THE BLUE RIDGE BLADE.

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THE OLD HOME.

The wild bird sings and the rivulet runs
So cheerily round the spot
Where the peaceful shades of the towering hills
Fall dim on my mother's cot.
The windows are low and the thatch is low,
And its old stone walls are gray—
Oh! I see it, I love it, where'er I go,
That old home far away.

The little clock ticks on the kitchen wall
To tell the passing hours,
And the woodbine is climbing round the cot,
With its sweetly scented flowers.
And the old arm chair, so cosy and low,
Where mother did knit each day—
Oh! I see it, I love it, where'er I go,
That old home far away.

My mother, I see her before me now,
Asleep in that old arm chair
With the sunshine tinging her wrinkled brow
That was once so smooth and fair;
Her crimpled border, as white as the snow,
And her dark brown hair turned gray—
Oh! I see it, I love it, where'er I go,
That old home far away.

And there's the white cow on its homeward path
As it comes so quiet along;
And the little maid with pail in her hand
Is singing that dear old song.
And the frolicsome lambs in that barnyard
Are gathering round to play—
Oh! I see it, I love it, where'er I go,
That old home far away.

Not all the pleasures the world can give,
Nor riches of land or sea,
Or the wealth or rank of earth's proud lords
Can e'er estrange from me
The roof that cover'd my dear mother's head,
With the humble floor of clay—
Oh! I see it, I love it, where'er I go,
That old home far away.

But alas! she has gone where all must go,
For we all shall pass away—
Yea! even the cot that I love so well
Will crumble and decay;
For this earth is only a resting place,
Its joys are ours for a day—
All my pleasure of life has center'd in
That old home far away.

In the Gloaming.

"You are the best judge of your own heart, but I do not think your future promises much happiness as the wife of Godfrey Hill. Remember who and what he is."

These were the words over which Alice Hill pondered as she walked slowly through the grove at Bellows Falls. It was her favorite walk, when she wished for solitude, though it lay at some distance from her home, the stately house that crowned an incline stretch of ground overlooking the village.

Remember who and what he is!

Mrs. Hill had said these words very slowly, and with due emphasis, only a few hours before, when Alice had read to her a letter in which Godfrey Hill had asked her to be his wife.

Who was he, then! He was the second cousin of Alice, a man of about twenty-seven, who had been brought up by his grandfather in the house upon Bellows Heights, and had supposed his inheritance of house and fortune assured.

Alice and her widowed mother had never entered the stately house while old Mr. Hill lived, but had supported themselves by keeping a school for young children, after Godfrey's cousin, Alice's father, had died.

It had never crossed their wildest imagination that the old gentleman at Bellows Falls would remember them by even a trifling legacy, and they were inclined to think themselves the victims of a practical joke, when they received the lawyer's letter informing them that Alice was the heiress of the entire estate of John Hill, of Bellows Falls.

It was like a dream, to come to the splendid home, to know there were to be no more weary struggles for daily bread, to wander through magnificent rooms and extensive grounds with the deliciously novel sensation of ownership.

And it must be confessed that Alice at first thought but little of the dispossessed heir.

But he introduced himself soon as a cousin, and visited the house as a welcome guest.

For, in answer to the second clause of Mrs. Hill's question, what was he? Alice could have answered truly that he was the most fascinating man she had ever seen.

And Alice Hill, though a bread winner in the busy world, had moved in good society, having aristocratic family connections both on her father's and mother's side.

She was no novice to be won by a merely courtly manner, but she had never met a man whose intelleet was so broad, whose courtesy was so winning whose face was so handsome as were those of Godfrey Hill.

And yet there was a letter in her writing desk written by the dead man whose heiress she was, warning her that, "because he is unworthy, because he has betrayed the trust I put in him, I have disinherited Godfrey Hill."

There was no specific charge, no direct accusation, but the young heiress was warned against her cousin.

Yet, in the many long conversations the two had held together, Godfrey Hill had endeavored to convince his fair cousin that his grandfather had been influenced by false friends to believe statements to his discredit utterly untrue.

He had almost convinced her that he was an innocent victim to unfortunate circumstances, a victim to a mistaken sense of honor.

She was young, naturally trustful, and her heart was free; so it is not wonderful that Alice Hill was inclined to restore the disinherited man to his estate by accepting the offer of his heart and hand. Absorbed in her reflections, Alice did not notice that clouds were gathering, till a sudden summer shower broke with violence above the tree tops.

The rain came through the branches suddenly, drenching through her thin black dress, and she ran quickly to the nearest house for shelter.

The nearest refuge proved to be the cottage where Mrs. Mason, who did the washing for the great house, lived with her daughter Lizzie, one of the village beauties.

There was great bustling about when Alice presented herself at the door.

"Mercy sakes! You're half drowned," the old woman cried, hurrying her unexpected guest to the kitchen fire. "You're wet to the shin, dearie. Now ain't it a blessing there's a whole washing in the basket to go home? You can go into Lizzie's room and change your clothes, and I'll do up them you've got on. Dear, dear! your hat is just ruined—crape won't bear wetting—and you've no shawl. You must just put on a dress of Lizzie's to go home in. It's nearly dark anyway."

"Where is Lizzie?" Alice asked.

"Sewing at Mrs. Gorham's, dearie. She will be coming home soon. I allers make that a part of the bargain that she's to be let home afore dark, and it gets dark now by six—fall days are shorter than summer ones. So she'll be home soon. It's clearing up."

It was clearing up, and it was also growing dark, so promising to send home the borrowed dress in the morning, Alice started for home.

She smiled at herself as she stood before the cottage mirror, for she had not worn a gay color since her father's death five years before.

Lizzie's blue dress, scarlet shawl and gay Sunday hat were sadly out of place upon the slender figure, and setting off the pale, refined face of Alice Hill.

"Dear me," said the old woman. I hope you'll soon chirk up a bit, Miss Alice, and take off your black. The old gentleman has been dead a year, now. Them roses do suit you beautiful."

Alice glanced at the staring red flowers reflected in the mirror and smiled, as she said:

"I will take great care of Lizzie's hat, Mrs. Mason. Good-by, and thank you.

It was nearly dusk, and there was a quarter of a mile to walk before home was reached, so Alice hurried through the grove where the trees had already shut out the lingering daylight.

She had tied a small veil of gay tissue over the gaudy hat, as she left the cottage, and she hoped, if she met any acquaintances, she would escape recognition.

When she was half through the grove she heard quick footsteps coming from the village, and a moment later a voice said: "You are punctual," and she was caught for a moment in Godfrey Hill's arms.

She knew his voice, and struggled to free herself, before realizing that he had mistaken her for the village beauty.

"Pooh!" he said, releasing her. "Don't put on airs, Liz. Were you going to the house?"

"Yes," she answered, faintly, indignant and yet curious, her woman's wits quickly seeing his error.

"I must go, too, before long, though I had far rather stay here in the woods with you, sweetheart."

"Your sweetheart is at the house," Alice said, trying to assume the jealous tone of an uneducated girl.

"What! That chalky-faced girl in black? Not a bit of it. Didn't I love you long before she came to take what is mine?"

And a curse followed, coupled with her own name, that thrilled Alice Hill with horror.

"But they say you will marry her," she persisted, calming her voice as well as she could.

"They say right! I will marry her, and have my own! Then, when she is dead, you shall have your old beau again, Lizzie, and come to the great house, my wife. It is only waiting a year or two."

"But she may not die!" gasped the horror-stricken girl.

"She will die! I'll have no fine lady taking what is mine—mine, I tell you. But what ails you? You are shaking as if you had an ague fit. I've talked it all over often enough before, and you never went off into such shakes! It is nothing new I'm telling you."

"But—you—would—not—murder—her?" the poor girl gasped, drawing her veil closer.

"Come now, none of that," was the rough answer; "you're not going back on me now, after all you've heard of my plans. You've sworn to keep my secrets, or I'd never have told you them. But what is the matter?"

And here Alice found herself shaken with no gentle hand, to her great indignation. But her fears overmastered her anger. Godfrey was heir-at-law to her newly acquired fortune, and if he suspected her identity, in those dark woods, she did not doubt, after what he had already said, that he would take her life.

"I am not well," she said, freeing herself from the rough grasp on her arm, "and I must hurry on. Wait for me here until I do my errand at the house and come back."

"Be quick, then," was the gruff reply.

And if she was in haste, the scoundrel might well be satisfied at the rapidity with which his companion left him.

She scarcely knew how she reached her home, tore off her borrowed finery and wrote to Godfrey Hill, declining the honor he had proposed to her, but giving no other reason for her refusal than the statement that she did not love him sufficiently.

"Mamma," she said, coming into the drawing room, "I have written to Godfrey, refusing his offer, and sent the letter to him by James. I have remembered who and what he is."

Mr. Godfrey Hill's amazement was unbounded when returning to his home, in the village hotel, to dress for his promised call upon Alice Hill, he found her note awaiting him.

But he did not renounce his hope of shaking her resolution until the next day, when he met the true Lizzie Mason in the shaded grove, and in the course of their lover-like conversation, that damsel told him who had worn her gay hat and red shawl on the previous evening.

"An' she sent a five dollar bill with the dress, because it got wet," said the girl. "An' that I call real handsome of her. Why, what ails you? you're white as chalk!"

"Nothing—nothing. You were not in the grove at all, then, yesterday?"

"No; I couldn't get off till long after dark and so I stayed all night. I knowed you'd be mad waiting for me, but I couldn't help it this time. Why—"

For her lover had started for the village without even the ceremony of a good-bye.

He lost no time, on his way, until he stood in the office of Jermyn & Jermyn, his grandfather's lawyers

White as death, with a voice hoarse and thick, he said to the older partner:

"You told me my grandfather left me ten thousand dollars, upon certain conditions."

"Quite correct. The conditions are that you leave Bellows Falls and never return to it, and that you sign a deed relinquishing all claims as heir-at-law, in case Miss Hill dies before she is of age. Mr. Hill did not draw up this paper until his will was signed and sealed, and he was reminded that he had made no stipulation for the reversion of his estate."

"Reminded by you?" was the bitter rejoinder.

"Reminded by me! He was shown the danger that you might become a suitor to the young heiress."

"Well, that danger is over. I have been a sincere suitor to the heiress, and she has refused the honor of an alliance."

"Hum!"

"So, having lost that stake, I am prepared to accept the conditions, take the ten thousand dollars, and turn my back upon Bellows Falls for life."

It was with a sense of great relief from a very urgent fear, that Alice Hill heard from her lawyer of the demand upon the estate, that made her poorer by ten thousand dollars, and removed Godfrey Hill from her path for life.

She told no one of the walk in the gloaming that had revealed to her the black treachery of the man who wooed her so gently, and had so nearly won the treasure of her young heart.

It made her shy of suitors for a long time, fearing her money was the magnet that drew them to her side; but there came a true lover at last—one she trusted and loved, and who won her for his tender, faithful wife.

And Godfrey Hill left his old home never to return.

There was no thought of revenge in Alice Hill's heart when she heard of the death of her cousin, nearly three years after his departure from Bellows Falls; but she could not restrain a fervent thought of thanksgiving, when she realized that there was no murderous thought hanging upon her possible death.

And to her relief she told her husband for the first time of that involuntary masquerade that saved her from the power of a villain.

"It was at this hour, Will," she whispered "and this is the first time since that day that I have been able to sit, without a shudder, in the gloaming."

Charmed by a Snake.

For some weeks the parents of Bertha Miller, near Mt. Vernon, Ohio, had noticed that their daughter was showing marks of declining health, evidenced by an increasing paleness and emaciation and accompanied by a melancholy mood. So marked was the change becoming that they began feeling great solicitude concerning her and consulted a physician about the matter. The physician visited the girl, but was unable to explain the cause of her decline or to render her aid. It also fell under the observation of her mother that each afternoon, about three o'clock, the girl would leave the house and remain away from one to two hours. This fact being communicated to the other parent, it was decided to watch the young lady and discover if possible the dingly on the day following when the hour had about arrived the father left the house and watched for the going of his daughter. In a few minutes the young girl was on her way through a wood and up a ravine leading from the house to a small stone quarry, some half-mile distant, reaching which she took a seat on a flat stone, under a small clump of trees, and remained sitting there quietly for several minutes, her head held in one position, and eyes evidently fixed on one spot. The father had gotten up so near by this time that he could observe all that would happen. In a few moments, to his amazement, there proceeded from the direction in which the girl was looking a snake about four feet in length, and known to him as our common blacksnake or racer. So astonished was he at the peculiar manner of his daughter and the appearance of the reptile that he remained quiet in his concealment to observe what would happen. The snake crept slowly along towards the girl until it halted close to her feet. After remaining there motionless for a minute or more and gazing fixedly into the face of the girl it slowly and stealthily began creeping toward her, and in a moment lay coiled in her lap. The girl remained perfectly motionless, apparently not the least alarmed at the presence of her visitor, but gazing intently at it. After lying in that position for a short time it slowly uncoiled, crept down to the ground and back to its hiding-place in the rocks. The girl remained sitting motionless for a considerable time, and then got up and retraced her steps to the house. On the next day the father, at the appointed time, took his gun and proceeding to the scene killed the reptile. The girl, startled at the report of the gun, sprang to her feet, but immediately recognizing her father, proceeded without further ado back home with him. She, when interrogated, could give no intelligible reason for visiting the spot, except that at a certain hour she felt strongly inclined to go and sit there. She has rapidly recovered her health, and appears in no wise affected in her mind. Experts can offer no solution to this strange proceeding, the most intelligible that the animal possessed a powerful mesmeric influence, and had so wrought upon the mind of the girl that she went automatically to the place. This, in connection with an accumulated inherited disposition to be beguiled by a serpent—transmitted from our first mother, Eve—offers the only rational explanation.

The Pyramids.

The Pyramids continue to puzzle man's ingenuity, not only as to their methods of construction, but as to the purposes for which they were built. Mr. Smyth, whose astronomical views imbued everything he looked at with his favorite science, endeavored to show that the pyramid was nothing more than an everlasting monument, with the beneficient intention of keeping forever fixed the unit of length—a sacred cubit standard. The last idea is that the pyramid is simply a cairn, and that as a cairn it will be resolved some day, and will crumble to the ground. The labor employed on the Great pyramid was equivalent to lifting 15,733,000,000 of cubic feet of stone one foot high. If accounts can be relied upon, it took 100,000 men twenty years to complete it. As a contrast, in constructing one of our earliest lines of railways there were lifted 25,000,000,000 cubic feet of material one foot high. The road was built by 20,000 men in less than five years.

The Old School-House.

It stood by itself on the outskirts of the village, and had now fallen into decay. The old porch through which we entered was broken down, and no longer the honeysuckle clambered over the sides. There was an air of gloomy desolation about the place, and the moaning doves in the trees without added to the gloomy picture. The desks and benches were still there, but covered with dust, and the spiders had hung their gray drapery over them. The teacher's table, raised on a platform, still stood, and the inkstand black and dry, had never been removed. The Bible, from whose pages the exercises of the school were always opened, was in its accustomed place, but like everything else, covered with dust and mold.

Twenty years before, when a very young boy, I had sat many a day and months coming my lessons in that school-room. It was a different place then. The warm sunlight came through the windows, and the balmy breezes crept in laden with the perfume of the flowers without. The butterflies darted in and out of the windows, and the little humming-birds hovered around the honeysuckle which clambered over the porch. The stream that dashed over its rocky bed made a weird music which mingled with the rustling of the leaves of the tall trees without.

The teacher was a pale-faced, dark, sad-eyed woman, not more than twenty-two years old, with a gentle manner that seemed almost hopeless. She had come to the village a stranger and opened the school. She called herself Mrs. Ray, and boarded with the wife of the sexton of the church. She evinced but little inclination for sociability with the villagers, and generally refused all invitations to social gatherings. She was evidently a woman of culture and refinement, accustomed to moving in polite circles; and how she ever came to drift into our quiet, little, out-of-the-way village it was hard to tell. She happened to come just at the time we needed a school, the old teacher having died, and so, in a short time, her school was full.

She was very gentle and the pupils learned to love her. Her very gentleness proved a restraining force, and the roughest boy bent readily to the rule of Mrs. Ray. It worried us, however, to see her so sad, and we noticed, too, at any unusual noise, or sudden appearing of the parents in the school-room, her dark eyes would assume an eager startled look, and her white face would turn still whiter.

Twenty years had rolled away since, as a little boy, I had gone to school to Mrs. Ray. I had left the village for the city, and now, for the first time, had come to visit the home of my childhood.

"Well, John," I said to the old sexton, "let us take a walk now to the school-room."

"Ah, sir, many is the day any one has been there. It is never opened now, and is fast falling to decay," said John.

"And Mrs. Ray, John; what became of the pale, dark-eyed teacher? Her story?"

I shook my head.

"Ah, sir, that was a terrible thing. We had to shut up the school-room because the children refused to go there, and so we built a new one. The building fell to decay, and the flowers around it died, and the weeds grew apace. It is very desolate there, sir."

"And what became of Mrs. Ray?"

By this time we had reached the old school-house, and having entered, were looking around.

"We'll dust this bench, John, and sit down, and you can tell me the story of Mrs. Ray."

The sun was just sinking behind the hills when we took our seats amid the dust and cobwebs of the old school-room. It seemed to me that I could see the sweet, pale face of Mrs. Ray clearly defined against the dark background of the gloomy place, and hear the gentle tones of her voice.

"Well sir," said the old sexton, "it was a terrible day when we found Mrs. Ray lying dead in the school-room, her throat cut, and her dress covered with blood. The children ran home and told the news, and the villagers hastened there; but she was dead, sir, and all we could do was to pick her up and carry her to my house, where she boarded."

"Did she cut her own throat?"

"Oh, no, sir; it must have been done by a stranger who spent a night in the village, and who was heard to inquire if a person answering to the description of Mrs. Ray lived here. You see sir, her name was not Mrs. Ray at all, but Mrs. Mandeville. The man was not seen the next day, and was never heard of again."

"What reason could he have for murdering her?"

"Mrs. Ray told her story to my wife. She had been engaged to be married to a young man who was poor, and who her father did not wish her to marry. He wanted her to marry Colonel Mandeville, who was rich and influential. Then the story reached her that the one she loved had married a lady in England, where he had gone to [illegible], and she felt desperate when she saw it, in the newspapers. She married Colonel Mandeville, but she was not happy with him because she did not love him and he was a fiery-tempered man, and he was afraid of him. In one of his rages he told her one day that the young man she loved was not married at all, and that he and her father had caused the marriage notice to appear in the papers, and had intercepted all their letters to each other. Then Mrs. Mandeville told him that there was no forgiveness in her heart for him; that she never wished to see him again, or her father either, for they had broken her heart. When the young man had heard of her treachery in marrying another when she had promised to marry him, he wrote her a terrible letter, upbraiding her. He grew a sort of melancholy, and one day he was found dead in his room; he had shot himself. Mrs. Mandeville stole from her house one night when her husband was out, and made her way here, because she knew that it was an out-of-the way place, and none would be apt to find her. She lived in this village two years, and we all learned to love her, she was so gentle and so kind. But my wife says she looked terrible, so white, and her eyes flashed whenever she spoke of her father and husband, and she used to say. "I never can, I never intend to forgive them, Mrs. Morrison; no, never! never!"

We can form no idea how her husband traced her here—for we supposed that the man was her husband—although we had no clue to him after he left the village. The children had left Mrs. Mandeville putting on her bonnet to leave the school-room, and that was the last time she was seen alive. Her bonnet was lying beside her when we found her dead, all bloody and crumpled. Poor young lady! It was a terrible sight to see her lying there, her eyes wide open and filled with an expression of fright and agony. I think, sir, that it would have been better if she could have forgiven those who did her the great wrong; but she said there was not one atom of forgiveness in her heart, that she would rather die than to say the word forgive to her father and her husband."

The sun had fairly gone down behind the hills when the old sexton finished his story. The shadows enveloped the old school-house in dusky dimness; we quietly arose and walked out, glad to leave behind a place haunted with such sad memories. No doubt as the old sexton said, it would have been better to have been forgiving, for forgiveness like charity, covers a multitude of sins.

The New "Annihilator."

Bright and early, before one-tenth of the citizens of Detroit had shaken off the effects of the glorious Fourth, Professor James K. P. Burlingame made his appearance on several streets in Detroit almost at the same moment. You would have known him to be a professor, even if you had seen him tangled up with a butcher-cart. That tall plug hat, carrying the stains of years—that linen duster girted at the waist—his long hair hanging down to keep his shoulders warm, was a dead give-away on his title.

The Professor came here to dispose of individual rights to use his "Fly Annihilator," and he didn't let thoughts of the next Presidential election set him down on a bench. His piccolo voice inquired of a woman at the front door of a house on Congress street east:

"Madame, have you ten seconds to spare this morning?"

"No, sir," was the prompt reply.

"Very well, then; you will miss seeing my Fly Annihilator," he remarked, as he walked off. "Thousands have missed it, to their everlasting sorrow—thousands have accepted it and been made happy for life."

"It's some kind o' pizen!" she called after him down the street.

"Warranted free from all drugs or chemicals dangerous to the human system, and recommended to people troubled with sleeplessness," he called back, as he briskly retracted his steps.

"I've got screens in every window, and yet the flys get in," she continued, as he opened his satchel on the steps.

"Of course they do—of course. A fly is like a human being. Bar him out and he is seized with a desire to get in at any price. Tell him he can't and he will or break his neck. Fling away your screens and depend entirely on my fly annihilator, warranted to kill on sight, and can be worked by a child four years old. This is the application."

He took from his satchel an eight ounce vial and a small brush, and holding it up continued:

"One twenty-five cent bottle does for twenty doors, and I give you directions how to make all you want. No poison here—nothing in this bottle to trot little children up to the cemetery."

"Why, you don't put it on the flies, do you?" she asked.

"Not altogether, madam. Any child can use it, as I said before. Just watch me a moment."

He swung the front door open, and with the brush applied the mixture to the back edge, giving it a thin coat from top to bottom.

"Now, then," he said, as he swung the door back, "flies like sweet. This mixture is sweet. The fly alights on the door, and you swing it shut, and he is jammed against the casing and crushed in an instant. Every door is capable of killing 1,000 flies per day. If you have twelve doors, your aggregate of dead flies will be exactly 12,000. When you have crushed about 2,000 on a door, take an old knife and scrape them off, and begin over again."

"Do you suppose—!" began the indignant woman, but he interrupted with:

"Don't suppose anything about it, except that it will mash flies and never miss. All you have to do is to open every door, apply the mixture, and shut them in succession. If you have twelve doors and twelve children, you can leave it all to the children. And only twenty-five cents a bottle."

"Do you suppose I want my doors daubed with flies and molasses?" she made a cuff at the bottle.

"Just as you prefer, madam," he quietly replied. "Some do and some don't. Some won't have it at any price, and others even set up extra doors in the back yard in order to use lots of it. I'll warrant this liquid to draw 'em, if you'll only open and shut the doors."

"I won't buy it—I won't have it!" she shouted, as she jammed the broom against the door.

"Very well, madam—very well. If you prefer a fly on your nose to one on the door I can raise no objections. Remember, however, that this is my farewell tour previous to appearing before the crowned heads of Europe, and you will not have another chance to secure the annihilator. All you have to do is to take your sewing on your lap and open and shut the door at regular intervals."

"If my husband was here he'd—he'd—"

"He'd buy the right for this county and make $20,000 in two months; but, as he is not here, we'll bid you good day and pass on. Sorry madam, but some folks prefer to kill their flies with a pitchfork, and the man with pitchforks will call here in fifteen minutes."

The Boy Barn-Burner.

The boy stood on the back-yard fence, whence all but him had fled; the flames that lit his father's barn shone just above the shed. One bunch of crackers in his hand, two others in his hat, with piteous accents loud he cried, "I never thought of that!" A bunch of crackers to the tail of one small dog he'd tied; the dog in anguish sought the barn and mid its ruins died. The sparks flew wide and red and hot, they lit upon that brat; they fired the crackers in his hand and eke those in his hat. Then came a burst of rattlin sound—the boy! Where was he gone? Ask of the winds that far around strewed bits of meat and bone, scraps of cloth and balls, and tops and nails and hooks and yarn, the relics of the dreadful boy that burned his father's barn.

Bank's Babies.

I was detained over Sunday in Barnsbury, and on Sunday morning I resolved to go to church. The first church I came to, a small frame structure with a wooden steeple, had the doors and windows tightly shut, but there was a man sitting on the front steps whittling a stick, and I said to him:

"Are you connected with this church?"

"Yes," he said, "I'm the sexton."

"What is it closed for?"

"Well, mostly on account of Bank's babies."

"Babies?"

"Sit down, and I'll tell you about it. You know Banks, he come to this town to live a few weeks ago a perfect stranger, and he rented a pew in this church. It seems that Banks had three little bits of babies, triplets, not more'n two months old, and then, besides these, he had twins about a year old. Nobody knew about the babies, but Banks wanted the mite darlings baptized, and he allowed to Mrs. Banks that to rush the whole five babies into church on one Sunday might excite remark, you understand. So he settled it that he'd have 'em christened gradually, so to speak. Accordingly the next Sunday he fetched little Jimmy, one of the triplets, and all went off well enough. On the followin' Sunday he came a promenadin' up the aisle with George Washington, another triplet, and Dr. Binns, our preacher, he fixed him up all right. People thought it was queer, but when on the next Sunday mornin' Banks and his wife come into church with another baby, William Henry, crying like a Pawnee war-whoop, some of the folks couldn't help snickerin'.

"Howsomdever nobody complained, and all might have been well if Banks had'nt come along the Sunday after with Elijah Hunsiker Banks, one of the twins. Everybody laughed, and Mr. and Mrs. Banks they were furious—mad as anything, you know; and when Elijah Hunsiker Banks hauled off accidently with his hand and hit Dr. Binns, who was holding him during the ceremony, a wack in the face, and the doctor dropped him in the water, the congregation just fairly roared with laughter. Mrs. Banks turned red as fire and looked as if she would like to murder somebody.

Well, you know, we all thought this was the last, and public feeling kinder simmered down on toward the end of the week, when who should come booming up the asile on Sunday morning but Mr. and Mrs. Banks, with Tecumseh Aristotle Banks, the remaining twin! Well, you ought to 've heard the congregation laugh! I never seen nothin' like it in all my experience. Even Dr. Binns had to smile. And the Bankses, they were perfect wild with rage. Anyhow, they baptized Tecumseh; and after meetin' some of the elders got to jokin' about it. One, they'd have to apply to the town supervisors for an extension of the water works; another allowed that arrangements ought to be made to divert Huckleberry Creek and run it down the middle aisle of the church; another made some kind of a [illegible] many banks were in town; another said that Banks would need about twelve pews when his family grew up. Somebody must have told Banks about it, for what does he do to revenge himself? He sends down to Clarion county to his two sisters to come and bring their children. So they had a couple of babies apiece, and as soon as they arrived Banks he begins to bring them to church gradually, like the others. You never seen such meetings as them! The church was jammed full, and people just roarin.' And when Banks came in on Sunday with the fourth and last of his sister's babies, the trustees thought it was time to interfere. Getting' to be a farce, you know! So Deacon Smith he stepped up and said somethin' or other to Banks, and Banks, quicker'n a wink, laid down the baby and banged the Deacon with his fist. And so, I dunno how it it was, but in a minute there was Banks and Deacon Smith, and Deacon Hubbard, and Banks' sister's baby, and me, all a rolling and a bumpin' over the floor, hittin' and kickin' and woopin' in a manner that was ridiculous to behold.

And when we all come to, and got straightened out, Banks picked up the battered baby of his sister and quiet, and the trustees held an informal meetin' and agreed to close the church for a month so's to kinder freeze Banks out, and now we've shut up; but I reckon is is no use, for I hear Banks has got his back up and gone over and joined the Baptists." So I said good day to the sexton and went in search of another sanctuary.

Strange Mexican Animal

The banks with stately big Rio Fuerte are lined saw for the first time the [illegible] and here I tile which the Spaniards call *iguana*—the Portuguese *cayman do motto*—i. e. 'tree-alligator.' The latter name may have been suggested by the formidable appearance of an animal which attains a length of seven feet and a weight of sixty-five pounds, and jumps from tree to tree with the impetus of a tiger-cat; but there is no doubt that the iguana is the most harmless creature of that size which ever jumped or flew or swam on this planet of ours—the most harmless creature of its size, we might say, for the little goldfish and the robin redbreast are beasts of prey compared with the tree-alligator: they will hurt a fly, but the iguana is a strict vegetarian, and like an orthodox Hindoo endeavors to prolong his life without shortening that of a fellow-creature. Still, with its saurian beak, its preposterous claws and the row of bristles along its backbone, this giant lizard is a scandalous phenomenon.

The Two Wills.

There are two passages in the will of Chiselhurst and the will of Longwood which may be contrasted and read with curious interest. The First Napoleon writes:

"I die prematurely, assassinated by the English oligarchy and its * * * The English nation will not be slow in venging me."

The Fourth Napoleon writes:

"I shall die with a sentiment of profound gratitude toward Her Majesty the Queen of England, toward all the Royal family, and toward the country where I have received during eight years so cordial a hospitality."

NEWS IN BRIEF.

—There are 1,800,000 marriageable girls in France.

—During the month of July the New York police captured sixteen runaway boys, from Boston and vicinity.

—The consumption of coffee throughout the world has increased during the past forty years from 190,000,000 to 850,000,000 pounds.

—Daniel Lawrence, a rich distiller, who died at Medford, Mass., recently left $7000 to the town of Tyngsboro, Mass., for a poor fund.

—Fourteen cups of Sevres china will be offered in competition by the French War Office to the societies of carrier-pigeon breeders.

—It is estimated that the Minnesota wheat crop will yield an average of fifteen bushels to the acre, or altogether 24,000,000 bushels in the state.

—There are four hundred and fifty lady dentists in the United States, and three times as many learning the business.

—The number of convicts in 1878 in all the State prisons of the Union was 29,197, of whom 13,186 were employed in mechanical industries.

—The amount of lumber on hand at the different points on the Susquehanna is represented as larger this year, at this season, than for years past at the same time.

—The Pennsylvania Railroad has erected gas works near the Union Depot, Pittsburg, for the manufacture of gas to be used in the depot and on the cars.

—Gadshill Place, Higham, the residence of the late Charles Dickens, and which has been for a long time in the market, has at length found a purchaser in Captain Austin Budden, of the Twelfth Kent Artillery.

—The export of American beer was valued at $150,000 last year, against $50,000 in 1874. The importations, on the contrary, have fallen off very largely, being 2,167,251 gallons in 1875, against 767,709 gallons in 1878.

—In recognition of the labors of Professor Greist, of the Law Faculty of Berlin, President Hayes has transmitted to the Professor, through Mr. Everett, a collection of volumes on the history of jurisprudence.

—A woman was drinking milk from a cup in Paris on the 28th of June, at 6 o'clock in the morning. The lightning knocked the cup from her hands, but left her unhurt. The cup could not be found.

—Three of the surviving descendants of Massasoit, the noted Indian, Mrs. Mitchell and her two daughters, are passing the summer in camp at Betty's Neck, a tract of land up the shores of Assawampsett Pond, in Massachusetts.

—The national debt is now about $2,304,000,000, which bears interest as follows, in round numbers; 3 per cent., $14,000,000; four per cent., $650,000,000; $600,000; 6 per cent., $350,000,000; no interest, $400,000,000.

—Ten years ago the exportation of leather to Europe was first started as an experiment. Since then the trade has grown to 25,000,000 pounds (valued at $4,000,000) per annum, with an increase for the first six months of this year of 1,000,000 pounds

—The Chicago elevators contain at the present time 2,535,273 bushels of wheat, 2,958,576 bushels of corn, 154,219 bushels of oats, 50,070 bushels of rye, and 76,960 bushels of barley, making a grand total of 5,775,098 bushels, against 1,570,055 bushels at this period last year.

—In Paris and its suburbs there are more than 18,000 people who live by rag-picking or rag-selling. There are 10,000 chiffonniers who go about collecting scraps of rags or paper, and 3,000 old clothes dealers who buy rags, and who again employ 2,000 workmen.

—In New South Wales last year the sum of $1,708,485 was expended upon primary education. Teachers' salaries absorbed $799,320. There were in operation 1,187 schools, attended in the aggregate by 123,125 pupils. Since 1877 there has been an increase of seventy schools. Ten years ago there were only 642 schools.

—The Boston Fish Bureau has just completed statistics of the catch of mackerel, the receipts and imports from January 1 to August 1. The New England catch of mackerel for that time is 61,763 barrels, of which 19,414 barrels have been packed out at Boston, 12,490 barrels at Gloucester and 29,941 at all other New England ports.

—A mile is 5,280 feet, or 1,760 yards in length. A fathom is six feet. A league is three miles. A Sabbath Day's journey is 1,155 yards less than two-third (horse) [illegible]. A day's journey is 32½ miles. A palm is three inches, a span is two feet. A [illegible] inches. A space is three feet [illegible] inches.

—Of 17,000 guns constructed by Mr. Krupp at his works at Essen during the last twenty-three years only sixteen have burst, and nearly all of these were destroyed during trials undertaken to test their power of resistance or endurance, and when, consequently, they were loaded with charges heavier than they were designed to fire.

—Thirty-two American horses arrived at Havre recently for the French cavalry. They were inspected by French officers detailed for the purpose, and were all accepted at prices ranging from $220 to $270, which are the top prices for French remounts. The horses were in splendid condition after their voyage, no accidents whatever having occurred on board ship.

—The immigration statistics at Castle Garden, New York, give the number of arrivals of imigrants during July at 12,408, against 8822 in July, 1878. The total arrivals since January 1 are 68,300, an increase of 21,550 over the same period last year. The records of each month show an increase, that in May being the greatest, when there were 18,328 arrivals, against 11,450 in May, 1878.

—Mrs. Damaris Boutelle has just died at Fitchburg, Mass., at the advanced age of 99 years. Longevity is a characteristic of her family. Two of her brothers died a few years since, on the 8th day of August, at the ripe ages of 82 and 86 respectively. A large number of the family have died at ages varying from 80 to 92. Mrs. Boutelle leaves a brother, Mr. David Boutelle, of Fitchburg, now 88 years old, and twin sisters, aged 81.