

MELTING LIKE WAX.

ALL MOUNTAINS WILL VANISH IN THE COURSE OF TIME.

Notable Elevations That Are Slowly Crumbling and Becoming Smaller—Awful Catastrophes That Befall the Village of Elm—Process of Change.

A French professor told the recent scientific congress in Rome that "all mountains will vanish off the face of the earth in course of time."

In 1881, in the Alps, there was an immense hill fall, caused by its human undermining in order to obtain slate for school use.

One-half of the village of Elm was overwhelmed, and it was so swiftly swept by the resistless mass that the line was sharply defined, and one house was out in two.

The process of change in earth levels in all lands is illustrated in your unpaved back yard or village street after heavy rains.

The forces of nature and the elements in battle, like the gospel, are levelers. They bring down the mighty and lift up the lowly.

"See here, Jones, I never thought you were a liar, but I overheard you tell Miss Gordon last night that her face was a perfect dream."

LORETTA, OR THE CHOICE.

An Interesting Story for Both Old and Young.

Written by George R. Miles.

IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.

CHAPTER II.

"One year" muttered the Colonel to himself, after Mrs. Cleveland had retired, drawing his capacious arm-chair closer to the fire as he spoke.

"One year, eh?" he repeated audibly, smoothing his thin white hair; then, emptying the mug of ale mechanically, he threw his feet heavily upon the fender.

The Colonel rose with that confident slowness with which a gentleman of the old school leaves the table, in the inspiration of the moment, to bring forth with his own hand his best bottle for his best friend.

"Oh my dear little pet," he thought, "they shall never coop you up here from the sight of those blessed fields among which you will ramble hereafter?"

Then for the first time, feeling that it was freezing hard, he crept on tiptoe to the door of a small room opening on the porch.

"Charley!" he whispered shrilly through the keyhole. In an instant came the answer, "Sir!"

"Charley! dress warm—saddle fleetly for yourself, and come to the parlor. Do it quietly."

The sagacious boy nodded, and the Colonel hobbled back. He took his immense writing desk from its time-honored green bag, unlocked it carefully, and selecting a quill, mended a pen with infinite pains.

Charley re-appeared before the old gentleman had finished writing, and without saying a word, stood by the door.

"Get closer to the fire, my boy—closer—warm up well," ejaculated the Colonel, looking to see that his commands were obeyed.

"There!" he continued, describing a flourish after his name, folded the letter and sealed it.

"Are you warm Charley?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where's your great coat—eh? and comforter—eh? Get them, you inconsiderate rascal! Do you think I want to freeze you on Fleetly's back, to be a Christmas snow-man for the children of the neighborhood?"

Charley retired, and the Colonel directed the letter. "Now, you're all right—no, stop! your ear's out," and he fixed the comforter carefully, even tenderly, around the boy's neck and head.

With a bow and a smile the trusty messenger departed. When he had gone, the Colonel again ensconced himself in his chair, and contrary to custom, lit another cigar and replenished his mug.

"Well-timed my boy! Is the letter in?"

A nod.

"The horse attended to?"

Another nod.

"Keep close to the fire then, and drink this; drink, I say! it won't hurt you," said the Colonel, slapping him on the back.

In a few minutes more they were both abed; but long after Charley was snoring, the Colonel kept tossing on his pillow, repeating—

The Catholic Church in the United States.

HOFMANN'S CATHOLIC DIRECTORY, the Official Directory of the Catholic Church in the U. S. (published by Hoffman Brothers Co., Milwaukee, Wis.) has furnished us advance sheets of the forthcoming Directory giving the following statistics, showing the growth of the Catholic Church in the United States.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Table with columns for Archdioceses, Bishops, Clergy, etc., listing statistics for various regions like Baltimore, Boston, New York, etc.

He had been a Catholic; but that was long ago, when his mother lived. By neglecting his religious duties for forty years, he had imbibed all the prejudices of society, all the errors of humanitarianism—all the suggestions of indifference, in short, he was utterly de-catholicized, and nothing more nor less than a thoroughbred man of the world—living for time and not for eternity, loving his neighbor as the world understands it, but neglecting his God.

Agnes was up with the sun and at mass. Her heart bounded gladly and fervently as she walked home with the bloom of health, youth and plety on her cheeks.

Breakfast and the Colonel were waiting for them at Loretto. The Colonel was a scrupulous observer of all the habits which bachelorship invents and cherishes.

Christmas was drawing near. Confessioners' windows in the village were already spangled with visions, that riveted the eyes and moistened the mouths of troops of eager boys, who knew that the harvest of the year—the annual feast was coming.

"My Dear old Uncle, Expect this evening yours, ELLEN ALMAY."

"Bless her bright young soul," exclaimed the Colonel, pressing the paper to his heart. Let the queen that will win this game!

That day was the longest the Colonel had ever spent; it seemed to him as though evening would never come. He examined his tackle, his guns, his razors, he whistled, he sang, read, wrote, walked, rode; but do what he would the hours were ages. By a strong effort, he managed to conceal his anxiety from his sister and niece; still they might have noticed that he started at the sound of every sleigh-bell, and that he took a particular pleasure in standing at the window.

Why, there's a sleigh at our gate," exclaimed Agnes, rising and going to the window.

"Who can it be?" said the Colonel, opening the door.

"Who are they Aggie—your eyes are better than mine?"

"Strangers to me, a lady and gentleman."

"My Lol, I do verily believe," cried the Colonel, rushing to meet her, as she leaped lightly from the sleigh.

"All that's left of me, uncle, and this is my very good friend Mr. George Melville, a young gentleman who can catch a trout, shoot a partridge, play all fours, and sing divinely. Take care how you hug me, uncle, I'm cold as an icicle, you'll break my bones, wait till I get warm, and disengaging herself, she ran into the parlor and threw herself on her knees before the fire.

"Now, Aunt Mary, take a good long look—don't you know me?"

"Without a word, Ellen flew towards Agnes, and seizing her by the hand, led her as close to the lamp on the table as she could get. There she stood, eyeing her from head to foot, so comically, that Agnes could not keep from smiling.

"So this is my little cousin, with whom I played, and quarreled and made up ten years ago! Do you remember me, Agnes? And the ex-

pression of her face had changed, her eyes were dark and she threw her arms round Agnes's neck.

"Madam, you do me great justice, in the first place, my name is not Ellen—the world has called me Aggie, but there's only one Aggie in the world! Secondly, though I am an inconstant, I can't say I have not my talents, and I'm saying what I do for my own sake."

"But what do you mean, my friend, Mr. Melville?"

"I have not my talents, and I'm saying what I do for my own sake."

"There was silence for a moment, Ellen, of course, was the first to break it.

"My goodness, Mr. Melville, you've not changed a bit, but I never saw you before, you may hug me as much as you please, and the old Aggie took her at her word.

Even Mrs. Cleveland looked at this and before she knew it, Charley appeared, and the old lady announced supper.

"You know we were talking about the future that morning, and you said you'd marry a soldier—and I—"