

HER BIRTHDAY.

"By-by, Dolly; don't sit up for me; I may be home till late."

And handsome Dick Everett, seal-capped and overcoated, bent to kiss his pretty little wife.

"Must you really go, Dick?" imploringly.

"Must I really go?" he repeated.

"What a dreadfully solemn face! Yes, you ridiculous darling, I really must."

"Why?" persistently.

"Oh, because of an—engagement I—I cannot break, dear!" a trifle guiltily.

"Good gracious! what an inquisitive little mortal it is, to be sure! Don't trouble your pretty head with business engagements; and once more, my pet, good-by. And—oh, I say, Dolly," turning back and putting a furry hand inside the door, "if you are in search of a job, I just wish you'd mend my other overcoat. I noticed a big tear in it for the first time to-night. Will you?"

And to his rather disconnected speech Mrs. Dick nodded, and smiled a bright acquiescence.

The door slammed behind Dick, and she glanced round the cosy, home-like room.

"If Dick had not been obliged to go out—and such a cold night, too!"

The gas burned brightly.

The cheery fire in the grate was a bed of golden coals.

The French clock on the mantel ticked merrily.

Towards the crimson-covered table, on which lay a pile of morned magazines, looked two wistful blue eyes.

But the bride of six months shook her dainty bronze-brown head with resolute determination.

The rosy lips repeated the hackneyed formula "Duty first, pleasure after."

So, accordingly, the little white hands laboriously lugged and hauled Dick's big overcoat into the room, turned it over, and commenced their wifely occupation.

She smiled softly to herself, for her thoughts were pleasant ones as she sat and sewed.

A rarely pretty picture in the parlor's fire-light glow, the childish figure in the soft dark dress and snowy muslin apron, the busy hands flying briskly through their task.

"To-morrow will be my birthday, and Dick has forgotten it, I know. How sorry he will be when I tell him to-morrow."

And as it broke merrily into "Coming Thro' the Rye," the French clock on the low marble mantel struck 10.

Her task finished, she turned the coat over to see if it needed other repairs, and as she did so a small square sheet of creamy paper fluttered from an inside pocket and fell upon the carpet.

She bent forward and picked it up with a laugh.

"Which of Dick's friends is sufficiently foppish to perfume his love letters, I wonder?"

Then she turned it right side up and looked at it?

And she saw—what?

Nothing very alarming.

Only a thick sheet of embossed paper, stamped with a monogram, in blue and gold, incomprehensible as monograms usually are.

A woman's letter, decidedly, written in pretty, scrawling, irregular hand, unmistakably a woman's.

The bird-like song died on Dolly Everett's lips.

The soft, bright color faded slowly out of her face.

The blue eyes grew wide and startled as deliberately, though almost involuntarily, she read the few words on the page before her.

The note ran:

"DEAR DARLING—I have missed you dreadfully of late. Come. Exercise diplomacy to-night and slip away. I hate her for keeping you from me. Besides, Gerster is in town. Is the hint too broad? In spite of all, Dick, ever yours ESTHER."

That was all.

But it was enough.

For a few moments Dolly's eyes, blazing, terrified, stared straight at the fatal sheet, as though they would shrivel it up with their blue fire.

Then she flung it shudderingly from her, as though it were a venomous thing, and could sting her.

Who was the woman who dared write in that manner to Dick—her Dick?—yes, she told herself, with an air of defiant proprietorship, hers only.

She crushed her hands tightly together, till the diamond next the plain gold circlet cut the white flesh cruelly.

Then, as a horrible suspicion leaped to life in her brain, with a slow moan she slipped from the chair and crouched, shivering, against the great shaggy overcoat.

Her fears took shape.

What if he had gone to meet this woman?

For the first time he had evaded answering her questions.

And how guilty and hurried he had seemed—so horribly happy and light-hearted, too.

A thousand words and glances, before almost unnoticed, now flashed upon her.

She snatched up the note again and looked at it.

It was dated the evening of that day.

"Oh, Dick! Dick!" she cried wildly, "how could you, how could you? And I loved you so!"

Then with a sudden burst of sobs she broke down altogether, and, burying her face in the crumpled overcoat, wept and wept as if her very heart would break, the graceful little figure was shaken and convulsed.

The fire burned low in the grate under a coating of gray ashes.

Eleven!

Now she did not pause to listen to the music.

Footsteps came along the sidewalk, up the steps.

A latch key turned cautiously in the door.

She neither heard nor stirred.

In the hall Dick paused, a curious smile on his lips.

"Dolly's asleep, as sure as fate!"

He divested himself of hat and overcoat, and, humming a popular air,

turned the handle of the parlor door.

"Goodness! Golly, what's the matter?"

His song came to an untimely end as he caught sight of the sobbing, shaking little figure on the hearth-rug.

He took one stride toward her, but at the sound of his voice she had sprung to her feet, with crimson cheeks and dangerously sparkling eyes.

"Stand off, sir! Don't dare to touch me!"

"Great heaven! Dolly—" in direst bewilderment.

"Don't Dolly me!" facing him like a diminutive tigress—"don't dare to!"

"Dolly!"

"Don't mention my name so soon after hers—this 'Edith,' to whom you are 'Dick, darling!'"

"Dolly!"

"Can you find no other word with which to defend or vindicate yourself except the repetition of my name?" this last with unnatural calmness.

The temperature had wafted round from the torrid to the frigid zone.

"Have you gone—mad?" slowly.

"If I have, find the cause—there."

Scornfully she flung him the crumpled note.

He snatched it eagerly and read every word.

Then he lifted up a face of, if possible, more intense, utter bewilderment than before.

"Where did you get this, Dolly?"

"There."

She pointed dramatically to the tumbled overcoat.

"There?" in blankest astonishment.

"There!"

He glanced from the note to the coat, from the coat to the note, then back again to Dolly.

She was longing desperately to steady her voice and still her heart sufficiently to ask him how he liked Gerster, just to exhibit a piece of stinging sarcasm; but she could not save her life.

There was a blank silence a moment, then Dick walked over and picked up the overcoat.

Hark! What was that?

Not a laugh, surely.

Yes, a laugh.

The maddest, merriest, wildest peal that ever rang from human lips.

There on the hearthrug stood Dick, the coat fallen loosely on the floor, his hands on both hips, and laughing—well, he was.

"Dick!" in faltering amazement.

"Yes," howled Dick.

"Oh, Dolly, it's the best joke of the season."

"Oh—h—"

And then he was roaring like a circus mad schoolboy again.

"Dick—tell me!"

Then, seeing her white, anxious face, he grew suddenly grave.

"Dolly, did you look at the envelope?"

"I saw none."

She showed her the envelope that had fluttered unnoticed under the table.

She read the address:

RICHARD HARVEY, ESQ.,
192 Blank street.

"Dolly, did you particularly notice the overcoat?"

"A tremulous 'No!'"

"Look! See that velvet collar—those buttons, this pocket-book! Is this my overcoat?"

"Oh, Dick, my dearest, forgive me? No, no, no!"

"My darling!"

"But," bubbling again into boyish laughter, "what a good joke! To think that I should walk home in, and that you should mend, Dick Harvey's overcoat! Wonder if his folks are going through my pockets now?"

"Who's Edith?"

"His sweetheart, whom he has to sneak off to see, because of a formidable heiress staying at his house at present, to whom his folks are trying to marry him. He told me all about it."

"Dick," shy arms went creeping round his neck, and blue eyes grew luminous through their tears, "I'm never even going to be jealous again. I—I'm not going to ask you where you were to-night, with triumphant heroism, undisturbed by a stratum of maddening curiosity."

"My pet, I was just going to tell you, but these will speak better than I can. You see I had not quite forgotten what to-morrow was."

He had drawn a leathern case from his pocket, and touching a spring disclosed a set and necklet of milk-white pearls on turquoise-velvet bed.

"Oh—h, Dick!"

A long-drawn breath, a rapturous lighting of blue eyes, a lifting of rosy lips, and then—well, when she got through Dick thought himself repaid.

"Won't there be fun at the office to-morrow. Jealous of Dick Harvey! But, by Jupiter, what a reception I got! Oh, o—h! Dolly, Dolly, it's the best joke on record."

And Dolly joined him merrily; for, after all, is not the sweetest laughter that which springs from tears?

The Children's "Dickey Bird Society."

Eighty thousand children in the north of England form the "Dickey Bird Society." They are pledged to protect birds, never to destroy a nest, and to feed birds in winter. It would not be a bad organization for this country. In combined voice and plumage our American birds of the woods and fields are equal to any in the world. It was a sorry piece of work to import such useless vagrants as English sparrows to take their places.

When Denver Was Sold Cheap.

Three-fourths of the present site of Denver was owned only a few years ago by Edward McClintock, who sold it for a pair of French calf boots, a pound of plug tobacco and a burro. McClintock drove an ox team in the first overland train that ever crossed the continent.

Wild Oats.

"Wild oats are never injured by the frost," says Pretzel's Weekly. But the frost of old age is often injured and made miserable by the wild oats sown in the spring time of life.

THE STORY OF "BLIND TOM."

Early Life of the Musical Prodigy—Eccentric, but Not an Idiot as Currently Reported.

A few days ago I accidentally learned that a lady, whose home is in New Orleans, but who is temporarily visiting in this city, could tell me something about Blind Tom's early life, and I accordingly went to see her. To the first question that would naturally be asked, she replied:

"Yes; I can tell you all about him. My father owned him. Blind Tom's father was foreman on my father's plantation in Georgia. A foreman, you will understand, is one who is placed over the other slaves on plantations where they do not have white overseers. Tom's mother was our cook, and as such her room adjoined the kitchen. The slaves, as you know, have separate quarters, and live a short distance from the house. The kitchen was close by, and Tom's mother, the cook, was frequently in the rear rooms of the house, and several of her children, of whom she had an extraordinary large number, would follow her around. After Tom had familiarized himself with his new surroundings, he became bold enough to creep from the kitchen out into the halls towards the parlor, where his acute ears would catch the sound of the piano. His mother in the kitchen would then miss him, and run to drag him back, each time administering a severe beating. But the child went back, all the same, and listened. After a while father's attention was attracted to the child, and told the mother to let him stay where he was. When we let him come into the parlor, the little imp went wild with delight. Before he could stand alone, he would draw himself up and commenced striking the keys."

"How old was Tom when he began to show his musical skill?"

"Tom could play any ordinary music and a few more difficult compositions before he was 4 years old. He would creep to the piano and play before he was able to walk, and could sing Scotch ballads before he could talk enough to ask for bread. All he needed was for some one to play so that he could hear and he would immediately play the piece without varying a particle. I remember well, a few years after, when Tom became more proficient and had learned to talk, seeing Tom grope his way into the parlor, and, approaching the piano, say to the lady who was then playing, 'I can play that better than you can. I'd, a' g'ones, I is.' And sure enough, he did, although he had never heard the music before."

"Has he ever tried instruments other than the piano?"

"Oh, yes. He can play on anything. The flute is his special favorite. He has a beautiful silver flute with silver keys, of which he is very proud. When he gets started he will sometimes play all night—until the chickens crow in the morning. Next to the flute the piano is his favorite, but he can execute music on any species of instrument he can get."

"Has Blind Tom had or needed any assistance in his musical achievements?"

"He has the very best kind of instructors, although it has been at times difficult to obtain a teacher who would not be less proficient than the pupil. All that Tom wants is some one to play new music for him, and he only needs to hear it played once. Some years ago father took him to Paris to see if he could not be made to see, and no effort has been spared to give him a good education. The story that Blind Tom is an idiot in everything but music is a popular error. His eccentricities when on the stage are mistaken for idiocy, when in fact Tom is frantically delighted or bewitched, if you please, over the music he is making or hearing. Blind Tom is not only well educated, but refined. He does not use the negro dialect, and can carry on an intelligent conversation with anybody. He is affectionate in disposition, and is devoted to all the family, who are equally as fond of him. When my boy was born Tom was much afraid that his place in the family would be taken by another, and he felt very badly about it."

"What do you think of the story that he is an idiot?"

"I don't know much about that," said the driver, candidly. "It seems strange that in a country as big as ours, and so full of grain, we can not have any better liquor. I must be from these revenue laws. When they put a tax of \$1.50 to \$2 a gallon on whisky, which only costs 50 cents a gallon to make, there will be adulteration of it. I suppose they didn't have the drunkards forty years ago that they do now, nor the new diseases that you hear about."

"How much does that man up in Pennsylvania ask for whisky?"

"He asks \$2.50 a gallon now. The internal revenue system gives our humble old-fashioned distillers a good deal of trouble. The laws are so minute that a plain man can hardly understand them, and they also increase the cost of making the liquor."

Attractions for the Crowd.

Walking through Wall street I noticed the workmen laying the foundation for the Washington statue. A crowd was watching the job. How easily a crowd is gathered here! The reason is found in the fact that a large part of the populace is composed of those who tramp the streets without apparent purpose, and are always ready to stop and gaze. Fourteenth street is the biggest of such idle gatherings, as there is a window there (in the third story) in which ridiculous marionettes are exhibited. These little toys are only fit for the children, and yet they attract great numbers of grown people, who stand on the opposite side and gaze with strange intendment on the silly performance. The joke of the thing is that the latter is only a bait for an advertisement. The showman has hired the window for this purpose, and while he attracts the public he also parades his business.

A crowd of fashion worshippers is always found at Arnold & Constable's immense corner window, where a half dozen wax figures display the fall styles in the most gorgeous manner. Rich and poor mingle in the circle of admiration. Here one meets an irresistible denial of the idea that "beauty undressed is adorned the most." No, no! Beauty (wax and paint beauty, at least) requires a \$5,000 dress to do it full justice. There is always a crowd at the bookstands, where so many stop, though not one in fifty makes a purchase. When one sees the words, "Our choice for 25 cents," how natural it is to halt and look! Each one gazes a moment or two, and then passes on, but some one else is ready to take his place. These facts show that though street life has a hurried aspect, a large part of it is composed of listless wanderers.

The Mysterious Author of "Rutledge."

A popular novel by a southern writer published by Mr. J. C. Derby was "Rutledge," which made a stir equalled by few novels today. This novel also met with a rebuff when it first came north, and was rejected by Messrs. Harper. The story is a strange one, the name of the heroine never being mentioned in it. An uncle of the author, Mr. Weeks, brought the manuscript to Mr. Derby, and said that the author did not wish to be known. Mr. Derby replied that he never published a book without knowing who wrote it, and that he must decline the manuscript on such terms. Mr. Weeks then offered to publish it at his own expense if Mr. Derby would put his imprint on it. This he declined to do. So a meeting was arranged, and Mr. Derby met Miss Miriam Coles. The question of the day was: "Who is the author of 'Rutledge?'" and everybody was eager to hear the answer. Mr. Derby, who has a keen appreciation of the humorous, got the editors of Vanity Fair to announce that in a certain number they would publish a portrait of the author of "Rutledge." Expectation was on tip-toe. The number appeared, and there stood the graceful figure of a lady outlined against the page; but, alas! the face was covered with a veil!

Work Will Tell.

(Anthony Trollope's Autobiography.)

My own experience tells me that a man can always do the work for which his brain is fitted if he will give himself the habit of regarding his work as a normal condition of his life. I therefore venture to advise young men who look forward to authorship as the business of their lives, even when they propose that the authorship shall be of the highest class known, to avoid enthusiastic rushes with their pens, and to seat themselves at their desks day by day as though they were lawyers' clerks, and so let them sit until the allotted task shall be accomplished.

NEED'S SUGGESTION.

(Louise R. Smith in St. Nicholas.)

"Where did you buy her, mamma?"

"Asked 3-year-old Ned of me.

As he leaned over the dainty cradle His 'new little sister' to see.

"An angel brought her, darling."

I answered, and he smiled, Then softly bent his curly head, And kissed the sleeping child.

But a sudden change came over him, And he said, "If I'd been you, While I was about it, mamma, I'd have bought the angel, too!"

Awful Hot.

It is estimated that if the earth should come into contact with another heavenly body of the same size, the quantity of heat developed would be sufficient to melt, boil and completely vaporize a mass of ice fully 700 times that of both the colliding worlds—the ice planet 150,000 miles in diameter.

Phrenological Journal: "Our bus-ess," said a conductor in answer to an inquiry made, "runs a quarter arter. arf arter, quarter to, and at."

THE OLD-FASHIONED WHISKY.

Home-Made Liquor Which Is as Honestly Manufactured as Sweet Cider.

(Gath's Maryland Letter.)

I observe, for the benefit of your temperance element in Ohio, for whose sobriety I have great respect, that the pain old German sects—the Mononists, the Danbers, &c.—generally keep little distilleries. It does not appear to have been fifty years ago the theory that a little whisky was death in a pot. Sometimes these distilleries are built of stone, and are of odd shapes, with overhanging eaves. Again they are two stories high and built of brick, to store the liquor after it is distilled.

Said I to my man: "How did they distill liquor in these little places?"

"Why, they first ground up the grain in the proportion they wanted and then let it soak in a boghead until it fermented. Then it was put in a mash-tub and boiled until its vapor went over into another place and came out whisky."

"Do you make any whisky in this region now?"

"Yes, it is said we make the best out of the Allegheny mountains—perhaps the best anywhere. I know one man up here near Greensville, Pa., who has about one thousand barrels on hand. Last year he would not distill any because the corn was too wet. Every parcel that man sells he takes a sample from the barrel, and he got the sample back from the barrel, and said he, that whisky was tampered with on the way. It tasted to me as if an old iron nail had dropped in it."

My driver then remarked: "The whisky you get in cities is not fit to drink. Our old distillers in this region, of whom there are some left, are just as honest in making whisky as if they made cider or put up canned peaches. Their fathers made whisky before them. Almost every miller had a little still down by the spring-house."

Said I: "What do you think about taking off the internal revenue taxes and having free whisky?"

"I don't know much about that," said the driver, candidly. "It seems strange that in a country as big as ours, and so full of grain, we can not have any better liquor. I must be from these revenue laws. When they put a tax of \$1.50 to \$2 a gallon on whisky, which only costs 50 cents a gallon to make, there will be adulteration of it. I suppose they didn't have the drunkards forty years ago that they do now, nor the new diseases that you hear about."

How much does that man up in Pennsylvania ask for whisky?"

"He asks \$2.50 a gallon now. The internal revenue system gives our humble old-fashioned distillers a good deal of trouble. The laws are so minute that a plain man can hardly understand them, and they also increase the cost of making the liquor."

Attractions for the Crowd.

Walking through Wall street I noticed the workmen laying the foundation for the Washington statue. A crowd was watching the job. How easily a crowd is gathered here! The reason is found in the fact that a large part of the populace is composed of those who tramp the streets without apparent purpose, and are always ready to stop and gaze. Fourteenth street is the biggest of such idle gatherings, as there is a window there (in the third story) in which ridiculous marionettes are exhibited. These little toys are only fit for the children, and yet they attract great numbers of grown people, who stand on the opposite side and gaze with strange intendment on the silly performance. The joke of the thing is that the latter is only a bait for an advertisement. The showman has hired the window for this purpose, and while he attracts the public he also parades his business.

A crowd of fashion worshippers is always found at Arnold & Constable's immense corner window, where a half dozen wax figures display the fall styles in the most gorgeous manner. Rich and poor mingle in the circle of admiration. Here one meets an irresistible denial of the idea that "beauty undressed is adorned the most." No, no! Beauty (wax and paint beauty, at least) requires a \$5,000 dress to do it full justice. There is always a crowd at the bookstands, where so many stop, though not one in fifty makes a purchase. When one sees the words, "Our choice for 25 cents," how natural it is to halt and look! Each one gazes a moment or two, and then passes on, but some one else is ready to take his place. These facts show that though street life has a hurried aspect, a large part of it is composed of listless wanderers.

The Mysterious Author of "Rutledge."

A popular novel by a southern writer published by Mr. J. C. Derby was "Rutledge," which made a stir equalled by few novels today. This novel also met with a rebuff when it first came north, and was rejected by Messrs. Harper. The story is a strange one, the name of the heroine never being mentioned in it. An uncle of the author, Mr. Weeks, brought the manuscript to Mr. Derby, and said that the author did not wish to be known. Mr. Derby replied that he never published a book without knowing who wrote it, and that he must decline the manuscript on such terms. Mr. Weeks then offered to publish it at his own expense if Mr. Derby would put his imprint on it. This he declined to do. So a meeting was arranged, and Mr. Derby met Miss Miriam Coles. The question of the day was: "Who is the author of 'Rutledge?'" and everybody was eager to hear the answer. Mr. Derby, who has a keen appreciation of the humorous, got the editors of Vanity Fair to announce that in a certain number they would publish a portrait of the author of "Rutledge." Expectation was on tip-toe. The number appeared, and there stood the graceful figure of a lady outlined against the page; but, alas! the face was covered with a veil!

Work Will Tell.

(Anthony Trollope's Autobiography.)

My own experience tells me that a man can always do the work for which his brain is fitted if he will give himself the habit of regarding his work as a normal condition of his life. I therefore venture to advise young men who look forward to authorship as the business of their lives, even when they propose that the authorship shall be of the highest class known, to avoid enthusiastic rushes with their pens, and to seat themselves at their desks day by day as though they were lawyers' clerks, and so let them sit until the allotted task shall be accomplished.

NEED'S SUGGESTION.

(Louise R. Smith in St. Nicholas.)

"Where did you buy her, mamma?"

"Asked 3-year-old Ned of me.

As he leaned over the dainty cradle His 'new little sister' to see.

"An angel brought her, darling."

I answered, and he smiled, Then softly bent his curly head, And kissed the sleeping child.

But a sudden change came over him, And he said, "If I'd been you, While I was about it, mamma, I'd have bought the angel, too!"

The Wardrobe of the Noble Roman.

It is surprising that the apparel of the Greeks and Romans so long maintained its simplicity of form. The primitive dress of both nations was a simple tunic, falling from the shoulders to the feet. Above this there was afterward worn a shorter tunic coming to the waist, and to this was added an outer cloak or tunic for out-door wear or for journeys. The shape of these garments permitted several to be worn, one over the other, when the severity of the weather required. Each of them had its reason for being, and they were all simplicity itself in form and material.

When Rome became luxurious, they were sometimes expensively ornamented with gold, jewels, and embroidery, yet their ancient cut was but slightly modified from the earliest period. Collars and cravats were to the noble Roman an unknown barbarism. Even when the tailor gave his tunic shape he left the neck bare, showing the fine way in which the head was set upon the shoulders. For this reason, as well as because the outer tunic, or toga, showed striking outlines of the figure, statuesque attitudes were easy, and no sculptor had to go far to find models for Jupiter, Apollo, or Antinous. There was little to be considered in this mode of dress besides the cut of the tunic.

The Roman might wear a helmet and gauntlets in war time, but gloves were not for his hands in time of peace, nor did he wear hat or cap, except when he went on a journey, which was not often. Sandals fastened with thongs, covered part of his foot and ankle, but stockings were effeminate, and he left their use to his wife and daughter. Shirt, in the modern sense, he had not, and to have increased his manly limits in close-fitting pantaloons would have been an insult to his personal freedom. Yet each separate portion of ancient dress contained the germ of an article of modern apparel. The inner tunic corresponded remotely with the shirt, the shorter one above it survives in the modern vest, while the outer tunic is faintly represented by the coat. When a Roman wished to protect his neck he drew the folds of his toga closer about it, and sometimes threw the garment over his head when the sun or rain was troublesome, after the manner of an Arab burmuse.

Wendell Phillips' Reminiscences of Fanny Kemble.

Some time since it was my good fortune to be present at a private luncheon when Wendell Phillips was the only other guest. The great orator was in the best of spirits, talking, as few men can talk, of things past, present and future. Some chat of theatrical matters started him upon reminiscences of the days of Fanny Kemble.

"We saved all our money," he said, "to buy tickets. I was in the law school, and some of my friends sold everything they could lay hands on, books, clothing or whatever came first, to raise funds. Then we walked in from Cambridge; we could not afford to ride, when tickets to see Fanny Kemble were to be bought. I went nineteen nights running to see her, Sundays, of course, excepted. After the play we used to assemble where the Parker house is now—it was the rear entrance to the Tremont theatre—then to see her come out. She would be so muffled up that we could not even see her figure, but we used to find great satisfaction in seeing her walk by on the arm of her escort up to the Tremont house. Then we would give three student cheers for her and walk out to Cambridge to bed."

"Such audiences as she had, too! If you'd put a cap sheaf down over the theatre, you would have covered about all Boston had to boast of in the way of culture and learning—Webster and Everett and Story. Judge Story used to be so enthusiastic that he'd talk about her all the time of the lecture. Next morning he'd say, 'Phillips—or somebody else, as the case might be—were you at the theatre last night? Well, what did you think of the performance?' I said to him once: 'Judge Story, you come of Puritan ancestors. How do you reconcile all this theatregoing with their teachings?' 'I don't try to reconcile it,' he answered, striking his hands together, 'I only thank God I'm alive in the same era with such a woman!'"

Wilkie Collins' Rheumatism.

Wilkie Collins writes most of his novels with his own hand, but now and then rheumatic gout gives him such pain that he cannot hold a pen, and then he employs an amanuensis. The greater part of "The Moonstone" was dictated, and Mr. Collins says it is the only one of his works which he has never read. The recollection of the agony he suffered while dictating it deters him. "For a long time, while that book was writing," he says, "I had the utmost difficulty in getting an amanuensis who would go on with his work without interrupting himself to sympathize with me. I am much like a beast in many ways—if I am in pain, I must howl; and, as I lay in the bed in the corner yonder, I would often break forth in a yell of anguish. Then my amanuensis would urge me to compose myself and not to write any more. Between the paragraphs I would go along nicely enough, having in my mind just what I wanted to say, and these interruptions would drive me mad. Finally a young girl, not more than 17, offered to help me, and I consented that she should, in case she was sure she could let me howl and cry out in my pain while she kept her place at the table. She did it, too, and 'The Moonstone' finally came to an end. But I never read it—never."

Old Rags for Glucose.

Sugar is now manufactured in Germany from old rags. The rags are treated with sulphuric acid, and converted into dextrine. This is treated with a milk of lime, and is then subjected to a new bath of sulphuric acid, which converts it into glucose. The glucose obtained by this process is identical with that of commerce, and may be used in the same way for confections, ices, etc