ELOPED WITH HIS STEP-MOTHER.

A New Yorker named Frank has just sprung into unenviable notoriety in Berlin. Frank is the son of a big Silesian land owner by his first marriage in South America, and the old man, being feeble, invited him to come home and help manage his property. His father's second wife is only 28 years old and very pretty. The son made love to her, and after a short courtship the pair decamped to Berlin, Frank taking with him valuables, chiefly bonds, worth £10,000.

The father discovered his loss and telegraphed to the authorities to await their arrival and arrest them. But Frank left the train a few stations before Berlin and arrived in the capital by a local train. In this way he mystified the police, but they kept on the watch and soon the career of the lovers was cut short. On the night of their arrival, as they were leaving the Alexander Platz Theatre, a police officer invited them to the police station. The wife has been liberated for the present, but Frank is still in gaol charged with theft. The wife alleges the money was her dowry, and that as she had decided to leave her husband she maintained that she was justified in taking it with her.

PARIS SENSATION.

'SECOND SIGHT' ON A RECENT TRAGEDY.

The somnambulist, Madame Mongruel, is, says 'Telegraph's' Paris correspondent, credited with having foretold in 1848 the restoration of the empire by Louis Napoleon, and she still enjoys a reputation for second sight, which seems to be founded on more substantial lines than her prediction about the Prince-President of the short-lived Second Republic. This somnambulist has been seen recently by M. Gaston Mery, who contributes articles on the mysterious and the supernatural to the 'Echo du Merveilleux,' and also to M. Drumont's paper. M. Mery went to see Mongruel about the supposed mystery surrounding the recent death of a notable personage. He told her that he had certain impressions in his mind as to the circumstances of the death, and he asked her to follow his thoughts, and to use whatever power she possessed in order to unravel the mystery. She accordingly described a man struck suddenly to the heart after he had swallowed and also smoked some stupefying opiate handed to him by a fascinating woman, who, however, did not know that she was giving him poison of the deadliest sort, something akin to strychnine. Then ensued a scene of wild disorder, during which the woman was carried away, and the dying man was attended to by persons who gave him a cordial, after which he entered into a state of delirium and raved until he died.

M. Mery next consulted Madame Bordo and Mademoiselle Claire, and he affirms that they described, while in their state of dream, scenes almost exactly like that depicted by Madame Mongruel. The three women do not know one another, but M. Mery does not state if they were conversant with the extraordinary rumours flying about respecting the death, of which they noted the circumstances for him in their dreams. He maintained, however, that Madame Bordo and Mademoiselle Claire described the very same woman, and gave a similar account of her actions to that furnished by Madame Mongruel. M. Mery concludes his strange story by reference to the statement twice made in a certain daily paper as to the rumours of impending divorce proceedings, which, if allowed to come off, would cause an enormous sensation throughout the whole world.

IN GAY PARIS.

MERCHANT'S UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Wassilief (says the 'Telegraph's' Paris correspondent) is a merchant, hailing from Odessa, and one fine day, while gazing at the waters of the Black Sea, which happened to be poetically blue on that particular occasion, he had what he regarded as a happy thought. He would start for Paris, and set the seal on the alliance about which he was very enthusiastic by wedding a French woman. This was his first, as it will probably be his last, visit to the gay city, so the worthy Muscovite may be excused for having in his ignorance paid fatal heed to the assurance volunteered by some profane jester of Montmartre, of all quarters, was the centre of the

RANK AND FASHION OF THE GALLIC CAPITAL.

'Accordingly,' the trader from Odessa took up his abode in that lively district, and ere long made, at one of the restaurants, the acquaintance of a fascinating young woman, who passed herself off as a member of an ancient and noble family which had been ruined in the Revolution. She was, as she declared when they had engaged in confidental conversation, anxious to raise the somewhat dilapidated fortunes of her house by cultivating the fine arts, and to this intent she had come to Paris to study painting. Evidence of this, it is true, was plainly visible on her cheeks, but love is proverbially blind. Wassilief suggested a shorter road to the wealth of which she was in search, fell down on one knee in

AN ATTITUDE OF SUPPLICATION

and rose an accepted lover. The happy day was soon fixed, the lady undertaking all the preparations for the nuptials. A few friends acted as witnesses at the ceremony, which took place at the Mairie, and then after a festive dinner at a restaurant the newly married couple proceeded to the furnished flat in which Wassilief had lived since his arrival. Here one more bottle of champagne was opened and discussed, and as the Russian's head was swimming round, for he had already been drinking any number of toasts, the devoted wife remarked blandly: 'You are tired my dear, but I have found a remedy for you.' As she spoke a curtain which concealed a corner of the room was brushed aside and

A COLOSSAL INDIVIDUAL,

brandishing a revolver, was revealed to view. 'Allow me to introduce this gentleman,' said the bride sweetly. 'Although appearances are against him he is as mild as a lamb. All that you have to do, my beloved Wassilief, is to take a pen and write a cheque for 60,000 francs. No one will harm you, and you can go back comfortably to Odessa. I was already attached to this gentleman when I met you.'

Wassilief could not believe his ears and his eyes. He defied the gigantic ruffian and his treacherous accomplice. Attempts at persuasion, terrible threats, all were in vain, and at last the couple giving up the game withdrew, leaving Wassilief to his melancholy reflections. The police are now in search of the colossal individual and of the young female with the painted cheeks, while the Russian merchant is packing up his boxes prior to returning to his country, a sadder and a wiser man.

POISONED IN AN ASYLUM.

SENSATIONAL CASE AT WATFORD.

A startling case of poisoning has occurred at the Metropolitan Asylum for Imbeciles at Leavesden, Herts, England, the facts being elicited at the inquest on March 18th by the Watford coroner.

It appears that on March 9th an inmate named Caroline Ansell, aged 26, received a parcel by post containing cake. There was no note with it, and the nurse handed it over in the ordinary course. Ansell ate some of it next day, giving portions to four other inmates. One named Smithers ate all that was given to her, but the other two spat the first mouthful out. Soon afterwards Ansell and Smithers became seriously ill, complaining of pains in the abdomen and sickness. Illness continued, and Ansell died on the following Tuesday. The asylum authorities communicated with the parents, and being suspicious of the case asked permission to make a post-mortem examination. This was refused, but the coroner, who was communicated with, ordered Dr. Cox to make an examination. The doctor now told the jury that appearances were compatible with death from an irritant poison, and he had handed over the contents of the stomach to the police. A nurse, who was called, stated that some time previously deceased received a parcel containing tea and sugar. She made tea from this, but on tasting it threw it down the sink as it tasted bitter. Another remarkable fact which came out was that just before this last incident deceased received a letter purporting to come from her cousin, Harriet Parish, informing her that her father and mother were both dead. This news proved to be totally false.

The head nurse stated that deceased told her she had not been well since she ate the cake, but she did not know where it came from. Mrs Ansell, the mother of the deceased, was called. She said she could neither read nor write and had not sent anything for over a year to her daughter as she was too poor. She had no knowledge whatever of cake. Harriet Parish, cousin of the deceased, said the letter now produced concerning the alleged deaths was not from her, and she knew nothing about it, nor of the cake. She had never sent the deceased presents of any kind. One of the women who spat the cake out said it had a layer of yellow substance inside, and was so bitter that she did not get the taste out of her mouth all the next day. The coroner elicited in answer to questions, that when the parents of the deceased were communicated with after the death they had refused to allow a post-mortem examination to be made. Other witnesses were in attendance but were not called, the coroner adjourning the inquest, and stating that he would submit the contents of the stomach to an expert for analysis.

SHOCKING TRAGEDY AT AYR

ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE

In the early hours of the morning one day last month a terrible tragedy was enacted in the Wallacetown district of Ayr, Scotland, a shoemaker named Samuel Duncan attempting to murder his wife, Janet Muir Frew or Duncan, with a large axe, and committing suicide by cutting his throat with a knife.

The couple resided in a single apartment of a small one-storey house at 31 Wallace-st. For about two years the husband had been in delicate health, and had been attended to by a doctor. For some time they had occupied separate beds, the husband sleeping in one bed, and the wife and two children, aged six years and three and a half years, occupying the other. Duncan, who was an Ulster Protestant, was married in Ayr about seven years ago, his wife being a native of the town. Four children were born of the marriage, two of whom are dead. Mr and Mrs Duncan removed from Cross-st. to Wallace-st. on Monday last, and by neighbours were regarded as a quiet living pair.

About ten o'clock on the night preceding the tragedy they retired to rest, leaving a paraffin lamp lighted. The wife was rudely disturbed in her slumbers by a severe blow upon the head, and on looking up she was horrified to see her husband standing by her bedside brandishing an axe over her head and preparing to deal her another blow. She immediately sprang out of bed and seized hold of the peapon with which her husband meant to kill her. The struggle between the pair was a severe and exciting one, part of the furniture being knocked about the room. The woman being the more powerful of the two succeeded in making her escape, and it is stated that the last thing she saw was her husband crawling under one of the beds. There can be no manner of doubt that if she had not acted promptly and realised the gravity of the situation she would have been hacked to death. As she left the building she met a neighbour named Holland, who was standing at the door of her residence. She told Holland that her 'man was mad,' and pointing to her wounds remarked 'Look what he has done.' She told Holland to go into the room were Duncan was, but the woman refused to do so. Mrs Duncan immediately proceeded to her brother's house in George-st., and intelligence of the untoward affair was at once conveyed to the police authorities. Sergeant Watson and Charles Frew, brother of Mrs Duncan, on entering the apartment, found Duncan lying on his back in bed with a blanket covering him. He was undressed, and blood was oozing from his mouth and throat. The throat was cut to the left of the windpipe, and a shoemaker's knife lay at his right side, his right hand resting upon the implement with which he had taken his life. The knife was stained with blood. In the other bed were huddled in a corner the two little children, who had been perhaps the spectators of the ghastly affair. The bedclothing was disarranged and chairs and other articles of furniture were either smashed or upset. There was a pool of blood in the bed in which Duncan lay; and Sergeant Watson, having a knowledge of ambulance work, bandaged the throat. Duncan had, however, made too deep a gash in his throat to survive, for he lived only about five minutes after Watson and Frew entered the room. It is understood he was unable to make any explanation for his rash conduct. Dr. Riddall, medical officer of health for the burgh, examined the body, and also Mrs Duncan. He found the latter was injured on the head and arm one of the ears being cut severely. On account of the nature of the woman's injuries he ordered her to be removed to the County Hospital. Mrs Duncan is expected to recover. She is described as a hard working woman, and owing to the delicate health of her husband she was compelled to do laundry and other work to maintain the household.

Duncan, it is said, had for some time been in a despondent state of mind. At one time he was a member of a church choir in Ayr, and was a good tradesman.

LOVER VERSUS PUGILIST.

SETTLING FAMILY DIFFICULTIES.

A strange story of life in a Northamptonshire rural district was related in the police court one day last month. In the little village of Barnwell, near Oundle, lives a farm labourer named William Henry Ogilvie, 35 years of age, who conceived an attachment for the youngest daughter of the rector of Barnwell, Miss Maud Huntingford, and the young lady's father cautioned him. As his unwelcome attentions were continued, Miss E. C. Huntingford, acting for her sister Maud, determined, it is said, to take immediate action. According to her own statement to a Peterborough journalist, she communicated with a London agency, requesting them to send down a man who would teach the undesirable suitor a lesson, expressing a wish that the drubbing should be administered without seriously hurting him. Accordingly, a prizefighter, 'a feather weight champion, weight 9st 5lb,' was sent down to Barnwell, and falling foul of Ogilvie in the rectory garden, administered a severe chastisement. This occurred on February 1. The incident was much talked about, and Mr Robert John Ogilvie, elder brother of the forlorn lover, went down to the apartments of Mr Buckworth, the curate, on February 8, and accused him of lending his stick with which to administer the thrashing. As a sequel to the interview, Ogilvie summoned the rev. gentleman for assault, and at Oundle Petty Sessions he was fined £3 and costs.

THE HEREFORD MURDER.

THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST POLICE AND NEIGHBOURS.

At a meeting of the Hertfordshire County Council on March 13th, the Mayor of Hertford called attention to the recent murder of a woman in that town, and asked the chairman of the Standing Joint Committee of he would institute a rigorous inquiry into the conduct of the police upon that occasion, and especially whether it was a fact, as stated, that during the three hours that the woman was being ill-treated the police were twice informed of it at the station, and that they took no notice of the information. An account of the murder with its wretched associations of callousness and accusations against the police was, it will be remembered, given in these columns a few weeks ago. Sir George Faudel Phillips strongly endorsed the necessity for a searching inquiry into the matter remarking that the mere dismissal of one or two subordinates would not meet the requirements of the case, but that justice should be meted out where justice was due. He characterised the conduct of the bystanders as a disgrace to humanity, and said that the crime had thrown back the civilisation of the town for a century.

The Chief Constable of Hertfordshire (Colonel Daniell) on March 10 suspended from duty Police-constable Langston, on whose beat the tragedy occurred, and Police-constable Sherwood, who was in charge of the police station at the time that two notifications were given of the fact that a woman was being cruelly treated. On March 11, after a full and private inquiry had been made into the facts of the case, these two constables were discharged. Langston had been 12 years in the service, and Sherwood nine.

John Smith was to have been brought before the Hertford magistrates on Thursday, but a certificate was produced from the prison doctor at St. Albans stating that the prisoner was physically and mentally incapable of being brought up, and under the circumstances he was further remanded for a week. The prisoner was in a state of collapse. He and the deceased woman were cousins. The prisoner was discharged on the charge-sheet as a labourer, aged 19.

At the inquest on the body of the victim Mercy Nicholls, the first witness was the husband of the deceased, Samuel Nicholls, a brickmaker. He told the court that three weeks ago the deceased left him, witness seeing her off from the railway station to Cole Green. That was the last time he saw her alive. Mrs Davis, of 13, Railway-st., said that about half-past three on Thursday morning a man knocked at her door and said, 'Missis, will you lend me an axe?' She said, 'What for?' and he replied 'To chop this woman's head off.' He then walked to the door of the Young Men's Christian Association and commenced to pull a woman about. The woman was nearly naked, and was moaning. Witness called out, 'Oh, you brute; and the man replied, 'The Prince of Wales has got no money; the Queen has got it all.' A man named Wright came along with a lantern, and witness asked him to go to the police station, which he said he would do. Wright, according to the witness's evidence, went on, and after that the man threw the woman back and kicked her as she fell. The woman asked for water, but the man said she would not have any. At this moment the man Wright came back, and said he had been to the police station but could find no one there. He then, according to the witness, 'drove on.' The man then dragged the woman under the archway of the Diamond public house and the witness went back to bed. Her husband was awake but he was 'frightened to come down.' Ebenezer Wright, a lad of 13, said that in Railway-st. he saw a man with something shiny in his hand. He was standing still in the road, and a woman was lying in the gutter with no clothing except on her chest. Her face was covered with blood. He recognised the man as Smith, whose nick name was 'Rotten.' Witness described how the man dragged the woman into a yard and kicked her. He said: 'If the Prince of Wales was here I'd stab him. He ain't got any money—the Queen got it all.' Witness added that he stopped in the street about half an hour, but did not see a policeman. A lamp lighter named Rapper said that at a quarter past 12 he saw the man and woman in the Diamond yard, and they said 'Good night' to him. At four a.m. the man was near the same spot, and called on witness to 'halt.' All he said in response to witness's salutation was 'He, he, he!' Forty minutes later he saw the woman lying in the gutter, and on looking at her found she was stabbed all over. He then went to meet his 'mate,' and afterwards returned and waited until the police came. In reply to a juror witness said he thought no one was allowed to interfere till the police came. Dr. Roche, house surgeon at the Hertford infirmary, said he found 59 wounds on the body, none in themselves fatal. The cause of death was hemorrhage from the wounds and exposure. Had she been brought in two hours earlier there might have been a chance of saving her life.

The inquiry was adjourned.

HIS SUSPICION.

Riding Master: I'm afraid, sir, I must ask you to pay in advance for the hire of the horse.

Amateur Rider: What's that for? Are you afraid that I shall come back without the horse?

Riding Master: Oh, no: but the horse might come back without you.

REMARKABLE IMPOSTERS.

THREE INTERESTING STORIES.

All the papers have been reviving the memory of the immortal Psalmanazar, who wrote that wonderful description of Formosa, an island which nobody had visited in the early 18th century. These reminiscences (writes Sir Walter Besant in his 'Voice of the Flying Day') are, of course, called up by the De Rougemont, alias Grein, case. I have before me the Rev. Psalmanazar's memoirs, written by himself, in which, like the great Grein, he carefully husbands the truth as regards his place of birth and real name. I have also the book which made him famous, namely, his description of the Island of Formosa. This wonderful work contains an account of the manners and customs of the people, their religion, their temples and their gods, their dress, their language, their alphabet, and many other particulars. Considering that the ingenious author had never been out of Europe, the book reflects the greatest credit on his imagination. There is nothing even distantly resembling Chinese or Japanese customs. The dresses are distinctly European of the mediaeval kind; they have sacrifices of children at their altars; they have temples and tabernacles; they devour the bodies of their criminals; and their customary breakfast is a pipe of tobacco, after which they cut off the head of a viper and suck the blood. This, the author says, is the most wholesome kind of breakfast possible. This man, though his veracity was completely discredited, contrived to get ordained, and spent two-thirds of a long life of 90 years in the profession of piety, and so far as could be judged, the practice of all kinds of good works.

So far as I have seen the papers have been silent about another remarkable impostor, namely,

CARABOO PRINCESS OF JAVASU.

This is her history in brief. On Thursday evening, April 3rd, 1817, the country village of Almondsbury, near Bristol, was greatly agitated by the strange arrival of a girl who could not speak any English. She was dressed, as any young woman might have been dressed, in a black stuff gown, with a muslin frill round her neck, a black cotton shawl on her head, and a red and black shawl round her shoulders, only it was afterwards remembered that the two shawls were worn, as the villagers hardly understood, in the Asiatic manner, that is, loosely but tastefully. On being taken to the nearest magistrate, Mr Samuel Worrall, of Knole Hall, she was examined by a man servant, who understood several languages; but what she said was not comprehended by this linguist. She had no papers, nor any money except a bad sixpence, nor any other clothes except a few necessaries tied up in a bundle, and a piece of soap. She was taken to the vilage inn, where a room was given her for the night, and it was observed by the housemaid that she knelt by the bedside before undressing. In the morning the vicar of the parish, who had heard of her arrival, brought books of travel with pictures, thinking it possible that she might recognise some one of the countries described. She appeared to have some knowledge of China, and made signs that it was a ship, not a boat, which had brought her to this country. So interesting a stranger could not be suffered to remain at a village inn, and she was removed to Knole, where Mrs Worral tried to make her understand, but failed. She was then taken to Bristol, and consigned by the Mayor to S. Peter's Hospital for vagrants. Here she was visited by a certain Portuguese sailor, who pretended to understand her language, and declared that she came from the coast of Sumatra. Upon this discovery Mrs Worrall took her again into her own house, and here a gentleman who had been in the East Indies made out her story, which is too long to be narrated in full. She was a Princess of Javasu, named Caraboo; she had been

KIDNAPPED BY A PIRATE,

and put on board a ship. Finding herself near the coast of England, she jumped overboard and swam ashore. That was all. This most interesting creature excited the greatest interest everywhere. The whole West Country began to talk about her and to visit her. Learned gentlemen and travellers wrote letters about her. By this time the marvels of her artless narrative had increased a thousandfold. The bubble burst when a former landlady came and identified her as Mary Willcocks or Mary Baker. She seems to have been a girl of a strange, unsettled mind, restless, imaginative and ungoverned. She was always playing a part. She made up stories when she was in charge of children. She ran away from one place after another. She pretended to be a French woman, and a Spanish woman, and anything else that came into her head. After shew as discovered and her story exposed she said she would like the adventures made into a play, if she herself could act the past of Princess Caraboo. Nothing could show more delightfully how much she had enjoyed playing that part. What became of the Princess I do not know, but I heard once that she had emigrated to America. She may have had many other adventures. In fact, she belonged to the class to whom adventures happen and strange things come. In these days she would be a spiritualist; she would 'go one better' than any other spiritualist; she would hint at strange mysteries and pretend to revelations. Or she would become a novelist! Or she would be write travels and adventures for 30 years among the cannibals of Borneo.

There was a third impostor who has been forgotten. She turned up unexpectedly in a small town of North Carolina about the year 1765. She was a young woman, well dressed, and of haughty manners. Presently it was whispered abroad that a great lady, a European lady,

A LADY OF EXALTED RANK,

was in the town. Then the planters came in to see her; they called; they left her with the belief that she was a very great lady indeed. And they were all much surprised to learn that she was no less a lady than H.R.H. the Princess Georgina Wilhelmina Dorothea Francesca Carolina, sister, if you please, of Queen Charlotte, Consort of George III. Who would have believed it possible. They requested her to hold a Court; she consented; the ladies all attended it; such condescension, yet such Royal hauteur, proclaimed her rank. Nobody doubted. One planter gave her a house, another a coach and six; everybody flew to wait upon her. Why the Princess should have come to America nobody asked. Unhappily, the dream was rudely dissipated. Two common and coarse men, bearing the little staff with the crown upon it (emblem of authority), called at the Palace, and—it is sad to relate—carried off the Princess 'with gyves upon her wrist.' And the people of Carolina learned with sorrow that their beloved Princess was a convict. She had been a housemaid in St. James' Palace; she was convicted of stealing some of the Royal household gear, was sentenced to death, but respited by intercession of the Queen, and sent to the plantations of Virginia for life. She escaped and concocted this remarkable story. They took her back to servitude, and so she vanishes, and history knows her no more.

THE MURDER IN WHITFIELD

EXTRAORDINARY BLUNDER: DECEASED NOT FRAU BRIESNICK.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

LONDON, March 24.

Truth is, we know, stranger than ordinary fiction, but that it should be able at times to give points to even the grim murder mysteries of Gaboriau and Lecocq does indeed make one gasp. Yet at the present moment many of us are talking of a crime which, if it had been written up by the French novelists or Anna Katherine Green, would have been pronounced wildly improbable. You may remember our writing you of the suffocation or strangulation of a German lady, a fortune-teller named Briesnick, in a house in Whitfield-street, Tottenham Court Road, about a fortnight ago. She and her husband, a much younger man than herself, had lodged there some time, and bore the reputation of being quite respectable Teutons. The master of the house, Mr de Swart, who by the way is a Dutchman, says that he was in Ireland when the two lodgers—the Briesnicks—came to his house, and after seeing his wife arranged for apartments on the first floor. His attention was presently directed to the fact that the woman was advertising in a German paper published in London as a fortune-teller, and he pointed out that such practices were considered illegal in England, and the advertisement was stopped. A subsequent advertisement appeared to the effect that Frau Briesnick was a masseuse, and he believed that every day she used to attend a young German actress staying in London. Next an advertisement appeared in a London morning newspaper, in which Mrs Briesnick applied for a situation as housekeeper. The two lodgers were always quiet, and nothing occurred during their stay to suggest that they were anything but respectable people. The man had described himself as being a baker. One fine morning the Briesnicks disappeared, leaving their rooms locked and an intimation that they should be back in a day or two. They did not, however, appear, and a disagreeable smell suggesting significant possibilities, Swart broke in the door. The sight which met his horrified gaze need not be enlarged upon. The room had been cleared of all the Briesnick's valuables, and stretched on a couch in an attitude of profoundest peace and repose lay the luckless Frau, a pillow over her face. She had been murdered, of course, presumably by her wretched husband. The corpse had commenced to decay, and to this cause the Swarts assigned an indefinable change in their lodger's appearance. 'Mein Gott! Death do make an alteration,' murmured the Dutchman, but neither he nor anybody else had a suspicion of the deceased's identity. At the inquest Mrs Swart was enabled (the body being under glass) to inspect it longer, and then she did say Frau Briesnick never looked like that. But our sage police were not on the qui vive, and in due course the murdered woman was buried as Frau Briesnick, and the Continent scoured for her husband. The coroner's inquest, after hearing particulars of the tragedy, stood adjourned to Tuesday last. Meanwhile, the Continental police got on the track of Briesnick (who had, it appeared, a woman with him), and ran him down. He seemed more astounded than alarmed when informed before the Police Commissary that he was suspected of murdering his wife, observing, 'But, mein herr, the Frau is quite well and in the next room,' and when the officers had compared photos, they also came to this conclusion.

Who, then, was the murdered woman?

A STRANGE MISTAKE.

When the news of this strange mistake in identity reached London on Monday afternoon the sensation was at first considerable. It turned out, however, at the inquest that the police had all along been dubious as to the deceased's identity, though for various undisclosed reasons they had not cared to make their suspicions public. The deceased was a Swiss chambermaid named Sophie Richards, who had got into trouble and presumably come to Frau Briesnick for improper assistance. The nature of the evidence was not allowed to transpire, but the jury returned a verdict equivalent to that of wilful murder against Fitz Metz and Augusta Hneida, alias Briesnick, the two persons at present in custody abroad.

HOW THE PRISONERS WERE ARRESTED.

Particulars of the two prisoners in Berlin and their history were furnished in a Wednesday's despatch to the 'Daily Telegraph.' The woman, whose real name is Hnieda, is the divorced wife of a baker of that name, under whom her companion, Metz, formerly served. After her divorce Frau Hnieda came to live with Metz in Berlin. For some time before the beginning of this year she was suspected and watched by the Berlin police, and presuming the latter were learning too much of her questionable proceedings, she decided early in January on leaving Berlin with Metz. They started together, via Homburg, for London, where they first took an apartment somewhere in Whitechapel, afterwards removing to Whitfield-street, where they passed as Herr and Frau Briesnick. Asked why they assumed a false name, they stated in their interrogatory that they had no special reason for doing so, but that they thought it was a common practice for Germans going to London to pass under assumed names, and there being no police check in this respect they did not suppose they would be discovered. Briesnick, the name that they selected; is that of the female prisoner's widowed mother. The Berlin police, acting on the information supplied them from London, arrested Metz at an hotel on the charge of murdering Frau Briesnick. It appears that the two had read an account in the papers of the supposed murder of Frau Briesnick, and that the female prisoner contemplated suicide from fear of being arrested. Metz, however, had calmed her with the assurance that he would not abandon her. Frau Hnieda was arrested and examined. She evidently supposed the police knew the whole story, for she confessed unasked. The two prisoners said that the woman who died came to Frau Hnieda in consequence of advertisements the latter had put in some London papers. She did not give her name, but stated that she was of Swiss nationality. She spoke German, and said she was a housekeeper, and had a lover who had supplied her with money for the purpose of an illegal operation, but she did not give his name either. She had paid several visits, and the last time she came was at 8 o'clock on the evening of March 1. She took a drug which it was expected would have the desired effect. As it did not she repeated the dose, and expired almost immediately afterwards in Frau Hnieda's room.

Metz insisted he was not in the room at the time, because in this case, as in the case of all others who consulted Frau Hnieda, he went into an adjoining chamber during the consultations. As the result of the victims death the two resolved to leave London, which they did on March 3. They went first to Amsterdam, and reached Berlin on March 10. From details supplied by the London police, it was known that Metz had a gold and a silver watch with him. From pawn tickets found on his person at the time of his arrest it appears that he pawned the gold watch at Amsterdam and the silver one in Berlin. The male prisoner is about 27 years of age, the female 35. From the description sent from London the Berlin police thought it was a case of murder against Metz, and were astounded on finding that the alleged victim was alive. As soon as they saw Frau Hnieda they were struck, too, with the fact that she did not answer to the description of the deceased woman. The matter has been placed in the hands of the Public Prosecutor of the Berlin Landgericht No. 1.

In reply to a question as to whether the prisoners would be tried in Berlin or in London, it was stated that if the court in Berlin found sufficient evidence established against them they would be sent to England for trial. It was added, however, that the preliminary proceedings would probably occupy a considerable time—perhaps months, as is usual in such cases—because of the immense amount of correspondence that necessarily passes thereon.

THE NEWCASTLE BARMAID'S CRIME.

AN EXTRAORDINARY LETTER.

The strange shooting of a man named James Rule at Newcastle on Tyne on the 2nd ult. by a barmaid named Marian Edith Morell, an account of which appeared in the 'Star,' was the subject of a coroner's inquiry on March 16th.

Maud Wray said she had been living with deceased as his wife for eight years.

Nicholas Birne gave evidence as to being in the company of deceased on the night of March 2nd, and on leaving a billiard room they found the accused outside. Witness, deceased, accused, and another man went into a public house, and afterwards deceased and accused walked along the street together. Several witnesses spoke to hearing two shots fired and to seeing

ACCUSED RAISE HER ARM

just as the second report was heard. Deceased was found wounded in the arm and head, and died on Saturday morning. When taken into custody the accused was informed by a policeman that deceased was not dead, but was in a critical condition, and she replied: 'Thank God for that.' The following letter, written to Alice Robertson, with whom the accused stayed, was found in her possession when she was taken into custody immediately after Rule was shot, and was identified as being in her handwriting:—

'Mr dear Alice,—I scarcely know how to pen this horrible note to you. This is how I must show my gratitude for all the kindness you have shown me. I must do it. I have made up my mind to end all this miserable uncertainty. Jim and I had a long talk when he was over on Sunday night. He said it would be worse than mad for us to marry unless we could go away from Newcastle. He had got himself into such a vortex that he has found it difficult to get himself out of it. He explained everything to me, Alice. I understand all the circumstances, how he has done everything to try and get that woman to leave him, but she won't. Forced to live with a woman to whom he doesn't even bear respect, what must her nature be to submit to such a life? If he was happy with her I would try and reconcile myself to everything else, but he is not. We have made three attempts to save money to take us to his brother's in Australia, and each time has failed. Everything seems to be against me. I have resolved to end my chequered and disappointed life. If I don't I will only live to contract more misery. Try to forgive me, dear. Think as lightly as you can of the stigma I will bring to your happy little home. If I could only explain, I feel you would understand why life grows so monotonous to me. Fate has tied many a millstone round my neck, but this one is weighing me down, and I have no power to rise above it. I want you to take all my belongings. What you cannot use yourself give to poor people. The plain gold ring on my finger—let it stay there. It was Jim's wife sent it to me. When we were in Scotland he wanted to buy me a dress ring as a memento of my week's visit to him, but you know my mania for plain ones. I preferred it, so he bought it. It has never been off my finger; let it stay on. Oh, for another week like that one; how happy we were! You will find my other rings in my trunk in a little work basket. You keep them all, and Jim's photo take from among the others, have it framed, and hang it in your room. Don't be ashamed of it. It is the photo of one of nature's truest gentlemen, no matter what his other faults may have been. And now I have had my say. Like a weary traveller,

TIRED OF LIFE'S JOURNEY,

I lay down to rest. I bid good bye to everythink without a pang or regret. Give my love to all our people. I wish them well, but ask them not to come to see me. Kiss my little darling for me. Poor Cyril; teach him to forget his Aunt Nellie. Give my love to Jim; dear old brother. I will break his heart, and now, good-bye, dear. Other people might blame you, but you be what you always have been, my truest friend, my more than sister. If all else would turn away from the mention of my name, you keep a little corner in your heart for me, and sometimes shed a few tears of pity for your God-forgotten, forsaken sister. Ask them to bury us together. If there is a God, He will forgive. He understands. Ask Laura to accept her sister's love. Be kind to her, dear. Give her my mother's wedding ring I had done up, and tell her to part with it only when starvation stared her in the face.'

The jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the woman Morell.

GOOD ADVICE.

If you've any task to do,
Let me whisper, friend, to you,
Do it.

If you've anything to say,
True and needed, yea or nay,
Say it.

If you've anything to love,
As a blessing from above,
Love it.

If you've anything to give,
That another's joy may live,
Give it.

If some hollow creed you doubt,
Tho' the whole world hoot and shout,
Doubt it.

If you've any debt to pay,
Rest you neither night nor day,
Pay it.

If you've any joy to hold,
Near your heart, lest it grow cold,
Hold it.

If you've any grief to meet,
At a loving Father's feet,
Meet it.

If you know what torch to light,
Guiding others in the night,
Light it.

ROUND THE WORLD TO ARREST A CLERK.

Considerable interest was manifested on Thursday, March 16, at the Birmingham Police Court, when it was known that a young man named Frank McBride, alias Maurice John Lothian, described as a writing clerk, Westminster Road, Handsworth, was to be charged on an extradition warrant with forging the transfers of certain shares belonging to Kynoch and Company, on August 31 last, and also with forging a cheque value £251 11/6, drawn on Lloyds Bank on September 9th. The police of Sydney, New South Wales, were advised that he would probably arrive there, and they watched him for four days after his arrival, and then arrested him on November 10th. On December 23 Detective-Inspector Daniels left Birmingham with the warrant in his possession. He sailed on the Orizaba via Port Said, Colombo, Albany, Adelaide, and Melbourne, eventually reaching Sydney, a distance of 12,383 miles, after five weeks. The

PLEASURE OF THE TRIP

was marred by the fact that just prior to leaving England Inspector Daniels had the misfortune to lose his favorite daughter. At Sydney the prisoner was committed to prison for 14 days in order that he might have an opportunity of appealing (as he had a right to do) against his proposed extradition to the Mother Country. No appeal was lodged, however, and Inspector Daniels set sail with his prisoner for England. The return journey was accomplished in remarkably quick time, the vessel arriving home two days before she was expected. Although the trip was pleasant, Inspector Daniels had a somewhat anxious time, as he was responsible for the safety of his prisoner. McBride, who is a smart, intelligent looking young fellow, and is said to be an accomplished musician, behaved very well. At the same time the inspector did not let him get out of his sight on board ship, and the pair occupied the same bunk. Plymouth was reached on March 15th. Inspector Daniels went on to Birmingham with his prisoner, reaching there at 4.10 on Thursday morning. When arrested at Sydney McBride had only about £28 in his possession, but he had a quantity of jewellery. On Thursday McBride was brought before the Court and on the application of Inspector Daniels remanded for a week.

AGREED TO DIE TOGETHER.

The police of the Western District of Glasgow are investigating the circumstances of a somewhat sensational affair which was reported to them on Friday, says the Glasgow 'Herald' of March 17. The facts, so far as they have been gathered, seem to point to the deliberate resolution on the part of a young man and a young woman to commit suicide by taking poison. In the case of the woman the determination was carried out only too successfully, but the man, although he swallowed a large quantity of laudanum, is recovering from its effects. Although mutually resolving to put an end to their lives, they did not proceed to carry out their threat in one another's presence. The manner in which the affair first came under the observation of the police did not lead them to suspect that there were any specially sensational circumstances connected with it. Between midnight and one o'clock on Friday morning two constables observed a man sitting on one of the seats in Kelvin Grove Park, near the Museum, and when they ordered him away they discovered that he was in a dazed condition. The man ultimately produced a three ounce bottle containing laudanum, and said he had consumed some of its contents. He was sorry they had disturbed him, as he was out of employment and destitute, and wanted to die. The policemen removed him to the Western Infirmary, where he recovered. Thornton states that he bought the bottle of laudanum is a shop in Glassford street, and that he and Jessie McLachlan, described as a machinist, who had resided in Stirling-street, slept in an hotel in Cowdaddens that night. On the following morning they went to the house of a friend in Raglan street, and afterwards were drinking in the district till about three o'clock in the afternoon. While they were in a public house in North Woodside Road the woman, Thornton says, took from him a bottle containing a shilling's worth of laudanum, and swallowed its contents. She began to stagger, and he at once conveyed her in a cab to the Western Infirmary, where she was detained and treated by Dr. Steele. She did not get any better, and died on Friday evening. Thornton further says that after leaving the infirmary, he went back to the same druggist's shop in Glassford street and purchased another shilling's worth of laudanum, and it was this dose he was taking when the police came upon him in the park. He adds that he and McLachlan, having been out of work for some time, and having no fixed abode, decided to die together by poisoning themselves.

A CURIOUS PATHAN CUSTOM

A curious Pathan custom is described by Mr Louis Dane in his report on the Peshawur settlement. This is the old tribal custom of a periodical distribution or vesh of the areas, and even of the houses, held by each clan over the existing adult males. This relic of a primitive state of society, where the main consideration was the maintenance of the fighting strength of a clan at its highest point, still prevails in Buner, where the last vesh was made in 1891. In British territory, however, the custom has gradually fallen into disuse, partly because it is opposed to the spirit of our revenue procedure, and partly because our settled rule, by enabling men to enjoy the fruits of their own toil and encouraging them to improve their holdings by irrigation, has upset the natural quality due to soil and climate alone. The vesh, like Rousseau's doctrine of the State of Nature, presupposes a primitive equality and breaks down under more artificial conditions of society. It appears that the original distribution which is attributed to Shekh Mehdi, himself a Pathan was wonderfully fair; even now in Charsadda and Yusufzai, where the old tribal distribution has been less interfered with than elsewhere, the aggregate value of the holdings of the main subdiversion of the clans is still much in proportion to their ancestral shares. Irrigation is, however, a great eradicator of old usages, and the original vesh has been washed out over most of the Peshawur district. Traces of it still prevail in the unirrigated portions of Yusufzai, where each man has a strip of land according to his share in each of the veshes or divisions of the village, running the whole length of the block. As subdivision proceeds, the strips become narrower and narrower, until at present a field often resembles the definition of a line, length without breadth; consequently even here, especially where well or canal irrigation is introduced, the people are being reluctantly forced to abandon the old system of distribution, which in a generation or two will practically cease to exist.