precipice to the extreme point where a narrow bank of shale sloped down steeply to a huge heap of boulders that had been broken off from the rocky walls, and heaped up to a height of more than one hundred feet. A little stream trickled down the slope and poured a tiny cascade of water over the edge of a large rock.

He descended with considerable difficulty to the beach, and ploughed his way ankle-deep through the dry, silvery sand to the strangely-shaped hillock by the water. And as he went he saw that which quickened his pulse, and made him glance swiftly round the rocky sides of the gorge.

Parallel with his own path were innumerable deep dents in the sand. They bore no resemblance to the impression of a foot, for they were merely little funnel-shaped holes. But Tredegar looked back at his own tracks, and saw that his own feet left similar marks in the shifting yielding sand. His heart beat high with hope.

"At last," he said to himself, "I have tracked this horror to its lair, and it shall not leave the gorge alive!"

But he was doomed to disappointment. He was, however, right in supposing that the hillock of sand marked the grave of a vessel. As he drew near to it he saw tora beams and shattered spars sticking out from the sides, and these were white as the sand itself, bleached by the suns of centuries. For at the first glance he could see that this was no modern ship, but an old galleon. Little remained of it but the high poop and a few bare ribs of oak. The black patch he had seen from the top of the cliff had not been timber, but the entrance to a cabin. The doorway was gone, and only a dark cavity remained. The floor was covered deeply with sand, and Tredegar saw that this had been shifted and trodden down by something.

He paused at the entrance, with clenched fists and his legs a little apart, to give him a firm standing. Then he picked up a stone and flung it hard into the darkness. The stone struck wood, and rattled from wall to wall. But nothing stirred within, and there was no sound but the splashing of the waters on the shore. He drew nearer, and, lighting a match, peered cautiously into the interior. At first he could see nothing. After the brilliant sunshine outside the light of the match was no more than darkness. Then, as his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, he saw that the cabin was empty.

He lit another match, and examined the inside. It was a room about twelve feet square, with a low ceiling. The timbers were rudely ornamented, and a coat of arms with a Spanish motto was carved on one of the beams. Tredegar recognised the arms of Castille in one of the quarterings. In one corner the sand was piled nearly to the ceiling, and it bore the impress of a body. A heavy oaken door with broken hinges lay half-buried on the floor.

He lit several more matches, and examined every inch of the woodwork carefully in the hope of finding some clue to the name of the vessel. But he found none. Then a sudden idea struck him. Here was the very place for him to live. A snug shelter from sun and rain; and with the door repaired and fixed, an almost impregnable fortress, where he could sleep in security.

He came out into the air and glanced at the line of rocks with the foam swirling round their bases. He was thinking of the boat and how he could bring it up on the beach. To his joy he noticed a narrow channel on one side, close to the cliffs. It was no more than fifteen feet wide, and the water sluiced through it like a mill race. It was possible that there were sunken rocks beneath. But still it was an opening, and a pair of strong arms might guide a boat through it.

He returned along the cliffs to the encampment, launched the boat, placed everything in it, and rowed round the coast till he reached the ravine. Only a man of his great strength would have attempted to guide an eighteen foot boat through that narrow swirling channel. And he failed in his task. The boat ran on a sunken rock and stuck there quivering like a butterfly impaled on a pin. He leapt over the side into the shallow rushing water, and by superhuman efforts managed to transfer everything to the shore. But his last chance of escape was gone. With no tools it would be impossible to repair the boat, even if he could save it from its present position. But in less than two hours it was broken to pieces.

Then he set to work to fix up the door of the cabin, and the sun was low in the heavens before he had accomplished the job to his satisfaction. After that he commenced to clear out the sand from the interior. He had lit a fire at the entrance behind a wall of sand, and the red light glowed through the doorway on the oaken walls. It was a laborious task, but he threw the sand out in great handfuls and scooped it away until it lay about a foot deep on the floor. He left this as a couch to sleep on.

Just as he had completed the job his eye was caught by several marks on a beam which he had just uncovered. He could not distinguish them in the firelight, but they appeared to be letters. He had some smattering of Spanish, and, striking a match, he stooped down and examined them, moving the match along from letter to letter, till he had spelt out the whole sentence. Then he looked behind him in terror, as though he expected to see something. For the words were in English, and had apparently not been cut more than a few years, and they were words that struck fear into his heart and threw a terrible light on the years that lay before him.

And yet they were but a short quotation from the New Testament: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

He rose to his feet and staggered out into the open. The sky was roofed with tossing flame and the land bathed in liquid gold. There was no sound but the roar of the sea on the rocks. The black cliffs towered up around him like the walls of a dungeon. It seemed for a moment as though he were chained down in the lowest depths of hell. The living death was written over the heavens and the sea and the sky and the very silence spoke of it.

He fell on his knees and prayed. "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

(To be continued.)

The Pianoforte Student.

A COMMON ERROR IN EXPRESSION.

(By J. S. Van Cleve.)

One morning, while listening to a young lady recite her lesson in piano-playing, I observed, with more than usual distinctness, an error in the understanding of musical directions of expression which is so frequently made that a word of elucidation and caution may be well.

Everyone knows, or at any rate thinks he knows, what is signified by the Italian word ritardando often employed by composers. My pupil was reciting the "Rondo Capriccioso," by Mendelssohn. In the introductory Andante there is toward the close a precipitate passage of octaves in the right hand, which has a mark of ritardando. When she arrived at the last three notes there was an abrupt halt, and a very slow, emphatic sounding out of the notes. Besides being quite abhorrent to the Mendelssohnian tradition, which demands almost constant equality of beating, this was so gross a gaucherie as to be quite glaring. I took occasion to explain to her the marked difference between ritardando and meno mosso.

The latter effect is also often employed in music, but is quite another thing from ritardando. Meno mosso means that there is to be an instantaneous alteration of the tempo to a slower rate, at which it is to remain until further notice.

The secret of the ritardando is to add an insensible amount of lengthening to each beat or note, at any rate to each unit of the music to be retarded, whether there be but two or three or four of such notes, or whether the slackening is to extend through a long series of 30 or 40 notes. Suppose you were to add a grain of sand each moment to a pan of a balance; it would sink lower and lower by very gentle and nicely-graded abatements, and the sinking would be as soft as the gentle alighting of a balloon under perfect control. This may be taken as an image of the ritardando. Such an effect is to be as aerial and pulse-like as possible, and nothing is more fatal to the effect desired by the composer, namely, the softening and dulling of the fire of feeling, than suddenly to quench it. Do not dash a cup of water upon the flame; sprinkle ashes upon it.

The expression meno mosso is generally used at the beginning of some entirely new thought or form of tone-structure, and is intended to distract the mind for a moment, and to produce a slight arrest of the attention or spur of wonder. The pit-fall into which all beginners at retarding seem to fall by some fatal instinct of blunder is that of changing the first note or two much too violently. The truth is, you must deliver the notes which immediately follow the direction "ritardando" nearly as fast as you have been going, then by little and little, usually by changes quite too delicate for a tyro, the sluggishness of the pulse must be brought in.

There is a wide-spread neglect of accurate attention to these routine and fundamental marks of expression among our pupils, and, as teachers, we are much too apt to take for granted a knowledge of what is to us so rudimental.