

and drank with a gusto such as the best-flavored champagne had never wooed from a palate formerly too delicate and fastidious to be pleased with the nectar of the immortals themselves, now appreciating with exquisite enjoyment the strongest liquors, the most acrid tobacco, nay, the Irish stew itself, cooked by a private soldier at a camp fire, savory and delicious, if glutinous with grease and reeking of onions.

"Heavy business the night before last," said a young Guardsman with a beautiful girlish face, and a pair of uncommonly dirty hands garnished with costly rings—a lad that looked as if he ought to be still at school, but uniting the cool courage of a man with the mischievous light-hearted spirits of a boy. "Couldn't get a wink of sleep from them at any time—never knew 'em so restless. Tell you what Colonel, 'rats leave a falling house'; it's my belief there's something up now, else why were we all relieved at twelve o'clock instead of our regular twenty-four hours in the trenches? Good job for me, for I breakfasted with the General and a precious blow out he gave me. Turkey, my boys! and cherry brandy out of a shaving-pot! Do you call that nothing?"

"Were you in the advanced trenches?" inquired Ropsley, stopping our young friend's gastronomic recollections; "and did you see poor—killed?"

The lad's face fell in an instant; it was with a saddened and altered voice that he replied,

"Poor Charlie! yes, I was close to him when he was hit. You know it was his first night in the trenches, and he was like a boy out of school. Well the beggars made a sortie, you know on the left of our right attack; they couldn't have chosen a worse place; and he and I were with the light company when we drove them back. The men behaved admirably, Colonel: and poor Charlie was so delighted, not being used to it you know, proceeded the machine, with the gravity of a veteran, 'that it was impossible to keep him within bounds.—He had a revolver (that wouldn't go off, by the way), and he had filled a soda-water bottle with powder and bullets and odd bits of iron, like a sort of mimic shell. Well, this thing burst in his hand and deuced near blew his arm off, but it only made him keener. When the Russians retired he actually ran out in front and threw stones at them. I tried all I could to stop him. (The lad's voice was getting husky now.) Well Colonel, it was bright moonlight, and I saw a Russian private take a regular 'pot shot' at poor Charley. He hit him just below the waist-belt; and we dragged him into the trenches, and there he—he died. Colonel, this 'baccy of yours is very strong. I'll just walk into the air for a moment, if you'll excuse me. I'll be back directly.' So he rose and walked out, with his face turned from us all; and though there was nothing to be ashamed of in the weakness, I think not one of us but knew he had gone away to have his 'cry' out, and liked him all the better for his mock manliness and his feeling heart.

Ere he came back again the bugles were sounding for afternoon parade. Orderly corporals were running about with small slips of paper in their hands, the men were falling in, and the fresh relief, so diminished every four-and-twenty hours, was again being got ready for the work of death in the trenches.

(To be continued.)

A CARPET AGAINST A FRIEND'S LIFE.

"CAN you spare me a hundred dollars, Edward? We want a new carpet very much; and the young wife gave the half blush that always accompanies a request for money, even in the best regulated families.

"I can hardly spare it, Jane; but as you have set your heart upon it, why I suppose I must."

The young wife looked with rapture upon the shining gold pieces.

"A hundred dollars," said she to herself.—"How rich it makes me feel! It seems a great deal to pay for a carpet, but gold is worth gold, as the old saying is, and one good purchase is worth a dozen poor ones. I'll buy one of the finest and most beautiful Brussels."

Afternoon came—the babe was laid asleep in his little cradle, and the maid received a scroll of charges to linger by its side every moment till the darling woke up. Jane, flushed with eager anticipation, looked her prettiest, and, throwing her mantilla over her handsome shoulders, she was just hurrying away, when a loud ring at the door brought out a very pettish "oh, dear!" at the unexpected intrusion.

"Oh! Jane—dear Jane!" and a pale young creature sat panting on the sofa. "We are in such trouble! Can you help us? Do you think we could borrow a hundred dollars from your husband? Couldn't you get it for us?—You know you said I might always rely on you when trouble came; and poor Charles expects every moment to be arrested; and he is so ill!"

"Dear, dear!" said Jane, her good heart suddenly contracting. "Edward told me only this morning, not to ask him for any money for three months; and she gathered her purse up tightly in her handkerchief. "I'm sure, if I—only—could oblige you, I would; but I expect Edward is really pushed. Can't you get it elsewhere? have you tried?"

"Yes," answered her friend, despondingly, "I

have tried everywhere. People know that Charles is ill and cannot pay up immediately. Mr J—— knows our circumstances, yet he insists upon that money. Oh, it is so hard, it is so hard!"

Her piteous voice, and the big tears running like rain down her pallid cheeks, almost unnerved Jane's selfishness. But that carpet—that beautiful carpet she had promised herself so long, and so often been disappointed of its possession, that she could not give it up. She knew her husband's heart—and that he would urge her to self denial. No, she would not see him—if she did, it was all over with the carpet.

"Well," said her friend in a desponding voice, rising to go. "I'm sorry you can't help me; I know you would if you could, and it is something to know that, but I go back with a heavy heart. Good morning, dear Jane; I hope you will never know what it is to want and suffer."

How handsome the new carpet looked as the sun streamed in on its wreath of flowers, its fawn, blue and crimson, its soft velvety richness, and how very proud felt Jane at the lavish praises of her neighbors. It was a bargain, too; she had saved thirty dollars in its purchase, and bought the pair of elegant vases for the window recess.

"I declare," said her husband, "this looks like comfort; but it spoils all my pleasure to think of poor Charley Somers. The poor fellow is dead!"

Jane gave a sharp scream and the flush faded from her face.

"Yes, that rascally J——! For the paltry sum of one hundred dollars, he arrested Chas., who ruptured a blood vessel, and lived scarcely an hour afterwards. You know he has been very weak and ill this long time."

"And Mary?" issued from Jane's bloodless lips.

"She has a dead child, and they tell me her life is despaired of. Why on earth didn't she send for me? I could easily have spared the money for that purpose. If it had stripped me of the last dollar they should have had it. Poor fellow—poor Mary!"

"And I might have saved it—all!" shrieked Jane, sinking upon her knees on the rich carpet. "Oh, Edward, will God forgive me for my heartlessness? Mary did call here, and I—I had the whole sum in my very hand, and coldly turned her away. Oh, my God, forgive me!"

In the very agony of grief, poor Jane would receive no comfort. In vain her husband strove to soothe her; she would not hear a word in extenuation of her selfish conduct.

"I shall never forget poor Mary's tears; I shall never forget her sad voice; they will haunt me to my dying day! O, take it away—that hateful carpet! I have purchased it with the death of my dearest friend; how could I be so cruel. I shall never be happy again, never—never."

Years have passed since then, and Mary and her husband lie together under the green sod of the churchyard. Jane has gray hairs mixed with the light brown tresses; but she lives in a home of splendour, and none know her but to bless her. There is a Mary, a gentle Mary in her household, dear to her as her own sweet children. She is the orphan child of those who have rested side by side for ten long years.

Edward is rich, but prosperity has not hardened his heart. His hand never tires of giving out bounty to the poor, and Jane is the guardian angel of the needy. "The New Carpet," long since old, is sacredly preserved as a memento of sorrowful but penitential hours; and many a weary heart owes to its silent influence, the prosperity that has turned want's wilderness into an Eden of plenty.

NEW WORKS.

From Help's Spanish Conquest in America.

ANCIENT MEXICO.

THE especial attributes of the most beautiful cities in the world were here conjoined; and that which was the sole boast of many a world-renowned name, formed but one of the charms of this enchantress among cities. Well might the rude Spanish soldier find no parallel but in the imaginations of his favourite romance.—Like Granada, encircled, but not frowned upon, by mountains; fondled and adorned by water, like Venice; as grand in its buildings as Babylon of old; and rich with gardens, like Damascus—the great city of Mexico was at that time the fairest in the world, and has never since been equalled. Like some rare women of choicest parentage, the descendant of two royal houses far apart, who joins the soft, subtle, graceful beauty of the south, to the fair, blue-eyed, blushing beauty of the north, and sits enthroned in the hearts of all beholders—so sat Mexico upon the waters, with a diadem of gleaming towers, a fair expanse of flowery meadows on her breast, a circle of mountains as her zone, and, not unwomanlike, rejoicing in the reflection of her beautiful self from the innumerable mirrors which were framed by her streets, her courts, her palaces, and her temples. Neither was hers a beauty, like that of many cities, which gratifies the eye at a distance, but which diminishes at each advancing step of the beholder until it absolutely degenerates into squalidity. She was beautiful when seen from afar;

she still maintained her beauty when narrowly examined by the impartial and scrupulous traveller. She was the city, not only of a great King, but of an industrious and thriving people. Mexico was situated in a great salt lake communicating with a fresh water lake. It was approached by three principal causeways of great breadth. There was an aqueduct which communicated with the mainland, consisting of two separate lines of work in masonry, in order that if one should need repair, the supply of water for the city might not be interrupted.—The streets were the most various in construction that have ever been seen in any city in the world. Some were of dry land, others wholly of water; and others, again, had pathways of pavement, while in the centre there was room for boats. The foot passengers could talk with those in the boats. It may be noticed that a city so constructed requires a circumspect and polite population. Palaces are common place things to describe, but the abodes of the Mexican Kings were not like the petty palaces of Northern Princes. One of the most observant of those Spaniards who first saw these wonders speaks of a palace of Montezuma's in which there was a room where 3000 persons could be well accommodated, and on the terrace like roof of which a splendid tournament might have been given. There was a market place twice as large as that of the city of Salamanca, surrounded with porticoes, in which there was room for 60,000 people to buy and sell. The great temple of the city maintained its due proportion of magnificence. The sacred enclosure was in itself a town, and Cortes, who seldom stops in his terrible narrative to indulge in praise or in needless description, says 'that no human tongue could explain the grandeur and the peculiarities of this temple. Cortes uses the word 'temple,' but it might rather be called a sacred city, as it contained many temples, and the abodes of all the priests and virgins who ministered at them, also a university and an arsenal. It was enclosed by lofty stone walls, and was entered by four portals, surmounted by fortresses. No less than twenty truncated pyramids, probably eased with porphyry, rose up from within that enclosure. High over them all towered the great temple dedicated to the God of war. This, like the rest, was a truncated pyramid, with ledges round it, and with two small towers upon the highest surface, in which were placed the images of the great god of war (Huitzilopochtli) and of the principal deity of all (Tezcatlipuk), the Mexican Jupiter.

From Gautier's Jettatura.

A SILENT MORNING AT POMPEII.

THE dead city wakes not at dawn like the living, and, though it has now half divested itself of the ashy robe that has clothed it for ages, the retreating night leaves it yet slumbering on its funeral couch. Tired to death, the tourists who saw it yesterday yet lingered in their beds, and the morn that illumines the mummy city shines there upon no human face. Strange is it to see by her rosy and azure light this carcass of a city death-stricken in the midst of its pleasures, its labors, and its civilization, and which has not undergone the tardy dissolution of an ordinary ruin. You stand expecting that the masters of these perfect houses will come forth in their Greek or Roman dress; you listen for the roll of the chariot whose track is still upon the pavement you look for the reveller to re-enter the tavern where his cup has marked a ring upon the counter. We walk in the past as though we were dreaming of it—we glance at the corners of the streets, and there an inscription in red letters announces the spectacle of the day. Only the day has gone by more than seventeen hundred years since.

WORK.

THERE is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in idleness alone there is perpetual despair. Work, ever so mammonish or mean, is in communication with nature; the real desire to get work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth. Consider how, even in the meanest sort of labor, the whole soul of man is composed into a kind of real harmony the instant he sets himself at work.—Doubt, desire, sorrow, remorse, indignation, despair itself, all these, like hell-dogs, lie beleaguering the soul of the poor day-worker, as of every man; but he bends himself with free valor against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring afar off into their caves. Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness.—*Carlyle.*

TIME'S CHANGES.—In ancient days the celebrated precept was "know thyself;" in modern times it has been supplanted by the far more fashionable maxim, "know thy neighbour and everything about him."

REMARK BY A DISGUSTING OLD BACHELOR.—There is one art which the use of these unmanageable crinolines is likely to teach the women of England, and that is—Petticoat Government.

Communication.

Matapedia, December 10, 1857.

Mr Editor,

I shall now drop the mail subject at present, and turn your attention to another extract from Contractor's letter—"But Mr Editor should the Courier ever travel with Her Majesty's Mails by the new line of road on the Matapedia, he will require harder teeth than the dogs to protect him, he will require good pistols and light pockets. As pocket books have gone astray on that route before now, not from the courier, they have only lately had the honour of one only from old Wyeman of three score and ten which could not easily defend themselves from the outscourings of the earth."

This is copied verbatim:—I have correctly noted the foregoing extract, letter for letter, point for point, capital for capital, and I offer it to the public as a sample of some of the sublime lingo that exists among us at this advanced period of the world's history; and if this be a sample from those who boast of their breeding and bringing up, what may be expected from the "outscourings of the earth." I now ask any schoolmaster; I ask any school boy; I ask any ignoramus in the land, to read the above extract over, and request him to say if he can decipher what Contractor wishes to be at. I will try and explain it. Contractor says that "pocket books have gone astray on that route before now, not from the courier, they have only lately had the honour of one only from old Wyeman of three score and ten which could not easily defend themselves from the outscourings of the earth." Now Mr Contractor, I wish to know, and I think the public would like to know, whether this honour which was bestowed "from old Wyeman" was in the shape of a pocket book or courier; if in the shape of the former, it could not have gone astray, but if your meaning be that of a Courier, then it would be advisable to state in your next "epistle of the Times," which of the "Wyemans the outscourings of the earth" may apply to when they are in want of a mail, for it must be quite evident to the most stupid that there are more "Wyemans" than one, and more mails to grant than one, for "one only" was granted. Why did you not make it more plain, Mr Contractor? Did any qualms of conscience strike you? or were you too delicate or tender-hearted to inflict a wound, and by that means jumbled your language up in such a manner that no mortal can understand you, except your private or particular friends? One thing is plain, Sir, that is if anything is plain that you have written, that "pocket books have gone astray," which if it means anything, it must be inferred that a trade has been carried on in "pocket books," for it is not in the singular but in the plural number, signifying more than one, and as no person could be foolish enough to suppose that pocket books have the power to walk away and lose themselves, the natural inference to be drawn is, that some ruffian or ruffians exist in the land who make a habit of stealing or robbing pocket books. Assuming the foregoing conclusions to be correct, let me ask you, Sir, did you, or any of your brood, ever strive to ferrit out this pocket book robbery? did you ever call for "a court of enquiry," to have the felon or felons taken up and punished by the law? were there no magistrates in the land, or any person possessing a spark of philanthropic feeling to step forward and protect an "old Wyeman of three score years and ten which could not easily defend themselves from the outscourings of the earth?" or is it that you wished to show that we have but a shadow of law reigning in our midst? or was it that you feared to institute an enquiry and dreaded an investigation? lest it might, after all, turn out to be without foundation, and thereby robbing you, and the like of you, of a sweet morsel to role under your tongue, with pleasing gusto, which you value more than gold, yea, even than much fine gold. If Sir, you believed your pocket book story why were you so modest or neglectful of your country's welfare as not to have published at least the name or names of the person or persons connected with the said pocket book story, together with their whereabouts? The public has a right to expect this much at your hands, so that honest persons might be on their guard. Why did you mix it up with pistols, dogs teeth, old Wyeman, couriers and a number of other things, that no living person could comprehend, not knowing anything of your precious secret? Were you ashamed or afraid to do so? perhaps both; but Sir, I shall help you to make it a little more plain, although it may cost you a bruised head and extract some of the stings from your serpentine associates, who run about under cover, hissing and showing their fangs to people as they pass them by, yet taking good care not to act the fool as you have done, come out, and show yourselves to be knocked on the head.

Why, Sir, did you not write something like the following—that Alexander Fraser, of the Matapedia, was blamed for robbing old Mrs Harris of a pocket book, with a large sum of money in it, and that you, and many such as you, believed it to be true, or tried hard to make yourselves believe it, and racked your brains by ingenious stories and plausible reasoning, to make every credulous person believe it also.—Something like the above would be the plain English of the story, and would have been understood by the most illiterate. Yet, bad and blundering as your charge was made, my heart leaped with joy when I glanced my eye over your pocket book insinuation; hence the burst of feeling at the commencement of my letters.