no guests. Mr. Wrinkfield read and smoked, turned paper after paper, book after book, uninterrupted, while Miss Patty grew more uncomfortably anxious and figety.

The clock struck eleven! Mr. Wrinkfield dropped his last paper, stretched himself, yawned sleepily, arose from his chair, walked across the room to the china closet and locked the door of the same as his wife was accustomed to do, turned out the gas, left the room and went slowly up stair to bed.

To her utter consternation Miss Patty found herself consigned to solitary imprisonment, in utter darkness.

As soon as Mr. Wrinkfield had unfolded his morning paper, on the morning following, the little Barbara came running to him, breathless and frightened.

"Oh, sir!" she panted, there are certainly thieves in the china closet. There is something in there making an awful noise."

"But the door is locked," said Mr. Wrinkfield, "and I have the key in my pocket."

"Then they must have been in there since yesterday," suggested the little maid. "Oh, my, the noise is really terrible. Won't you please come and see what it is?"

Mr. Wrinkfield armed himself with a revolver and carving knife, marched boldly into the dining-room and unlocked the closet door.

There, crouched in one corner, sat Miss Patty with her handkerchief pressed to her face, swaying her body to and fro and moaning with a severe neuralgia.

"The deuce!" he ejaculated, hardly knowing whether to believe his eyes. "You here, Miss Pry?"

"I—I was locked in here by some oversight, yesterday," moaned the wretched woman. "Please let me out."

At the same moment feet pattered on the stairway. It was Mrs. Wrinkfield and the children.

The little woman flew to her husband's arms.

"Oh, Charles," she sobbed, "I couldn't sleep all night, for thinking how I left you here under espionage."

"Espionage?" screamed Miss Patty, behind her handkerchief. "I have seen no spies here; nothing but rats and mice and big black bugs that nearly frightened me to death. I think it's a real shame!"

"Oh, Miss Patty! when you know you persuaded me—"

Miss Patty was rapidly growing hysterical from pain and shame, and could contain herself no longer.

"If I had known you were such a weak, pitiable creature, Mary Wrinkfield, I would never have consented to assist you in this."

"I don't want your assistance," retorted Mrs. Wrinkfield, growing courageous. "Get a husband of your own if you want to play the spy. I won't allow you to spy upon my husband again."

Miss Patty tore out of the house in a rage, vowing she would never again speak to such a weak fool of a woman.

"I know I was right," she said. "Men are all alike, every one of them. To be sure, Wrinkfield entertained no comcany on that particular evening. But that was not my fault and I'm not to blame.

"That ungrateful woman! To think of the terrible hours I spent cramped up in that miserable closet for her sake, and such thanks as I got for it! What base ingratitude!"

But Mrs. Wrinkfield's confidence in her old friend's superior sagacity had declined fully fifty per cent.

A pretty shabby looking man walked into the office of a Western newspaper, and approaching a man in a red shirt and top boots, who had his feet on a desk and his chair tipped back, remarked:

"Are you the editor?"

"I am, sir; but haven't time to talk. If you have anything to say, boil it down to a stickful."

The visitor eyed him sharply for a moment, and then drew a seven shooter from his pocket and advanced a step or two. The editor turned pale as death, when the other said:

"Don't be frightened. I shant hurt you. I am tired of life, but have too much self-respect to commit suicide. Here, take this poem on Spring and this pistol and do your duty as a citizen who loves law and a higher standard of literature."

His pistol was handed back, also the poem, and the versifier remarked as he stepped to the door:

"If I were rich and had everything necessary to make me happy, and should offer you an ode on Spring you would kill me, but now you are too mean to pull a trigger. I thought I could come in here and be quietly massacred, but I can't. You are the most contrary man I ever saw."

Then he marched out with solemn grandeur.

DON'T BOYS.—Don't be impatient, no matter if things do go wrong sometimes. Don't give the ball a kick and send it into a mud-puddle, because it would not go straight where you threw it. Do not send the marble against the fence, and thus break your best alley, because your clumsy fingers could not hit the center. Do not break your kite string all to pieces because it will not come down from the tree at the first jerk. It will take you three times as long to get it down afterward. Do not give your little brother an angry push and a sharp word if he cannot see into the mysteries of marble playing or hoop rollling at the first lesson. You were once as stupid as he is, although you have forgotten it. What in the world would become of you if your mother had no more patience than you? If, every time you come near her when she was busy she thrust you off with a cross word? Dear, kind, loving mother, who never ceases to think of you, to care for you, who keeps you so nicely clothed, and makes such nice things for you to eat. What if she were so impatient that you would be half the time afraid to speak to her, to tell her of your own troubles at school or at play? Ah, do not grieve your mother by your impatience and your crossness.

POISONING HER RELATIVES.—Investigations in Madison county seem to indicate that Mrs. Francis Shrouder, of Chittenango, not only poisoned her mother, Mrs. Lowery Barnard, but also Mrs. Pope, aged eighty, who died in July, 1876, and Mr. Barnard, who died over a year ago. Dr. Manlius Smith, of the Syracuse University, found positive traces of arsenic in Mrs. Pope's stomach. The old lady had $800 in United States bonds in her bed, which were never found after she died. Mrs. Shrouder spent money very freely after the funeral. Mrs. Pope was buried in Truxton, Courtland county, the day after her death. It is alleged that a Chittenango man seduced Francis at fourteen, and she lived as his mistress for some time. Mrs. Barnard opposed this, but her father upheld the girl. She is now twenty-five years of age, and not very prepossessing in appearance. At the recent term of court in Madison county she and her husband were indicted for the murder of her mother. The testimony against her is said to be very strong.

Mme. Nilsson will receive $18,000 for twelve performances in Spain during the wedding festivities of King Alfonso.

A Dare-Devil Jehu.

Buffalo Bill tells a good story about a party of Englishmen traveling on the plains before the Pacific railroad was finished. They came tumbling into Laramie, abusing the driver and the coach and the "blarsted country" generally, because, they averred, there was no "coaching or driving outside of England." Their contempt of all things American was shown in the most offensive manner to all the people standing around as they alighted. It happened that Bob Scott, the finest driver and most reckless dare-devil on the plains, was to take the coach to the next station; eight miles westward from Laramie, and as that gay Jehu heard the remarks of the Britishers, he slowly make up his mind to give them a specemen of purely American coaching. The stable boys led out six colts that looked as if they had never heard of a stage before; they reared and snorted, plunged and kicked until the noble Britons were quite delighted with the anticipation of a fine drive.

"Now, driver, you know, just give 'em their heads and let 'em go; don't you be afraid, my boy."

"Yes," says another encouragingly, "my good fellow, just go ahead."

Bob mounted the box slowly while a man held each horse, he gathered the reins and said quickly, "Let 'em go.' And they did, and the colts plunged and reared, but Bob's iron grasp held them in. With the aid of the California brakes he held them down to a walk for three miles, while the passengers blasphemed at him for a "cad" and a sneak. At the end of that three miles they got to the top of a hill, and one Britain poked his head out of the window and began to say something, but as he did a wild, unearthly yell waked that vicinity, and at the same time Bob threw all six lines down. The coach seemed to lift from the ground, and those six colts started at the very best speed they could make. Amother yell from Bob, and they seemed to increase it, then to help matters he drew his revolver and began firing over the horse's heads.

"Great God," cried the Britons, "we've got into the hands of a a blarsted lunatic!"

"Stop, Stop!" shey shouted; but the mad team and crazy driver tore faster and faster, while the stage went bouncing over the rocky road in a way that threatened to pound the passengers all to pieces. Bob craned his neck over and yelled into the window:

"Gents, I'm just getting 'em started; they'll do better after a while." And he took out the lamps and hurled them at the leaders with a wild Comanche war whoop.

The affrighted passengers presently saw the station in full view; the question was how was that team to be stopped. They gave themselves up for gone, and hung on desperately to the seats. It seems that the horses were accustomed to go right into the stable, coach and all, and up they came to the open door at full speed. There was a yell from the assembled stable attendants and tavern loafers, then a fearful crash as the whole top of the coach went off, throwing three Britons out and breaking two arms and a leg, besides other slighter accidents. Bob came out of the stable, picked up an Englishman, and said:

"Never mind, sir; we'll have a real nice drive to the next station. I was obliged to take 'em along slowly over that ere bad road. Boys, put in the other team in a fresh coach, and give me a couple of cocktails. Its dull driving so dog-gone slow, and I'm powerful dry."

Those Englishmen waited and sent for a doctor, but they did not put anything in their note-book about American driving.—*Washington Capital.*

It is by far the most painful episode in the history of the church at Maltese Cross Roads. The talented minister of the church was awarded the degree of doctor of divinity by one of our colleges a few days since, and soon as the commencement exercises were over, he telegraphed the news to one of his deacons. The telegram. as he sent it, read: "I've just been D. D.'d by my ala mater," but as the deacon received it it read: "I've just been d—d by my alma mater." The deacon had the most exalted opinion of his dominie, not only of his intellectual abilities, but of his moral worth, and at once called an indignation meeting of the church, at which, in the most scathing terms, he denounced the college which had presumed to d—n a reverend gentleman who was of unimpeached soundness in doctrine, and whose practice was in strict conformity with his preaching. He carried all his hearers with him, and his motion that the salary of their dear but shamefully abused pastor be increased $500, and that a committee be appointed to purchase a silver service to be presented to him on his return, was carried unanimously, and there wasn't a dry eye in the house. The newly-degraded minister, bearing his blushing honors with graceful humility, arrived home one morning shortly after. * * * In the afternoon, the deacon, we regret to say, dissolved his connection with the church and bought a shot-gun. About the same time a genial and urbane operator began leaving for parts unknown as fast as the lightning express would carry him.—[Burlington Hawkeye.

ALL SORTS.

General Hooker was engaged in the preparation of some works for the press at the time of his death.

The latest man picked out for the English mission by the correspondents is President Woolsey, of Yale.

When a Sioux warrior leaves his badly ventilated wigwam he merely steps out for a little hair.

Most of the shadows that cross our path through life are caused by standing in our own light.

When one temptation goeth away another cometh; and we shall ever have something to suffer.

By flight alone we can not overcome, but by patience and humility we conquer all our enemies.

Miss Alice Isabel Hooper, step daughter of the late Charles Sumner, was recently married to Edward Balfour, formerly of Scotland.

It was a shifting engine that caused the disaster in Michigan, and now the railroad officials will turn their attention to shifting the responsibility.—[Phil. Bul·

"Where a woman," says Mr. Partington, "has been married with a congealing heart, and one that beats desponding to her own, she will never want to enter the maritime state again.

Help and give willingly when you have anything, and think not the more of yourself; and if you have nothing, keep the cup of cold water always at hand, and think not the less of yourself.

A correspondent says that nowadays every woman of social position in New York models or paints, or photographs or translates, or carves or chisels, or reads Sanscrit or political economy.

"If it was for the years couched upon his head," wrote the obituary writer; and then he got right up and howled when the type-setter rendered it. "If it were not for his ears he could have stood upon his head."

The Zulus are an enterprising sort of people, says the *Times* of St. Louis. They have declared peace have a dozen times, and are still twisting the British lion's tail so hard that he doesn't know whether he's got the jimjams or the colic.

Pious old lady: "Just think, Rose, only five missionaries to twenty thousand cannibals!" Kind-hearted niece: "Goodness! the poor cannibals will starve to death at this rate."

"The pole-cat," says Josh Billings, "is so called because a fellow needs a pole three hundred feet long to kill one, and if the wind favors the cat a longer pole would be more desirable."

Once upon an evening dismal, I gave her a kiss paroxysmal, and called her name baptismal, precious name I love of yore. Ah! She was a darling creature, pert of speech and fair of feather; but, egad, you couldn't teach her, for she had been there before, and only murmured, "buss me more."

MA'S OLD BEAU.

Clara and Mary Merwin, sisters and orphans, were in the drawing room of their pleasant home on the edge of a beautiful village near the Missouri. Their mother had been dead several years. Their father had lately died, leaving them an estate, as they supposed, of the value of some forty thousand dollars, but they had learned quite recently that the property was encumbered to such an extent that they were very likely to be deprived of it all. This discovery, as may be supposed, filled them with sadness and anxiety, and they were seated in silence, unable to read, to converse, to work, to do anything but brood over their great misfortune.

While they were thus occupied with their thoughts a buggy drove up in front of the house, a man alighted, and the buggy drove away.

The man must have been on the shady side of fifty, to judge from his gray hairs, although his face was indeed fresh and unwrinkled. He was dressed with remarkable neatness, and his manner indicated briskness as well as precision. In one hand he carried a small valise and in the other an umbrella, and he stepped quickly to the door and rang the bell. In a few minutes he was ushered into the presence of the young ladies.

"I'm obliged to introduce myself," he said, smiling and bowing in a courtly manner. "Abner Pierce. Here is my card—professional card. You will perceive that I am a lawyer in St. Louis, and presumably a respectable man. Don't be afraid; I'm not here to hurt you, but to help you. I have the honor to call myself a friend of the family—that is to say, although it is many years since I have seen any member of your family, I have always had the highest regard for your now sainted mother, and nothing would please me better than to be of some service to her children."

"We are happy to meet you," murmured Clara.

"Thank you. I happened to hear—no matter how—that you are in trouble, and have come up here in the belief that I can assist you. I hope that you will feel that you can trust me. I am actually an honest man, although a lawyer, and I mean well, though I express myself clumsily."

"I am free to admit," said Clara, "that we need assistance and advice, and that we have not known to whom to look for it."

"Very well. It is a good thing, no doubt, that I have come. Now sit down and tell me all about it."

Clara Merwin, who, as the elder of the orphans was leader in everything, told how she and her sister had taken out letters of administration upon her father's estate, when a man of whom they had never before heard put in an appearance, and presented a mortgage, with bond included, executed by the late Mr. Merwin, upon all his real estate, for the sum of $40,000. Not content with prohibiting them from attempting to sell everything, he had tied up their money in bank, leaving them absolutely penniless. They had used their credit, but tradesmen were becoming impatient, and some had refused to supply them any further without pay.

"That's a bad case," said Mr. Pierce. "You need money—that is the first thing to be attended to. You must let me act as your banker until I get you out of this scrape, and that won't be long, I hope. How much do you owe?"

"More than one hundred dollars," answered Clara.

The old gentleman counted out two hundred dollars from a well-filled pocketbook, and handed it to her.

"For your mother's sake," he said, when she refused to receive it, and he forced it on her in such a way that she could not help taking it. He then accepted the young lady's invitation to make their house his home during his stay, and he went into dinner with them.

"Is there any place where I can smoke?" he asked, when they returned to the sitting-room.

"You can smoke here," said the impulsive Mary. "Pa always smoked here, and we are used to it."

So he took a meerschaum and some tobacco from his valise, and was soon puffing away with an air of great content.

"I can think better when I smoke," he said. "Did you ever have any legal advice in the matter of that mortgage, Miss Merwin?"

"Yes, sir," replied Clara. "Our lawyer said it was a plain case against us, although it was strange that we never heard of the mortgage before."

"Very strange. What is the name of the man who holds it?"

"Alexander Campbell."

"Hum. A good name, but a bad man, I am afraid. When and where can I see this man?"

"He will be here this afternoon," answered Clara. "He proposes, if we will make him a deed of the real estate, to give up the bond and mortgage, leaving our money in banks and the rest of the personal property."

"Very liberal. Introduce me to him when he comes, as an old friend of the family, and not as a lawyer."

Mr. Alexander Campbell called in the course of the afternoon, and was made acquainted with Abner Pierce, at whom he looked suspiciously; but his eyes fell when he met the old gentleman's intent gaze. Mr. Pierce glanced but slightly at the deed that was offered for the consideration of the ladies, being occupied in studying the countenance of the man in whose favor it was drawn.

"I can't decide upon it just now," he said at last. "As a friend of these landies—standing, as I may say, *in loco parentis*—I must make a few inquires concerning the value of this property. Suppose you come after supper, Mr. Campbell, and suppose you bring that mortgage with you. I have no doubt it is all correct, but I would like to see it."

Mr. Campbell assented to this and withdrew. Abner Pierce filled his pipe with nervous haste, but also with tobacco, and Mary brought him a light.

"I know that you have some good news for us," she said. "I can see it in your face."

"Not bad, my child, I hope and trust that it is very good. A good name but a bad man, I said, and it is true. I think I see my way out of this difficulty, and the money that I lent you is safe. But you mustn't interfere with me, young ladies, or object to it. You must trust me and let me work it out my own way."

After supper, when Abner Pierce had enjoyed another comfortable pipe, and conversed with the girls concerning their mother, as he had known her in her youth—a subject upon which he grew quite eloquent—Mr. Alexander Campbell came in, bringing the deed and the mortgage, both of which he handed to Mr. Pierce for examination.

"I have made inquiries concerning the property," said the old gentleman, "and am satisfied that it is not worth more than the amount of the mortgage, and would probably bring much less if sold at foreclosure. Your offer is a liberal one; but I must first look at the mortgage. This appears to be correct," he continued, when he examined the instrument. "It is all properly acknowledged and the signature is undoubtedly that of Philip Merwin. I suppose the young ladies will go to the county seat to execute the deed."

The girls' countenances fell at this sudden surrender to execute the deed.

"This reminds me," said the lawyer, picking up the mortgage again, "of an occurrence that fell under my observation in Tennessee, where a friend of mine died suddenly, leaving a widow and one daughter. The widow was about to administer upon his estate, when a man unknown came forward and presented a mortgage similar to this, and for exactly the same amount. It was examined by lawyers who were familiar with the signature of the deceased and pronounced it correct. Although there was something strange about the affair, they could find no flaw in the instrument. It was particularly puzzling to one of them who thought he had transacted all the law business of the deceased. He got hold of the mortgage and brought it to me when I was in Nashville. I happened to have in my possession a very powerful magnifying glass that had been presented to me—the most powerful single lens I had ever seen. With this I examined the mortgage, and soon discovered that 'forty' had been raised from 'four.' There was no mistake about it. I could easily see the marks of chemical erasure, and the difference in the pen and ink, between the 'raised' and the rest of the instrument. How the rascal got into the Recorder's office I don't know; but the record there had been altered in the same manner. He ran away, and it was not considered worth while to follow him. Very strange circumstance, wasn't it, Mr. Campbell?"

Mr. Campbell was fidgeting uneasily in his chair, and made no reply.

"Here is the glass," continued the old gentleman, taking it from his pocket; "you can see yourself how well it magnifies. Now, as I look at this 'forty,'—why, bless me, the same signs are visible that I saw in the Tennessee mortgage! I think you will be obliged to drop this, Mr. Campbell. My Tennessee man's name was Alexander Bell, and he has added a Camp to it since he came to Missouri."

Campbell, his face red as flame, reached out to take the document.

"I believe I will take this, Mr. Campbell, for fear of accident. What, do you think you can take it by force? Here is something that shoots five times. Going, are you? Very well, I don't think you will be molested, if you will leave this part of the country and never return to it. It is barely possible that the estate of Philip Merwin may really owe you four thousand dollars. If so, I advise you not to try to collect the debt, as such an attempt would land you in the penitentiary. Good-night, Mr. Campbell, and farewell."

"What is it? What does this mean?" asked Clara, as Mr. Pierce, rubbing his hands and smiling, bustled to fill his pipe.

"Are you dull, my child? The fellow is a swindler, and has been found out. I guessed as much when I first heard of the affair, and was sure of it when you told me his name. You will soon be able to pay me my $200, and then we will straighten up matters. Thank you, Mary, you are very kind to give me a light."

"Don't you mean to punish him?" asked Mary.

"It wouldn't pay. We could put him in the penitentiary, but you might lose $4000 by the job. By trying for forty thousand he lost the four that may have been justly his due. He will be far from here by morning, I have no doubt, and good riddance to him. Ah! this is comfortable. I know that I feel better, and I hope that you do."

The girls were sure that a great weight had been lifted from their minds and hearts. Alexander Campbell, alias Bell, decamped, and Abner Pierce stayed a week with the orphans, during which time he arranged all their affairs satisfactorily, and won their lasting gratitude and love.

"How can we ever thank you for all you have done for us," said Clara, when he was about to leave.

"It was for your mother's sake, my child. And for her sake, if I can ever help you, all I have is at your service."

Abner Pierce has made visits to the orphans frequently since the event above narrated, and they have always had a cordial welcome for "ma's old beau."

Mark Twain in Politics.

The largest political meeting of the campaign was held in this city by the Republicans last evening. The Opera House was densely packed to hear General Joseph R. Hawley, of Connecticut, General Hawley was introduced by Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens) who said: "I see I am advertised to introduce the speaker of the evening, General Hawley, of Connecticut, and I see the report that I am to make a political speach. Now, I must say that this is an error. I wasn't constructed to make stump speeches, and on that head (politics) I have only this to say: First, see that you vote. Second, see that your neighbor votes Lastly, see that yourself and neighbor don't scratch the ticket. General Hawley was President of the Centennial Commission. He was a gallant soldier in the war. He has been Governor of Connecticut, member of Congress, and was President of the Convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln.

General Hawley — That nominated Grant.

Twain—He says it was Grant, but I know better. He was a member of my church at Hartford, and the author of "Beautiful Snow." May be he will deny that. But I am only here to give him a character from his last place. As a pure citizen, I respect him; as a personal friend of years, I have the warmest regard for him; as a neighbor whose vegetable garden adjoins mine, why—why, I watch him. That's nothing; we all do that with any neighbor. General Hawley keeps his promises, not only in private but in public. He is an editor who believes what he writes in his own paper. As the author of "Beautiful Snow" he has added a new pang to winter. He is broad-souled, generous, noble, liberal, alive to his moral and religious responsibilities. Whenever the contribution box was passed I never knew him to take out a cent. He is a square, true, honest man in politics, and I must say he occupies a mighty handsome position. He has never shrinked a duty or backed down from any position in public life. He has been right every time, and stood there. As Governor, as Congressman, as a soldier, as the head of the Centennial Commission, which increased our trade in every port and pushed American production into all the known world, he has conferred honor and credit upon the the United States. He is an American of Americans. Would we had more such men! So broad, so bountiful in his character that he never turned a tramp empty handed from his door, but always gave him a letter of introduction to me. His public trusts have been many, and never in the slightest did he prove unfaithful. Pure, honest, incorruptible, that is Joe Hawley. Such a man in politics is like a bottle of perfumery in a glue factory—it may modify the stench if it doesn't destroy it, And now, in speaking thus highly of the speaker of the evening, I haven't said any more of him than I have of myself. Ladies and gentlemen, this is General Hawley.

Mr. Clemens was frequently interrupted by applause and laughter. At the close of his remarks, General Hawley stepped forward, and, for an hour and a half, spoke on the issues of the day.[—*Elmira Republican.*

A THREE-YEAR OLD BOY DRINKS CARBOLIC ACID AND DIES.—A distressing case of accidental poisoning by swallowing carbolic acid, the victim being the three-year old son of W. H. Heisler, Cashier of the Seventh National Bank, was reported to the Coroner yesterday. During the summer, while Mr. Heisler's family were away, carbolic acid in various vessels was distributed through the house to prevent the ravages of moths in the carpets, furniture coverings and winter garments. The cupful which the child partook of was under a sofa in the parlor, and had been overlooked by the family on their return from the country. On Saturday the little fellow crept under the sofa and drank some of the burning acid. He sprang out and fell into convulsions, and the sickening odor of the disinfectant told the story. Physicians were sent for, who administered antidotes, but without avail, and the child died on Sunday morning.—*Philadelphia Times, Oct. 28th.*

CORNS IN HORSE'S FEET.—Corns are the result of a bruise of the sensitive part of the sole of the horse's foot, and generally occur at the inside heel. They are caused by the shoe. Among the symptoms are redness or discoloration of the horn at the inner angle of the heel, more or less increased local heat, tenderness, and consequent lameness. When standing the horse is inclined to favor the foot by slightly raising the the heel from the ground. In some cases active inflamation and suppuration may ensue, evidenced by the escape of matter above the hoof, where the hairs join the same. In ordinary cases relief may be obtained by proper attention to the shoeing. Such a horse should be shod regularly every three or four weeks, the diseased parts carefully pared down, but without starting the blood; and the shoe should be affixed so as not to bear on the inside heel.

Hamlet has well said: "We know what we are, but we don't know what we may be."

Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII.—I wrote lately to your Majesty that if the lady (Anne) could only be kept away from Court for a little while the Queen might still regain her influence over the King, for she does not seem to bear any ill-will toward her. Quite lately he sent her some cloth, begging her to have it made into shirts for him. The lady, hearing of this, sent for the person who had taken the cloth—one of the principal gentlemen of the bed-chamber—and although the King himself confessed that the cloth had been taken to the Queen by his order, she abused the bearer in the King's presence, threatening that she would have him punished, severely. Indeed, there is talk, as I am told, of dismissing, to please the lady, some of the officers of the royal household, and if so, the said gentlemen will not be the last, for some time back, the wife of the young Marquis (of Dorset) and two other ladies, most devoted to the queen, and in whom she found more comfort and consolation than in any others, were at her request dismissed from Court and sent home.—[Simancas Archives.

Her Cheek.—A Paris letter says: During the earliest days of Sarah Bernhardt's fame, a gentleman in the audience had the exceedingly bad taste to persistently hiss her. She "spotted" him, found out his address, called at his house and had an interview alone with him. I wonder how he liked it? Then and there she told him it was always her endeavor to conscientiously do her duty as a historic artist and please the public, that she regretted anything like failure in that duty, and she would feel greatly obliged if he would kindly point out her defects, in order that she might correct them. This spirited conduct won for her another passionate admirer. Another day she read in a Parisian paper that her hair was false and that her teeth were far too good to be genuine. Next day the dramatic critic was amazed to behold a lady dash into his room and let down her hair in his presence. "Pull it!" she exclaimed, as she placed a luxuriant tress in his hand.

Miss Julia Jackson, daughter of "Stonewall" Jackson is about sixteen years old, tall, slender and graceful; a blonde, with fresh color and fair hair. Her manners are gentle, yet not shy.

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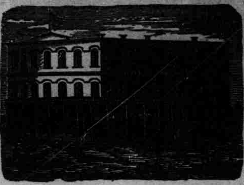

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