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DEAR SIR:
We beg to acknowledge receipt of your favor of the 11th, enclosing check No. 31 for \$25.00, the same being in full payment of our claim under policy No. 7, covering insurance on our own Gray Deer Horse, which died on the night of the 9th inst.

Correspondence Solicited.
OFFICE AT THE BANK OF ALAMANCE

A MAKER OF HISTORY

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM,
Author of "The Master Mummer," "A Prince of Slinery," "Mysterious Mr. Sablin," "Anna the Adventuress," Etc.

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Duncombe rose slowly to his feet and, summing a waiter, paid his bill. The man produced a second one, dated a few days back, for a large amount. "What is the meaning of this?" he asked. "I do not owe you anything."

"Monsieur desire?" he asked. "I do not owe you anything. I promised to pay the next time. I will call the manager."

"I want the address of a young lady named Merrimillion, Flossie, I think, they call her," Duncombe said. "Thirty-one Rue Pigalle," the man answered promptly. "But she should be here within an hour. She never misses."

Duncombe thanked him and hailed a carriage. "Shall I give mademoiselle any message?" the man asked confidentially. "I am going to call for her," Duncombe answered. "If I do not find her I will return."

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Duncombe dared do no more than cast a single horrified glance at it.

"Want you! Spencer, do you mean it?" Duncombe exclaimed. "Want you! Why, there's no one I'd rather interest in the affair than you."

"Well, I can promise you my interest is pretty well excited already," Spencer answered. "I'm with you right along. Now tell me where you've been this evening and what's happened."

Duncombe recounted the evening's events. His new ally listened and afterward smoked for a moment or two in silence. "It is simply wonderful," he declared.

"The whole secret service system of Paris is working to cover up the traces of the boy and Guy Foyton of course are everywhere and their organization perfect. The first one of their creatures who tries to break away is Mile. Flossie. The poor little fool lived for only a few hours afterward. Your bribe was high, but she ought to have known better."

"Why?" Duncombe asked. "Why, of course! The theft of her poor little jewels was only a bit. It was the matter of fact her murderer would have been perfectly safe if he had strolled into the nearest police station and made his report. She was killed because she was going to give you certain information."

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed. "Tell me, Spencer, who or what can be at the back of all this? Guy Foyton was simply a healthy minded, not over intelligent young Saxon, unambitious and passionately fond of his home and his country life. He had no friends over here, no interests, no ties of any sort. He was abroad for the first time of his life. He regarded foreign countries and people simply with the tolerant curiosity of the untraveled Britisher. He appears in Paris for one night and disappears, and forthwith all the genius of French espionage seems to have combined to cover up his traces. It is the same with his sister, only as she came afterward it was evidently on his account that she also is drawn into the mystery. What can be the meaning of it, Spencer?"

"My young friend," Spencer said, "I will be frank with you. I have not the least idea of all this, though you had better not abandon your inquiries altogether. I will put you up at the Cercle Anglais. It will serve to pass the time, and you may gain information at the most unlikely places. And now good-bye."

that they left together. "Are you going my way, baron?" he asked as they stepped into the Place Vendome.

"I was going to the Cercle Anglais," the baron answered. "Do you belong?" "I am up for a month's membership, but I am not elected yet," Duncombe answered.

"Then you shall come in as my guest," the baron declared. "You are exceedingly kind," Duncombe answered. "I wonder whether I might presume still further upon your good nature and ask you a question."

"The asking," the baron murmured, "involves nothing." "You bear, I am told, an honorable name, and you are well received in society. Why do you associate with murderers and thieves in that hell of a cafe where I saw you first?"

"My friend," he said, "I seek always the life amusing, and I find it there." "The asking," the baron murmured, "involves nothing."

"You know so much," Duncombe said. "I have no doubt that you know the one thing which I would give years of my life to be satisfied about."

"The boy's dark eyes were fixed steadily upon his." "Sir George," he said, "there is nothing which I can possibly say to you. My warning has been exceedingly foolish, but after all if I can persuade you to leave Paris I shall have done no great harm. As for the cards—well, I must plead guilty to weakness there."

I have not the slightest objection to taking the life of a man who is making a nuisance of himself, but his honor or I think one should not tamper with. May I offer you a cigarette? Well, Louis, what luck?"

The baron had strolled into the room and was sitting on the arm of a chair. "It will be all right directly," the baron answered. "We have three, and old D'Arcon has telegraphed that he will be here in five minutes."

"I was really very careless of me," he said, "but I completely forgot that I had an engagement at the hotel at 6 o'clock. I am afraid that I shall not be able to stop."

The baron glanced quickly at his young friend. There was nothing whatever to be learned, though, from his pale, boyish face. His own countenance had darkened for the moment, but he recovered his composure immediately.

"As you will," he answered carelessly. "Perhaps you can drop in later. Come and dine, will you, at half past 8?"

"I am much obliged to you, baron," Duncombe said. "I cannot accept your invitation. I am a lover of plain speaking, so I will not plead a previous engagement. But the one thing I want from you, the thing which I have almost a right to demand, you will not give. I do not feel, therefore, that any more than ordinary intercourse is possible between us."

The baron bowed gravely. "My dear Sir George," he said, "I am answered. I wish I could drive out of your mind that extraordinary hallucination relative to my supposed knowledge of your young English friend. It is impossible. Very good. I shall look forward to a time, Sir George, when we may meet on a better footing."

Duncombe left the hotel with the recollection of that curiously ironic smile fresh in his mind.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Plaster of Paris Bananas. Bunches of bananas that are absolutely unfit for food hang out in front of the wholesale produce commission houses. Some of them have remained there until they have grown rusty with age.

"Couldn't get a finer looking bunch than that," said one of the dealers the other day, "even if it is plaster of Paris. We had to get rid of the real ones at a sign, but the peddlers who came down here had a way of pulling one of two out of the bunch that happened to be hanging there on the hook. The small boys, too, had a way of making a grab for a banana or two. By the time the bunch was on duty under the awning for an hour it was no longer presentable to the aesthetic sense. So we began to cultivate the practice of selling the whole bunch, which is not quite so palatable, but just as good for advertising. And even at that some youngsters in his haste will grab plaster of Paris fruit and get away with it before he realizes that he has made off with something bad for his digestion."—New York Herald.

LEAF BLIGHT.
Frequently Causes Much Damage to the Strawberry Crop. Strawberry leaf blight frequently causes great damage to the strawberry crop, as explained by a grower in Rural New Yorker, who says that it makes its appearance about the time the fruit sets and begins its destructive ravages as the berries begin to ripen. It first manifests itself by turning the leaves a brownish red; it will then attack the stems and hails, cutting off the supply of nourishment from the berries; the calyx begins to wither and dry up, and the berries become soft and insipid and are of little value.

As the Berry Season Advances. It usually grows more destructive as the berry season advances. The conditions conducive to the development of the disease appear to be a general weakness of the plants. This may be brought about from various causes, such as old and worn-out beds, impoverished soil, plants with a heavy set of fruit with insufficient nourishment, plants exposed during winter without protection or unmulched beds during hot dry weather. Any one of these conditions will have a tendency to weaken the constitution of the plants, making them an easy prey to rust, blight and other diseases.

Kinds Susceptible to Blight. During the time we have been engaged in growing strawberries we have found some varieties so constitutionally strong in their vegetative parts and so vigorous in their fruit organs that they will do well almost anywhere, while other sorts are constitutionally weak in foliage, yet strong in fruit bearing propensities. They set a great quantity of berries with little or no fruit to mature the fruit. Such varieties are very susceptible to blight and should not be cultivated except by those who are well acquainted with their natural requirements. It requires a healthy, vigorous foliage to digest the various plant foods found in the different soils, and probably the safest method of protecting the plants from blight and other fungous diseases is to conserve moisture by thorough cultivation while the plants are growing, protecting them well during the winter with a liberal mulch of horse manure. This material if left on the plant during the summer prevents the escape of moisture at a time it is most needed, and it keeps the soil cool—in fact, it is to the bearing bud what the cultivation is to the newly planted field.

THE LINCOLN PLUM.
A Variety of Rare Beauty and Excellent For Market. The Lincoln plum has shown is described by the Ohio experiment station as being a variety of rare beauty and excellent for market, one of the best second early plums; fruits free from rot in some seasons; first blossoms May 7, full bloom May 19, last bloom May 15; in full fruit Aug. 16. Fruit large to very large, roundish oblong, blunt at apex, smooth; flesh green long and strong and set at an angle; nature distinct, slightly depressed; color light greenish yellow, over-spreading with a beautiful shade of crimson; dots many, very minute and indistinct; bloom, thin; flesh light yellow, firm; pit rather large, free; quality only fair; tree only a moderate grower, but healthy, and forms a round, shapely head; foliage very luxuriant; leaves large; quite prolific, but not so much so as to require thinning of the fruit.

Canada possesses no general register with a recognized standard of qualification for the medical profession. Each province possesses the right to establish its own licensing authority, and medical men qualified and registered in one province are not allowed to practice in an adjoining province.

Science by its anatomical spokesmen has long since exploded the attractive but fallacious creed of the phrenologist. It is now well known that no cranium, not even that which inclosed the mighty intellect of Sophocles, reveals on its outer aspect any certain signs of the cerebral development within it. The inner table alone expresses in its form the characters of its evolution.—London Lancet.

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The children cannot possibly have good health unless the bowels are in proper condition. Correct any constipation by giving small laxative doses of Ayer's Pills. All respectable druggists, grocers, and dealers in medicine sell Ayer's Pills.

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Are due to indigestion. Ninety-nine of every one hundred people who have heart trouble can remember when it was simple indigestion. It is a scientific fact that all cases of heart disease, not organic, are not only treatable, but are the direct result of indigestion. All food taken into the stomach which fails of perfect digestion ferments and swells the stomach, puffing it up against the heart. This interferes with the action of the heart, and in the course of time the delicate but vital organ becomes diseased.

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