

THE EGYPTIAN ARCHITECT.

There is a story of the olden time
That offers pleasant theme for poet's rhyme:
Of a builder who, with skill and care,
Designed a temple renowned grand and fair.
A temple for the gods on earth to stand,
To tell the coming of the Master's hand.
Day after day, inspired by lofty thought
And pious zeal, the patient artist wrought:
Day after day slowly, as great works do,
The temple structure, in construction true,
Until at last, beneath the smiling skies,
It stood complete, a joy to heart and eyes.
Then came the entrance, in solid stone,
The builder carved a name—it was his own!
And passing well the King who ruled the land,
Would claim the work, he hid, with ready hand,
The letter "M" a plastering thickly laid,
And hid on that another record made.
Then all the people seeing there the name
Of their great King, praised him with loud acclaim,
And said how wise he was, how good, how great,
To build so grand a temple for the State!
His name for that good deed spread far and wide,
Lived while he lived, nor ended when he died,
But as years rolled on, they brought the day
When the false speaking tablet fell away,
And let the record stand fair and true,
By which all men the right hand knew:
Then, making rich amends for all the past,
Fame crowned his memory with her gifts at last.
As I still, in that age so long gone by,
Full many told, with purpose pure and high,
We've dreamed to see another name appear
Upon the structure that so bravely rears
Some false pretender, like the King of old,
Grasping the golden scepter he should hold.
But Truth and Right, though overlaid awhile
By impost power, or cruel Wrong or Guile,
With time the letters on so clear and deep
The firm granite, will be made to reap
And every door of a dead sublime,
Victor at last o'er Circumstances and Time,
Still, like the Builder in this ancient story,
Shall stand his well-earned record of glory.

STRANGE REVERSON.
THE MAN WHO NEVER LAUGHED AND WHY HE NEVER LAUGHED.

I had an old friend, if fate should
Ever lead you to the graveyard at
Rethel, you might read his name on a
slab that is neighborly with the tomb
of Abbe. Caelier, an amiable person
who has received credit for something
which were produced by somebody else.
It is no more than true that my old
friend has lain under the yew-tree
that his grandchildren planted over
him. The wind has gradually filled
with earth the inscription which was
intended to inform the public: there
lies M. Jean Bernard, who has been
over the specimen of lapidary calligraphy
until the letters of the epitaph have be-
come a velvet green of the most picto-
resque appearance.
My old friend, like a goodly number
of those who sleep about him, was
something besides a tender spouse and
excellent father for whose soul prayers
are offered up. He was a humorist and
a humorist he had traveled extensively,
had been shipwrecked half a dozen
times, and was the possessor of a world-
ly experience well worth consulting.
It was a most singular thing, however,
that, in spite of his amiable and ad-
venturous life, he never laughed, and often
jolly humor, he never laughed.
M. Bernard was fond of telling
pleasant stories, but, while all around
him were laughing and laughing, he
alone retained his impassibility. His
features would become animated, his
forehead wrinkled, his eyes would
sparkle and enjoyment was plainly
visible; but as his lips, they never
seem to be able to express even that
slight grimace that Fontenelle tolerated
—the smile.
One evening—it was on board the
English steamer Solent—a nephew
of my old friend was sitting at my side.
"Tell me," I said suddenly to the
young man, "why is it that your uncle
never laughs?"
"What! Have you also remarked that
peculiarity? It is an old story that
dates away back to the days of his boy-
hood."
"Can't you tell me about it?"
"On one condition, however, that
you will be careful never to make any
allusion to it in my uncle's presence."
I promised; but, now that my old
friend is dead, I can take my turn and
tell why it was that he never laughed.
In 1814, during the great war in
France, M. Jean Bernard had reached his
fifteenth year. He was living in
Nancy with his mother. His father
had been killed at Leipzig, and his
elder brother, a captain in the young
guards, was one of the 70,000 heroes who
disappeared, step by step, the march of
the allies on the soil of France. These
success lay in their numbers alone.
It was a rainy day, at the end of
February. The Prussians, beaten the
night before by Napoleon, had taken
the city, and were busy in the almost
deserted streets of the town. Worn
out and covered with mud, they formed
on the public places in front of the
walls of the Hotel de Ville. Sadder
and sadder were the faces of the
soldiers, the soldiers, hurrying on and
tossing their heads to look back, load-
ed with guns. They felt that they
were pursued by the terrible curses
which had passed their lines on the night
before.
"They are afraid!" cried a young boy,
who was one of a small crowd of children
who were playing in the street.
A burly captain, with a grizzly
mustache and an athletic form, heard
the remark, looked the boy in the face
and advanced toward him. "You little
devil," he said, "you are a brave fellow,
but you are a liar. I will teach you
to tell the truth. You say they are afraid.
Well, I will show you that they are not."
The captain stepped forward, and threw
him to the ground. The young man
accomplished, he lengthened out his step
to regain his already retreating feet.
The young Frenchman, a small child
in his face, livid, breathless, and
with rage, threw himself upon one of
the retreating Prussians, and, with
the force of a cannon ball, he threw
him to the ground. He was quickly thrown
to the ground, trampled under foot, and
wounded in the breast with a sabre.
The curious crowd that had gathered
had fled in a panic, while the Prussian
had been killed. The young man was
already out of town when the young
Frenchman, in his paroxysm of rage, was
still fighting in his own blood with an
imaginary foe.
He was carried up to his home.
A brain fever placed his days and his
reason in danger, and it took all a
mother's care to bring him back to life.
He never spoke of this adventure, which
he seemed to have forgotten, and every-
body was careful not to recall it. His
character was visibly affected; from
cheerfulness and joyousness, he be-
came taciturn, and when he was par-
ticularly happy he contained himself
with a stony smile.
After the year 1815, Jean Bernard was
placed in a school, where his brother-
in-law, the professor of arms and
bought him a farm in the neighborhood
of Metz.
To be continued.

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