

MY FRIEND LEONARD.

The first time I saw him was on the shore of Lake Gable in the Pyrenees. The noonday sun was dazzling upon the lake and the mountains, and I had established myself in a sheltered nook under my umbrella.

A young fellow very elaborately dressed made his appearance. He advanced to the slip, where a little boat was moored, and there affecting not to notice my presence, he surveyed with an important and critical air the steep granite heights of the formidable Pique Lope.

The newcomer persisted in his inspection of the mountain, and evidently sought to excite my interest by drawing down his brows in his very careful scrutiny.

"For pity's sake!" I cried at last to gratify him. "You are equipped as elaborately as if you meant to climb Vignemale."

"The young man did not relish my patronizing tone, for he looked me over leisurely and superbly before answering."

"That is in fact just what I mean to do," His laborious exaggeration of dignity amused me and I continued the conversation.

This regime is exactly the healthiest for young Gasparel. He doesn't look to me like a long liver."

"What motive brought them here?" I asked. "Mr. Miget's health. He appears to be very robust, but two years ago he got some lung trouble going wild duck-shooting with his nephew in the Camargue marshes—a pastime said to be very unhealthy."

"After a moment's silence, I remarked casually how much anxiety it must cause the Miget family to have such an enviable fortune linked to such a frail life. My neighbor gave me a glance from his keen gray eyes."

"Yes," said he gravely, "it is a cruel uncertainty. The husband and wife think of it day and night. They can neither eat nor sleep for thinking of it."

We exchanged, with reserve, a parting glance. I went to bed and dreamed of Leonard. The next day I looked out for him, but all that day he did not appear at Carerets.

"I was delighted to see the little tourist safe and sound, but on the other hand, I regretted the familiar patronage with which I had accosted him on the previous evening."

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OUR PHOSPHATE MINES.

A Newly-Developed Industry of Much Importance. Destined to Become a Source of Great Profit to American Agriculturists—Some Valuable Information.

We find in a special report of the commissioner of labor the latest statistics relating to the phosphate industry of the United States. The report says the New York Sun, not only shows the actual output of our phosphate mines, but estimates the period during which the industry may be expected to continue.

Carroll D. Wright, the commissioner of labor, points out in his introduction that the value of the discovery of phosphates from an agricultural viewpoint, cannot be overestimated.

The home consumption of the fertilizer takes place chiefly in the southern, eastern and western states. It is conspicuously in demand for the cotton crop of the south, for the fruit and vegetable crops of the east and for the grain crops of the west.

We are assured that great pains have been taken by the department of labor to collect trustworthy information as to the amount of phosphates which may reasonably be expected to be delivered hereafter from the mines. The quantity in sight in South Carolina is computed at 14,000,000 tons in this state the industry, at the present rate of production, will extend over twenty-eight years from 1891.

With the only complete bicycle plant in the world, where every part of the machine is made from A to Z, it is any wonder that Victor Bicycles are acknowledged leaders?

In North Carolina, Georgia and other states is put down at 1,000,000 tons, while Florida is credited with the enormous quantity of 123,556,116 tons. Taken together these estimates show a total of 148,556,116 tons of phosphate in sight, and enable us to measure the future opportunities for the employment of labor in this industry.

Ladies Must Remove Their Hats. It will seem strange to the American woman, with her Declaration of Independence traditions, to hear that the director of the French opera has assumed the authority to make a hard and fast rule with respect to ladies' bonnets.

Grand Duchesse Serge. Grand Duchesse Serge of Russia, who, with her husband and Grand Duke Paul, has been to Baltimore on a visit to Queen Victoria, is the handmaid of the daughters of the late Princess Alice of Hesse.

Contrary to the general belief that Ireland leads the world in its fondness for "prunes," statistics show that the people of Germany and Belgium are the greatest potato eaters; the consumption in these countries annually exceeds one thousand pounds per head of population.

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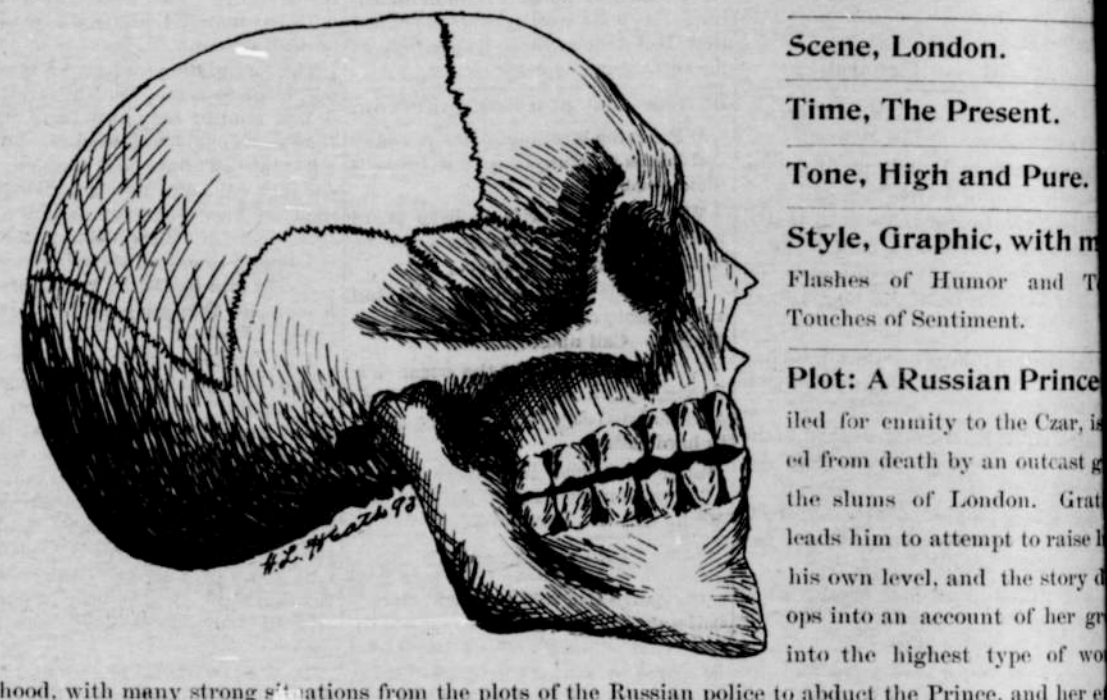
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