THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUNDOUT

By A. L. Harris Author of "Mine Own Familiar Friend," etc. Copyright, 1891, by Cassell Publishing Company. Copyright, 1902, by Street & Smith.

He struck a match, and, lighting

the candle, advanced towards the door

which he inserted his duplicate key.

He entered and closed the door be-

He put his candle down on the writ-

ing table while he considered what

was to be done next. The waste

paper basket first attracted his atten-

tion as being at once the nearest and

the easiest object on which to exer-

It was about a quarter full of torn

fragments, which he promptly

emptied out before him. A rapid and

cursory examination was sufficient to

prove that these were of no import-

ance. So he swept them back into

The next thing to be done must be

to tackle the writing table. How was

this to be accomplished? Shocking

to relate, he produced from his pocket

nothing less than-a bunch of skele-

To his great disappointment one

after another of the drawers upon the

right hand proved to be empty. He

turned his attention to those on his

out the tightly wedged contents. He

spread it open; yes, it was a news-

paper-some months old. What could

be the reason for preserving it? A

dent! The 4:30 train from Dover

wrecked and partially consumed!"

There was a full account of that

ghastly affair, with minute details

of all the horrors-a recollection of

which returned to him, most vividly

"Further details—number of bodies

other and another.

He put his hand to one and pulled

their original receptacle.

ton keys!

cise his powers of investigation.

hind him, without, however, com-

pletely shutting it.

CHAPTER XXII.-Continued. Before he could reply the house-

maid put in another word. "Beggirg your pardon for speaking, after being told to hold my tongue, out it's something beginning with a

book I came across accidental." "So that is how you came by your information," said her master, "Something beginning with a 'B,' is it? Sup-

'B'-as I saw it myself in a prayer

pose you let me see the book?" "Which I intended to have showed it to you at the first," she said, fumbling in her pocket and producing the well worn little volume, which she was about to hand to her master.

A sudden dart-a long arm stretched out, and a powerful hand wrested it from her.

"This is my property," exclaimed its owner, sternly. "The name written within may be mine or another's, but so long as I choose to keep it a secret-secret it shall remain."

"This is most extraordinary conduct!" exclaimed Mr. Ferrers, "most extraordinary! Under the circumstances, only one course is open to me. It is impossible for me to harbor under my roof one who has obtained | left. admittance under a false name, and absolutely refuses any explanation. I must, therefore,"-assuming his severest expression, while the young man seemed to hold his breath as he waited for the sentence to be pro- sudden thought-he looked at the date nounced upon him-"I must, there and then-Yes, there it was on the infore, discharge you at once, and with side sheet. "Terrible Railway Accia month's wages in lieu of the ordinary notice."

It was all up.

morrow, if you like."

He could scarcely prevent himself

from showing some signs of exulta-

tion. Ah! perhaps by this time to-

morrow the situation might be chang-

ed. He might be the judge, and an-

"Stay one moment," Mr. Ferrers

This time he addressed the woman

"As I have also a strong objection

to persons who pry into other people's

a month's notice at the same time.

succeeded in wi king her spite upon

him who had de pised her attractions

situation. Moreover, the man whose

disgrace she had labored to secure

laughed in her face as he passed her.

That will do; you can go."

Perkins, who had reached the door.

all he required.

other-

continued.

"When-when am I to leave?" inquired Ted, with eyes fixed upon the floor and heart beating furiously.

as he scanned the column. He re-This question seemed to take the placed the first, and took down anperson to whom it was addressed unawares.

"When!" he answered; "why-oh,

"I will try the third first." he said, and inserted one of his skeleton keys into the lock. This drawer-the third in order from the top-on being opened showed itself, strangely enough, to contain three articles, all of a widely different character.

These were a large and bulky envelope, a revolver and a small bottle of colorless fluid. The young man could not repress an exclamation of surprise and triumph as his eye fell upon these.

The secret he had been in search of of the apartment into the lock of so long lay ready to his hand-the proofs of the crime were there waiting for him to grasp them. He knew it, and yet hesitated. The shock of the discovery seemed to paralyze his hand, so that for an instant he was unable to stretch forth and take possession of what he believed would make him master of a man's fate.

At last he put out his hand, which trembled as he did so, and took up the revolver. It was a six-chamber revolver, and a glauce showed that one ony of the chambers had been dis-

A fierce, hungry look came over his face as he roticed this, and, laying the weapon down, he searched for something which he always carried about him-the conical shaped bullet which had been discovered in the stuffing of the fourth carriage from the engine. He dropped it into the empty chamber, which it fitted exactly.

"Proof number one!" he said, with grim joy, as he felt the dreadful thirst for blood return upon him with ail its former strength. He laid the revolver down and took up the small stoppered bottle. What was this, and what bearing had its contents upon the matter? He removed the stopper and inhaled the contents carefully. A strong and unmistakable, odor of bitter almonds greeted him. Prussic acid, beyond doubt! What did this point to? There seemed to be only one answer possible-Suicide! A means of escape provided in case of the worst happening. He replaced the stopper and placed the bottle by the side of the revolver, while he took up the third and last article. This was the envelope before mentioned. It was large and thick and sealed in no less than three places. On it, in place of an address, were written the strange words: . "To be burned, unopened,

after my death." To be burned, unopened, after his death!-what did that mean? Why, if it were to be burned, unopened, had he put himself to the pains of writing it? For that the envelope contained the completed copy of the "true narrative and confession of the strange tragedy" he had not the least doubt. But why had he described it as the strange tragedy? Cowardly and detestable it might well be-but why strange?

"At any rate, so far from its being burned, unopened," he said, aloud. "I will now myself—'

He held the letter in one hand and, with the other he was about to break the seals, when a voice cried: "Stop!"

(To be continued.)

Doctors knew a Good Thing. Congressman John Sharp Williams tells of a man in Mississippi who is a hypochondriac of the first order. This individual's failing is a source of never-ending amusement to his fellow townsmen. It was of this man that some one humorously remarked, in answer to a question as to how the sick man was getting on, that "he com-

Mr. Williams says that the hypochondriac was one day telling a friend of his efforts to regain his old-time health. He ran over the list of doctors whom he had consulted. Whereupon the friend remarked:

plained that he was feeling somewhat

"Well, old man, I must say that you appear to have lots of faith in doc-

"Certainly I have," replied the sick man. "Don't you think the doctors would be foolish to let a good customer like me dte?" - Colorado Springs Gazette.

Long Lines of Kings.

Though Japan be the latest country to enter the circle of world powers. her emperor surpasses all sovereigns in the length of his pedigree, according to the London Chronicle. He is the one hundred and twenty-second member in direct, unbroken descent of his family who has sat on the throne of Japan. The founder of his house was, in Japanese legend, a goddess of the sun, and contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar, 666 years before the Christian era. On the other hand, the Romanoffs have been royal only since 1601, when they succeeded to the sovereignty of the then extinct house of Rurik. As for other European rulers, King Edward can go back to Cerdic, 395 A. D., the Hapsburgs to 952 A. D., and the Hohenzollerns to the eighth century, but as kings only to 1701.

Why It Wasn't Legal.

In the New York Law School at a recent lecture on the making of wills the case of a woman in one of Rider Haggard's books was cited. This woman had a man's will inscribed in ink on her back. And the will was held regular and legal because it had been made in writing.

After giving this practical illustra-"Is a will so inscribed regular and |

legal in your opinion?" "No," answered Smith.

"Why not?" asked the professor. "Because it's a skin game," replied

The professor felt angry enough to order Smith out of the room, but the class laughed so much that he decided to overlook the student's flippancy.

EUROPE IS JEALOUS.

STIRRED UP BY "AMERICAN COM-PETITION."

Talk of Commercial Unions Against the United States Is Almost Universal-President McKinley's Words of Advice Recalled.

The government report of the commerce of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1903, plainly indicated that the calendar year 1903 would be a record-breaker with respect to exports and imports. The total for the year is \$2,479,000,000. The export figures are \$1,484.668,127; imports, \$995,473,101; excess of exports over imports, \$480,095,000. In thirty years, from 1873 to 1903, exports increased 167 per cent, while imports increased 67 per cent. The figures tell their own story, fully justify the foreign tributes to our commercial progress, and explain the movements on foot in Europe to organize trade alliances to meet "American competi-

liance, particularly directed against the United States, has been a pet project with Count Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs. That somewhat irascible official proclaimed six years ago that Europe should counteract American commercial energy. European nations, he urged, must stand together against "transoceanic" countries. An Italian admiral and former foreign minister took up the refrain, and even the sedate London Spectator observed that America was cherishing "illusions" as to its security from huge coalitions of this kind. The London journal said that Europe had become restive for the reason that we are beyond foreign commercial competition, are disposed to monopolize trade, take "swift reprisals" when European countries fortify their industries with tariffs, are a rock in Europe's way in China, while holding fast to the Philippines. Fear, hatred and dread were rapidly becoming, according to the Spectator, the dominant continental emotions toward

The difficulties confronting this economic alliance have been insuperable hitherto, but a step has now been taken in that direction by the organization of the Middle European Economic Society. One of its founders says that the greatest task before the organization will be the creation of Count Goluchowski's commercial union. It is hoped to bring the Triple Alliance, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Scandinavia within the operations of the society.

has recently reported that it is necessary to obtain a reduction of the American tariff by a reciprocity convention in the interest of French industries, and it is probable that other European countries will endeavor to secure similar treaties with the United States—all of which gives emphasis to President McKinley's declaration:

"Commercial wars are unprofitable. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times; measures

By still "holding up" the Panama treaty. Senator Gorman and his associates may be embarrassing the administration, but they certainly are injuring their own party.

Incident to the presidential election in Colombia popular feeling in the little republic is excited. Reports from Bogota are that a large force of troops is to be sent to the isthmus. If this be done the United States

Responsibility will be charged upon the Democratic senators who, refusing to recognize an accomplished fact and in order to "put the administration in a hole," delay the treaty and encourage the Colombians in their miscon-

Secretary Hay's note of Nov. 11 distinctly stated that under this government's interpretation of its obligations no hostile troops would be permitted to land in any part of Panama. Since that time the new republic has been recognized by all the great European powers and the United States has negotiated with it a treaty guaranteeing the integrity of its territory

popular desire for the canal, of the treaty, Mr. Gorman and his associates | while he is living. Mr. Bryan collects

When Secretary Hay was asked for government aims to represent the

This is as it should be. It is a so much to do with the foreign rela-

from the secretary of state. They seem to think that the relations of the whole country to foreign nations are an appropriate field in which to develop personal and political rancor, and seek for partisan advantage at the expense of the whole country. If they cannot find at home political issues on which their party may ride into power they, in search of such issues, play politics with the foreign relations of the government, careless of the injury they may inflict upon the credit and prosperity of their country.

It is unfortunate that senators who have been trying to make political capital out of an important treaty now before the senate have not that high sense of patriotic duty and of regard for the welfare of the whole country which Secretary Hay put in one pregnant sentence. They should go to school to him until they have learned the difference between the foreign and domestic affairs of a nation. Every man in public life should know and respect it, but there are senators who do not. They have made themselves so conspicuous that it is not necessary to name them.

Time to Stop It.

Last Monday the insurgents about the city of Santo Domingo fired upon the launch of the United States cruiser Yankee, killing Engineer J. C. Johnston and openly attacking the American flag.

In itself the incident is not of great international importance. But it is symptomatic of a condition that has prevailed for a century in Santo Domingo and its neighbor, Hayti, and whose further endurance by the United States is a public scandal.

The people of these two so-called republies have proved, through three generations of experiment and experience, absolutely incapable of orderly government. Their history is but a chronicle of factional brawls and their rulers but a succession of military adventurers.

Aside from the destruction of the Maine there was nothing in the condition of Cuba more warranting American intervention than there is and long has been in the condition of Santo Domingo and Hayti. People so barbarous as to murder Engineer Johnston would not hesitate to blow up an American national vessel with all her

It is time to drop the sentimental nonsense which has governed our treatment of this American island and to stop this public anarchy. Since these people cannot and will not keep peace and order for themselves it is time for the United States to keep peace and order for them.-Chicago Inter Ocean.

Gorman Out of the Race.

The election of Isidor Rayner to the United States senate from Maryland probably will put an immediate end to the talk of the nomination of Senator Gorman for the presidency. Mr. Rayner is a strong anti-machine man and won his fight against the determined opposition of the political organization of which Senator Gorman is the

At Senator Gorman': request, former Governor Smith called an extraordinary session of the legislature two years ago for the enactment of a negro disfranchisement law. It was understood at the time that, in return for this action, Governor Smith was to be sent to the senate.

When the time for the balloting came, however, Senator Gorman disregarded his alleged promise and threw his strength to Bernard Carter, the leading railroad corporation lawyer of Maryland. Some of the former governor's friends stood by him, but neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Carter could muster at any stage of the proceedings as many votes as Mr. Rayner, the out-and-out independent, who will be Senator Gorman's colleague.

The long and bitter fight and his final defeat have greatly weakened Mr. Gorman's influence in his own state, and the number of Democratic presidential possibilities is reduced by one.

Mr. Bryan and Mr. Carnegie. Mr. Bryan, as becomes a blossoming plutocrat, begins to emulate Mr. Carnegie. He is to erect and give to Salem, Ill., the city of his birth, a library building, to cost \$25,000. Then he is to provide and install a library at a cost of \$15,000. It may be doubted if that is not too much money to spend upon the books in a \$25,000 building. Whether the sum be disproportionate or not, it testifies to the donor's breadth of view and enlightened generosity. The race between

all the admirers of philanthropy. Mr. Carnegie may have more money, but Mr. Bryan has more youth, a profitable pen and voice and great testaare neither patriotic nor politic in pro- the money from the dead to give away. tracting their vain and factious "hold | The conditions are less unequal than they seem .- New York Sun.

Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Bryan will be

watched with turilling excitement by

No Law a Panacea.

The whole discussion of remedies a statement in regard to the rumored | for trusts is apt to create the unfoundsettlement of the war crisis in the ed belief that for all industrial ills east, he made an answer which con- there is an absolute cure. It contained this felicitous phrase: "The ceals the fact that great financial sucstate department never plays politics, cess, even by a trust, can be won not the crisis comes that shakes the nabut in the foreign relations of the only by hidden and abhorent means, but by transcendent ability and unflagging industry. It is apt, moreover, to engender the delusion that law can pity that the same cannot be said of | "transmute leaden instincts into goldthe United States senate, which has | en conduct," and that eventually society will evolve a way by which the tions of the country by virtue of its | individual may avoid pecketing unaparticipation in the treaty making voidable losses, and will devise a substitute for the old-fashioned vir-There are some senators who, in tue of looking out for number one .-



This is more important than it

seems at first sight. Not until a

farmer learns something about the weeds on his farm; their life, habits and the injury they are doing, will he be interested enough to try and eradicate them, says Professor L. R. Waldron of the North Dakota station. The quantity of weeds upon many of the Indians' farms in this state is notorious and it is here that we find the knowledge in regard to weeds, and consequently the interest taken in their removal, at its lowest ebb. It is when we find the weed question becoming a part of the farmer's conscience, a part of his moral life, that we have great Lopes for the future of that man's farm. This can come about only through the channel of education. An observing farmer learns in two or three years the weeds that are most abundant upon his farm, also those that are doing him the greatest amount of damage. He can also learn the names of these upon inquiry, or they can be sent to the experiment station, where information concerning them will be cheerfully furnished. A piece of land is infested with a certain kind of weed which becomes more abundant than all other kinds. The method of rotation the farmer is using increases rather than decreases the weed. If he knows the habit of this weed he can change his rotation soon enough to prevent its becoming very abundant. If he knows the appearance of the seed, he will quit sowing grain containing that weed seed. An example came under-the writer's observation some time ago. A piece of land was infested with wild morning glory or bindweed. This weed is a perennial and spreads by means of deep-seated underground stems. The land had been seeded for several years in such a way as not to hinder the growth of this weed. By the middle of June the morning glory had almost complete possession of the field and from that time the wheat crop was doomed. Had the farmer known this weed and the nature of it a few years ago, he could have gotten rid of it without much trouble, whereas now the land is practically worthless and a large amount of labor will be necessary to exterminate it. If every farmer knew the Canada thistle on sight and kept a sharp lookout for it, many of the thistle pat hes could be gotten rid of easily; but, the plants become deep-rooted after four or five years and difficult to eradicate.

The Wheat Crop, 1903.

Below we give, by states and territories, the yields of winter and spring wheat, for the year 1903, as compiled by the United States Department of

WINTER WHEAT.				
States and Ter- ritories.	Acreage.	Yield per acre.	Produc-	
	Acres.	Bush	Bushels.	
New York	544,039	17.8	9,683,894	
New Jersey	113,456	14.0	1,588,384	
Pennsylvania	1,669,131	15.6	26,039,411	
Delaware	114,489	10.2	1,167,786	
Maryland	809,667	12.5	10,120,338	
Virginia	804,557	8.7	6,909,646	
North Carolina		5.1	3,228,606	
South Carolina ."	270,261	6.5	1,756,696	
Georgia	299,958	6.2	1,859,719	
Florida	10000		A CONTRACTOR	
Alabama	412,133	9.1	1,029,419	
Mississippi	3,569	8.0	28,552	
Louisiana	75.0575	0.0		
Texas	1.483,595	13.4	19,880,173	
Arkansas	274,654	7.0	1,922,578	
Tennessee	1,683,531	7.1	7,693,670	
West Virginia	404,785	10.2	4,128,807	
Kentucky	920,028	8.4	7,728,235	
Ohio	2,065,950	13.7	28,303,515	
Michigan	1,001,604	15.5	15,521,862	
indiana	2,399,403	10.0	23,994,630	
Illinois	1,972,850	8.4	16,571,940	
Wisconsin	192,761	18.6	2,469,782	
Minnesota				
Iowa	80.156	15.9	1,274,480	
Missouri	2,551,105	8.7	22:194.614	
Kansas	5,951,146	14.0	83,316,044	
Nebraska	2,183,494	16.4	35,809,302	
Idaho		21.0	2,682,939	
Washington	373.989	20.1	7.517.179	
Oregon	368,126	18.9	6,957,5e1	
California	1.868,410	11.2	20,926,192	
Oklahoma	1.643.130	14.9	24,482,637	
Indian Territory.	249.691	12.0	2.696.292	
United States	27 510 510		was out orn	

SPRING WHEAT,

United States 32.510.510 | 12.3 | 390.867.250

States and Ter- ritories.	Acreage.	Yield per acre.	Production.
	Acres	Bush	Buxhela
Maine	→ 8.132	25.5	297,356
New Hampshire .			
Vermont	1.76%	29.9	35.697
Wisconsin	403.805	1.6	5,895,553
Minnesota	5.321.325	111	70,652,597
Iowa		12.1	11.256.824
Missouri		0.000	
Kansas		17.1	3,933,511
Nebraska	503,830	12.6	6,349,258
South Dakota	3,424,150	13.8	47,252,994
North Dakota		12.7	55,240,580
Montana	28,730	28.2	2,784,327
Wyoming	22,667	29.9	473,740
Colorado	2235,082	26.6	7,423,381
New Mexico	41,712	18.4	822,701
Arizona	19,129	25.0	483,964
Utah		22.6	4.156.071
Nevada	21,426	27.6	591.358
Idaho	114,791	21.3	2:445.049
Washington	~ 608,252	20,5	12,469,166
Oregon	316,835	17.3	5,481,245
California	********		
Okinhoma			
Indian Territory .			
United States.	16,954,457	14.0	217,954,585

Go to the country where man lives close to nature's heart; study him as he there meets the problems of life. and you will find literature which is realistic in the best and truest sense. Men of the country are to our national life what the steel frame is to our mighty stone or brick structures when tion to its foundation. It is the loyal hearts and clear brains of the country folks which save it from destruction. -(Ian McLaren) Rev. John Watson.

Farmvard manure is a universal fertilizer, suiting all crops, climates and soils. In the case of leguminous crops where great difficulty has been experienced in arranging satisfactory artificial mixtures, farmyard manure has always given excellent results.

CHAPTER XXIII. The Envelope With Three Seals.

It was twelve o'c.ock on Friday sight. The clock in the hall below had struck the hour. Another half hour ticked slowly by, and at the end of that time a door in the upper part of the house was opened softly and by imperceptible degrees.

The room within was in darkness and the figure of the man who cautiously emerged was barely visible in

the general glocm.

he succeeded in laying his hand upon a candle and a box of matches, which, earlier in the evening, he had secreted in a convenient, but out-of-the-way corner.

"This is my property!" as soon as you can; or "-with a | found-distressing scenes-the inslightly more leniert tone, as he re- quest-the verdict-mysterious disflected that, after all, as the fellow covery with regard to a first class pashimself had said, there might be rea- senger-foul play suspected! Verdict sons, not necessarily bad, for the con- of Wilful Murder!" And so on and cealment-"you can remain until toso on he retraced his way through the whole of that dark tragedy-wasting Victory! Another night, which was what he felt to be precious time, but

unable to tear his attention away from these records of the past. At last he rammed the paper back into its pigeon hole and turned his attention again to the drawer beneath. When it at last yielded to his efforts, he was rewarded by the sight of a flatly folded packet of parchment, tied with tape-the identical last will and testament which he had heard spoken of so often by the cook. But this, though of interest in one way, was not that of which he

concerns and interfere with their priwas in search, and he began to feel vate property, you may as well take a qualm of fear lest, after all, his quest should prove useless. His eye, roaming restlessly about, The biter was it. She had not a was caught by the gleam of brass in a word to say I herself. She had dark corner. The candle, which was sufficient to light him at his task, still left the greater part of the room in and repulsed her overtures, but she semi-darkness, and there was somehad done it at the expense of a good thing over there, in that corner, which

> he had not taken into account. It was an old fashioned piece of furniture-the only shabby and evidently second hand article in the room. It was an upright article and was divided into a portions, the lower containing drawers and the upper being shut in with doors, which were fitted with a brass lock and fastening.

It was old and much scratched, and had apparently seen considerable use; but must have been a good article originally. He took the candle in his hand and, crossing the room, inspected it closely. "There is a look about it"-holding the candle up higher-"as though it might have a history He crept lightly on his stockinged attached to it. It looks"-with a sudfeet past the doors of the rooms on | den impulse-"as though it might be the upper floor, and began to descend trusted to keep a secret." He put the candle upon the mantelpiece close by It was much in his favor, the stairs and again resumed his burglarious being so well and so massively con- operations. "I shall soon be able to structed, that there was no startling pass muster as an experienced house- tion, the professor called on John and treacherous creak to betray the breaker, at this rate," he remarked to Smith, saying: feet which trod them secretly in the | himself, with grim irony, as the lock dead of night. And so he made his turned traitor, and the door, swinging way slowly and safely to the floor on open, revealed a number of drawers which the room was situated into within, each garnished with a lock which he was minded to penetrate. and brass handle. Which should he After careful and noiseless search, attack first? Much time had already been wasted, and at that moment, as though in answer, the clock on the mantelpiece chimed three, while the clock in the hall without repeated the

hour after it.

A Middle European Commercial Al-

America.

The French Customs Commission

of retaliation are not."

Neither Patriotic Nor Politic.

will be at war with Colombia.

ception of this country's attitude.

-the treaty now before the senate. Thus, as Mr. Hay asserts, Panama has acquired "an inchoate right" to our protection, and invasion by Colombia would be fercibly repelled by the United States. In view of the strong demands expressed by southern legislatures and of the demonstration in caucuses that Democratic senators mentary expectations. Mr. Carnegle cannot be mustered to defeat the is trying to give away his money

A Felicitous Phrase.

whole people.

power.

theory and practice, differ radically New York Post.