JOAN OF THE SWORD HAND

By S. R. CROCKETT, Author of "The Raiders," &c.

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CHAPTER XXI.—Continued.

At this point an officer came swiftly across the parterre and stood with uncovered head by the steps of the terrace, waiting for permission to ascend. The Prince summoned him with a movement of his hand.

"What news?" he said; "have the ladies yet left the Summer Palace?"

"No, my lord," answered the officer earnestly; "but Jeannes Rede of the Princess Margaret's household has come with a message that the plague has broken out there, and that the Lady Princess is the first stricken."

"Which Princess?" demanded Ivan, with an instant instinct of time.

"The Lady Joan, Princess of Courtland, your Highness," replied the man; without, however, looking at the Prince of Muscovy.

"The Lady Joan," cried the Prince Louis, "she is ill? She has brought the Black Death with her? She is stricken with the plague? How fortunate that, so far, I—"

He clapped his hand upon his brow and shut his eyes as if giving thanks.

"I see it all now!" he cried. "This is the reason the Kernsberg traitors were so willing to give her up. It is all a plot against my life. I will not go near. Let the court physicians be sent! Cause the doors of the Summer Palace to be sealed! Set double guards! Permit none to pass either way, save the doctors only! And let them change their clothes and perfume themselves with the smoke of sulphur before they come out!"

His voice mounted higher and higher as he spoke, and Ivan of Muscovy watched him without speaking, as with hands thrust out and distended nostrils he screamed and gesticulated.

Prince Ivan had never seen a thorough coward before, and the breed interested him. But when he had let the Prince run on far enough to shame him before his officer, he rose quietly and stood in front of him.

"Louis," he said in a low voice, "listen to me—this is but a report. It is like enough to be false; it is certain to be exaggerated. Let us go at once and find out."

Prince Louis threw out his hands with a gesture of despair.

"Not I—not I!" he cried. "You may go if you like, if you do not value your life. But I—I do not feel well even now. Yesterday I kissed her hand. Ah, would to God that I had not! That is it. I wondered what ailed me this morning. Go—stop the court physicians! Do not let them go to the Summer Palace; bring them here to me first. Your arm, officer; I think I will go to my room—I am not well."

Prince Ivan's countenance grew mottled and greyish, and his teeth showed in the sun like a thin line of dazzling white. He grasped the poltroon by the wrist with a hand of steel.

"Listen," he said—"no more of this; I will not have it! I will not waste my own time and the blood of my father's soldiers for naught. This is but some woman's trick to delay the marriage—I know it. Hearken! I fear neither Black Death nor black devil; I will have the Lady Margaret today if I have to wed her on her deathbed! Now, I cannot enter your wife's chamber alone. Yet go I must, if only to see what all this means, and you shall accompany me. Do you hear, Prince Louis? I swear you shall go with me to the Summer Palace, if I have to drag you step by step!"

His grasp lay like a tightening circle of iron about the wrist of Prince Louis; his steady glance dominated the weaker man. Louis drew in his breath with a choking noise.

"I will," he gasped; "if I must—I will go. But the Death—the Black Death! I am sick—truly, Ivan, I am very sick!"

"So am I!" said Prince Ivan, smiling grimly. "But bring his Highness a cup of wine, and send hither Alexis the Deacon, my own physician."

The officer went out cursing the Muscovite ears that had listened to such things, and also high Heaven for giving such a Prince to his fatherland.

At the Princess' door Prince Ivan tapped gently and inclined his ear to

"I swear you shall go with me."

listen. Louis fumbled with his golden crucifix, and as the Muscovite turned away his head he pressed it furtively to his lips. Ever since he set foot in the Summer Palace he had been muttering the prayers of the Church in a rapid undertone.

"Prince Louis to see Princess Joan!" Ivan answered the low-voiced challenge from within. The door opened slightly and then more widely. Ivan pushed his friend forward and they entered, Louis dragging one foot after the other towards the shaded couch by which knelt the Princess Margaret, Thora of Dornholm, pallid and blue-tipped, stood beside her, swaying a little but still holding, half unconsciously, a silver basin, into which Margaret dipped a fine linen cloth, before touching with it the foam-flecked lips of the sufferer. Prince Ivan remained a little back, near to where the court physicians were conferring together in stage whispers. As he passed, a tall, grey-skirted, long-bearded man, girt about the middle with a silver chain, detached himself from the official group and approached Prince Ivan. After an instinctive cringing movement of homage and salutation, he bent to the young man's ear and whispered half a dozen words. Prince Ivan nodded very slightly and the man stole away as he had come. No one in the room had noticed the incident.

Meanwhile Louis of Courtland, almost as pale as Thora herself, his lips blue, his teeth chattering, his fingers clammy with perspiration, stood by the bedside clutching the crucifix. Presently a hand was laid upon his arm. He started violently at the touch.

"It is true—a bad case," said Ivan in his ear. "Let us get away; I must speak with you at once. The physicians have given their verdict. They can do nothing!"

With a gasp of relief Prince Louis faced about, and as he turned he tottered.

"Steady, friend Louis!" said Prince Ivan in his ear and passed his arm about his waist.

He began to fear lest he should have frightened his dupe too thoroughly.

"See how he loves her!" murmured the doctors of healing, still conferring with their heads together. "Who would have believed it possible?"

"Nay, he is only much afraid," said Alexis the Deacon, the Muscovite doctor; "and small blame to him, now that the Black Death has come to Courtland. In half an hour we shall hear the death-rattle!"

"Then there is no need of us staying," said more than one learned doctor, and they moved softly towards the door. But Ivan had possessed himself of the key, and even as the hand of the first was on the latchet bar the bolt was shot in his face. And the eyes of Alexis the Deacon glowed between his narrow red lids like sparks in tinder as he glanced at the whitening faces of the learned men of Courtland.

Without the door Ivan fixed Prince Louis with his will.

"Now," he said, speaking in low, trenchant tones, "if this be indeed the Black Death (and it is like it), there is no safety for us here. We must get without walls. In an hour there will be such a panic in the city as has not been for centuries. I offer you a way of escape. My Cossacks stand horsed and ready without. Let us go with them. But the Princess Margaret must come also!"

"But—but—but—" Louis still objected, "the Princess Joan—she may die. That will reflect upon my honor if we all desert her. My sister will continue to attend her. They are friends. I will go with you . . . Margaret can remain and nurse her!"

A light like a spear point glittered momentarily under the dark brows of the Muscovite.

"Listen, Prince Louis," he said. "Your honor is your honor. Joan of the Sword Hand and her Black Plagues are your own affair. She is your wife, not mine. I have helped you to get her back—no more. But the Princess Margaret is my business. I have bought her with a price. And look you, sir, I will not ride back to Russia empty-handed, that every petty boyar and starveling serf may scoff at me saying, 'He helped the Prince of Courtland to win his wife, but he could not bring back one himself.' The whole city, the whole country from here to Moscow know for what cause I have so long sojourned in your capital. Now, Prince Louis, will you have me go as your friend or as your enemy?"

"Ivan—Ivan, you are my friend. Do not speak to me so! Who else is my friend if you desert me?"

"Then give me your sister!"

The prince cast up his hand with a little gesture of despair.

"Ah," he sighed, "you do not know Margaret! She is not in my gift, or you should have had her long ago! Oh, these troubles, these troubles! When will they be at an end?"

"They are at an end now," said Prince Ivan consolingly. "Call your sister out of the chamber on a pretext. In ten minutes we shall be at the cathedral gates. In another ten she and I can be wedded according to your Roman custom. In half an hour we shall all be outside the walls. If you fear the infection you need not come near her. I will do all that is necessary. And what more natural? We will be gone before the panic breaks—you to one of your hill castles—if you do not wish to come with us to Moscow."

"And the Princess Joan—?" faltered the coward.

"She is in good hands," said the prince, truthfully for once. "I pledge you my word of honor she is in no danger. Call your sister!"

Even as he spoke he tapped lightly, turned the key in the lock and whispered, "Now!" to the Prince of Courtland.

"Tell the Princess Margaret I would speak with her!" said Prince Louis. "For a moment only!" he added, fearing that otherwise she might not come.

There was a stir in the sick chamber and then quick steps were heard coming lightly across the floor. The face of the princess appeared at the door.

"Well?" she said haughtily to her brother. Prince Ivan she did not see, for he had stepped back into the dusk of the corridor. Louis beckoned his sister without.

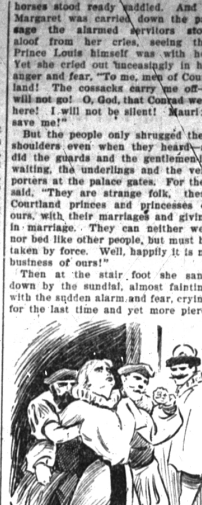
"I must speak a word with you," he said. "I would not have these fellows hear us!" She stepped out unsuspectingly. Instantly the door was closed behind her. A dark figure slid between. Prince Ivan turned the key and laid his hand upon her arm.

"Help!" she cried, struggling; "help me! For God's grace, let me go!"

But from behind came four cossacks of the Prince's retinue who half-carried, half-forced her along toward the gates at which the Muscovite horses stood ready saddled. And as Margaret was carried down the passage the alarmed servitors stood aloof from her cries, seeing that Prince Louis himself was with her. Yet she cried out unceasingly in her anger and fear, "To me, men of Courtland! The cossacks carry me off—will ye not go! O, God, that Conrad were here! I will not be silent! Maurice, save me!"

But the people only shrugged their shoulders even when they heard—as did the guards and the gentlemen-in-waiting, the underlings and the very porters at the palace gates. For they said, "They are strange folk, these Courtland princes and princesses of ours, with their marriages and giving in marriage. They can neither wed nor bed like other people, but must be taken by force. Well, happily it is no business of ours!"

Then at the stair foot she sank down by the sundial, almost fainting with the sudden alarm and fear, crying for the last time and yet more pierc-



"Help!" she cried, struggling.

ingly, "Maurice! Maurice! Come to me, Maurice!" Then above them in the palace there began a mighty clamor, the noise of blows stricken and the roar of many voices. But Ivan of Muscovy was neither to be hurried nor flurried. Impassive and determined, he swung himself into the saddle. His black charger changed his feet to take his weight and looked about to welcome him—for he, too, knew his master.

"Give the princess to me," he commanded. "Now assist Prince Louis into his saddle. To the cathedral, all of you!"

(To be continued.)

COURTESY AT A TURNSTILE.

How the Progress of an Impetuous Man Was Assisted.

The usual hurried crowd was filing through the turnstile to the Union depot from the Elevated station this morning. A man stood aside to permit two women to precede him through the whirligig. As he started through an impetuous man with a grip bumped him aside and took his place. The man's politeness made a lightning change to indignation. A swift kick was the only redress possible and it sent the hasty one through the turnstile with some impetus to spare.

The offended man with the grip turned to seek satisfaction, but he was barred in. It would cost him five cents to get at the enemy. He reached for a nickel, looked at the clock and hurried on to his train.

"That was good for him. I admire your spirit," said a woman.

"I'm no hero," modestly exclaimed the other. "I only did my duty as I saw it. Any one else would have done the same. Besides, didn't I have a cinch, though? He couldn't touch me."—Kansas City Star.

Mixing Theology and Poker.

"Few persons except clerks behind the counter know to what extent discount is given to the families of clergymen, firemen and policemen," said a floor manager in an uptown store. "There is no doubt we are often imposed upon in this way, but there seems to be no way to prevent it.

"It is hard to question a woman's veracity when she tells you she is the wife, sister or daughter, as the case may be, of the Rev. Mr. Blank of Flatbush, or that her husband is a fireman. We must take her word for it. The oddest case of that kind I ever saw happened last week. A young woman came around to purchase some articles for a camping outfit, said she and her mother and sisters were going to spend the summer in the Adirondacks.

"Among her purchases were six packages of playing cards at forty cents a pack and two boxes of poker chips.

"'And now,' she said, as she reached for her purse, 'please compute the usual discount for ministers. My father is the Rev. Mr. Dash of St. Cecile's.'

"I thought she was imposing on us, and I made an investigation. Much to my surprise, I found she was speaking the truth."—New York Press.

A Good Catch.

Robert—I say, Henry, what do you make of this? There was a donkey tied to a rope, and the rope was four feet long; twelve feet away there was a bundle of hay and the donkey wanted to get to the hay, because he was hungry. How did he do it?

Henry (triumphantly)—Oh! I've heard that before. You want me to say "I give it up," and then you would say "So did the other donkey."

Robert—Not at all, my dear man. Work it out; it's quite simple.

Henry (after a pause)—Well, I don't know how he did it.

Robert—He simply walked up to the hay and ate it.

Henry—But you said he was tied to a rope.

Robert—Yes; but the rope was not tied to anything. You mustn't jump at conclusions like that, you know—Montreal Herald.

Princess Peace.

Princess Irene, wife of Prince Henry of Prussia, was christened as a child at the close of the war in 1866. Irene means "peace."

INVENTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Zirconium the New Filament.

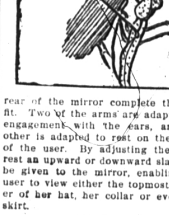
Zirconium is the material used in the production of a new filament for incandescent lamps by Prof. Welding. To obtain the filament he submits oxides of zirconium and magnesium at a high temperature to the action of hydrogen. Pulverizing the resultant alloy and adding a cellulose solution, it is transformed into a plastic and homogeneous mass, from which the filaments are drawn, one pound of the raw material yielding upwards of 50,000 filaments. They present a metallic appearance when carbonized in an atmosphere free from all traces of oxygen. Requiring a current of only thirty-seven volts, three of the zirconium lamps can be placed in series across the usual 110 volt circuit, while for the 220 volt circuit another type using forty-four volts is made, five lamps being placed in series. For high candle power lamps several filaments are placed in the same bulb and connected directly with the 110 volt circuit.

A One-Piece Railway Wheel.

A process for making a one-piece steel railway wheel has been devised. For a 33-in. wheel an ingot about 16 inches in diameter is used, and with steam-hammer and hydraulic press the ingot is forged until the hub and web are brought to practically the finished size. It is then subjected to a process of heat treatment, so that the outer portion of the wheel is brought to a rolling heat, while the web and hub are kept at a lower red heat. The rolling process brings the wheel to its final shape.

Mirror on the Ears.

Ordinarily, a woman is obliged to hold a hand glass in one hand while attempting to arrange her coiffure before a mirror to see to the fit of her garment at the back, and hence has but one hand free to perform the adjustments desired. A recent feminine patentee believes her mirror-supporting attachment will solve this difficulty for femininity, enabling the mirror to be used the same as a hand glass, and still leave both hands free for attending to her toilet. The mirror is preferably made from rather thin glass for the sake of lightness, and is mounted on a thin metallic back suitably inclosing its edges. Three supporting arms mounted in a socket at the



rear of the mirror complete the outfit. Two of the arms are adapted for engagement with the ears, and the other is adapted to rest on the chest of the user. By adjusting the chest rest an upward or downward slant can be given to the mirror, enabling the user to view either the topmost feather or her hat, her collar or even her skirt.

Biggest Dredger in the World.

The most powerful dredger in the world, both in point of size and out put, has recently been added to the German navy. So heavy has been the silting in the harbor and approaches of Wilhelmshaven the existing plant has long been unable to cope with the deposits, the great German liners being barred from the harbor in consequence. The new dredge, with upwards of 2,000 horsepower and a capacity of 4,500 tons, is proving capable of performing the enormous task presented, however, dredging 123,000 cubic feet of compact sand an hour and lifting light silt at the rate of 176,000 cubic feet hourly. The vessel is thus capable of removing over 200,000,000 cubic feet in a year of 250 working days, the estimated cost being less than one-fifth of a cent per cubic foot, including interest and running expenses. The boat is 262.4 feet in length and 47½ feet beam.

Sea Water for Tuberculosis.

At the last session of the Paris Academy of Medicine a treatise by Dr. Fournol recommending hypodermic injections of sea water against tuberculosis attracted much attention. Dr. Fournol has prepared a sea water serum which possesses the property of increasing the blood pressure. He treated twenty-four patients at a Paris hospital with it. Some of them suffered from recent tuberculosis of the lungs, others for old tuberculosis of the bones. In all cases a distinct improvement was noticeable in the local as well as in the general condition. Consul General Guenther, writing from Frankfort, Germany, says that the results appeared so important to members of the academy that it was resolved to notify the tuberculosis commission with the intention of continuing a series of experiments throughout Europe.

New Anesthetic.

Stovaine enters the list beside chloroform and ether. Stovaine, the new anesthetic of Dr. Fournesu, is injected into the spinal fluid and within five minutes gives complete insensibility below the point of injection, while the patient does not lose consciousness. The effects last for an hour and a half. No unfavorable results have been reported in the numerous tests that have been made in France, but fears of lack of control and danger of blood poisoning have been expressed.

There isn't much hope for a man who will lie when the truth would do just as well.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.

Surprising Statements Vouched for by Whitehead & Mitchell and Cobb & Cobb.

All of us who know these druggists are confident that they would make none but straightforward statements, and when they tell you of the many Birmingham people who have suffered for years with indigestion and have been cured through using Pepsikola tablets we must believe every word is true. No other remedy so quickly relieves and cures sour stomach, heartburn, coated tongue, nervousness, insomnia, debility, that run-down, tired-out feeling and every other trouble arising from poor digestion. We continue to sell Pepsikola tablets with the understanding that you can have your 25 cents back in case you are in the least disappointed. In the face of these facts, nobody should hesitate an instant to avail themselves of the opportunity to regain perfect digestion, perfect health, renewed energy, new vigor and new vitality through the use of a remedy that does not cost a penny should it fail to do all that is claimed. There is no risk to you whatever and we ask you to try it on Whitehead & Mitchell and Cobb & Cobb guarantee.

WHY NOT?

Now comes the report that a disciple of Prince Mike is looking for a foothold in our village—Well! Well! Let them come.

The intimation is that they want about four houses and a room large enough for associations and ceremonies, unless our guess is missed, if they do come there would be ceremonies and to spare.

CHANGED HER APPEARANCE.

Birmingham Woman's Ambition Realized.

Nearly every woman in the world wants to be beautiful and attractive for if it were only skin deep, beauty is desirable from every standpoint, and perfect beauty means perfect health. If one's complexion is at fault, it is due in most cases to improper diet, a torpid liver, high living, impure blood and constipation. After trying lotions and skin foods with disappointing results, a prominent Birmingham lady was induced to try Laxakola tonic tablets and in her case they have worked wonders. They act as a tonic, enrich the blood, stimulate the liver, encourage the action of the bowels, put new life in the skin and clear up the complexion by assisting nature to do its own perfect work. Whitehead & Mitchell and Cobb & Cobb have been selling Laxakola tonic tablets for some time now and from the rapidly increasing demand Birmingham ladies must find them beneficial in every way.

There is absolutely no risk, for a 25c package of Laxakola Tonic Tablets must do all we claim or we will promptly return your money.

AT THE THEATRES.

WHITNEY

Chas. E. Blaney's strenuous play "Across the Pacific" will be next week's attraction at the Whitney, commencing Sunday afternoon. The action of the play opens in a Montana mining camp. The next scene shows an opium den and Chinese restaurant in San Francisco, the docks there with the United States transport about to leave for the Phillipines. As a fitting finale, there is terrific bombardment of a blockhouse by the insurgents, and a response with a genuine Gatling gun by Uncle Sam's boys. This forms one of the most thrilling climaxes ever introduced to play-goers. A thrilling sword duel also takes place in this act. While the piece is sensational it is softened by a strong love interest, at times pathetic and again mirthful. The rough rider band will play several popular airs, and several specialties will be introduced by different members. Matinees will be given daily, except on Wednesday.

LYCEUM.

Arthur C. Aston will offer his new drama, "Shadows on the Hearth" at the Lyceum for one week commencing Sunday night. The play is one of the rural district of New Jersey, laid in and about the little village of Frenchtown, on the Delaware river. The time of the piece is in the summer and autumn of 1861; the military life entering the play in several places, which adds a spiciness seldom given to drama of this type. The plot concerns two girls, Kate and Nell Berrick. Nell has loved and married, but not too well. On the eve of the birth of her child she is left alone, a deserted wife. Not knowing where to go, she leaves the child on her father's doorstep, where it is taken in and cared for. Later the father overhears the two girls and divining that the child belongs to Kate, drives her from his home with the child. The girl assumes the guilt to protect her sister, and the story of her wanderings are pathetic and interesting. She is finally found by her lover who takes her to his home. Matinees will be given on Wednesday and Saturday, with a special performance on Monday afternoon, Labor Day.

This is a tin can civilization. In the days of Washington, there weren't any tin cans. Now, one great concern makes fifteen cans annually for every man, woman and child in the country.

Lord Roberts says the army of Great Britain is altogether inadequate and inefficient. This applies only to mere fighting, however. At polo and pink teas the army shines as much as ever.

Three duels were fought in Mississippi the other day, four of the six principals being killed. Over in France people will regard this as a new romance by some writer with an extraordinary imagination.

The Troubles of Humanity.

There are troubles of the rich
Fresh for the gossiper day by day;
There are the waiting armies which
Are taught to have and yet not to stay;
There are the rogues in office who
Still shame us by their sinful greed—
But still the sky is often blue
And good men still come forth to lead.

The warring and the sin and woe
We make our daily themes, but still
At sunset we may see the glow
Of promise on the eastern hill!
The strife and wrongs we emphasize,
And often foolishly forget
That Virtue's broad, white banner flies
High over all the others yet.

—S. E. Kiser.

It requires much less philosophy to take things as they come than to part with them as they go.

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TORPEDO BOAT IS CUT IN TWO

German Battle-Ship Reported to Have Rammed Vessel at Eckernfoerde.

Berlin cable: The Kiel correspondent of the Lokal Anzeiger says the battle-ship Woerth rammed torpedo-boat S 124 in the harbor of Eckernfoerde Wednesday morning, cutting her in two, and that three firemen in the boiler-room were scalded to death by escaping steam. The S 124 was one of six torpedo-boats launched in 1994. She was of 420 tons displacement and had a speed of thirty knots.

INSURANCE.

The economy and hard work of long years are sometimes just a home. Protect it by insuring in the grand old Hartford. J. A. Bigelow, Agt.

FOLEY'S KIDNEY CURE Makes Kidneys and Bladder Right

TIGER HUNTING IN AFRICA.

Predatory Beast Killed by Blow of Rifle Butt.

"An exciting adventure with a tiger occurred at Sabi recently," says a South African paper. "The beast was seen going from L. Banger's place, dragging a calf toward a dense bush, which lay close by. Mr. Banger could not leave the store until nearly sundown and by that time the tiger had eaten nearly half the calf. On coming up to him Mr. Banger fired and managed to break the animal's left shoulder, but it was too dark to follow. Next morning he set out with a couple of dogs and a few boys. As soon as the dogs bayed him the tiger commenced growling, but he could not be seen for the dense bush. All of a sudden he dashed out, passed Mr. Banger and caught one of the boys, whose flesh was very badly torn and had to be sewed up by a doctor. Mr. Banger, being afraid of shooting the boy, ran up to the tiger, and broke his neck with the gun. The animal measured from nose to tail seven feet six inches."

Wanted, For Sale, For Rent.

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Pepsikola is prepared in the form of chocolate-coated tablets and gives relief by increasing the flow of gastric juice and saliva, by stimulating the stomach to do its own work, and by giving new tone and vigor to the entire digestive tract.

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A Perfect Cure: For All Throat and Lung Troubles.

Money back if it fails. Trial Bottles free.

Funny

That you leave the stable door unlocked until the horse is stolen—but it's history and human nature. Now, why don't you be odd and

Peculiar

and lock the door NOW by renting a safe deposit box in the Exchange Bank for $1.00 per year? And if you want any deeds, mortgages, leases, wills or other legal papers made, here is the place to have it done, not only in a neat manner

But Correct

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DAILY EXCURSIONS DETROIT TO THE PARKS St. Clair Flats Tashmoo Park Port Huron and TOLEDO

On the magnificent steel steamers TASHMOO, GREYHOUND (New) and CITY OF TOLEDO

Toledo and Return, every Sunday Morning, 50c; Flats or Tashmoo and Return, 25c; Port Huron and Return, $1.00.

Steamer leaves Detroit for Flats, Tashmoo, Port Huron and Way Ports Daily, 8.30 A. M. and 2.30 P. M. (Sundays excepted). Steamer for Port Huron and St. Clair week days at 3.30 P. M. returning arrive 8.45 A. M. and 10.00 A. M. and 5.30 P. M. Passengers taking afternoon steamer to the Flats have ample time for fish supper and return on the Tashmoo at 8.30 P. M. Steamer for Toledo leaves Detroit week days 6.00 A. M. Sundays, 9.00 A. M. and 5.00 P. M. Telephone 1509

GRISWOLD ST. WHARF

AT THIS OFFCE JOB WORK PROMPTLY EXECUTED