

The Crime of the Boulevard

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By Jules Claretie

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

"Look, look keenly," went on the manager. "You will see your brother dematerialize after becoming changed in color. The flesh will disappear and you will see a skeleton. Think, think, my brothers, this is the fate which awaits you perhaps soon on going away from here. Think of the various illnesses and deaths by accidents which await you. Contemplate the magic spectacle offered by the Cabaret du Squelette and remember that you are dust and that to dust you must return. Make wisely this reflection, which the intoxicated man made to another man in like condition, but asleep. And that is how I shall be on Sunday. While waiting, my brothers and sisters, for nothingness, look at the dematerialization of your contemporary, if you please."

The play of lights, while the man was talking, began to throw a greenish pallor and to make spots at first transparent upon the orbits of the eyes; then, little by little, the spots seemed to grow stronger, to blacken, to enlarge. The features, lightly picked out, appeared to change gradually, to take on gray and confused tints, to slowly disappear as under a well-damp vapor which covered, devoured, that face, now unrecognizable! It has been said that the manner in which this phenomenon was managed was a remarkable thing. It is true, for this human body seemed literally to dissolve before the curious crowd, now become silent and frightened. The work of death was accomplished there publicly, thanks to the illusion of lighting. The livid man who smiled a few moments before was motionless, fixed; then, passing through some singular changes, the flesh seemed to fall from him in pieces. Suddenly the play of lights made him disappear from the eyes of the spectators, and they saw, thanks to reflections made by mirrors, only a skeleton. It was the world of specters and the secret of the tombs revealed to the crowd by a kind of scientific magic lantern.

Bernadet did not desire to wait longer to strike his blow—this was the exact moment to do it, the psychological moment of the man in the sombrero revealed a deep trouble. There was in this look something more than the curiosity excited by a novel spectacle. The muscles of his pale face twitched as with physical suffering. In his eyes Bernadet read an internal agony.

"Ah!" thought the police officer. "The living eye is a book which one can read as well as a dead man's eye." Upon the stage the play of lights was rendering even more sinister the figure who was giving to this morbidly curious crowd the comedy of death. One would have thought it was one of those atrocious paintings made in the studios of certain Spanish painters in the putridero of a Valles Leal. The flesh, by a remarkable scientific combination of lights, was made to seem as if falling off the corpse in a state of decomposition. The lugubrious vision made a very visible shudder pass over the audience. Then Bernadet, drawing himself up to his full height so as to get a good view of the face of this man so much taller and more approaching as near to him as possible—in fact, so that his elbow and upper arm touched the young man's—slowly, deliberately dropped one by one these words:

"That is about how M. Rovere ought to be now—"

And suddenly the young man's face expressed a sensation of fright, as one sees in the face of a pedestrian who suddenly finds that he is about to step upon a viper.

"Or how Rovere will be soon," added the little man, with an amiable smile. Bernadet desisted under this amiability and intense joy. Holding his arm and elbow in an apparently careless manner close to his neighbor as he pronounced the name Bernadet felt his neighbor's whole body tremble and give a very perceptible start. Why had he been so quickly moved by an unknown name if it had not recalled to his mind some frightful thought? The man might, of course, know, as the public did, the details of the crime; but, with his strong, energetic face, his resolute look, he did not appear like a person who would be troubled by the recital of a murder, the description of a bloody affray or even by the frightful scene which had just passed before his eyes.

"A man of that stamp is not chicken hearted," thought Bernadet. "No, no." Hearing those words evoked the image of the dead man, Rovere. The man was not able to master his violent emotion, and he trembled as if under an electrical discharge. The shudder had been violent, of short duration, however, as if he had mastered his emotion by his strong will. In his involuntary movement he had displayed a tragic eloquence. Bernadet had seen in the look, in the gesture, in the movement of the man's head, something of trouble, of doubt, of terror, as in a flash of lightning in the darkness of night one sees the bottom of a pool.

Bernadet smilingly said to him: "This sight is not a gray one."

"No," the man answered, and he also attempted to smile.

He looked back to the stage, where the somber play went on.

"That poor Rovere!" Bernadet said.

The other man now looked at Bernadet as if to read his thoughts and to learn what signification the repetition of the same name had. Bernadet sustained with a naive look this mute interrogation. He allowed nothing of his thoughts to be seen in the clear, child-like depths of his eyes. He had the air of a good man, frightened by a terrible murder, and who speaks of the victim as if he feared for himself. He waited, hoping that the man would speak.

In some of Bernadet's readings he had come across the magic rule applicable to love. "Never go," wait for the other to come." (Ne Ire, fac venire.) applicable also to life, to that duel of magnetism between the hunted man and the police spy, and Bernadet waited for the other to come.

Bravely, after a silence, while on the little stage the transformation was still going on, the man asked in a dry tone:

"Why do you speak to me of M. Rovere?"

Bernadet affably replied: "Because every one talks of it. It is the actuality of the moment. I live in that quarter. It was quite near there that it happened, the affair—"

"I know," interrupted the other.

The unknown had not pronounced 10 words in questioning and replying, and yet Bernadet found two clues simply insignificant—terrible in reality.

"I know," was the man's reply, in a short tone, as if he wished to push aside, to thrust away, a troublesome thought. The tone, the sound of the words, had struck Bernadet, but one word especially—the word "Monsteu" before Ro-

vere's name. "M. Rovere? Why did he speak to me of M. Rovere?" Bernadet thought.

It seemed, then, that he knew the dead man.

All the people gathered in this little hall, if asked in regard to this murder, would have said: "Rovere? The Rovere affair? 'The Rovere murderer! Not one who had not known the victim would have said: 'M. Rovere!'"

The man knew him then. This simple word, in the officer's opinion, meant much.

The manager now announced that, having become a skeleton, the dear brother who had lent himself to this experiment would return to his natural state, "fresher and rosier than before." He added pleasantly, "A thing which does not generally happen to ordinary skeletons."

This vulgar drollery caused a great laugh, which the audience heartily indulged in. It made an outlet for their pent up feelings, and they all felt as if they had awakened from a nightmare. The man in the sombrero, whose pale face was paler than before, from the only man who did not smile. He even frowned fiercely (noted by Bernadet) when the manager added:

"You are not in the habit of seeing a dead man resuscitated the next day. Between us, it would keep the world pretty full."

"Evidently," thought Bernadet, "my young gentleman is ill at ease."

His only thought was to find out his name, his personality, to establish his identity and to learn where he had spent his life and especially his last days.

He did not hesitate long. He left the place, even before the man in the coffin had reappeared, smiling at the audience. He glided through the crowd, repeating, "Pardon—I beg pardon!"

traversed rapidly the hall where new-comers were conversing over their beverages, and stepping out into the street, looked up and down. A light fog enveloped everything, and the gaslights and lights in the shop windows showed ghostly through it. The passersby, the cabs, the tramways, bore a spectral gloom.

What Bernadet was searching for was a policeman. He saw two chatting together and walking slowly along under the leafless trees. In three steps, at each step turning his head to watch the people coming out of the cabaret, he reached the men. While speaking to them he did not take his eyes from the door of that place where he had left the young man in the gray felt hat.

"Dagonin," he said, "you must follow me, if you please, and 'pull me in!' I am going to pick a drunken quarrel with a particular person. Inseparable and arms, do you understand?"

"Perfectly," Dagonin replied.

He looked at his comrade, who carried his hand to his shako and saluted Bernadet.

The little man, who had given his directions in a quick tone, was already far away, he was stepping out of the cabaret gazing searchingly at each person who came out. The looks he cast were neither direct, menacing nor even familiar. He had pulled his hat down to his eyebrows, and he cast side glances at the crowd pouring from the door of the cabaret.

He was astonished that the man in the sombrero had not yet appeared. Possibly the man had stepped, on his way out, in the front hall. Glancing through the open door, Bernadet saw that he was right. The young man was seated at one of the tables, which were oaken tables, with a glass of greenish liquid before him. "He needs alcohol to brace him up," growled the officer.

"I can wait till he has finished his absinth," said Bernadet to himself.

The door was shut again.

He had not long to wait. After a small number of persons had left the place, the door opened and the man in the gray felt hat appeared, stopped on the threshold and, as Bernadet had done, scanned the horizon and the street. Bernadet turned his back and seemed to be walking away from the winshop, leaving the man free to take a keen glance or two over his shoulder toward him. Bernadet crossed the street and hurried along at a rapid pace in order to gain on the young man and to maneuver to find himself directly in front of the unknown. The man seemed to hesitate, walked quickly down the boulevard a few steps toward the Place Pigalle, in the direction where Rovere's apartments were, but suddenly stopped, turned on his heel, repassed the Cabaret du Squelette, and went toward the Moulin Rouge, which at first, Bernadet thought, he was about to enter. As he stood there, the vanes of the Moulin Rouge, turning about, lighted up the windows of the opposite buildings and made them look as if they were on fire. At last, obeying another impulse, he suddenly crossed the boulevard, as if to return into Paris, leaving Montmartre, the cabarets and Rovere's house behind him. He walked briskly along and ran against a man—a little man—when he had not noticed, who seemed suddenly to detach himself from the wall and who fell against his breast, hiccupping and cursing in vicious tones.

"Inbelle!"

The young man wished to push away the intoxicated man who, with hat over his eyes, clung to him and kept repeating:

"The street—the street—is it not free—the street?"

Yes, it was certainly a drunken man—not a man in a snook, but a little fellow, bourgeois, with hat askew and a thick voice.

"I—I am not stopping you. The street is free, I tell you!"

"Well, if it is free I want it!"

The voice was vigorous, but showed sudden anger, a sudden tone, a slight foreign accent, Spanish perhaps.

The drunken man probably thought him insolent, for still hiccupping, he answered:

"Oh, you want it, do you? You want it? I want it! The king says 'we wish don't you know!'"

With another movement he lost his equilibrium and half fell, his head hanging over, and he clutched the man he held in a sudden embrace.

"It is mine also—the street—you know!"

With sudden violence the man disengaged himself of this harassing creature. He thrust aside his clinging arms with a movement so quick and strong that the intoxicated man this time fell, his hat rolled into the gutter and he lay on the sidewalk.

But immediately, with a bound, he was on his feet, and as the man went calmly on his way he followed him, seized his coat and clutched him so tightly that he could not proceed.

"Pardon," he said. "You cannot go away like that!" Then as the light from a gas lamp fell on the little man's face the young man recognized his neighbor of the cabaret who had said to him: "See! That is how Rovere must look!"

At this moment Dagonin and his

comrade appeared on the scene and laid vigorous hands on them both. The young man made a quick, instinctive movement toward his right pocket, where, no doubt, he kept a revolver or knife. Bernadet seized his wrist. He twisted it and said:

"Do nothing rash!"

The young man was very strong, but the huge Dagonin had herculean biceps and the other man did not lack muscles. Fright, moreover, seemed to paralyze this tall, young giant, who, as he saw that he was being hustled toward a police station, demanded:

"Have you arrested me, and why?"

"First for having struck me," Bernadet replied, still bareheaded, and to whom a gamin now handed his soiled hat, saying to him:

"Is this yours, M. Bernadet?"

Bernadet recognized in his own quarter! That was glory!

The man seemed to wish to defend himself and still struggled, but one remark of Dagonin's seemed to pacify him:

"No rebellion! There is nothing serious about your arrest. Do not make it worse."

The young man really believed that it was only a slight matter and he would be liberated at once. The only thing that disquieted him was that this intoxicated man, suddenly become sober, had spoken to him as he did a few moments before in the cabaret.

The four men walked quickly along in the shadow of the buildings, through the almost deserted streets, where the shopkeepers were putting out their lights and closing up their shops. Scarcely anyone who met them would have realized that three of these men were taking the fourth to a police station.

A tricolor flag floated over a door lighted by a red lantern. The four men entered the place and found themselves in a narrow, warm hall, where the agents of the police were either sleeping on benches or reading around the stove by the light of the gas jets above their heads.

Bernadet, looking dolefully at his broken and soiled hat, begged the young man to give his name and address to the chief of the post. The young man then quickly understood that his questioner of the Cabaret du Squelette had caught him in a trap. He looked at him with an expression of violent anger, of concentrated rage.

Then he said:

"My name? What do you want of that? I am an honest man. Why did you arrest me? What does it mean?"

"Your name?" repeated Bernadet.

"Oh, well, I am called Prades. Does that help you any?"

The man wrote: "Prades, P-r-a-d-e-s with an accent. Prades. First name?"

"Charles, if you wish."

Charles Prades, noticing the slight difference in the tone of his answer, "We wish nothing. We wish only the truth."

"I have told it."

Charles Prades furnished some further information in regard to himself. He was staying at a hotel in the Rue de Paradis-Polissiere, a small hotel used by commercial travelers and merchants of the second class. He had been in Paris only a month.

Where was he from? He said that he came from Buenos Aires, where he was connected with the commercial houses, or rather he had given up the situation to come to Paris to seek his fortune. But while speaking of Sydney he had in his rather rambling answers let fall the name of Buenos Ayres, and he was staying at a hotel in the Rue de Paradis-Polissiere, a small hotel used by commercial travelers and merchants of the second class. He had been in Paris only a month.

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He was French consul. The officer paid no attention to this at the time, for what good? Prades' real examination would be conducted by M. Ghonyr. He (Ghonyr) was not an examining magistrate. He was the ferret who hunted out criminals.

This Prades was stupefied, then furious, when the examination over, he learned that he was not to be immediately set at liberty.

What an absurd quarrel, a collision without a wound, in a street in Paris was sufficient to hold a man and make him pass the night in the station house with all the vagabonds of both sexes collected there.

"You may liken your fate to yourself tomorrow morning," said Bernadet.

In the meantime, they searched this man, who, very pale, making visibly powerful efforts to control himself, biting his lips and his black beard, while he examined his pocket book, while they looked at a Spanish knife with a short blade which he had (Bernadet had divined it at the time of his arrest) in his right pocket.

The pocket book revealed nothing. It contained a few receipts, a few bills of the hotel in the Rue de Paradis, some envelopes without letters, without stamps and bearing the name "Charles Prades, merchant," two bank bills of 100 francs and nothing more.

Bernadet very simply asked Prades how it was that he had upon his person addressed letters which he evidently had not received, as they were not stamped. He replied:

"They are not letters. They are addresses which I give instead of visiting cards, as I have not had time to procure cards."

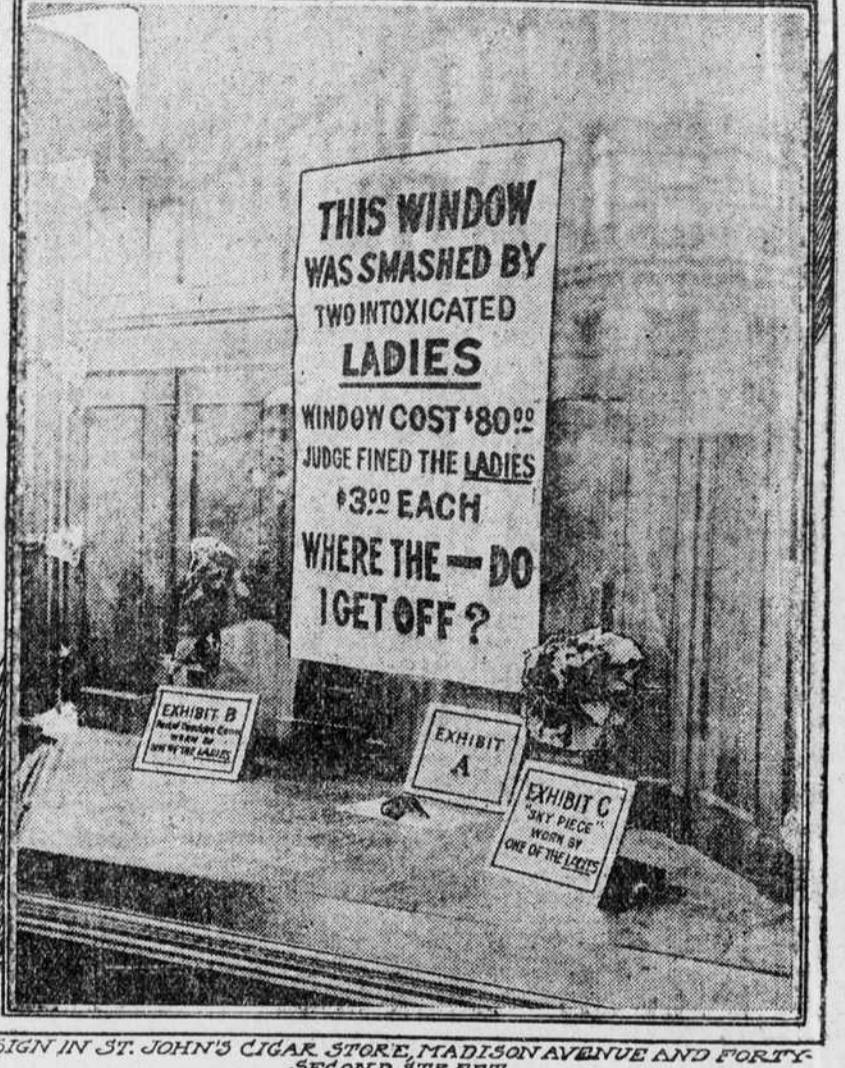
"Then the addresses are in your writing?"

(Continued Next Week.)

The Immortal.

Since my soul and I are friends,
I go laughing on my road,
Whether up or down it veers,
I have never felt my load.
For the winds that trust with me,
And the stars share in my joy;
Meadow, hill or sky or sea,
I create and destroy.
How often I give him or wee
Plits a shadow on the sod;
Life and death perpetual flow,
Underneath them I am God.
Smiler than the smallest insect,
Larger than the moving whole;
One in the divided heart,
And the Universal soul.
Silent death he could not fast,
I am not to birth at last,
Universes are of me,
—Ellen Glasgow, in Harper's Magazine.

YOU GET THE ADVERTISING, MR. CIGAR STORE MAN



New York, Special: Constantly changing groups of men and women stood about the cigar store of W. W. St. John, at Madison avenue and Forty-second street, and smiled as they read the placard. The large plate glass front had been demolished and the placard, in flaming letters, stood in the space designed for the display of pipes and cigars.

But there were things other than the placard that attracted attention. Three articles of women's apparel were displayed there and gave mute testimony of the combat between "intoxicated

ladies," which had resulted in the demolishing of the window. These were a comb, a fragment of the upper portion of a woman's waist and a hat trimmed with blue violets and other flowers. These articles were described by the following small placards:

"Exhibit A—Comb worn by one of the ladies."

"Exhibit B—Piece of directoire gown."

"Exhibit C—Sky piece worn by one of the ladies."

Wherever the word "ladies" appeared it was heavily underscored with red ink.

THE PHILOSOPHIC BRAKEMAN.

He Rejoices When the Train Is Late For Purely Personal Reasons.

The Flying Bluenose, a train which usually earns its title as railroad travel goes in the quiet Canadian province. It travels, had been held for an hour or more at a little town until a new locomotive could be procured. The regular locomotive had laid down on the job. It was a case of tired boiler tubes.

Passengers were chafing at the delay. There was no reason for impatience, for the next stop was the terminus of the line, and a seaport; those who were going to take the boat knew it would wait for the day but dinner, and the train would surely arrive before 6. The scheduled time of arrival was 3:30.

Nevertheless the passengers were impatient. Most of them were Americans, which explains it. They clustered around the rear platform of the Pullman or made daring excursions into the town, with one ear open for the whistle of the extra locomotive coming down the line.

The writer of this article urges that we ought to thank God that we belong to the most nervous, restless, all pervading race the world has seen since the days of Julius Caesar. It is our "nerves" that make us what we are.

What Made It Wild.

From the New York Herald.

All the customers of Charles Kaerbein who keeps a saloon at No. 502 Washington street, Hoboken, dropped in yesterday to see the wild cat which Charley's brother, Ferdinand, had just brought from the United States of Columbia for the New York Zoological society of which he is acting assistant curator general. The cat, which is zoologically known as an ocelot, was in a little wooden crate with thin slats for bars, and it was the wildest looking wild beast that any of the thirty ones had ever seen.

"What a wild cat," said Gus Hogeboom, as he hewed that froth from a foaming beaker, "Why that thing would jump through this and out of your hand."

"Sure he's a wild cat," said Charley. "My brother said so, and he ought to know."

"Snush," remarked Meyer Goldberg, with scorn. "I got a black cat at home that would eat him alive."

"He's a sure enough wild cat just the same," insisted Charley.

"Well what makes him wild?" inquired Gus Hogeboom, as he shifted his feet on the brass rail.

"Makes him wild, John," said Charley, "what makes him wild, John?" and he appealed to his bartender.

"Search me," said John, "but it's time to feed him," and producing from behind the bar a luscious and far reaching cake of limburger cheese, he approached the ocelot's crate and inserted the toothsome delicacy between the bars.

Half a minute later Gus and Meyer and all the rest were agreed that it was the wildest wildcat they ever had met. The filmy crate went to pieces with a couple of heaves and the cat took charge of the bar, he wrecked whole communities of bottles, spilled unfinished schooners, flew about the room like an insane cyclone and made the place look like the morning after Ferdinand arrived with a keeper from the Bronx that, by the aid of sharp prodded poles and net, the ocelot was subdued and returned to captivity.

About that time Gus and the others were pulling themselves together out of the adjacent neighborhood.

"Sure," said Gus wisely, as he rubbed himself with a pained expression, "I got the answer. That's what makes him wild."

Nevada's Wild Horses.

From the Milwaukee Sentinel.

The ranges set apart by the government in Nevada are overrun by droves of wild horses, which in the aggregate are said to amount to 15,000 at least," said D. C. Carson, who has just returned from that state. "At one time there was a law in Nevada permitting the shooting of these wild horses in order to get rid of them. The hides were sold and the hunters made a good living out of it.

"But, as is usually the case, there were hunters who continually made mistakes when out gunning. Many a domestic horse fell a victim to the hunters' rifles. This finally became so much of a loss to the ranchers and others that the law was repealed. Since that time the droves have grown and are exceedingly troublesome. The forestry men are ordered to shoot these horses when ever they come on them, but they are so busy with other and more necessary work that little impression is made on the droves by that means. Meanwhile, the horses are increasing and the question of how to wipe them out is becoming a serious one for all concerned."

Explained.

Grace—Miss Waspie says she wonders why she has to meet so many disagreeable people.

Heleen—That's easily explained. It's hard for anybody not to be disagreeable in Miss Waspie's company.

Cement is used for roofing in France, especially near Lyons.

Cuba's output of molasses this year will not fall short of 10,000,000 gallons.

Taking Periodicals.

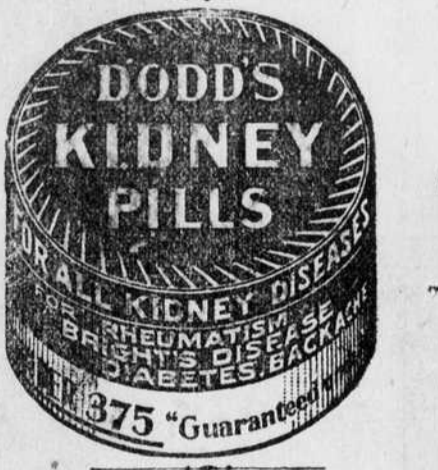
Jack London, the writer, was talking in San Francisco about the desertion of his crew. Mr. London, as well as the world knows, is circling the world in a small boat, and his crew deserted at Honolulu on account of the dullness of the life.

"They are greatly bored," said Mr. London. "They had a look of mind all the time. What did they expect? They acted as if they expected a periodical shipwreck, a periodical onslaught of cannibals, a periodical rescue of some fair girl from pirates. They were rather like a man named Samson whom I once knew."

A book agent called on Samson's wife.

"Do you take any periodicals?" he inquired.

"Oh, no," she replied. "I never take any. But my husband, I'm sorry to say, takes a periodical about once every 10 days. Are you a temperance worker, sir?"



When I loved a maiden
My heaven was in her eyes,
And when they bent above me
I knew no deeper skies;
But when her heart forsok me,
My spirit broke its bars,
For grief beyond the sunset
And love beyond the stars.

When I loved a maiden
She seemed the world to me;
Now is my soul the universe,
My dreams—the stars are I;
There is no heaven above sea,
No glory binds or bars,
My grief beyond the sunset
My love beyond the stars.

When I loved a maiden
I worshipped where she trod;
But when she went to heaven,
Set free the imprisoned god,
Then was I king of all the world,
My soul had burst its bars
For grief beyond the sunset
And love beyond the stars.

—Alfred Noyes in Everybody's.

How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.

We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligations made by his firm.

WALDING, KINNA & MARVIN,
Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price 75 cents per bottle. Sold by all Druggists.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

Orchestra Oversight.

The snare drummer happened to catch a selection that called for the use of half a dozen or more instruments. To make the shift from one to another he had to hustle in a fashion that nightly impressed persons sitting near. When he had finished the lively operation he was puffing and blowing and the perspiration was coming out in streams.

A man just outside the orchestra rail leaned forward and pointing to the score, remarked:

"That was good work, old man, but you missed one place."

"I did?" responded the drummer in surprise. "Why, I thought I played everything that came my way."

"No," the other resumed, "you didn't do everything, and I saw the leader glance at you. Right there, in the middle of that measure, is a place where it says you should have gone down cellar and shaken the furnace, and you didn't pay any attention to it."

Interesting Railway Facts.

In one year, 1926, with the aid of modern railroad appliances, it was able to move one ton of freight 139,963 miles, and one passenger 16,237 miles. A man with a good team of horses and a wagon on roads better than the average American road would be doing well to haul one and a half tons 30 miles, six days in the week, or 15,000 ton miles per year, leaving no time for passenger transportation. At this rate it would require more than 10 men and 20 horses to do the freight transportation which one man does with a railroad and without any horses; and to carry the freight traffic which the railroads do this country carried last year, 17,500,000 men and 35,000,000 horses would be required, instead of the 1,672,000 men who actually not only effected the transportation of all this freight, but of all the passenger traffic also. The improvement since 1888 alone has enabled 1,672,000 men to do what in 1888 would have required 700,000 more.

New Ideas for Play.

Manager—I've got a new idea for a melodrama that ought to make a hit.

Playwright—What is it?

Manager—The idea is to introduce a cyclone in the first act that will kill all the actors.

THEN AND NOW.

Complete Recovery from Coffee Ills.

"About nine years ago my daughter, from coffee drinking, was on the verge of nervous prostration," writes a Louisville lady. "She was confined for the most part to her home.

"When she attempted a trip down town she was often brought home in a cab and would be prostrated for days afterwards.

"On the advice of her physician she gave up coffee and tea, drank Postum, and ate Grape-Nuts for breakfast.

"She liked Postum from the very beginning and we soon saw improvement. To-day she is in perfect health, the mother of five children, all of whom are fond of Postum.

"She has recovered, is a member of three charity organizations and a club, holding an office in each. We give Postum and Grape-Nuts the credit for her recovery."

"There's a Reason."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.