The Diamond Bracelet

By MRS. HENRY WOOD,

Author of East Lynne, Etc.

CHAPTER XVII.

Once more Gerard Hope entered his uncle's house; not as an interloper stealing into it in secret, but as an honored guest to whom reparation was due, and must be made. Alice Seaton leaned back in her invalid chair, a joyous flush on her wasted cheek, and a joyous happiness in her eye. Still the shadow of coming death was there, and Mr. Hope was shocked to see her—more shocked and startled than he had expected, or chose to express.

"Oh, Alice! What has done this?"

"That," she answered, pointing to the bracelet, which, returned to its true owner, lay on the table. "I should not have lived many years, of that I am convinced; but I might have lived a little longer than I now shall. It has been the cause of misery to many, and Lady Sarah says she shall never regard it but as an ill-starred trinket, or wear it with any pleasure."

"But, Alice, why should you have suffered it thus to affect you," he remonstrated. "You knew your own innocence, and you say you believed and trusted in mine; what did you fear?"

"I will tell you, Gerard," she resumed, a deeper hectic rising in her cheeks. "I could not have confessed my fear, even in dying; it was too distressing, too terrible; but now that it is all clear, I will tell it. I believed my sister had taken the bracelet."

He uttered an exclamation of amazement.

"I have believed it all along. She had called to see me that night, and was for a minute or two in the room alone with the bracelets; I knew she, at that time, was short of money, and I feared she had been tempted to take it—just as this unfortunate servant man was tempted. Oh, Gerard, the dread of it has been upon me night and day, preying upon my fears, weighing down my spirits, wearing away my health and my life. And I had to bear it all in silence—that dreadful silence that has killed me."

"Alice, this must have been a morbid fear."

"Not so—if you knew all. But now that I have told you let us not revert to it again; it is at an end, and I am very thankful. That it should so end has been my prayer and hope; but not quite the only hope," she added, looking up at him with a sunny smile; "I have had another."

"What is it? You look as if it were connected with me."

"So it is. Ah, Gerard! Can you not guess it?"

"No," he answered, in a stifled voice. "I can only guess that you are lost to me."

"Lost to all here. Have you forgotten our brief conversation the night you went into exile? I told you then there was one far more worthy of you than I could ever have been."

"None will ever be half so worthy; or—I will say it, Alice, in spite of your warning hand—half so loved."

"Gerard," she continued, sinking her voice, "she has waited for you."

"Nonsense," he rejoined.

"She has. I have watched and seen, and I know it; and I tell it you under secrecy; when she is your wife, not before, you may tell her that I saw it and said it. She is a lovable and attractive girl, and she does not and will not marry; you are the cause."

"My darling——"

"Stay, Gerard," she gravely interrupted: "those words of endearment are not for me. Give them to her; can you deny that you love her?"

"Perhaps I do—in a degree. Next to yourself——"

"Put me out of your thoughts while we speak. If I were—where I so soon shall be—you could not be dearer to you than any one on earth? Would you not be well pleased to make her your wife?"

"Yes, I might be."

"That is enough, Gerard. Frances, come hither."

The conversation had been carried on in a whisper, and Lady Francis Chenevix came towards them from a distant window. Alice took her hand; she also held Gerard's.

"I thought you were talking secrets," said Lady Frances, "so I kept away."

"As we were," answered Alice. "Frances, what can we do to keep him among us? Do you know what Col. Hope has said to him?"

"No. What?"

"That though he shall be reinstated in favor as to money matters, he shall not be in his affection, or in the house, unless he prove sorry for his rebellion by retracting it. The rebellion, you know, at the first outbreak, when Gerard was expelled from the house before that unlucky bracelet was ever bought; I think he is sorry for it; you must help him to be more so."

"Fanny," said Gerard, while her eyelids drooped, and the damask mantled in her cheek, deeper than Alice's hectic, "will you help me?"

"As if I could make head or tail out of what you two are discussing!" cried she by way of helping her out of her confusion, so she attempted to turn away; but Gerard caught her to his side and detained her.

"Fanny—will you drive me again from the house?"

She lifted her eyes twinkling with a little spice of mischief. "I did not drive you before."

"In a manner, yes," he laughed. "Do you know what did drive me?"

She had known it at the time, and Gerard read it in her conscious face.

"I see it all," he murmured, drawing her closer to him; "you have been far kinder to me than I deserved. Fanny, let me try and repay you for it."

Frances endeavored to look dignified, but it would not do, and she was obliged to brush away the tears of happiness that struggled to her eyes. Alice caught their hands together and held them between her own, with a mental aspiration for their life's future happiness. Some time back she could not have breathed it in so fervent a spirit; but—as she had said—the present world and its hopes had closed to her.

"But you know, Gerard," cried Lady Frances, in a saucy tone, "if you ever do help yourself to a bracelet in reality, you must not expect me to go to prison with you."

"Yes, I shall," answered he, far more saucily; "a wife must follow the fortunes of her husband."

THE END.

The Promotion of the Admiral

Morley Roberts, in The Strand.

Mr. Smith, who ran a sailors' boarding-house in that part of San Francisco known as the Barbary Coast, was absolutely sui generis.

Every breeze that blew, trade-wind or monsoon, had heard of his iniquities. He got the best of everyone.

"All but one," said Smith, one night, in a moment of weakness, when a dozen men who owed so much money that they crawled to him as a Chinaman does to a joss were hanging on his lips; "all but one."

"Oh, we don't take that in," said one of the most indebted; "we can't 'ardly believe that, Mr. Smith."

"Yep, I was done brown and never got the best of one beast," said the boarding-house keeper. He looked them over malignantly.

"I kin lick any of you here with one hand," he went on, "but the man as belted me could have taken on three of you with both hands. I run against him on the pier at Sandridge when I was in Australia fifteen years ago. He was a naval officer, captain of the Warrior, and dressed up to kill, though he had a face like a figurehead cut of mahogany with a broad axe. And I was a feelin' good and in need of a scrap. So when he bumped ag'in me I shoved him over. Prompt I shoved him. Down he went, and the girls that knowed me laughed. And two policemen came along quick. I didn't care much, but this naval josser picks himself up and goes to 'em. Would you believe it, but when he'd spoke a bit I seed him donate 'em about a dollar each, and they walked off round a heap of dunnage on the wharf, and the captain buttoned up his coat and came for me.

"I never seen the likes of it. He comes up dancin' and smilin', and he kind of give me half a bow, polite as you like, and inside of ten seconds I knew I'd struck a cyclone, right in the spot where they breed. I fought good (you know me) and I got in half a dozen on his face. But I never fazed him none, and he wouldn't bruise more'n hittin' a boiler. And every time he got back on me I felt as if I'd been kicked.

"He scarred me something cruel. I could see it by the blood on his hands. 'Twarn't his by a long sight, for his fists were made of teak, I should say. And in the end, when I seemed to see a ship's company of naval officers around me, one of them hit me under the car and lifted me up. And another hit me whilst I was in the air, and a third landed me as I fell. And that was the end of it so far's I remember. They told me afterward he was the topside fighter in the hull British Navy, and I'm here to say he was."

"And you never got even?" asked the bartender, seeing that no one took up the challenge.

"Never set eyes on him from that day to this," said his boss, regretfully.

"And if you did?"

Smith paused—took a drink.

"So help me I'd Shanghai him if he was King of England!"

And one of the crowd who had put down the San Francisco Chronicle in order to hear this yarn picked it up again.

"S'elp me," he said, in breathless excitement, "'ere's a funny cohincidence, 'Ere's a telegram from 'Squimault, sayin' as how the flagship Triumphant, Hadmiral Sir Richard Dunn, K. C. B., is comin' down to San Francisco!"

"By Jove, let's look," said Shanghai Smith. He read, and a heavenly smile overspread his hard countenance. He almost looked good, such joy was his.

"Tom," he said to the bartender, "set up drinks for the crowd. This is my man, for sure. And him an admiral, too! Holy sailor, ain't this luck?"

He went out into the street and walked to and fro, rubbing his hands, while the men inside took their drink.

"Was there ever such luck? Was there ever such luck?" murmured Mr. Shanghai Smith. "To think of him turnin' up all of his own accord on my partic'lar stampin' ground! Holy sailor! was there ever such luck?"

The morning of the following day Her Majesty's ship Triumphant laid her anchors off Saucelito, in San Francisco Bay.

Though the admiral did not know it, one of the very first to greet him when he set his foot on dry land at the bottom of Market street was the man he had licked so thoroughly fifteen years before in Melbourne.

"Oh, it's the same," said Smith to his chief runner, who was about the "hardest case" in California. "He ain't changed none. Just so old he was when he set about me. I'm goin' to have thishyer admiral shipped before the stick on the toughest ship that's about ready to go to sea. Now what's in the harbor with officers that can lick me?"

"Well, I always allowed (as you know, sir) that Simpson of the California was your match. And the California will sail in three days."

"Righto," said Smith; "Simpson is a good, tough man. Bill, the California will do."

"But how'll you corral the admiral, sir?" asked Bill.

"You leave that to me," replied his boss. "I've got a very fruitful notion as will fetch him, if he's half the man he was."

Mr. "Say-it-and-mean-it" Smith laid for Admiral Sir Richard Dunn, K. C. B., etc., etc., from ten o'clock till half-past eleven, and he was the only man in the crowd that did not hope the victim would come down with too many friends to be tackled.

The admiral came at last; it was about a quarter to twelve, and the whole water-front was remarkably quiet. And the admiral was only accompanied by his flag-lieutenant.

The two were promptly sandbagged, the lieutenant left on the street and the admiral carried to the house in the Barbary Coast. When he showed signs of coming to he was promptly dosed, and his clothes were taken off him. As he slept the sleep of the drugged they put on a complete suit of rough serge toggery and he became Tom Deane, able-bodied seaman.

By four o'clock in the morning Tom Deane lay fast asleep in a forward bunk of the California's fo'c's'le as she was being towed through the Golden Gate. And his flag-lieutenant was inquiring in hospital what had become of the admiral. And nobody could tell him more than he himself knew. Flaring headlines announced the disappearance of a British admiral, and the wires and cables fairly hummed to England and the world generally.

(To be continued.)

Game to Tempt the Sportsman.

Hunting big game has an irresistible attraction for all sportsmen, and the more rare the species being sought, the more keen is the hunter's delight. The big game of this country is comparatively well known, but Asia offers some rare species, they are sought every year by countless sportsmen of all nationalities, usually without success.

An ambition of big game hunters is to capture, or shoot, a snow leopard. This rare animal lives on the snow-covered Himalayas, and seldom is seen at an elevation of less than 11,000 feet. He is a beautiful creature, white as the snow he lives among, and is both wild and savage. Even in the great altitudes where he makes his home he is extremely rare, and not only have few persons shot him, but few even have seen him. Any one who wants to stand in the first rank of big game men should try for a snow leopard; if he gets one his reputation is made.

An animal known to exist, but of which no white man ever has seen the dead body, is the mountain ibex of Kamchatka. This great peninsular of Kamchatka, whose half a million square miles is inhabited by less than 7,000 people, is probably the least known of any land in the world not circumpolar. Down its center runs a chain of great mountains, many of them active volcanoes and others covered with thick forests up to a height of 4,000 or 5,000 feet. Above the timber line lives a species of ibex, or mountain sheep, larger and stronger than any that exist elsewhere. The natives show bits of the skins of these animals and some of their enormous horns, but no white man ever has seen a whole one alive or dead, much less killed one.

Monumental Brasses.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century it occurred to some one to preserve the likeness of his departed friend, as well as the symbols of his rank and station, says the Gentleman's Magazine. So effigies were introduced upon the surface of the slabs, and were carved flat, but ere fifty years had passed away, the art of the sculptor produced magnificent monumental effigies. Knights and nobles lie clad in armor with their ladies by their sides; bishops and abbots bless the spectators with uplifted right hands; judges lie in their official garb; and merchants with the emblem of their trade. At their feet lie animals, usually having some heraldic connection with the deceased, or symbolical of his work; e. g., a dragon is trodden down beneath the feet of a bishop, signifying the defeat of sin as the result of his ministry. The heads of effigies usually rest on cushions which are sometimes supported by two angels.

Flitting of the Barber.

BY CHARLES HENSLEY.

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"Yas'm, das what I wants ter do, I wants ter stick my knife down the th'oat er dat vilyun, er dat scound'el—"

"My, sez Mandy.

"Yas'm,twell hit go ri' down th'ough de middle er his black heart. Das what I wants ter do. En when I git hit dar, I des wants ter tu'n dat knife roun' en roun', twell I cut dat black heart er his'n inter chitterlins."

"'My,' sez Mandy, 'you suttinly is savage.'

"'Dar,' sez I, 'dar, you done said hit. When you sez savage you des spells my name. I des so savage dat I eat dat vilyun's heart en drink his blood en des not bat my eyes.

"'What make you so savage agin dat barber,' sez Mandy, 'what he bin doin' ter you?'

"'What he bin doin' ter me? He bin doin' des a plenty. Ain't he been trapesin' roun' wid de 'oman dat es good es belong ter me; dat bin promisin' dese days en days fer ter ma'y me? En now he got ter shove his ugly se'f 'twix' me en her, en try en keep cump'ny wid her?'

"'En what de name er dat lady dat you speakin' er?' sez Mandy.

"'Hit des a fool 'oman er de name er Mandy en kase she des a fool 'oman, en ain't got so ve'y good senses, dey ain't nuthin' dat I kin do ter her, 'cep' en savin' des ter drap her, en dat I reckon I got ter do; fer by dese ways er gwine on she show dat she little better'n a hussy. But fer dat barber, I des suttinly takes hit outer him. I des bruck his back en knock de ugly head clean offer him, das all.

"'En dat lady you speakin' about?' sez Mandy, 'I des kin tell you dis; she got senses enuf ter do a heap er tinkin' befo' she ever ma'y wid a triflin' vilyun like you is; wid yo' big mouf en yo' big tales, en yo' knives, en yo' weepuns, en yo' hussies—hussy yo'se'f, suh.'

"'Das all ri', das all ri'. Yo' des do wid yo'se'f what you tink de bes' ter do, en ef you like ter keep somebody else cump'ny better'n my cump'ny, you des keep hit. Hit don't matter fer me if de yeth des gyape open en swaller you up. But alier dat ain't gwine save dat barber. Dey ain't no use er yo' cryin' en whimperin' roun' me; dat barber des got ter die.

"'I ain't wo'yin' about dat barber,' sez Mandy, 'I ain't sceart a bit fer him. Dat barber des twicet de man dat you is. Ef I do enny cryin' hit be fer you, you misubble scound'el. Dat barber des ca'y pocketsful er knives en razors roun' wid him aller de time. You go foolin' roun' wid dat barber en he cuts de lights er life outer you. En ef you tackle wid dat barber you better git you a dray pin fer ter hit him wid, fer ef he gits clost ter you, you des es good es dead en gone en mos' forgot.'

"What Mandy sez about dat barber diden suit me so ve'y better. I know myse'f f'om what I yere f'om dis one en f'om dat one, dat he a bad man, des a teh'ble man; a fightin' man f'om yere come yonder. He des boas'es dat endurin' er his time he kill mo'n ten men; en wid one er 'em dat he cuts out a piece er his heart en toas'es hit over de fire en eats hit wid pepper on hit; en wid anudder dat he plant vines on topper his grave en eats de berries offer dem vine, des ter strenken his heart. I des sholy got ter watch my corners wid a man like dat. I tink en I tink. Fus' I tink er one way en den I tink er anudder. One time hit look like a good way des ter stan' behinder a corner twell he come by en den ter swat him wid a dray pin or a crow bar. Das all ri', ef I don' miss my lick; but sposen dat I does miss my lick, dar I is wid my lick done gone en he on topper me wid his razor. En den agin I tink dat he got ter cross de bayou on one er dem bridge, en I might des sot up dar on one er de beams twell he come under en fall onter his head ri' hard. But sposen dat he jump f'om under, dar I is on de groun', all shuck up wid de fall en whoder de chanst ter lif' my han'. Dat tinkin' mos' kep me awake in de night.

"In de mo'nin' I got up en still I

"My," sez Mandy, "you suttinly is savage."

diden know what de bes' fer me ter do. At de las' I tuck a nickel outer my pocket en th'ow hit up in de ar, ter see which way I got ter go dat day. Well, suh, ef dat nickel diden pint ri' straight ter de shop er dat barber. I pick hit up en th'ow hit agin, hit come de ve'y same way. Den I see, come good luck, come bad luck, I des got ter go ter dat barber shop. En widout takein enny mo' time ter tink I des goes. When I come ter de shop I des walks in en hangs up my coat en my hat, des like hit belong ter me, en den I sits down in de barber cheer en I sez: 'Barber,' sez I, 'gi' me a shave.' En de barber, he des lafs, en when he done wuck up de lather en upread hit over my face, he sez ter me, 'My,' sez he, 'I bin tinkin f'om what I yeres dat I boun' ter use my razor on you fer sumpin else beside ter scrape yo' chin. Not,' sez he, 'dat I got nuthin agin you, kase I ain't, but fer aller dat fire en fury dat I yeres about you, hit look like I bleedzed ter do hit des ter take keer er my own hide.' 'Barber,' sez I, 'people yeres a heap er ting dat dey ain't no call fer 'em ter yere, en a heap er ting dat neber wuz spoke.'

"'I got nuthin' agin you,' sez de barber, 'to be sho', ef I wanted dat 'oman ri' bad, dat Mandy, I des would have her ef I had ter skin you fus' to git her. But I don' wan' her. I des don', I got mo' wives ri' now den I got enny use fer. I got two er 'em in dis yere town, en dey fixin' ter gi' me truble dis ve'y minute, kase dey done foun' out dat I got mo'n one. I don' wan' no mo' er de 'omans ri' now. But I is got dis much agin you,' sez he, 'dat you bin talkin' mighty big, en bin tellin yo' tales er what you gwine do wid me.'

"'Barber,' sez I, 'don' you let dat razor slip; fer f'om what you tell me you is got all de trubble you needs ri' now.' Fer atter he tell me dat he got mo' wives on his hands den he got enny use fer, I wuz feelin' all ri', en I wuzen sceared er him no mo'.

"'Das so,' sez he, 'das so, ef I had de time en wuzen a'ready in trubble, dey ain't nuthin I like better,' sez he, 'den des ter take you in han's en cook yo' goose. But at de time presen',' sez he, 'dey is two lady a'ready quarlin' over me, en my time is all tuck up. All I got ter do,' sez he, 'is ter pull my foot

"Barber," sez I, "when do you leave?"

outer dis yere town, en I got ter do dat quick.'

"'Barber,' sez I, 'whar you gwine f'om yere?'

"'I is gwine a long way,' sez he, 'I is gwine up North.'

"'Barber,' sez I, 'when you gwine?'

"'I wuz studyin',' sez he, 'ter start termorrer evenin'.'

"'Barber,' sez I, 'you start dis evenin'. I gi' you fi' dollah,' sez I, 'fi' good dollah ef you do.'

"'All ri',' sez he, 'I do hit; I go dis ve'y evenin'.'

"'But how does I know, sez I, ef I pays you my good money, dat you keep yo' wo'd en go?'

"'You kin come down ter de railroad,' sez he, 'en put dat fi' dollah inter part er my ticket, en den, ef you likes, you kin see me off on de train.'

"En sodat evenin' atter de ticket wuz bought I see him onter de cyars, en des es de cyars wuz pullin' out he holler outer de winder, 'you gi' my love ter de lady.' En I sez twix' my teef, 'You misubble scound'el, I des suttinly will.'

"Dat same evenin' I knock at Mandy's do', I got free, fo' piece er dis yere pink stickin' plarster stickin' ter my chin en acrost my cheek.

"'My,' sez Mandy when she open de do' ter let me in, what you bin doin' wid yo' face; who bin meddlin' wid you?'

"'Dat some er yo' barber's doins,' sez I.

"'En what you done wid dat barber?' sez she.

"'I sez nuthin, but des looks at her ri' stiddy. 'What you done wid dat barber?' sez she again.

"'Oman,' sez I, 'dey ain't no barber no mo', an' wid dat she 'gun ter whimper an' ter cry.

"'Dey ain't no use er cryin' fer dat barber,' sez I, 'you seen de las' e dat barber on topper er dis yeth.'

"'I don' keer fer de barber,' sez she, 'en nebber did keer a bit fer him. I des wuz tinkin' er you; I don' wan' you ter have de blood er no man on yo' han's.' 'Dar, dat des hit, honey,' sez I, 'en dat des what save dat barber's life. De fus' time he git down on his knee en beg fer his life, I shuck my head. De second time he des beg an' he pray, but I shuck my head. But de las' time I sez ter him, 'Barber,' sez I, 'ef I don' po' out yo' blood dis time, hit 'pears like a lady dat don' like dis yere killin' en spillins er blood. Take yo' misubble life,' sez I, 'en tank de lady fer hit.'

"'My,' sez Mandy, 'I diden tink you could a done de barber dat a way; you suttinly is a man.'

"'En now, 'oman,' sez I, mighty solemn, 'let dis be a warnin' ter you; you des take yo' cautions f'om dis, en enny er dese yere triflin' scound'els, ef dey wuz barbers er des what dey wuz, come foolin' roun' wid you, you tu'n 'em loose en tell 'em ter go dey ways. Ef dey don', I des po' out dey blood all over de yeth. Fer f'om dis times on, f'om dis ve'y day, dey ain't gwine ter be no mo' pitty er mussy in dis bus'm.'"

INDIANS AS POLITICIANS.

Electioneering Among the Tribes on Rather Unique Plan.

The campaigns of the Indians are a story of sharp moves and deep laid plans, and, as among themselves they cannot all be bosses, the game of politics often becomes swift and exceedingly dangerous. Electioneering is carried on in a rather unique manner. They give big picnics in the back woods. Here the candidates meet and debate on certain subjects. If their temper gets the better of them, and it generally does, they fight it out. At a picnic given by the Cherokees some five years ago three men were killed because of the accusation by one that the other two were guilty of stealing horses. Big feasts are held at these gatherings, the expenses being borne by the candidate who is elected. The bills are never paid until after election; then the winner takes them all into his office and gives vouchers on the government. So it is generally understood that the expenses of the campaign are borne out of the public funds. There is no such thing as taxation among the Indians, all of their money coming from invested funds in the treasury at Washington. It is the aim of the whole Indian populace not to keep this money there, but to get hold of as much of it as possible. With that aim in view they are apt to elect men who lay stress on their ability as diplomats at Washington. An attorney in Tahlequah won a $100,000 fee for securing a big sum of money as an appropriation to the Indians.—Detroit Free Press.

A GIANT FUCHSIA.

Magnificent Specimen of This Plant in Portland, Oregon.

The largest and most magnificent fuchsia plant in this city, and probably in the state, is to be seen in the garden of Robert Foulkes, says the Portland Oregonian. It springs from a single stem some three inches in diameter, but divides into three at the surface of the ground. The top is seven feet in height and is twenty-six feet in circumference, and is loaded with hundreds of beautiful flowers in every stage of development, while the ground beneath is carpeted with fallen blossoms. The plant would have been much higher and broader but for the fact that it has to be put in the cellar every winter and the limbs have to be trimmed off. The height has to be reduced so that it can stand under the floor above. A rather remarkable thing is that when the plant is dug up at the beginning of winter, it is in full foliage and still loaded with blossoms. Uprooting almost any plant in this condition would prove fatal, but the fuchsia takes it all as a matter of course, and soon after it is houses the leaves and flowers fade and drop off and the plant goes to sleep. As soon as it feels the breath of spring it begins to put forth tender shoots in profusion, as a hint that it wants to get out of doors. When it is planted out, it starts in growing and "blowing" as if to make up for lost time. Mr. Foulkes has several other varieties of fuchsia in his garden, one of which produces beautiful blossoms eight inches in length from the end of the stem to the end of the petals.

Royal Family Secrets.

A few months ago the Empress Frederick caused her journals and her correspondence to be destroyed, including an immense collection of letters written by Queen Victoria, most of which were, of course, of a strictly confidential nature. The late Empress was no doubt anxious to prevent any possibility of a repetition of the vexatious tracasseries which arose about the papers of Emperor Frederick and caused so much trouble during the summer of 1888, until they were safely deposited among the Hohenzollern family archives at Berlin. It is believed that the famous diary, about which there were such floods of gossip, was burnt shortly after this removal. It is well known that Queen Victoria had a great deal of trouble and anxiety about the Prince Consort's confidential correspondence with his brother, the late Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Prince Albert wrote most openly to his brother and his weekly letters were full of private family affairs and of social and political secret history. Ultimately Duke Ernest handed over the Prince's letters to the Queen, who also recovered her husband's correspondence with his cousin, the late king of Portugal.—London Truth.

Not Groaning—Singing.

The following story was related the other day in the Liverpool (England) Post. Seated in a third class carriage of a south bound express were eight people. Seven of the number were quietly reading, when suddenly the eight broke into deep and blood-curdling groans. Horror-stricken the rest gazed at him for a moment, and then one of them, with great presence of mind, produced a brandy flask, and, pouring out a copious draught, forced it on the sufferer. It was quickly disposed of. "How do you feel now," inquired one of the company. "Prime!" was the reply. "What was the matter with you?" was the next query. "Matter with me? Nothing!" was the indignant retort. "What in the name of thunder did you groan like that for, then?" cried the owner of the brandy. "Groan, sir—groan!" said the astonished man. "Why, I was singing."

Henrietta—"How was the club meeting, Hortense?" Hortense—"Oh, the literary papers were all right, but the coffee and sandwiches were 'way below par.'"