

THE DRAGONS.

Prince Vortigern—so run the ancient tales—
A stronghold sought to build in wildest Wales;
But some fell power frustrated each essay,
And nightly wrecked the labors of the day;
Till Merlin came, and bade the builders all,
Beneath the escarp'd and many-bastioned wall,
Dig deep; and lo, two dragons, o'er whose lair
Nothing secure might rise, lay sleeping there.

Search the foundations, you that build a state;
For if the dragon forms of Wrath and Hate
Lie coiled below, and darkly bide their hour,
Fear walks the rampart, Fear ascends the tower,
And let it not content you that they sleep;
Drive them with strong enchantments to the deep.
First of such charms is Perfect Justice; then
Comes the heart's word that conquers beasts and men
No other craft shall serve—no spells but these
Drive the old dragons to the whelming seas.

—Saturday Review.

Their Growsome Bridesmaid

GEORGE HAYDEN was really no such great villain after all.

Put baldly, he had merely flirted with a girl of a lower position in life than his own, and left her. Yet circumstances and the girl had before long made the affair seem a heartless tragedy, and for two miserable years George Hayden had been haunted by it.

There was no doubt that he had made love, generally with gay nonchalance, occasionally with fervor, to Kate Moon, of Mossyke farm.

It was during that summer when he was off fishing in Devon, and the weather was beyond reproach—except for fishing. The trout would not bite, and Kate Moon was beautiful, tall and black haired, with a complexion of the proverbial Devon milk and roses; a magnificent, passionate, impulsive girl.

It was an artistic pleasure to him to see her coming toward him in her lilac-cotton gown—she always wore lilac-cotton gowns unlike any one else's, full gathered and dainty, with a bordering of palest pink around her waist; the effect was one of lavender and roses.

It was when the rector came back after his holiday, bringing with him his sister, his niece and—quite by coinci-



"TELL HER ABOUT ME AND SEE WHAT SHE'LL SAY."

dence—a college friend of Hayden, that mischief began, and it began without delay, for the college friend recognizing Hayden in the village, introduced him to the rectory party, and Hayden promptly fell in love, genuinely this time, with Sybil Dove, the rector's niece.

It did not take Kate Moon long, either, to see her doom.

Hayden, it is true, was a little troubled at first, but that was merely annoyance with himself for the careless way in which he had talked love—"desecrated," he called it—but he did not dream of the manner in which Kate would take it.

No one but Hayden and Kate herself knew of that terrible night of recrimination when the moon shone down on the final meeting in Dalving wood.

By the next night Hayden had left the village; by the next Sunday Kate Moon had left the world; she had drowned herself in the river—the pretty river where the trout had fought shy of Hayden's rod and line.

And Hayden began that terrible two years with the sight of the girl constantly before his eyes, in her lilac gown, with the rose-pink bands about her waist and hem, and with her last words in his ears.

"Tell her about me, and see what she'll say of your love! Tell her, I say, or I'll curse you to your very marriage day!—aye, to your very deathbed; I'll walk and sit and stand between you, and you shall never bide in peace!"

Then what had seemed but a summer's flirtation shocked Hayden as a heartless tragedy, and grew and grew into his life till he became, to himself a sort of banned wanderer.

About two years later Hayden met Sybil Dove in Rome, and for the first time the wretched tragedy became less important, and his heart leaped. He could see, too, that Sybil was happy to meet him.

For weeks he sunned himself in joy, and tried to banish Kate. Then one day he faced the ghost and reasoned with himself in a logical, sensible manner, and his state of mind became more normal, and he asked himself why he should not be happy.

Next morning, on the hill, he broke into the first love words he had uttered since he dawked with Kate by the Devonshire river.

"I love you!" he cried out, as he and Sybil sat resting in the noontide. "Sybil, I can't live without you! I have hungered for you since I first met you two years ago!"

"I love you, too!" she said, simply, when she could find voice. And Hayden held her in his arms for a rapturous moment.

When he glanced up, his arms still about her, a girl was passing along the hill below—a dark-haired girl, in a lilac gown. It was, of course, merely a coincidence.

Hayden shivered and loosed his clasp. The old haunted feeling had returned. He had an impulse to tell Sybil the whole wretched story, but it would be a gloomy beginning to the first hour of his new happiness. Besides which, Mrs. Dove came into sight at the moment.

Those were strange months, those months of engagement. There were hours when both Hayden and Sybil were wildly gay; but again there were hours when a cloud hung over them, when something seemed to be between them, checking their words as if a third person were listening.

In himself Hayden could understand the feeling, for even now, spite of argument, spite of happy future, he could not throw off the recollection of Kate Moon and her despair. But the same mood in Sybil he could not understand. Was the drowned girl always to be between them? Hayden groaned.

"Tell her, I say, tell her, or—" In desperation Hayden caught up his hat. "I'll stroll down to the church," he muttered hastily the evening before the wedding, after hours of gloom in which he had seen the dead girl walking between himself and his living bride. "I'll see how the decorations are getting on."

It was a lovely old building of gray stone, far famed for its many windows of stained glass, which in a close line told in rich purples and crimson the story of Joseph and his brethren.

One or two gardeners were busy at the choir stalls; some girls talking in subdued tones were garlanding a pillar. Hayden watched their deftness. Then with a tender impulse he turned his eyes to the altar, where he would kneel to-morrow beside—

A sudden horror clutched him, the blood surged within him and deafened him. Bending at the altar step was a dark-haired figure in a lilac gown with a pink band across the hem.

Hayden groped with his hand, and, clutching a pew door, closed his eyes in a despairing faintness. His bondage was to be relentless.

When he looked again the figure was gone. The girls at the pillar had turned from their work to speak to another. Unseen in his misery, Hayden stole out at the porch, stunned and cold in the sunshine.

Hayden never forgot the night which followed, as he lay, unnerfed and hopeless, waiting for his wedding day, and facing in all their details the two years past and the many years to come, from the day when he had played a summer's game with the heart of a girl to all the days when he should live close to the girl he loved, and feel himself a murderer.

Toward morning he began to take a more ordinary view of the matter. This was his wedding day—sunny, happy, glorious. He had been in an excited, unnatural state of mind yesterday. He had brooded so long that his remorse was abnormal.

"The prettiest wedding the village had ever seen," the people said afterward. The pews were packed and a subdued buzz of comment played about Hayden's ears as he waited.

He had not allowed himself much time to kill; but, supported by his best man, he took his place about five minutes before the bride was expected. He determined to throw off useless self-reproaches and do his best in the future.

The brightly colored crowd was an undistinguishable whole to him; but at the end of the aisle was a shaft of brilliant light; it streamed through the porch, and into and through it walked a double line of beauty.

They came on in the sunshine and halted till the end of the lines was inside the door, then they widened the space between them and lined the lower half of the little aisle.

The smile on Hayden's face snapped off as suddenly as if struck by a hand; his features became stiff and

ashen-colored; a roar seemed to be filling the church and hurrying his brain, the building itself heaved about him.

But the figure on which his eye had first smilingly rested stood motionless. She stood nearest to him, as first bridesmaid, her back slightly turned; a drooping hat almost hid her features, but she was dark-haired and splendidly poised, and her gown was of lilac with a pink band about the hem! Lilac, among the white gowns beside her!

Then he felt a hand grip his arm firmly. "Keep up, old man, she's coming," some one said.

Then a hush, then a stir filled the church, and between the waiting bridesmaids, shutting from his sight that terrifying form, came Sybil toward him; and chilled, horror-filled, as one in a dream, he stepped to meet her.

"Tell her, I say, tell her—" was in his ears as the marriage service began. A strange vow mingled with Hayden's marriage vows. "Tell her?" "I will." "I will." "I vow it."

There was no lilac gown among the bridesmaids surrounding her when he took her away. He could see no one like Kate Moon.

But he told Sybil all the story as they drove toward their new life; and she listened with flushed, averted cheek.

But when he had finished, and a moment's silence like a concrete block of despair had followed, she turned to him and wept upon his shoulder. And "How you must both have suffered!" were her first sobbing words.

But because she was frightened by the new suffering the telling of the tale had cost him, she did not say that she had known the story all along, and that the silence had been as an avenging ghost between them.

One day, long after, when Hayden and his wife strolled into the old church, he noticed a curious thing.

Sybil had walked toward the chancel while Hayden halted by the door, and as she stood a moment in the aisle he saw her white gown turn to lilac in the sunlight, and a band of rose-color fell across the hem.

For a moment the blood flushed into his face, and all the miserable past rose before him.

Then, as he looked, Sybil moved forward and her gown was white again—and again as she moved it was splashed with color.

Then in swift enlightenment he looked up at the famous windowed story of Joseph and he understood.

"It was all for the best, though," he said to himself at last, and in unutterable relief he followed his wife and stood again beside her before the altar.—*Utica Globe.*

MEDICINAL VIRTUES OF FISH.

Carp and the Tench Are Valuable as Curatives.

Fishing literature, prior to the days and writings of Izaak Walton, opens up points of interest which are unique, says the Brooklyn Eagle. Not the least interesting are the constant references of the early writers to the medical virtues of fish. Of course, many of the salt and fresh water fishes mentioned by the old writers are not recognized by the writers of to-day, but the freshwater perch, carp, tench and eel are yet recognized, and it is in connection with these fish that some of the quaintest ideas as to their medicinal virtues has prevailed.

In the art of healing the carp plays a respectable part. One old writer speaks of the fat of the carp as being of miraculous powers for the alleviation of "hot rheumatism."

The manner of its application was by frequent rubbing on the painful part, and the effect was said to be eminently mollifying and salutary. The triangular bones in the throat of the carp, on being ground to a powder and applied to a wound or bleeding nose, were said to act as styptic. The gail was also said to have been used for sore eyes and "above the eyes," says an old Esculapian, "two little bones exist, semi-circular in shape, which are diligently preserved by noble females against the lunatic disease."

The eel has also a respectable medical history. Members of the profession from Galen to the present day recommend it. Hippocrates, however, makes this exception: "This food is forbidden in tabes and diseased spleen." Galen prescribed it in nephritis. The monks of Salerno held the eel in abhorrence. They say, according to Dr. Badham, in their dietetic code, "to live on eels is a sure recipe for spoiling the voice." Pliny also held this opinion, but says also, "singular they are holden to be to cleanse the humors, either choleric or phlegmatic, likewise, to cure the infirmities of the spleen, and only that they be hurtful to the throat and make a man to lose his voice—they be harmless now."

Facing the Future.
"What is baby's name?" asked the graciously condescending young woman.
"His name is Flyin' Machine Jackson," was the colored mother's reply.
"How did you come to give him such an extraordinary name?"
"Well, you see dat chile takes after his father an' I wanted to give him a name dat were gwine to be appropriate. An' every time anybody mentions 'flyin' machine' dey say 'it's sumpin' dat positively refuses to work.'—*Washington Star.*

Can Claim Damage.
In Mexico the family of a dead duelist can claim support from the person who shot him.
The masculine idea of an intellectual woman is the one who is as thin as a match and wears glasses.

EDITORIALS

Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.



Official Corruption.
THE great Governments and the great municipalities of the world have a problem before them which as yet they have not fairly faced, but which they must face if they are to make sure in times of emergency of the efficiency of their agents. The growing hunger for money as the one absolute condition of endurable life, the increasing severity of the competition for great contracts, and the decaying abhorrence of suicide all tend to the development of "corruption" in its official sense, that is, of bribe-taking by officials, and of stealing from State and municipal departments. No form of government seems to protect the nations from it. We have less of it than most countries, because under our social conditions the class which really governs has been taught from early childhood to regard bribe-taking as a worse dishonor even than cheating at cards, and because those who suffer are absolutely free to complain; but even here, when the Government is forced to spend millions suddenly, rings are formed to get some of that money, and the taxpayer is fleeced through preposterous charges and illicit commissions.

It is a great blot on modern civilization, which in many respects depends upon efficiency for success. Efficiency and corruption are wholly incompatible. Some think that corruption produces only waste, and that they can bear waste; but that is a false view. Corruption, in the first place, arrests the employment of the best men in leading positions, for the whole energy of the corrupt is devoted to preventing their promotion, or if they are promoted, to rendering their positions untenable. In the second place, corruption makes energetic administration nearly impossible, for no Government ever loses the hope of preventing it; and to prevent it most of them apply an infinity of "checks," every one of which occupies part of the time of the executive officer, and increases the load of responsibility under which at last he dare do nothing without previous sanction. And, in the third place, corruption is not only fatal to the very idea of duty, but to the habit of performing it.

A perfect remedy for corruption is hard to find, because it requires a change in the motives of the corrupt which Governments cannot produce, and which society will not be at the pains to encourage effectively; but two or three palliatives might at least be tried. One is to protect those who complain. Another is to pay all those who have anything whatever to do with contracts at least decently, a rule often neglected in the case of the experienced but subordinate men upon whose judgment their less experienced superiors in matters of business compelled to rely. And a third is to declare bribe-giving and bribe-receiving a form of treason severely punishable whenever it is proved.—*London Spectator.*



Social Gravitation.
THE census proves incontestably that the drift of population cityward reached its maximum some years ago, and has begun to recede. Some one has said: "Hereafter the city and the country will march side by side, with even step." Even this is hardly probable. The change of drift is owing to economical conditions that will continue strongly to favor the country. Population will still move out and differentiate from the masses. In fact, the coming deal seems to be rather an evenly distributed suburbanism, covering the whole country; while the cities will remain as ganglia. Following this ideal the city will grow more country-like, while the country will steadily acquire those privileges which have heretofore belonged to the city.

According to a recent census bulletin, 150 towns show an increase of 32 per cent during the last ten years, which is about the average of the increase of the whole country. The relative gain of cities from 1880 to 1890 was from 22 to 29 per cent—or 7 per cent positive increase—but from 1890 to 1900 this increase was only about 2½ per cent. This tells the story with accuracy. It does not warrant us in assuming that cities will cease to grow, but that relatively they will cease to grow as fast as the country. * * * A potent cause for depopulating the country came in with improved machinery. Farm work could be done with fewer hands. A single reaper would replace ten men. Costly machinery could be profitably used only on large farms, yet a single reaper might serve a dozen small farm owners

GREAT AGRICULTURAL DISCOVERY

Four-fifths of every breath of air which the lungs inhale is pure nitrogen. It is one of the commonest of the elements. And yet, says a writer in Harper's Monthly, it is the one thing for the lack of which wheat fields, cotton fields and corn fields are abandoned as "worn out" because it is the most expensive plant food for man to supply to the soil, and one which most plants are unable to absorb in its pure state from the air. To remedy this the Department of Agriculture at Washington is preparing to distribute among farmers a substance resembling compressed yeast, which will raise, not bread, but crops; for when applied to certain plants it will enable them to take abundant nitrogen from the atmosphere. The "yeast" is really a mass of germs, which bid fair to become most efficient gardeners.

It has long been known that clover and other leguminous crops flourish in "worn-out" soil, and when plowed into it partially restore the fertility of it. Studying this phenomenon, scientists have found that in such a soil the plants have nodules, little buncles or swellings, on their roots, which they do not have when grown elsewhere. These nodules are formed by bacteria called radiocolla.

Professor Nobbe, a German investigator, found that lupines which had the nodules would grow in soil devoid of nitrogen. Without the nodules the lupines would not grow. He obtained some of the radiocolla from the nodules and propagated them in gelatine till he had many millions of the germs.

He then put into three jars equal quantities of sterilized sand containing no nitrogen whatever. In each jar he planted beans. The first he fertilized with all the usual plant foods except nitrogen. The second he sup-

plied with the same food and salt-peter, a form of nitrogen easily absorbed by plants. The third he fed like the first, and in addition inoculated sand with his radiocolla.

The result was extremely interesting. The beans all came up, and for a few days grew alike. Then the first lot, having no nitrogen, turned yellow and died. The second continued to grow in normal fashion. But the third, although it got no nitrogen in the soil, flourished far beyond its neighbor, and developed a luxuriant and healthy growth, showing that the radiocolla had enabled it to draw its nitrogen from the air.

Professor Nobbe carried his experiments much further. He showed that while in neutral soil radiocolla are all alike, once they have associated themselves with a given plant, as clover, they become very nearly useless for other plants, such as beans and lupines. Accordingly he has labored to produce highly specialized bacteria for each crop—gardeners germs trained to grow their specialty.

Having done this, his next move was to place them in the farmers' hands. He grew them by millions and packed them in bottles of gelatine. All that the farmer needed to do was to dilute the gelatine with warm water, mix it with the seed and a little soil, partially dry the mixture and sow it. The germs did the rest.

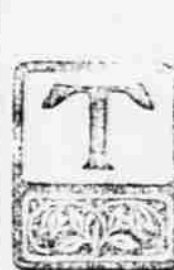
There was much opposition to the new "fertilizer," and one old farmer who did not believe in it planted in a big field a lot of the inoculated seed in a big letter "N." Professor Nobbe having named the gelatine compound "Nitrogen." The farmer was amazed and convinced when above all his other beans that year there stood out the letter "N" in luxuriant and healthy plants.

Professor Nobbe's glass jars are inconvenient to handle, so the United States Department of Agriculture, following up his experiments, has hit

co-operatively. So far, the Eastern States were at the greater disadvantage, the deserted farms were common throughout New England. It was wiser to go West with small capital, and leave the homestead to go back to wilderness, rather than to remain and be starved. This state of affairs, in aggravated symptoms, continued until near the close of the nineteenth century. * * * A cause for the reaction which we chronicle, is the splendid increase in the value of farm products, brought about by our having secured the world's markets. Commercial expansion during the last ten years has immensely increased the exportation of nearly everything that the farm produces. Our fruits, our meats, our corn are now found in every market of the globe. There is no longer any fear of overproduction; we have only to insist on the open door principle and free competition. The farmer can apply his whole attention to the increase of products, and the conquest of insect and fungoid enemies. Agriculture is proving itself to be once more what it was in the early part of the last century, the most independent of all the industries.—*New York Independent.*



Forts and Naval Attacks.
THE failure of the fort guns to do more damage in the attacking fleets. It was a matter of faith among the authorities that not even the strongest modern battleship could safely attack an effective modern fort, armed with long-range heavy guns. England is at present making a number of long-range fort guns for the defense of her south coast, and it is calculated that these guns will easily be able to throw a twelve or thirteen-inch shell across the Straits of Dover, so that it would not seem to be worth while for France even to take her Channel squadron out of port, much less to attempt to land in the face of such an overwhelming attack. But this is mere theory. The truth is, that although the weight and range of these guns have been steadily increasing the human powers which are to use them have not shown, and are not likely to show a corresponding progress. While a gun can carry a shell across the Straits of Dover, the gunner who could make a hit of twenty miles is yet unborn; neither eyesight nor fineness of hand are equal to the task. Nor would the atmosphere permit it, if they were. Attacks by fleets are made by sea; and the sea is proverbially untrustworthy in the matter of weather. Air currents, mists, uneven radiation, mirage and a dozen similar causes deflect the shot and the vision which directs it. Moreover, no one nowadays is likely to attack a fort at close range in broad daylight. The Port Arthur bombardments were nearly all at night, and some of them in snowstorms. It is intelligible that a ship at sea can more or less locate a position on land, such as the Golden Hill above Port Arthur, over a town where there are certain to be some lights at least; but the fort has no lights to guide it in locating the ship, except the momentary flash of the guns, which give hardly any opportunity for aiming. In the case of the Vladivostok bombardment, it seems that the Japanese fleet were too far off to do any damage, and, therefore, too far off to receive any. It is also likely that the object of that attack was to draw the Russian fire in order to locate their forts; the Russians seemed to have divined this, and naturally abstained from firing.—*Harper's Weekly.*



No Thought of Annexation.
THE United States regards Canada as under British Imperial suzerainty, an independent sovereign nation, whose title is as valid as that of any nation on the globe. It has no thought of annexing Canada against her will, nor does it, indeed, regard annexation as necessary or inevitable. It is not sitting up o' nights to coax or to coerce the Dominion into union with the Republic. If ever Canada should at her own will seek such union, the United States would probably be cordially responsive. But, if Canada never does seek it, the United States will regard with entire unanimity and satisfaction the prospect of continuing for all time to share this continent with another great English-speaking commonwealth, and will only hope for constantly increasing sentiments of mutual esteem and constantly strengthening bonds of friendship between these two sovereign nations.—*New York Tribune.*

upon the "compressed yeast cake plan" as simple and satisfactory.

Comrades.
Bobby was ten years old and an alarmingly light-hearted and careless young person. It was supposed, however, that he would be capable of escorting his grandmother to the family Christmas dinner, one block away from her home, without mishap.

He was tall for his age, and he offered his arm to his grandmother in a gallant and satisfactory manner as they started off together.

"I hope he will remember that she is almost ninety, and not try to hurry her. I'm sure I've cautioned him enough," said Bobby's mother, as she began to dress her younger children. But when she arrived at the family party it appeared that grandmother had turned her ankle and was lying on the lounge.

"Bobby," said the mother, reproachfully, "where were you when grandma slipped?"

"Now I won't 've that boy blamed," said grandmother, briskly, smiling up into Bobby's remorseful face. "We came to a fine ice slide, and he asked me if I thought I could do it, and I told him I did. And I want you children to remember one thing; when you get to be most ninety you'll count a turned ankle a small thing compared with having somebody forget that you've outlived everything but rheumatism and sitting still. Anybody that likes can rub this ankle a minute or two with some liniment, but I want Bobby next me at dinner, mind!"

He Had Twenty-seven Wives.
In the course of a murder trial at Cape Town recently the defendant, an aged Malay trader, admitted that he had twenty-seven wives.

Our idea of a mean man is one who spends two-thirds of his time in getting money and the other third in keeping it.