

DISILLUSION.
"Oh, my love has cheeks as red
As the rose!"
So the lover cries, misled,
For the idea that his saint
Ever knew the use of paint
Never came into his head,
I suppose.
"Alabaster is her throat!"
Hear him talk!
Has he never chanced to note
How his darling faintly blushed,
As with dainty hand she brushed
From the lapel of his coat
Powdered chalk?
"And her form is just divine!"
What a fool!
Come, fond youth, to me incline,
And I'll whisper in thine ear
Softly so that none can hear
The whole secret I opine—
Cotton-wool!
"Bat her wealth of golden hair
Hippity-doo!"
All save you are well aware
That the hat within whose mesh
She has caught a lover's hair
Nightly hangs upon a chair
With her gown.
See her flirting now, close pressed
In the waltz.
Come, forget her! That is best.
Trust me, I, too, loved her once,
And I learned at last, fond dunces,
That her heart's like all the rest—
It is false!
Somerville Journal.

POOR PILUQUESNE.
Chesterfield is the little sleepy town in the Midlands, with the crooked spire, which lies amidst a congeries of colliers and coal pits, and which you may see from the railway, midway between Derby and Sheffield.
Many years ago, in the midst of the peninsular war, a number of French prisoners were interned there.
Many years ago a famous company of players was acting there in the dingy little theatre down a back-yard.
One night, when "The Magpie, or the Maid of Paliseau," was acted, it was noted that some half-dozen of the exiles, in whom the name of the play doubtless evoked some memory of their native land, came and paid their hardly-earned pence to the gallery. Poor fellows! They took their pleasure as sadly as if they had been Englishmen of the Fen country.
The performer who interested them most was the magpie. When she fled across the stage with the spoon in her mouth they applauded incontinently. At her next aerial flight she stuck midway on the wire, and the curtain had to descend in order to extricate her from this perplexing predicament.
The manager, an Irishman and a great actor in his time, stood at the back of the gallery (a very scanty one), and wrathfully objurgated the property man, adding various oaths to his seed, breed and generation. Up went the curtain again, and once more the magpie tried her flight, but in vain, and the play had to end as best as it could without the aid of so important a performer.
At this moment a fair, fragile boy of seventeen, with flaxen hair and great olive eyes with black lashes and eyebrows, timidly approached the frate impresario. The lad was in a much-worn and stained French naval uniform. There was a hectic flush on his cheek, and he coughed slightly, as, taking off his cap, he bowed politely to the manager. Then in the prettiest broken English he commenced:
"Pardon, mille pardons, Monsieur Directeur, la pauvre magpie ne fly straight. I make 'er skim along like a little butterfly."
"Ah! be off wid your broken-down English, boy," said the manager. "Spako to me in the language of La Belle France. Sure, I am a native and to the manner born, for I got my twopenorth at Douny. Ici en parle Francais, fili!" he exclaimed, with a furious Irish accent, as he placed his hand on his capacious chest.
Thus urged, the boy explained volubly in his native tongue that he would undertake to make the magpie fly across the stage without difficulty.
The next minute they were behind the scenes. As they approached the property room the manager roared:
"Larry! Larry! Come out o' that, you thief of the world. I wonder you're not ashamed to luk me in the face!"
"I am that same, yer honor," responded the man; "but sure it wasn't Larry's fault that some blackguard was after sticking a tinpeny nail in the old magpie's gizzard. Bad luck to her for a baste of a bird, anyhow!"
"Well, here's a young gentleman all the way from France who's goin' to set the crayture right," said the manager.
The French lad bowed ingratiatingly, and glanced wistfully at the property man who at first looked daggers; then he growled:
"Young gentleman! Shure if it wasn't for the trousers, it's a young lady he'd be after makin', and a beauty, too. Ah, well! Praps his father was in Bantry Bay in '98 with General Hoche and the Shan van Voght with the rest of the bhoys. Anyhow, he's a stranjer among these murdering Sassenachs, so give us a taste of your fist, ma bouchealeen bawn!"
With that he nearly squeezed the lad's hand to a pulp.
Whatever pain he endured he only looked up and smiled. The smile went straight to Larry's heart, and from that they were brothers. In five minutes the boy put the magpie right.
From that time forth he was scarcely ever out of the theatre. He soon made himself useful in a hundred ways to honest Larry, who, although he couldn't speak a word of French, was a capital pantomimist, and succeeded in making himself understood. Whenever he came to a dead hitch he went to the beautiful Miss Vere, the leading lady, who had been educated in a convent in the lower countries and who spoke French, German, Italian, Dutch

and Walloon as fluently as her mother tongue.
Then the manager, who had taken to the stranger, was always at hand with his atrocious Hibernian French, besides which poor Piluquesne (that was the lad's name) spoke many English words, and the youngsters of the theatre spoke many French ones—very badly, it is true, but still intelligibly enough.
They generally called him "Poor Pil" or "Pill" for shortness.
He told them that he was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow," and that he had been a midshipman in the French Navy. He was at liberty most of the day, but had to report himself every night at quarters prior to lock-up hours.
At last, when the end of the season came, "Poor Pil" sought Miss Vere at her lodgings, and breaking down in a paroxysm of grief terrible to behold, declared that if left behind in that dreadful place he must die. Miss Vere was a young lady of resources. She had a man's heart in a woman's body, and having given her word that he should not be left behind, she there and then arranged a plan of action with Larry.
On the last night the play was "Hamlet," which was finished by half-past 10. That evening "Pil" was conspicuous by his absence. Everybody was astonished but Miss Vere Larry and the manager.
Fitz Edmund, who played Hamlet, said he thought it strange that Piluquesne had not turned up to say "Good-bye."
The manager replied: "M. Piluquesne is a gentleman, and knows what he is about."
The performance was over altogether about 11. The carts were waiting at the door, and Larry and the men were occupied in packing the properties and wardrobe for the next town, when Lieut. Carter (a grim, hank officer), who had charge of the depot that night, came down with a file of men and demanded to know in the most peremptory manner what had become of Piluquesne.
"Devil a wan of me knows," replied Larry. "After all I done for him he might have been after larkin' round to give you a leg up the last night; but it's just the way with them ungrateful thieves of foreigners. Bad luck to them; they're all alike, every mother's son of 'em!"
While the subject was being thus hotly discussed between the lieutenant and Larry Ophelia's coffin was brought out and carefully deposited on the cart beside Yorick's skull, the pickaxe, the spade and the shrouding sheet, etc.
"That's a rum rig out to travel with" growled the lieutenant.
"Why, sure, captain, said Larry, "you wouldn't have us go borrowing the blessed paraphernalia in every town we go to. Suppose, now, the mistress happened to be stretched out wid her toes upward, and ax your honor's butler for the loan of a coffin?"
"None of your lip, you impudent, bogtrotting Paddy!" roared the enraged officer as he ordered his men to the "Right about face; quick march!"
As the gallant lieutenant turned the corner, had been able to look two ways at once, he might have seen the property man executing an Assyrian hieroglyph in the rear. Perhaps it was just as well that he didn't witness that interesting performance.
Half an hour later Larry made a start for Derby. When they were well out of town he looked round to see that he was unobserved. Then he undid the screws of Ophelia's coffin. There in the moonlight lay poor Piluquesne, sleeping like "the baby of a girl," and smiling in his sleep.
"Aha! Mishter Longlegs," cried Larry, "you can look the stable door now that the horse has bolted, but you're not so cute as you think you are, for all you wear an epaulette on the one shoulder of you that's up to your ear."
Day was breaking when they got to Derby; but, unseen and unsuspected, Larry contrived to smuggle his precious charge into the theatre, where "the boys and girls" kept him concealed for a week or two, till they had clubbed enough money to enable them to send him to London by mail, having previously "squared" the guard and driver.
Now, of course, all things being smooth and the coast clear, "Poor Pil" ought to have got safely to London, from London to France, and to "have lived happy ever after" with his mother, or to have become an admiral or a post captain at least; but unfortunately fact and fate refused to be "squared" by fiction, however guards and drivers of mail coaches may be.
A distinguished authoress, referring to a little book of mine recently published, said to me at the haymarket the other night, the night of the Banquets' farewell:
"You shouldn't have made that poor young fellow die. I declare, it makes me quite unhappy to think of his lying out there in the snow on her grave."
Whereupon I replied: "My dear madam, I didn't make him die—he did die." So "Poor Pil"—but I am anticipating.
He had soft pleasant ways, and beguiled the time by making little toys for the ladies, with whom he was an especial pet, and by assisting Larry, who became more and more attached to him. The poor lad had been ailing a long time—was consumptive, and racked with a torturing and suffocating cough.
The night before his departure—Miss Vere and the girls had prepared an omelette with sweet herbs and some chicken broth, while the manager and the boys brought him a posset made with whey and white wine.
The girls tucked him up in his comfortably-improvised bed in the green room, kissed him and bade him good night.
The lads remained to cheer him up; some of them even talked of running over to see him at his home in Normandy.
He brightened up wonderfully, sang them "L'Amour, L'Amour," and talked

ed hopefully of his journey on the morrow.
Larry was the last to leave him.
"Embrassez-moi, mon cher Larriet!" said "Poor Pil."
The Irishman understood him well enough then, and he gently gathered him up in his strong arms and kissed him; then honest Larry broke down.
"Don't you cry for me, mon cher Larriet," said the boy I shall soon be strong enough when I get home, and you will come and see me in La Belle France some day will you not?"
"Some day," said Larry; "yes, some day; but there, there, go to sleep, jewel—go to sleep, avick! or you'll never be able to get up to-morrow."
At last he did fall peacefully to sleep, and Larry left him to make the preparation for the journey.
When they came at daybreak to see him off "Poor Pil" had taken a much longer journey than they had anticipated. It was a lovely morning in the young spring and the birds outside made alive the dismal place with music. The sun shone through the window on to the bed. The fair young face was bright and smiling. One drop of blood had trickled down the side of his mouth. It was quite dry now and glittered like a ruby in the sunshine. The great blue eyes, open and staring wide, looked far away beyond even the fair France he loved so well.
The players laid the poor French boy in the graveyard of the parish church; and there all that is mortal of him, save that which has returned to the resolving elements from whence he came, rests still.
Miss Vere wrote the sad news to the poor mother at her home in far away Normandy.
Some months after there came a letter from the village cure, which I have ventured to put into English, thus:
"My dear Madam—Thanks, and yet again thanks for your esteemed favor. Alas! it is my painful duty to inform you that my sister, Mme. Piluquesne, whose grief for the expatriation of my nephew and her only son was incessant and inconsolable, is no more. It was my melancholy privilege to administer to her the last rites of our holy church on the very day on which our little Paul left us for a better inheritance.
"She was sleeping, and I stayed to watch and pray by her to the last. That morning at the fifth hour she awoke and started as if she had seen something in the sunlight, which had just peeped in to give us good-morrow."
"My boy! my boy!" she cried, "I am coming! Stay but a little and we will journey together to the beyond."
"And so she passed away."
"I feel, I know that she had seen and heard something which my eyes and ears, 'of the earth earthy,' could not see or hear.
"I think it is your great poet (surely his masterpiece) who says:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Both grossly clogs us in, we cannot hear it."
"Again, and yet a thousand times again, I thank you for all your love and care for our little Paul."
"Permit a poor priest who admires the divine art of which mademoiselle is so distinguish an ornament, to present the assurances of the profound consideration with which he ventures to subscribe himself, mademoiselle's grateful, humble servant."
"Mlle. Helene Vere."
After "Poor Pil's" death all kinds of wild rumors obtained currency in the theatre. Larry swore that during the performance of the "Maid of Paliseau" he saw Pil in the property room arranging the bird's wings. Mrs. Cassidy declared that on Saturday night, when she was rather late in clearing the theatre, as Sunday morning dawned she saw him; nay, more, she heard him sing "Adieu Fideles!" and the poor old soul faded away with terror.
Certain it is that even Manly, the manager, who was a skeptic, to Larry's delight withdrew the magpie piece from the repertory, and that Mrs. Cassidy the first thing on Saturday morning, as for actors—well, they are always more or less superstitious, and for many a year after that no actor could be induced to stay in the Derby theatre after midnight.
Once, indeed, Jack Holmes, a sailor, just returned to his native place after the war, and afflicted with a plethora of prize money, took a party of chums to the gallery to see "The Stranger," which impressed him so powerfully that he fell fast asleep.
His friends, overtaken by Bacchus, forgot all about him. Equally oblivious of his presence, the servants of the theatre put out the lights, locked up and left him to his slumbers.
When honest Jack awoke in "the dead waste and middle of the night" he had at the faintest idea where he was.
As soon as he pulled himself together he growled: "Where are those land lubbers? They've all sheered off and left me at the mast-head while they've crawled down below through lubber's hole."
At this moment he heard, or thought he heard, a soft voice speaking in an unknown tongue.
Looking down on the stage, he saw in the moonlight which streamed through a circular opening at the back of the gallery, a fair young boy in a trayed and worn foreign naval uniform. He had bright hair, great blue eyes and an angel face, and a drop of blood trickling from his pale lips.
"Hold hard, young powder monkey," cried Jack. "I'm coming down on deck to have a jaw with you."
With that, with the agility of a cat he scrambled down the side of the gallery and boxes, and leaped upon the stage.
As he did so the figure faded into the air.
Wild with terror the sailor shrieked and shouted until he alarmed the neighborhood.
When they took him out swooning, folks said that he was drunk. Perhaps he was; but then—perhaps he wasn't.

At any rate, he swore to his dying day that he was sober, and all the king's horses and all the king's men could never induce Jack Holmes to cross the threshold of the theatre again.
As regularly as the players came to Derby in the spring time, so regularly the poor French boy's grave was bedecked daily with fresh flowers.
The years passed by, the good old manager died, the actors grew old and were scattered half over the globe.
Soon after the "Three days in Paris," he who writes these lines, then a wretched child, who had just lost one nearer and dearer to him than all the world, was casting some flowers on a new-made sepulchre, when he caught sight of a venerable and beautiful woman clad in the garb of a sister of the Sacred Cœur engaged in the same pious office at an adjacent grave. The lady was attended by a tall, thin, white-headed old man, who, from his peculiar dress and demeanor, appeared to be a foreigner. The grave at the foot of which they stood had been neglected, the sexton said, for years. It had, however, that very morning been covered with fresh green turf and flowers, and a small mural cross with an inscription now stood at its head.
As the lady returned the basket which had contained the flowers to her attendant she said in a singularly sweet and distinct voice, "Ah! mon ami! How bright and beautiful it seemed when this poor boy was taken from us, thirty years ago, but now, how sordid, and squalid and miserably provincial it all is. Even the little theatre in which we trusted and fretted our fiery hours away in the spring time of our lives—the theatre, which we thought a veritable palace of enchantment, what is it now?"
"Fais, madame," replied the man in a strangely mixed accent, compounded of French and Irish, "if you ax me the truth, it's like a blue-mowldy, rotten orange-box, that's what it is."
"Perhaps it was always thus, Larry, and 'tis only we who are changed; all things are beautiful to the young."
"Thin all things are beautiful to you, miss; for you never grow old. Ah, Miss Vere!"
"Larry!"
"I humbly beg your pardon, Madame Crisla; but I couldn't help thinking I was young once myself, but, the Lord be praised, here comes Lady Scarsdale's carriage. The train laves in half an hour. Let us get out of this; for sure the heart is sore within me when I think of the poor boy lying here in the cold."
The lady entered the coach, her attendant mounted the box beside the coachman and the carriage drove away.
Ten years later the writer happened to mention this occurrence to the late William Robertson, father of Tom Robertson the dramatist, who strangely enough turned out to be one of the actors in the foregoing events, and from his lips this little memento mori was taken down.
When last I was in Derby a neglected grave, overgrown with dark, rank weeds, and a time-worn fragment of a shattered cross, on which is inscribed two words, without date, comment, or text, were all that remained to remind one of "Poor Piluquesne."—John Coleman in Longman's Magazine.

POSTAL DETECTIVES.
How They Work to Keep the Mails Clear of Frauds.
Hartford Globe.
The maintenance of a large force of trained detectives or "inspectors," as they are designated upon the rolls of the Postoffice Department, has greatly purified this branch of the service. An infinite number of swindlers are still carried on through the agency of the mails.
Swindlers reach their intended victims by circulars and by advertisements in careless or characterless newspapers. The former method is preferred by sharpers as being the least likely to come under the notice of the official spies of the department.
It is an easy matter to obtain full lists of any required number of names, running up into the millions. Lottery companies make a business of selling full lists of the names of their patrons, and other swindling concerns which obtain original lists are addicted to the same practice.
Countrymen who reply to any one of the hundreds of snap advertisements wonder how it is that the hundreds of fascinating enterprises from one end of the country to the other obtain their addresses, and they feel, some way, that they must be persons of importance. Their vanity is flattered, and in innumerable instances they undergo a regular course of training before they acquire a sufficient fund of experience to enable them to realize that they are on the wrong side of the institution for the feebleminded.
The art craze, which during the last few years has spread over the country like an epidemic has developed a swindle that is very hard for the department to reach, and which affords a livelihood for a large number of enterprising and unscrupulous persons. The knaves tax the great army of unsophisticated girls who imagine they have artistic tastes by showing them, through the medium of circulars, how they can put themselves in the way of earning comfortable incomes with the expenditure of a trifling sum for an outfit. They promise to take work that is produced according to their "system," and require a small cash payment in advance from the favored artists. The department finds this a most troublesome class of cases to deal with, the originators protecting themselves very completely, as a rule, against prosecution.
The Postoffice Department spent months trying to break up this scheme of a man who contracted to send pianos and organs from his manufacturing in Maine and California to any part of the country on payment of \$2 or \$3 or \$4 to defray the cost of boxing the instruments. The articles were received according to contract, but they proved to be cheap toy pianos and organs, the expense of boxing which was about 10 per cent. of the sum remitted in each case. Another fellow made a lot of money by boxing and forwarding very cheap mouth organs to all who patronized him through the mails.
The proprietor of a snide but harmless cure for deafness reaped a harvest of \$30 or \$40 a day for a long time. His headquarters were in New York. The president of a bogus medical college did a prosperous business in selling spurious diplomas, but as the men who bit at his bait were confessedly as great swindlers as he was, the department was a long time getting at him. This was a swindle pure and simple.
An army of ruralists forwarded hard-earned dollars for a "mowing machine knife-sharpener, simple, effective," and received in return, sticks dipped in emery dust, and pieces of iron. Another ingenious operator found a market for thousands of copies of a cheap edition of the Scriptures by representing the book to be a collection of very tough stories. It is not recorded that the department interfered with this missionary enterprise.

WASHINGTON SOCIETY.
Women Who Write Glowing Descriptions of Their Costumes in Newspapers.
W. E. Curtis in Chicago Inter-Ocean.
Four papers are published Sunday morning for social news, while the daily journals here and elsewhere have society reporters who are giving more attention to such matters than ever before. They are very actively assisted by the society people themselves, and about half the matter published is contributed by those who are referred to in the lines they write.
For example, the editor of one of the Sunday papers received a sample of the latest thing in stationery, upon which was written in the angular hand that is so fashionable the following:
"The most dashing and brilliant belle at the reception of Mrs. Wilson was the daughter of Congressman Black, who has assumed a leading position in Washington society. Her beauty was remarked by every one, and was heightened by her costume, which was a gown of ivory white corded silk, with square bodice of corded velvet. The Marie Stuart collar was edged by small red beads. A rich drapery of thread lace was fastened over the front and held by panels of the velvet. In her corsage was jewelled shepherd's crook, and in her hair a silver dagger and gold arrow, in the center of which shone an immense carbuncle."
The communication was anonymous, but the editor knew where it came from, and knew that its publication meant the sale of a hundred copies or so of his paper, which would be sent to all of the family friends. Another similar anonymous letter (in which I have taken the liberty to alter the names) read as follows:
"Miss Genevieve Jones daughter of Gen. George Jones, of the army, was one of the prettiest girls and greatest belles at the army and navy german. She is tall and slender, and her gown of rich cream crepe, garnished with handsome Escorial lace and Marchal Nod buds, was most becoming to her brunette type."
And here is a third which was contributed by the brother of the young lady named: "Among the most noted belles at the army and navy german was Miss Pauline Aiken, of Tennessee. She has a face of flower-like delicacy and coloring and a classic head poised on a lovely neck. She wore an esthetic gown of white lace, and her powdered hair accentuated the youthful beauty of her face. The toilet of Mrs. Pinson, who chaperoned her, was an excellent combination of black and white."
What He Bought.
Clara Bell's Letter.
I know the most prim and modest of young Episcopal curates. He may get audacious after being established a few years in a full rectory, but at present, if he said "boo" at all to a pretty girl, it would be in the mildest whispered tone. He is in love, it happened to him lately, on first sight of my dear little friend, Henriette; and she knows it though he hasn't told her so. By the time he gathers courage to pop the question she will have had ample opportunity for inquiry as to his prospects. His family and her own inclination. Well, he bought a Christmas present for her—selected it all by himself, he told me to-day, on bringing it round to our house in his handbag for me to inspect.
"I have an artistic eye for color and shape," he said, "and I am sure that Miss Henriette will be charming in the hoarse robe that I have procured. It is mostly white, with just a faint suggestion of delicate blue in the lace that garnishes. And then the flowing draperies will of a surty be vastly becoming to her. Please give me your judgment."
Then he out with the thing which really was a heavenly construction of Chinese silk and fine lace. But I had a dreadfully wrenching convulsion of laughter on getting sight of it, though my face was serious.
"What do you think of it?" he asked.
"Lovely," I replied.
"And she will like it?"
"Undoubtedly."
"Then I will send it to her in the morning."
"Stay a moment," I said gravely. "You are a young clergyman just setting out on your chosen life mission, and you cannot be too careful in your social duties. Forgive me for my seeming presumption, but I feel it my duty to warn you to be on your guard. The public is so censorious you know—so apt to construe meanings and motives. Believe me that you run a risk in giving this to Henriette, no matter how pure your thought may be, how significant in some religious, symbolic way that I don't understand the article is or how—"
"Stop, stop, Miss Clara Belle," the frightened fellow interrupted; "what is this garment?"
"A nightgown," said I.
It was fortunate that I had a bottle of rather strong cologne at hand for him to sniff at, or I verily believe he would not have roused from the collapse.
Mr. Whittier dislikes, for himself, biographies and biographers. "Of course, I am glad," he said to a recent visitor, "to have thee tell my friends anything about me they care to know; but such fame as a man gets from books written about him after he is dead seems to me worth very little. I have never thought of myself as a poet in the sense in which we use the word when we speak of the great poets. I have just said from time to time the things I had to say, and it has been a series of surprises to me that people should pay so much attention to them and remember them so long."
Joseph Lilley, the oldest ex-United States Senator, finished his ninety-fifth year heartily and in happiness at Nottingham, N. H., recently.