

A DEAD PAST

By MRS. LOVETT CAMERON

CHAPTER XXIII.

He stood up, facing her, with his back to the fire. Now that she could see him well, with the light of the lamp shining full upon him, she could see that he was very much altered. He was thin, and worn, and aged; his broad, manly figure had shrunk; his shoulders stooped; the eyes that used to be brave and buoyant, now looked weary and lifeless. She was shocked to see him so changed. He laughed shortly and bitterly as he looked at her.

"I have come half across Europe to see you, traveling night and day through all this frost and snow. I have taken no rest, and scarcely any food for four days, and all you can find to say to me at the end of it is to revile me for not keeping out of your way?"

"What have you come for?" she repeated more gently.

"What have I come for? To see you, Rosamond—to still the raging hunger at my heart. Because, when I found out where you were, I could not rest until I saw you again."

"How did you hear where I was?" she said wonderingly.

"There was a man, a poor fellow from this part of the country—he was conspicuous, I think—who met us. I heard it from him at Mentone."

Mary's brother! She understood it then. There was a sort of fatality about it. She sat down wearily.

"What have you been doing with yourself, Brian? You look fearfully ill."

"I have been ill for months. We started, my cousin, Edgar Raikes, and I, to go to China, Australia, heaven knows where. We began by a fortnight in the Austrian Tyrol, and there I got laid up with a sort of fever. I have been ever since till a month ago, when I managed to get down to the Riviera. I am getting right now, only a bit weak and pulled down."

"And a journey like this across Europe, in such weather and in your present state! What madness, Brian! It is enough to kill you!"

She looked at him with a kindly pitying concern. What surprised herself more than she could account for was the utter calmness and indifference with which she saw him. Save in the first moment of surprise, her pulses had beat no faster for her to thrill her.

"When trust is gone," she told herself as she looked at him, "then the foundations of the building are undermined, and with time and absence the idol itself soon crumbles into powder." Aloud she said to him, with a kindly reproach in her voice: "What folly could induce you to undertake such a journey for nothing, Brian?"

"Do you call it nothing, then, that I am here, that I can see you once more, hear your voice, touch your hands?"

He knelt down before her on the hearth, and took her hand—his own trembled and shook, hers was as cold as ice and as perfectly unresponsive.

"Rosamond, tell me once again—let me hear from your lips—that you love me still. Then I will go. I ask for nothing more. That will be enough for me. Tell me that, once, and I will leave you."

"I cannot tell you that I love you, Brian," she said coldly, wondering, as she spoke, at the fearful evidence of selfishness of which such words, from this man to her whose life he had spoiled, gave evidence.

"You cannot say so! Do you mean that you do not love me, Rosamond? It is impossible! You cannot have ceased to care for me?"

She withdrew her hands from his, and reached them up behind her head with a weary action. Her eyes wandered away from his pleading, earnest face that was haggard with passion and misery. For a moment or two she was silent, then very slowly she said:

"The one thing under the sun which is absolutely impossible, Brian, is to rekindle the ashes of a dead fire."

He rose from his kneeling attitude at her feet, and stood with his back to the mantelpiece. Then he drew a long, shivering breath.

"Ah! it is dead, then," he said, almost in a whisper.

"Yes," she answered, still not looking at him. "It is dead. Thank God! thank God!"

There was silence between them for the space of four or five minutes—absolute silence, during which the clock ticked steadily and the fire logs sparkled and crackled, and Brian Desmond faced the bitterest and cruellest moment of his whole life.

It was Rosamond who spoke first.

"You have left your wife, Brian, at Mentone?"

He started.

"My wife! Good heavens! Surely you know—you must have heard!"

She looked at him with interest.

"What is it? I have heard nothing."

"Is it possible that you do not know that my wife left me before I went abroad?"

"Your wife left you?" she repeated in a voice of dismay. "Do you mean that you are not living with her—that you are separated from her?"

"She, at all events, has separated herself from me," he said bitterly. "It seems that no woman can stick to me now. Very likely I deserve it."

"But, Brian," she cried eagerly, "I don't understand! Do you mean that she left her home and went away? What made her leave you?"

"Her own idiotic jealousy," he replied irritably. "Some one, I believe, saw us together that one evening—do you remember it, Rosamond?"

Could she ever forget it? Although the anguish of it was past, the bare recollection of that day in London was sufficient to make her shudder.

"Yes, yes, go on," she said, hastily.

"I don't know who it was. Either an interfering young fool, called Sir Roy Grantley, who imagined himself to be in love with her, or else a mischief-making woman called Talbot, I never can make out which; but one of them must have seen us together and told her. She wrote

me a sensational letter and left my house."

"But, Brian, surely, surely, that alone could not have led her to such a strong measure."

"Oh, she was always jealous about you! She found out—she knew, I believe—that it was you, and not her, whom I loved."

"And it is I—who have worked her all this woe and agony!" she moaned.

"Oh, what can I do? What can I do?"

"Do not distress yourself, Rosamond. Kitten was not like you; she is a mere child, a creature with no depth or power of feeling; she has the inconsequence of immaturity, not the heart of a woman. I do not think she has the power to feel much; she is but a baby."

"Ah, do not think it!" cried Rosamond eagerly. "Do not flatter yourself with such a delusion, Brian. Would a child and baby—a mere shallow, heartless creature as you call her—have left her home, her comforts—you—if she had not suffered acutely?"

"Ah, you do not know her, her little baby ways, her keen pleasure in trifles, her rapid changes of manner and of feeling."

"What has that to do with it?" cried Rosamond, with an impatient wave of her hand. "No, I do not know her, but I think I know her better than you do; that must be a nature that can love intensely, and to whom love is either life or death. She might have been childish, but you have mistaken inexperience for ignorance, and the trustfulness of youth for an evidence of heartlessness. Brian, find your wife and take her back to your heart and to your love. To her you are all the world—to me, thank God, you are nothing!"

"Is it, indeed, as you said last night, dead ashes?" he asked, looking wistfully into her dark eyes and grasping her hand tightly.

"Absolutely and entirely," she answered with that brisk coldness of voice, that cheerful kindness of expression, which is a more effectual extinguisher of love's hope than a passion of reproaches or a whole volume of angry denial.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Where is that girl, Ann?"

"She is out in the park, ma'am."

"She is always out in the park. It isn't fit for her to be out at all in such weather, with that cough of hers that never gets any better. Instead of being a comfort to me, she is nothing but a burden and a responsibility. I am sure I don't know what to do about her—and there's nobody that I can write to for orders nowadays, with the master and mistress gone abroad, and even Mr. Raikes as has took himself off—the Lord knows where! I think in my old age, that it is hard to be saddled with a useless child like that."

The speaker was Mrs. Succurden; she stood at the hall door shading her eyes from the bright winter sunshine, and looking out over the snow-covered slopes that reached away, one below the other, till they sank into the dazzling whiteness of the plains below. She had not looked long before she espied between the black trunks of the beech groves some quarter of a mile away a small, dark-robed figure that wandered slowly and aimlessly over the crisp, snow-covered grass.

"There she is," muttered the housekeeper, with a pucker of annoyance on her forehead. "Poor feckless, half-witted creature, sauntering along as if it was midsummer; with no more notion of taking care of herself than if she was a baby. Tom," she called out to one of the gardeners, who was sweeping the snow in a desultory manner away from the front door, "go and tell Catherine that I want her."

She came obedient to the summons. A small, wisp-like figure of a girl in her dark dress, with a face that seemed scarcely human in its absolute transparent pallor.

"You wanted me, Mrs. Succurden?"

"Yes, I want you to come in; it is not fit for you to be wandering about in the snow like that. Have you washed the best dinner service, as I told you?"

"Yes, I have done all the work you set me to do."

"Come in then, and go and dust the glass in the octagon room."

Kitten did what she was told. She went into the octagon room. It was the room where Edgar Raikes used to sit—the room which Brian had once used as his own, and where the photograph of Miss Gray stood in its frame with the closed brass doors, upon the mantelpiece. It was a place that had a strange fascination for Kitten. She would stand whole minutes at a time motionless at the window that looked out over the now barren trees towards the grey church tower in the hollow.

Kitten never went into the octagon room without dreaming by the window for a while, nor without a glance inside the closed doors at Rosamond Gray's picture. This self-torture, which kept her love and her pain alive, became a sort of religious duty to her.

"Was I not right to leave him?" she would say to herself, almost with triumph, "since he loved her so much, and could never, by any effort, have set me in her place? Are not all the mistakes of this world made by the women who struggle for a man's love which there is no hope of their getting? Better to let it go."

There was a glass-doored cabinet in the corner of the octagon room. It was filled up to the topmost shelf with specimens of old cut glass. It was part of Kitten's duty to dust the glass and the shelves, and to replace these valuable objects in order in their places. Kitten, mounted upon a low pair of steps, was carefully dusting an old goblet of greenish-hued crystal, which she knew better than Mrs. Succurden could tell her, was of untold value, being absolutely unique and unreplaceable; she was still dreaming about Brian's youth, about the beautiful girl whom he had loved long ago.

She could hear Mrs. Succurden's voice talking volubly, and with a certain ag-

tation and animation which was unusual to her, and as the voices drew nearer, she was able to distinguish the housekeeper's words.

"This way, miss—dear me, I beg your pardon—ma'am I should have said! You haven't forgotten the way I'll be bound—dear me, to think of seeing you here again after all these years! It do seem strange indeed! And to think of your living so near, too—only at Dunsterton, and your never having come over to see the old place before!"

"Well, I have been a long time, certainly, in coming to see you, Mrs. Succurden," replied a clear, crisp voice, with a pleasant ring in it, presumably the voice of a lady, as Kitten was instantly aware, and how great is the charm of a refined and well-bred voice. "I owe it to my shame, but to-day, I had a fancy to bring my friend, Col. Trefusis, to look at the vicarage gables and at the dear old church, and as we were so near, why, I could not resist the temptation of coming on across the park."

"Along the old path, miss—ma'am, I mean! Ah, how many a time I've seen you come springing up the slope with your light steps!"

They were well within the room by now. The tall lady in her long fur cloak, and the slight figured gentleman a little behind her, looking about him with keen, kindly blue eyes, and behind them both, Mrs. Succurden, in her white cap and black silk gown, with her basket of keys in her hands, Kitten, from her vantage ground at the top of the steps, could see the group who invaded her solitude, while they were unaware of her presence.

"You have a great deal of glass here," said the gentleman to Mrs. Succurden.

"Ah, you would like to go over the houses, no doubt, sir," replied the housekeeper. "I will see if I can find the head gardener, he is generally about at this hour."

She led the way out of the room; the gentleman went with her. The lady in the long fur cloak made no effort to follow them. She was left alone, standing by the window where Kitten had so often stood with her back to the room, and her eyes riveted upon the grey church tower.

Rosamond moved from the window at length; then she did exactly what Kitten herself had done hundreds of times. She went straight to the mantelpiece, and opened the brass doors of the painted miniature. She took it down from its place and gazed long and earnestly at the lovely face, bright with youth and happiness, that smiled back at her.

She turned away from the fireplace, leaving the doors of the picture wide open. Then Kitten saw her face, and behind it that other face, that was the same, only not the same. The beautiful features were unaltered, the eyes were as lovely, the proud pose of the head was unmistakable, only that in the living woman the curves of the laughing mouth were saddened, and the head of sorrow and suffering had swept like a storm cloud over the once bright and fearless brow. But all that Kitten realized at that moment was one thing alone. This was Rosamond Earle, whom Brian Desmond loved!

The room swam round her, her wide-open eyes grew dark and dazed with unspeakable pain and anguish, then came a crash, and the sharp ring of broken glass as the medieval goblet fell, shattered into a thousand atoms upon the parquet flooring, then a dull, heavy thud, and a little dark-robed form slipped suddenly down from the top of the steps into a huddled mass upon the ground.

Bill Nye's Habits.

Tall, slim and bald, Bill Nye was cut out by nature to amuse people, and he did amuse, even though his humor was of a simple and homely kind. The Denver Times recalls his reply to a correspondent who inquired about Bill's habits of work and life. It was as follows:

When the weather is such that I cannot exercise in the open air, I have a pair of dumb-bells at my lodgings, which I use for holding the door open. I also belong to an athletic club and a pair of Indian clubs with red handles. I owe much of my robust health to this.

I do most of my writing in a sitting posture or in an autograph album. When I am not engaged in thought I am employed in recovering from its effects. I am very genial and pleasant to be thrown among.

I dress expensively, but not so as to attract attention. In the morning I wear morning dress, in the evening I wear evening dress, and at night I wear night dress.

Getting His Tightwad Worth.

"Why doesn't Tightwad buy his stamps at the postoffice instead of going to that news stand every night?"

"The news dealer handles the baseball extra."

"I see. Tightwad buys one every night, eh?"

"Oh, no! You see, the papers lay on the showcase and while the clerk is getting the stamps Tightwad reads the score."—Detroit Tribune.

Comparing Records.

"No, indeed," she said. "I can never be your wife. Why, I had half a dozen offers before yours."

"Huh!" rejoined the young man in the case. "That's a nothing. I proposed to at least a dozen girls before I met you."

No Pirate Crews.

"How Russia must envy Switzerland!"

"Why?"

"Because Switzerland hasn't any navy."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

In Hard Luck.

The Judge—Have you anything to offer the court before sentence is passed on you?

The Prisoner—No, your honor; I had \$15, but my lawyer appropriated it.

No Room to Retreat.

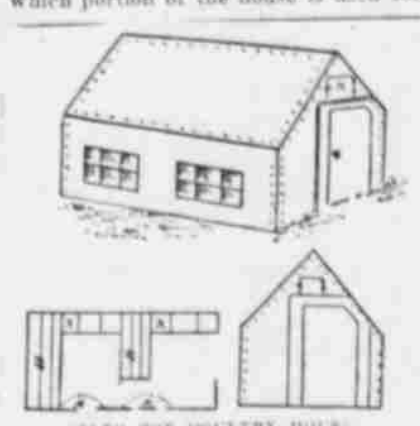
Mrs. De Style—Did you ever do any fighting at close quarters, Major?

Major Wedderly—Sure. Most of my married life has been spent in a flat.



Practical Poultry Houses.

A practical poultry house may be built of four upright piano boxes. The backs and ends which come together are removed, together with two of the tops. The two remaining tops are inclosed at the middle end of the house and at the front, and a small door made in the gable end of one, which portion of the house is used for



PLANO BOX POULTRY HOUSE.

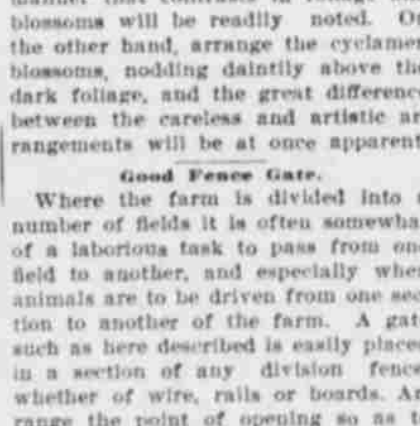
the storage of grain. A sloping roof is built over the entire structure, and the building covered with waterproof paper, thus cutting out any possibility of trouble in the way of leakage or drafts which might result from the joining. Two windows are made in the lower front of the house facing the south, and directly under each window a dusting box is made, which will afford the fowls much pleasure, as they enjoy the sunshine. Roosts are placed at one end and in the middle, and nest boxes on the side opposite the windows.

Arranging the Window Garden.

How often do we notice a shelf filled with small plants in the window garden, many varieties grouped promiscuously until the characteristics of each are entirely destroyed. Arrange each class of plants in a separate clump, and you will be surprised to note the difference in their appearance. Take such plants as primroses, cyclamen, violets and ferns and arrange them alternately on the plant shelf. Now group all the ferns in the center of the shelf, the tall sword fern in the middle, with the broad-leaved sorts next, and the beautiful maiden-hair fern and other dainty varieties drooping from the edge of the shelf. On one end of the shelf, at a little distance from the ferns, group the different varieties of primroses in such manner that contrasts in foliage and blossoms will be readily noted. On the other hand, arrange the cyclamen blossoms, nodding daintily above the dark foliage, and the great difference between the careless and artistic arrangements will be at once apparent.

Good Fence Gate.

Where the farm is divided into a number of fields it is often somewhat of a laborious task to pass from one field to another, and especially when animals are to be driven from one section to another of the farm. A gate such as here described is easily placed in a section of any division fence, whether of wire, rails or boards. Arrange the point of opening so as to have firm corner posts, then make a gate four feet wide; a light post is set before the end of the boards are cut if the gate is erected as a part of a board fence. Two strong strips are nailed on the gate portion and three strong strap hinges are fastened on



FEENCE GATE.

the boards where cut next to the post. Strong hooks and screw-eye serve as fastenings at the other end of the gate. It costs but little to arrange several of the handy gates about the farm, and they will be found useful. The illustration shows the idea clearly.—Indianapolis News.

Keep Good Horses.

We know a farmer who has not less than \$700 invested in old plug horses, says Chicago Inter Ocean. Ringbones, spavins, wire cuts, curbs, etc., are conspicuous when you look over his herd. He has ten or a dozen head, and none of them can be depended upon for a decent day's work. This man thinks he needs lots of horses with which to do his work, and he bought this assortment because they were cheap. We know another farmer with only three head that cost \$500, but they are good ones, and he can do more work in a day with them than the other man can with his ten head. The moral is, Keep less horses, but have good ones.

Valley Frosts.

Three causes operate to produce valley frosts, which are: First, the air, made cold on clear nights, becomes heavier, rolls down the hillsides and settles at the bottom. Second, the winds do not reach the valleys, which allows unobstructed radiation of heat. Third, the richer soil of the valleys induces a later and more succulent growth, thereby promoting more rapid evaporation.

Protecting the Manure.

The annual question concerning the disposition of the stable-made manure comes up as the pile begins to assume formidable proportions. By far the best way of taking care of it is to spread it on the fields where it will go down into the soil and be in readiness for the crop which is to be sown in the spring. If it is to be stored, the ideal place is the pit with cement bottom, which will hold the liquid excrement. If this cannot be done, then store it under a shed, placing it in layers and let the hogs root it over. If even this is not feasible, then put it in piles not very high and cover with any old, rough boards—almost anything that will keep out the rain, which causes the liquid portions to leach away.

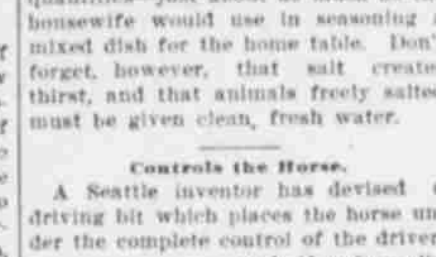
An excellent plan is to choose a place where the soil is of a clay nature, and dig a trench all around the space where the pile is to be, and in this way save some of the liquid, which may be scooped up and poured back on the pile. Use the pile as a receiver for the slop from the house, and see that it is forked over several times during the winter. The main thing, however, is to see that it is protected from the elements as much as possible.

Salt for Farm Animals.

Most farmers fully realize the importance of salt to the farm animals, but they too often forget to supply it at the proper time and in proper quantities. Possibly sheep should be handled a little more cautiously than other animals in this respect, and small quantities doled out to them daily. The other farm animals can safely be trusted with a lump of salt in the manger, to which they may have free access. Even the swine will do better if a lump of rock salt is put in the corner of the trough, although it is usually the better plan, with them, to season the slop given them with more or less salt. This is also the better plan of furnishing salt to hogs, using the mash each day but in small quantities—just about as much as the housewife would use in seasoning a mixed dish for the home table. Don't forget, however, that salt creates thirst, and that animals freely salted must be given clean, fresh water.

Controls the Horse.

A Seattle inventor has devised a driving bit which places the horse under the complete control of the driver, and, if universally used, there would be no more runaway horses. This driving bit contains the ordinary jointed mouth-piece, with rein rings attached, the rings and mouth-piece being pivoted together to a curved snaffle bar.



DRIVING BIT.

The snaffle bars meet at the center under the lower jaw of the horse and are hinged by a rivet, the overlapping ends of the snaffle bars being recessed to form a smooth joint. An overdraw check guard, consisting of a curved chin bar connects to the snaffle bars. An overdraw check bit passes through slots in the upper end of the check guard. The inventor claims that the overdraw check, when connected to either a snaffle bit or to a stiff mouth-piece bit, is humane in its action, does not force the jaws of the horse open to an extent to interfere with the proper breathing, will not pinch the sides of the mouth of the horse, and will not chafe and irritate the animal.

Feeding of Roots in Winter.

The countries that lead in quality of live stock use roots as food for the animals. England, which gave us our best breeds, would never have done so but for her large crop of turnips. The English market reports give prices of beets, mangels and turnips as regularly as do our journals for grain and hay. In some sections of this country the root crop is becoming an important one, but we rely mostly on corn, which produces not only largely of grain, but also of fodder; hence it is cheaper to grow corn than roots, but better results would be obtained if roots were added to the corn, hay and fodder. Labor-saving implements now cheapen the cost of producing roots, compared with former years, and with the use of roots the food is more varied, which promotes more rapid growth of young stock and greater yields from producers.

Packing Pork.

Clean the barrel thoroughly until all bad odors are removed. Then cover the bottom with three inches of salt and pack in a layer of pork, closely filling the space and covering the whole layer with salt three inches deep. Pound it down solid with an ax and start another layer, keeping on in the same way until the pork is all packed. Cover the whole with one-half bushel of salt and let it stand a few days, after which clean cold water should be added. A float with a flat stone on top will keep the meat from rising above the surface. This plan requires more salt than commonly used but is very sure for keeping meat.

Sheep on Small Farms.

A Western writer says: A small grass farm for sheep should be divided into small fields of five to ten acres each, according to the size of the farm and the number of sheep. The land devoted to sheep should be fully stocked to use the pasture to the best advantage, and forage crops should be provided for fall feeding when pasture fails, and the sheep need a little extra feed to put them in good condition for winter.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



- 1135—Stephen crowned King of England.
- 1402—Columbus cast anchor in the Bay of St. Thomas.
- 1549—Death of Margaret, Queen of Navarre.
- 1552—Charles V. raised siege of Metz.
- 1560—First General Assembly of the Scottish church opened.
- 1562—Battle of Dreux. Conde taken prisoner.
- 1603—Mahomet III., Sultan of Turkey, died of the plague.
- 1620—The Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock.
- 1621—The English Commons claimed freedom of discussion.
- 1632—John Cotton, first minister of Boston, died.
- 1667—Many Scotch Covenanters were executed.
- 1688—King James II. of England fled to France. Throuse declared abdicated.
- 1710—First issue of Boston Gazette published by William Brinker.
- 1745—City of Milan entered by Spanish invaders.
- 1747—Colonial House and records in Boston destroyed by fire.
- 1775—British Parliament ordered confiscation of all American vessels.
- 1776—Washington crossed the Delaware.
- 1777—Gen. Washington moved his troops to Valley Forge.
- 1782—United States frigate Charleston captured by British.
- 1783—Gen. Washington delivered his commission to Congress at Annapolis.
- 1791—Bank of United States commenced discounting in Philadelphia.
- 1795—Henry Clinton died.
- 1796—French surrender Fort Kehl on the Rhine to the Austrians.
- 1803—Louisiana taken possession of by United States.
- 1804—Benjamin Diersell, Earl of Beaconsfield, born. Election of Thomas Jefferson as President of the United States.
- 1805—Joseph Smith, founder of Mormonism, born at Sharon, Va.
- 1806—Joseph Johnson, publisher of Cowper's poems, died.
- 1811—Many persons perished in the burning of a theater at Richmond, Va.
- 1813—Fort Niagara captured by the British.
- 1816—Bible societies prohibited in Hungary.
- 1820—Wife of Gen. Andrew Jackson died.
- 1820—Prince of Polignac sentenced for life for treason. Independence of Belgium recognized by the allied powers.
- 1831—Stephen Girard, Philadelphia philanthropist, died.
- 1832—Termination of civil war in Mexico.
- 1835—Independence of Texas proclaimed.
- 1841—Assassination of Sir W. MacNaughton at Cabul.
- 1842—Texas troops invade Mexico.
- 1845—Steamer *Bellona* sank in the Mississippi river.
- 1848—Asiatic cholera broke out among United States troops in Texas. Louis Napoleon made President of French republic.
- 1851—Dismissal of Lord Palmerston from office. Lagos, Africa, destroyed by the British.
- 1852—Annexation of Pugn to British India.
- 1854—Armed collisions in eastern Kansas over slavery question.
- 1860—South Carolina seceded from the Union.
- 1861—Principality of Roumania created by union of Moldavia and Wallachia.
- 1864—Savannah occupied by Gen. Sherman.
- 1870—Tours surrendered to the Germans.
- 1874—Hoosac Tunnel turned over to Massachusetts by the builders.
- 1884—Mackay-Bennett cable opened to the public.
- 1894—War between China and Japan declared ended. Capt. Dreyfus found guilty and sentenced to Devil's Island.
- 1898—French Chamber of Deputies by vote again sustained government in Dreyfus case.
- 1899—Cuban Junta in the United States dissolved. Dwight L. Moody, noted evangelist, died. Duke of Westminster, richest man in England, died. Buchtel College, Akron, Ohio, burned.
- 1900—Treaty between Mexico and China signed at Washington, D. C. Gen. Wood assumed office as Governor General of Cuba.
- 1901—William Ellery Channing died.
- 1902—First wireless telegraphic message transmitted across the Atlantic.
- 1903—East river bridge, connecting Manhattan and Williamsburg, opened.

This and That.

A shell from a 12-inch gun makes its flight of nine miles in forty-two seconds.