

Lippincott's Magazine, December, 1885 eBook

Lippincott's Magazine, December, 1885

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Page 1

A TOBACCO PLANTATION.

In the following article I propose to give some account of a typical tobacco-plantation in Virginia and the life of its negro laborers as I have observed it from day to day and season to season. Although it is restricted to narrow local bounds and runs in the line of exacting routine, that life is yet varied and eventful in its way. The negro stands so much apart to himself, in spite of all transforming influences, that everything relating to him seems unique and almost foreign. Even now, when emancipation has done so much to improve his condition, his social and economic status still presents peculiar and anomalous aspects; and in no part of the South is this more notably the case than in the southern counties of Virginia, which, before the late war, were the principal seat of slavery in the State, and where to-day the blacks far outnumber the whites. This section has always been an important tobacco-region; and this is the explanation of its teeming negro population, for tobacco requires as much and as continuous work as cotton. There were many hundreds of slaves on the large plantations, and their descendants have bred with great rapidity and show little inclination to emigrate from the neighborhoods where they were born. Some few, by hoarding their wages, have been able to buy land; but for the most part the soil is still held by its former owners, who superintend the cultivation of it themselves or rent it out at low rates to tenants. The negroes are still the chief laborers in the fields and artisans in the workshops; and, excepting that they are no longer chattels that can be sold at will, their lives move in the same grooves as under the old order of things. Their occupations and amusements are the same. As yet there has been no increase in the physical comforts of their situation, and but little change in their general character; but this is the first period of transformation, when it is difficult to detect and to follow the modifications that are really taking place.

Every large tobacco-plantation is an important community in itself, and the social and economic condition of the negro can be observed there as freely and studied with as much thoroughness as if a wide area of country were considered for a similar purpose. In the diversity of its soils and crops and in the variety of its population and modes of life it bears almost the same relation to the county in which it lies that the county bears to its section. Indeed, no community could be more complete in itself, or less dependent upon the outside world. In an emergency, the inhabitants of one of these large plantations could supply themselves by their own skill and ingenuity with everything that they now obtain from abroad; and if cut off from all other associations, the society which they themselves form would satisfy their desire for companionship; for not only would its members



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be numerous and representative of every shade of character and disposition, but they would also be bound together by ties of blood and marriage as well as of interest and mutual affection. Similar tasks and relaxations create in them a similarity of tastes. The social position of all is identical, for there are no classes among them, the only line of social division being drawn upon differences of age; and they are paid the same wages and possess the same small amount of property. They are attached to the soil by like local associations, which vary as much as the plantation varies in surface here and there. Each plantation of any great extent is like that part of the country, both in its general aspect and its leading features, just as the employments and amusements of its population, if numerous, are found reflected in the social life of the whole of the same section.

The particular plantation to which I shall so often allude in this article as the scene of the observations here recorded, like most of the tobacco-plantations in Virginia, covers a broad expanse of land, including in one body many thousand acres, remarkable for many differences of soil and for a varied configuration. It is partly made up of steep hills that roll upon each other in close succession, partly it is high and level upland that sweeps back to the wooded horizon from the open low-grounds contiguous to the river that winds along its southern border. At least one-half of it is in forest, in which oak, cedar, poplar, and hickory grow in abundance and reach a great height and size. The soil of the lowlands is very fertile, for it is enriched every few years by an inundation that leaves behind a heavy deposit; that of the uplands, on the other hand, is comparatively poor, but it is fertilized annually with the droppings of the stables and pens. Patches of new grounds are opened every year in the woods, the timber being cleared away for the purpose of planting tobacco in the mould of the decayed leaves, while many old fields are abandoned to pine and broom-straw or turned into pastures for cattle.

The principal crops are tobacco, wheat, corn, and hay, but the first is by far the most important, both from its quantity and its value. Everything else is really subordinate to it. The soils of the uplands and lowlands are adapted to very different varieties of this staple. That which grows in the rich loam of the bottoms is known as "shipping tobacco," because it is chiefly consumed abroad, as it bears transportation in the rough state without injury to its quality. "Working tobacco" is the name which is given to the variety that flourishes on the hills; and this is used in the manufacture of brands of chewing- and smoking-tobacco to meet the domestic as well as the foreign demand. There is a third variety which grows in small quantities on the plantation,—namely, "yellow tobacco," so called from the golden color of the plant as it approaches ripeness; and this tint is not only retained, but also heightened, when it has been cured, at which time it is as light in weight as so much snuff. This variety is principally used as a wrapper for bundles of the inferior kinds, and is prepared for the market by a very tedious and expensive process; but the trouble thus entailed and the money spent have their compensation in the very high prices which it always brings in the market.

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The fields where tobacco has been cultivated during the previous summer are sown in wheat in the autumn, unless they are new grounds, when the rotation of crops is tobacco for two years in succession, followed in the third year by wheat, and in the fourth by tobacco again. The soil is then laid under the same rule of tillage as land that has been worked for many seasons. As a result of this necessity for rotation, much wheat is raised on the plantation, although the threshing of it interferes very seriously with the attention which the tobacco requires at a very critical period of its growth. The greater part of the low-grounds is planted in Indian corn, the return in a good year being very large; and even when there has been a drought, the general average in quantity and quality falls short very little. The soil here is so fertile that tobacco planted in it grows too coarse in its fibre, while the cost of cultivating it is so high that the planter is reluctant to run the risk of an overflow of the river, which destroys a crop at any stage in a few hours. Although corn is very much injured by the same cause, it is not rendered wholly useless, for it can be thrown to stock even when it is unfit to be ground into meal. At a certain season the fields of this grain along the river present a beautiful aspect, the mass of deep green flecked by the white tops of the stalks resembling, at a distance, level, unruffled waters; but sometimes a freshet descends upon it and obliterates it from sight, the whole broad plain being then like a highly-discolored lake, with rafts of planks and uprooted trees floating upon its surface.

The general plantation is divided into three plantations of equal extent, each tract being made up of several thousand acres of land; each has its own overseer, and he has under him a band of laborers who are never called away to work elsewhere, and who have all their possessions around them. Each division has its stables, teams, and implements, and its expenses and profits are entered in a separate account. In short, the different divisions of the general plantation are conducted as if they belonged to several persons instead of to one alone.

It is the duty of the overseer of each division to remain with his laborers, however employed, and to overlook what they are doing. He sees that the teams are well fed, the stock in good condition and in their own bounds, the fences intact, and the implements sheltered from the weather. He must hire additional hands when they are needed, and discharge those guilty of serious delinquencies. His position is one of responsibility, but at the same time of many advantages; for he is given a comfortable house for his private use, with a garden, a smoke-house, a store-room, and a stable,—a horse being furnished him to enable him to get from one locality to another on the plantation under his charge with ease and rapidity; and he is also supplied with rations for himself and



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family every month. The social class to which he belongs is below the highest,—namely, that of the planter,—and above that of the whites of meanest condition. Formerly one of the three overseers on the plantation which I am now describing was a colored man who had been a slave before the war, a foreman in the field afterward, and was then promoted, in consequence of his efficiency, to the responsible position which I have named. He was a man of unusual intelligence, and gave the highest satisfaction. His mind was almost painfully directed to the performance of his duties, and the only fault that could be found with him was an occasional inclination to be too severe with his own race. Very naturally, he was looked up to by the latter as successful and prosperous, and his influence in consequence was very great. Unlike most of his fellows, he was given to hoarding what he earned, and in a few years was able to buy a plantation of his own; and there he is now engaged in cultivating his own land.

There is a population of about four hundred negroes on the three divisions of the plantation, this number including both sexes and every age and shade of color. All of the older set, with few exceptions, were the slaves of their employer, and did not leave him even in the restless and excited hour of their emancipation. Born on the place, they have spent the whole of their long lives there, and consider it to be as much their home as it is that of its owner. In fact, the negroes here are remote from those influences that lead so many others to migrate. The plantation is eighteen miles from a railroad and forty from a town, and is set down in a very sparsely settled country that has been only partially cleared of its forests. It has a teeming population of its own, which satisfies the social instincts of its inhabitants as much as if they were collected together in a small town. In consequence of all these facts, and in spite of the new state of things which the war produced, there survives in its confines something of that baronial spirit which we observe on a landed estate in England at the present day, where every man, woman, and child is accustomed to think of the landlord as the fountain-head of power and benefits. A similar spirit of loyal subordination prevails particularly among the oldest inhabitants of the plantation, who were once the absolute chattels of its owner, and who look upon that fact as creating an obligation in him to support them in their decrepitude. Being too far in the sere and yellow leaf to work, they are provided every month with enough rations to meet their wants, and in total idleness they calmly await the inevitable hour when their bones will be laid beside those of their fathers. There are few more picturesque figures than are many of these old negroes, who passed the heyday of their strength before they were freed, and who, born in slavery, survived to a new era only to find themselves in the last stages of old age. They are regarded

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by their race with as much veneration as if they were invested with the authority of prophets and seers. Some of them, in spite of their years, act occasionally as preachers, and are listened to with awe and trepidation as they lift up their trembling voices in exhortation or denunciation. As travellers from a distant past, it is interesting to observe them sitting with bent backs and hands resting on their sticks in the doorways of their cabins on bright days in summer, or by the warm firesides in winter, while members of younger generations talk around them or play about their knees.

The negro laborers marry in early life, and the size of their families is often remarkable, the ratio of increase being, perhaps, greater with them than with the families of the white laborers on the same plantation, and the mortality among their children as small, for the latter have an abundance of wholesome food, are well sheltered from cold and dampness, and have good medical attendance. As soon as they are able to walk so far, they are sent to the public school, which is situated on the borders of the plantation, where they have a teacher of their own race to instruct them, and they continue to attend until they are old enough to work in the fields and stables. They are then employed there at fair wages, which, until they come of age or marry, are appropriated by their parents; and in consequence of this many of the young men seek positions on the railroads or in the towns before they reach their majority, in order that they may secure and enjoy the compensation of their own labor. In a few years, however, the greater number wander back and offer themselves as hands, are engaged, and establish homes of their own.

Tobacco being a staple that requires work of some kind throughout the whole of the year, a large force of laborers are hired for that length of time. It is not like wheat, in the cultivation and manipulation of which more energy is put forth at one season than at another, as, for instance, when it is harvested or threshed. A certain number of laborers are engaged on the plantation on the 1st of January, who contract to remain at definite wages during the following twelve months. Whoever leaves without consent violates a distinct agreement, under which he is liable in the courts, if it were worth the time and expense to subject him to the law. He is paid every month by an order on a firm of merchants who rent a store that belongs to the owner of the plantation and is situated on one of its divisions; and this order he can convert into money, merchandise, or groceries, as he chooses, or he gives it up in settlement of debts which he has previously made there in anticipation of his wages. The credit of each man is accurately gauged, and he is allowed to deal freely to a certain amount, but not beyond; and this restriction puts a very wholesome check upon the natural extravagance of his disposition.



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On each division of the plantation there is a settlement where the negroes live with their families. The houses of the "quarters," as the settlement is called, are large weather-boarded cabins. In each there is a spacious room below and a cramped garret above, which is used both as a bedroom and a lumber-room, while the apartment on the first floor is chamber, kitchen, and parlor in one, and there most of the inmates, children as well as adults, sleep at night. The furniture is of a very durable but rude character, consisting of a bed, several cots, tables and cupboards, and half a dozen or more rough chairs of domestic manufacture, while a few pictures, cut from illuminated Sunday books or from illustrated papers, adorn the whitewashed walls. The brick fire-place is so wide and open that the fire not only warms the room, but lights it up so well that no candle or lamp is needed. The negroes are always kept supplied with wood, and they use it with extravagance on cold nights, when they often stretch themselves at full length on the hearth-stone and sleep as calmly in the fierce glare as in the summer shade, or nap and nod in their chairs until day, only rising from time to time to throw on another log to revive the declining flames. They like to gossip and relate tales under its comfortable influence, and it is associated in their minds with the most pleasing side of their lives. Those who can read con over the texts of their well-worn Bibles in its light, while those who have a mechanical turn, as, for instance, for weaving willow or white-oak baskets or making fish-traps or chairs, take advantage of its illumination to carry on their work.

Each householder has his garden, either in front or behind his dwelling, according to the greater fertility of the soil, and here he raises every variety of vegetable in profusion: sweet and Irish potatoes, tomatoes, beets, peas, onions, cabbages, and melons grow there in sufficient abundance to supply many tables. Of these, cabbage is most valued, for it can be stored away for consumption in winter, and is as fresh at that season as when it is first cut. Around the houses peach-trees of a very common variety have been planted, and these bear fruit even when the buds of rarer varieties elsewhere have been nipped, both because they are more hardy and because they are near enough to be protected by the cloud of smoke that is always issuing from the chimneys. Every householder is allowed to fatten two hogs of his own, the sty, for fear of thieves, being erected in such close proximity to his dwelling that the odor is most offensive with the wind in a certain quarter, and, one would think, most unwholesome; but his family do not seem to suffer either in health or in comfort. Every cabin has its hen-house, from which an abundant supply of eggs is drawn, which find a ready sale at the plantation store; and in spring the chickens are a source of considerable income to the negroes. Their fare

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is occasionally varied by an opossum caught in the woods, or a hare trapped in the fields; but they much prefer corn bread and bacon as regular fare to anything else. They dislike wheat bread, as too light and unsatisfying, and they always grumble when flour is measured out to them instead of meal. Coffee is a luxury used only on Sunday. The table is set off by a few china plates and cups, but there are no dishes, the meat being served in the utensil in which it is cooked. On working-days breakfast and dinner are carried to the hands in the fields by a boy who has collected at the different houses the tin buckets containing these meals.

The hands are as busy in winter as during any other part of the year. Much of their time is then taken up in manipulating the tobacco, which has been stored away in one large barn, and preparing it for market, the first step toward which is to strip the leaves from the stalk and then carefully separate those of an inferior from those of a superior quality. Although there are many grades, the negroes are able to distinguish them at a glance and assort them accordingly. They are not engaged in this work of selection continuously from day to day, but at intervals, for they can handle the tobacco only when the weather is damp enough to moisten the leaf, otherwise it is so brittle that it would crack and fall to pieces under their touch. They like this work, for the barn is kept very comfortable by large stoves, they do not have to move from their seats, and they can all sit very sociably together, talking, laughing, and singing. It contrasts very agreeably with other work which they are called upon to do at this season,—namely, the grubbing of new grounds, from which they shrink with unconcealed repugnance, for outside of a mine there is no kind of labor more arduous or exacting. The land cleared is that from which the original forest has been cut, leaving stumps thickly scattered over the surface, from which a heavy scrub-growth springs up. Active, quick, and industrious as the negroes may be in the tobacco-, corn-, or wheat fields, they show here great indolence, and move forward very slowly with their hoes, axes, and picks, piling up, as they advance, masses of roots, saplings, stumps, and brush, which, when dry, are set on fire and consumed. The soil exposed is a rich but thin loam of decayed leaves, in which tobacco grows with luxuriance.

In February or March the laborers prepare the plant-patch, the initial step in the production of a crop that remains on their hands at least twelve months before it is ready for market. They select a spot in the depths of the woods where the soil is very fertile from the accumulated mould, and they then cut away the trees and underbrush until a clean open surface, square in shape and about forty yards from angle to angle, is left, surrounded on all sides by the forest. Having piled up great masses of logs over the whole of this surface, they set them on fire at one end



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of the patch, and these are allowed to burn until all have been consumed, the object being to get the ash which is deposited, and which is very rich in certain constituents of the tobacco-plant and is especially conducive to its growth. The ploughmen then come and break up the ground, hoers carefully pulverize every clod, and the seed is sown, a mere handful being sufficient for a great extent of soil. The laborers afterward cover the surface of the patch with bushes, and it is left without further protection. In a short time the tobacco-plant springs up in indescribable profusion, and in a few weeks it is in a condition to be transferred to the fields.

Before this is done, however, the seed-corn has begun to sprout in the ground. The first cry of the whippoorwill is the signal for planting this cereal. The grains are dropped from the hand at regular intervals, both men and women joining in this work; and they all move slowly along together, the men bearing the corn in small bags, the women holding it in their aprons. The wide low-grounds at this season expand to the horizon without anything to obstruct the vision, a clear, unbroken sweep of purple ploughed land. The laborers are visible far off, those who drop the grains walking in a line ahead, the hoers following close behind to cover up the seed. Still farther in the rear come the harrows, that level all inequalities in the surface and crush the clods. Flocks of crows wheel in the air above the scene, or stalk at a safe distance on the ploughed ground. Blackbirds, which have now returned from the South, sing in chorus on the adjacent ditch-banks, mingling their harsh notes with the lively songs of myriads of bobolinks, while high overhead whistles the plover. The newly-sprung grass paints the road-side a lush green, the leaves are budding on weed and spray, and over all there hang the exhilarating influences of spring.

As soon as the hands have planted the corn, they begin transplanting the tobacco, which they find a more tedious task, for they can only transfer the slips to the fields when the air is surcharged with moisture and the ground is wet; otherwise the slips will wither on the way or perish in the hill without taking root. But if the weather is favorable they flourish from the hour they are thrust into the ground. It takes the laborers but a short time to plant many acres; and when their work is done the fields look as bare as before. The original leaves soon die, but from the healthy stalk new ones shoot out and expand very rapidly. The soil has been very highly fertilized with guano and very carefully ploughed, so that every condition is favorable to the growth of the plant if there is an abundance of rain. At a later period it passes through a drought very well, being a hardy plant that recovers even after it has wilted; but very frequently in its early stages the laborers are compelled to haul water in casks from the streams to save it from destruction.



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The most jovial operation of the year to the hands is the wheat-harvest in June; but the introduction of the mechanical reaper has taken away something of its peculiar character. Much of the grain, however, is still cut down with the cradle. The strongest negro always leads the dozen or more mowers, and thus incites his fellows to keep closely in his wake. As they move along, they sing, and the sound, sonorous and not unmelodious, is echoed far and wide among the hills. Behind them follows a band of men and women, who gather the grain into shocks or tie it in bundles.

After the harvest is over, the time of the laborers is given up entirely to the tobacco, which has now grown to a fair size. Their first task is to “sucker” it,—that is, cut away the shoots that spring up at the intersection of each leaf and the stalk, and which if left to grow would absorb half the strength of the plant. They also examine the leaves very carefully, to destroy the eggs and young of the tobacco-fly. Day after day they go over the same fields, finding newly-laid eggs and newly-hatched young where only twelve hours before they brushed their counterparts off to be trampled under foot. As the tobacco ripens, it becomes brittle to the touch and is covered with dark yellow spots, and when this appearance is still further developed the time for cutting has arrived, which generally is in the first month of autumn, and always before frost, which is as fatal to this as to every other weed. The plant is now about three feet in height, with eight or nine large leaves, the stalk having been broken off at the top in the second stage of its growth. On the appointed day a dozen or more men with coarse knives split the stalk of each plant straight down its middle to within half a foot of the ground. They then strike the plant from the hill and lay it on one side. The leaves soon shrink under the rays of the sun and fall. One of the laborers who follow the cutters then takes it up and places it with nine or ten other plants on a stick, which is thrust through the angle formed by the two halves of the plant separated from each other except at one end. It is deposited with the rest in an open ox-cart and transported to the barn. In the barn poles have been arranged in tiers from bottom to top to support the sticks; and when the building is full of tobacco the laborer in charge ignites the logs that fill parallel trenches in the dirt floor, and a high rate of temperature is soon produced, and is maintained for several days, during which a watch is kept to replenish the flames and prevent a conflagration. As soon as the tobacco has changed from a deep green to a light brown, it is removed on a wet day to the general barn. The same process of curing is going on in many barns on the same plantation, and occasionally one is burned down; for the tobacco is very inflammable, a stray spark from below being sufficient to set the whole on fire.

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The principal work of the autumn is the gathering of the ripe corn. A band of men go ahead and pull the ears from the stalks and throw them at intervals of thirty yards into loose piles and another band following behind them at a distance pick the ears up and pitch them into the ox-carts, which, when fully loaded, return to the granary, around which the corn is soon massed in long and high rows. When the whole crop has been got in, a moonlight night is selected for stripping off the shucks; and this is a gay occasion with the negroes, for they are allowed as much whiskey as they can carry under their belts. The leading clown among them is deputed to mount the pile and sing, while the rest sit below and work. As he ends each verse, they reply in a chorus that can be heard miles away through the clear, still, frosty air. Their songs are the ancient ditties of the plantation, and are humorous or pathetic in sound rather than in sense. And yet even to an educated ear they have a certain interest, like everything, however trivial, connected with this strange race.

Such, in general outline, are the tasks of the laborers on the plantation during the four seasons of the year. It is beyond question that they do their work thoroughly. It makes no difference how deep the low-ground mud is, or how rough the surface, or how lowering the weather, they go forward with cheerfulness and alacrity. Nothing can repress or dampen their spirits. How often I have heard them as they returned through the dusk, after hoeing or ploughing the whole day, singing in a strain as gay and spontaneous as if they were just going forth in the freshness of a vernal morning! Their sociable disposition is displayed even in the fields, for they like to work in bands, in order that they may converse and joke together. This companionableness is one of the most conspicuous traits of their character. Even the strict patrolling of slavery-times could not prevent them from running together at night; and now that they are free to go where they choose, they will put themselves to much trouble to gratify their love of association with their fellows. One reason why a large plantation is so popular with them is that the number of its inhabitants offers the most varied opportunities of social enjoyment.

Sunday is the principal day on which the negroes exchange visits. There is a settlement, as I have mentioned, on each division of the plantation which I am now describing, and, although these settlements are situated at some distance apart, this is not considered to be a serious inconvenience. At every hour on Sunday, if the day is fair, men and women, in couples or small parties, neatly and becomingly dressed, are seen moving along the chief thoroughfare on their way to call on their friends. The women are decked in gay calicoes, often further adorned with bunches of wild flowers plucked by the road-side; while the men are clothed in suits which they have bought at the "store,"

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and they frequently wear cheap jewelry which they have purchased at the same establishment. The dandies in the younger set flourish canes and assume all the languishing airs that distinguish the callow fops of the white race. Many visitors are received at the most popular houses, and they are observed sitting with the families of their hosts and hostesses under the shade of the trees until a late hour of the afternoon. Some pass from cabin to cabin, not stopping long at any one, but finding a cordial welcome everywhere. Some linger very late, and make their way back by the light of the moon. As they move along the low-ground road their voices can be heard very distinctly from the hills above as they talk and laugh together; and sometimes they vary the monotony of their walk by singing a hymn, the sound of which is borne very far on the bosom of the silence, and is sweet and soft in its cadence, mellowed as it is by the distance and idealized by the nocturnal hour.

There are two church-edifices on the plantation, one of which is used during the week as a public school, but the other was built expressly for religious worship. Both are plain but comfortable structures, the outer and inner walls of which have been whitewashed and the blinds painted a dark green. Around them are wide yards, carefully swept; otherwise their neighborhoods are rather forbidding, on account of the silence and darkness of the forests in which they are situated, the only proof of their connection with the world at large being the roads which run by their doors. The pulpit of one is filled by a white preacher of Northern birth and education, who removed to this section after the war; and the only objection that can be urged against him is that he often holds religious revivals at the time when the tobacco-worm is most active in ravaging the ripening plant. The negroes who have to walk several miles after their work is over to get to his church are kept up till a late hour of night and in a state of high excitement, and are so overcome with fatigue the following day that they dawdle over their tasks. These revivals are also celebrated at the other church, but always in proper season; for the minister there is not only sound and orthodox in his doctrines, but he is also a planter on his own account, and, therefore, able to understand that the interests of religion and tobacco ought not to be brought into conflict.

Many parties are given every year, and they are attended by several hundred negroes of both sexes, who have come from the different "quarters," and even from other plantations in the vicinity. The owner of the plantation always supplies an abundance of provisions—a sheep or beef, flour and meal—for the feast that celebrates the general housing of the crops, which is to the laborers what the harvest-supper is to the peasantry of England. The year, with its varied labors and large results, lies behind them, the wheat, tobacco, and corn have

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all been gathered in, their hard work is done, and though in a few weeks the old routine will begin again, they are now oblivious of it all. Hour after hour they continue to dance, a new array of fresh performers taking the place of those who are exhausted, and then the regular beating of their feet on the floor can be heard at a considerable distance, with a dull, monotonous sound, varied only by the hum of voices or noise of laughter or the shrill notes of the musical instruments. These are the banjo and accordion, the former being the favorite, perhaps because it is more intimately associated with the social traditions of the negroes. Their best performers play very skilfully on both, and indulge in as much ecstatic by-play as musicians of the most famous schools. They throw themselves into many strange contortions as they touch the strings or keys, swaying from side to side, or rocking their bodies backward and forward till the head almost reaches the floor, or leaning over the instrument and addressing it in caressing terms. They accompany their playing with their voices, but their *repertoire* is limited to a few songs, which generally consist in mere repetition of a few notes. All their airs have been handed down from remote generations. Their words deal with the ordinary incidents of the negro's life, and embody his narrow hopes and aspirations, but they are rarely connected narratives. As a rule, they are broken lines without relevancy or coherence, while the choruses are so many meaningless syllables. The negroes seem to derive no pleasure from music outside of those songs and airs which they have so often heard at their own hearthstones, and which have come down to them from their ancestors.

The Christmas holidays, extending from the 25th of December to the 2d of January, are a period of entire suspension of labor on the plantation. In anticipation of their arrival, a large quantity of fire-wood is hauled from the forests and piled up around the cabins; but the negroes spend very little of this interval of leisure in their own homes, unless a bad spell of weather has set in and continues. They are either out in the open air or at the "store." This latter serves the purpose of a club, and is a very popular resort. Even at other times of the year it is always packed at night; but during the Christmas holidays it is full to overflowing in the day-time. At this gay season the fires are kept burning very fiercely; the Sunday suits and dresses are worn every day; the tables are covered with more abundant fare of the plainer as well as rarer sort. All visitors are received with increased hospitality, and work of every kind that usually goes on in the precincts of the dwelling is, if possible, deferred until the opening of the new year. Many strange faces are now seen on the plantation, and many faces that were once familiar, but whose owners have removed elsewhere. The negro is as closely bound in affection to the scenes of his childhood as the white man, and



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he thinks that he has certain rights there of which absence even cannot deprive him, although he may have left for permanent settlement at a distance. When he dies elsewhere he is always anxious in his last hours that his body shall be brought back and buried in the old graveyard of the plantation where he was born and where he grew up to manhood. And when he comes back to the well-known localities for a brief stay, he feels as if he were at home again in the house of his fathers, where he has an absolute and inalienable right to be.

Philip A. Bruce.

SCENES OF CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S LIFE IN BRUSSELS.

We had "done" Brussels after the approved fashion,—had faithfully visited the churches, palaces, museums, theatres, galleries, monuments, and boulevards, had duly admired the beautiful windows and the exquisite wood-carvings of the grand old cathedral of St. Gudule, the tower and tapestry and frescos and facade of the magnificent Hotel-de-Ville, the stately halls and the gilded dome of the immense new Courts of Justice, and the consummate beauty of the Bourse, had diligently sought out the naive boy-fountain, and had made the usual excursion to Waterloo.

This delightful task being conscientiously discharged, we proposed to devote our last day in the beautiful Belgian capital to the accomplishment of one of the cherished projects of our lives,—the searching out of the localities associated with Charlotte Bronte's unhappy school-life here, which she has so graphically portrayed. For our purpose no guide was available, or needful, for the topography and local coloring of "Villette" and "The Professor" are as vivid and unmistakable as in the best work of Dickens himself. Proceeding from St. Gudule, by the little street at the back of the cathedral, to the Rue Royale, and a short distance along that grand thoroughfare, we reached the park and a locality familiar to Miss Bronte's readers. Seated in this lovely pleasure-ground, the gift of the empress Maria Theresa, with its cool shade all about us, we noted the long avenues and the paths winding amid stalwart trees and verdant shrubbery, the dark foliage ineffectually veiling the gleaming statuary and the sheen of bright fountains, "the stone basin with its clear depth, the thick-planted trees which framed this tremulous and rippled mirror," the groups of happy people filling the seats in secluded nooks or loitering in the cool mazes and listening to the music,—we noted all this, and felt that Miss Bronte had revealed it to us long ago. It was across this park that Lucy Snowe was piloted from the bureau of the diligence by the chivalrous stranger, Dr. John, on the night when she, despoiled, helpless, and solitary, arrived in Brussels. She found the park deserted and dark, the paths miry, the water "dripping from its trees." "In

the double gloom of tree and fog she could not see her guide, and could only follow his tread”



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in the darkness. We recalled another scene under these same tall trees, on a night when the iron gateway was “spanned by a naming arch of massed stars.” The park was a “forest with sparks of purple and ruby and golden fire gemming the foliage,” and Lucy, driven from her couch by mental torture, wandered unrecognized amid the gay throng at the midnight concert of the Festival of the Martyrs and looked upon her lover, her friends the Brettons, and the secret junta of her enemies, Madame Beck, Madame Walravens, and Pere Silas.

The sense of familiarity with the vicinage grew as we observed our surroundings. Facing us, at the extremity of the park, was the unpretentious palace of the king, in the small square across the Rue Royale at our right was the statue of General Beliard, and we knew that just behind it we should find the Rue Fossette and Charlotte Bronte’s *pensionnat*, for Crimsworth, “The Professor,” standing by the statue, had “looked down a great staircase” to the door-way of the school, and poor Lucy, on that forlorn first night in “Villette,” to avoid the insolence of a pair of ruffians, had hastened down a flight of steps from the Rue Royale, and had come, not to the inn she sought, but to the *pensionnat* of Madame Beck.

From the statue we descended, by a quadruple series of wide stone stairs, into a narrow street, old-fashioned and clean, quiet and secluded in the very heart of the great city,—the Rue d’Isabelle,—and just opposite the foot of the steps we came to the wide door of a spacious, quadrangular, stuccoed old mansion, with a bit of foliage showing over a high wall at one side. A bright plate embellishes the door and bears the inscription,

PENSIONNAT *de* DEMOISELLES
Heger-parent.

A Latin inscription in the wall of the house shows it to have been given to the Guild of Royal Archers by the Infanta Isabelle early in the seventeenth century. Long before that the garden had been the orchard and herbarium of a convent and the Hospital for the Poor.

We were detained at the door long enough to remember Lucy standing there, trembling and anxious, awaiting admission, and then we too were “let in by a *bonne* in a smart cap,”—apparently a fit successor to the Rosine of forty years ago,—and entered the corridor. This is paved with blocks of black and white marble and has painted walls. It extends through the entire depth of the house, and at its farther extremity an open door afforded us a glimpse of the garden.

We were ushered into the little *salon* at the left of the passage,—the one often mentioned in “Villette,”—and here we made known our wish to see the garden and



class-rooms, and met with a prompt refusal from the neat *portresse*. We tried diplomacy (also lucre) with her, without avail: it was the *grandes vacances*, the ladies were out, M. Heger was engaged, we could not be gratified,—unless, indeed, we were patrons



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of the school. At this juncture a portly, ruddy-faced lady of middle age and most courteous of speech and manner appeared, and, addressing us in faultless English, introduced herself as Mademoiselle Heger, co-directress of the *pensionnat*, and “wholly at our service.” In response to our apologies for the intrusion and explanations of the desire which had prompted it, we received complaisant assurances of welcome; yet the manner of our kind entertainer indicated that she did not appreciate, much less share in, our admiration and enthusiasm for Charlotte Bronte and her books. In the subsequent conversation it appeared that Mademoiselle and her family hold decided opinions upon the subject,—something more than mere lack of admiration. She was familiar with the novels, and thought that, while they exhibit a talent certainly not above mediocrity, they reflect the injustice, the untruthfulness, and the ingratitude of their creator. We were obliged to confess to ourselves that the family have apparent reason for this view, when we reflected that in the books Miss Bronte has assailed their religion and disparaged the school and the character of the teachers and pupils, has depicted Madame Heger in the odious duad of Madame Beck and Mademoiselle Reuter, has represented M. Heger as the scheming and deceitful M. Pelet and the preposterous M. Paul, Lucy Snowe’s lover, that this lover was the husband of Madame Heger, and father of the family of children to whom Lucy was at first *bonne d’enfants*, and that possibly the daughter she has described as the thieving, vicious Desiree—“that tadpole, Desiree Beck”—was this very lady now so politely entertaining us. To all this add the significant fact that “Villette” is an autobiographical novel, which “records the most vivid passages in Miss Bronte’s own sad heart’s history,” not a few of the incidents being “literal transcripts” from the darkest chapter of her own life, and the light which the consideration of this fact throws upon her relations with members of the family will help us to apprehend the stand-point from which the Hegers judge Miss Bronte and her work, and to excuse, if not to justify, a natural resentment against one who has presented them in a decidedly bad light.

How bad we began to realize when, during the ensuing chat, we called to mind just what she had written of them. As Madame Beck, Madame Heger had been represented as lying, deceitful, and shameless, as heartless and unscrupulous, as “watching and spying everywhere, peeping through every keyhole, listening behind every door,” as duplicating Lucy’s keys and secretly searching her bureau, as meanly abstracting her letters and reading them to others, as immodestly laying herself out to entrap the man to whom she had given her love unsought. In letters to her friend Ellen, Miss Bronte complains that “Madame Heger never came near her” in her loneliness and illness.



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It was, obviously, some accession to the existing animosity between herself and Madame Heger which precipitated Miss Bronte's final departure from the *pensionnat*. Mrs. Gaskell ascribes their mutual dislike to Charlotte's free expression of her aversion to the Catholic Church, of which Madame Heger was a devotee, and hence "wounded in her most cherished opinions;" but a later writer, in the "Westminster Review," plainly intimates that Miss Bronte hated the woman who sat for Madame Beck because marriage had given to *her* the man whom Miss Bronte loved, and that "Madame Beck had need to be a detective in her own house." The recent death of Madame Heger has rendered the family, who hold her now only as a sacred memory, more keenly sensitive than ever to anything which would seem by implication to disparage her.

For himself it would appear that M. Heger has less cause for resentment, for, although in "Villette" he (or his double) is pictured as "a waspish little despot," as fiery and unreasonable, as "detestably ugly" in his anger, closely resembling "a black and sallow tiger," as having an "overmastering love of authority and public display," as basely playing the spy and reading purloined letters, and in the Bronte epistles Charlotte declares he is choleric and irritable, compels her to make her French translations without a dictionary or grammar, and then has "his eyes almost plucked out of his head" by the occasional English word she is obliged to introduce, *etc.*, yet all this is partially atoned for by the warm praise she subsequently accords him for his goodness to her and his "disinterested friendship," by the poignant regret she expresses at parting with him,—perhaps wholly expiated by the high compliment she pays him of making her heroine, Lucy, fall in love with him, or the higher compliment it is suspected she paid him of falling in love with him herself. One who reads the strange history of passion in "Villette," in conjunction with her letters, "will know more of the truth of her stay in Brussels than if a dozen biographers had undertaken to tell the whole tale."

Still, M. Heger can scarcely be pleased by the ludicrous figure he is so often made to cut in the novels by having members of his school set forth as stupid, animal, and inferior, "their principles rotten to the core, steeped in systematic sensuality," by having his religion styled "besotted papistry, a piece of childish humbug," and the like.

Something of the displeasure of the family was revealed in the course of our conversation with Mademoiselle Heger, but the specific causes were but cursorily touched upon. She could have no personal recollection of the Brontes; her knowledge of them is derived from her parents and the teachers,—presumably the "repulsive old maids" of Charlotte's letters. One of the present teachers in the *pensionnat* had been a classmate of Charlotte's here. The Brontes had not been popular with the school.



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Their “heretical” religion had something to do with this; but their manifest avoidance of the other pupils during hours of recreation, Mademoiselle thought, had been a more potent cause,—Emily, in particular, not speaking with her school-mates or teachers except when obliged to do so. The other pupils thought them of outlandish accent and manners and ridiculously old to be at school at all,—being twenty-four and twenty-six, and seeming even older. Their sombre and grotesquely-ugly costumes were fruitful causes of mirth to the gay young Belgian misses. The Brontes were not especially brilliant students, and none of their companions had ever suspected that they were geniuses. Of the two, Emily was considered to be, in most respects, the more talented, but she was obstinate and opinionated. Some of the pupils had been inclined to resist having Charlotte placed over them as teacher, and may have been mutinous. After her return from Haworth she taught English to M. Heger and his brother-in-law. M. Heger gave the sisters private lessons in French without charge, and for some time preserved their compositions, which Mrs. Gaskell copied. Mrs. Gaskell visited the *pensionnat* in quest of material for her biography of Charlotte, and received all the aid M. Heger could afford: the information thus obtained has, for the most part, we were told, been fairly used. Miss Bronte’s letters from Brussels, so freely quoted in Mrs. Gaskell’s “Life,” were addressed to Miss Ellen Nussy, a familiar friend of Charlotte’s, whose signature we saw in the register at Haworth Church as witness to Miss Bronte’s marriage. The Hegers had no suspicion that she had been so unhappy with them as these letters indicate, and she had assigned a totally different reason for her sudden return to England. She had been introduced to Madame Heger by Mrs. Jenkins, wife of the then chaplain of the British Embassy at the Court of Belgium; she had frequently visited that lady and other friends in Brussels,—among them Mary and Martha Taylor and their relatives, and the family of a Dr. — (not Dr. John),—and therefore her life here need not have been so lonely and desolate as it has been made to appear.

The Hegers usually have a few English pupils in the school, but have never had an American.

Some American tourists had before called to look at the garden, but the family are not pleased by the notoriety with which Miss Bronte has invested it. However, Mademoiselle Heger kindly offered to conduct us over any portion of the establishment we might care to see, and led the way along the corridor, past the class-rooms and the *refectoire* on the right, to the narrow, high-walled garden. We found it smaller than in the time when Miss Bronte loitered here in weariness and solitude. Mademoiselle Heger explained that, while the width remains the same, the erection of class-rooms for the day-pupils has diminished the length by some yards. Tall houses



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surround and shut it in on either side, making it close and sombre, and the noises of the great city all about it penetrate here only as a far-away murmur. There is a plat of verdant turf in the centre, bordered by scant flowers and damp gravelled walks, along which shrubs of evergreen and laurel are irregularly disposed. A few seats are placed here and there within the shade, where, as in Miss Bronte's time, the *externals* eat the luncheon brought with them to the school; and overlooking it all stand the great old pear-trees, whose gnarled and deformed trunks are relics of the time of the hospital and convent. Beyond these and along the gray wall which bounds the farther side of the enclosure is the sheltered walk which was Miss Bronte's favorite retreat,—the "*allee defendue*" of her novels. It is screened by shrubs and perfumed by flowers, and, being secure from the intrusion of pupils, we could well believe that Charlotte and her heroine found here restful seclusion. The coolness and quiet and—more than all—the throng of vivid associations which fill the place tempted us to linger. The garden is not a spacious nor even a pretty one, and yet it seemed to us singularly pleasing and familiar,—as if we were revisiting it after an absence. Seated upon a rustic bench close at hand, possibly the very one which Lucy Snowe had cleansed and "reclaimed from fungi and mould," how the memories came surging up into our minds! How often in the summer twilight poor Charlotte had lingered here in restful solitude after the day's burdens and trials with "stupid and impertinent" pupils! How often, with weary feet and a dreary heart, she had paced this secluded walk and thought, with longing almost insupportable, of the dear ones in far-away Haworth parsonage! In this sheltered corner her other self—Lucy Snowe—sat and listened to the distant chimes and thought forbidden thoughts and cherished impossible hopes. Here she met and talked with Dr. John. Deep beneath this "Methuselah of a pear-tree," the one nearest the end of the alley, lies the imprisoned dust of the poor young nun who was buried alive ages ago for some sin against her vow, and whose perambulating ghost so disquieted poor Lucy. At the root of this same tree one miserable night Lucy buried her precious letters, and "meant also to bury a grief" and her great affection for Dr. John. Here she had leant her brow against Methuselah's knotty trunk and uttered to herself those brave words of renunciation which must have wrung her heart: "Good-night, Dr. John; you are good, you are beautiful, *but you are not mine*. Good-night, and God bless you!" Here she held pleasant converse with M. Paul, and with him, spell-bound, saw the ghost of the nun descend from the leafy shadows overhead and, sweeping close past their wondering faces, disappear behind yonder screen of shrubbery into the darkness of the summer night. By that tall tree next the class-rooms the ghost was wont to ascend to meet its

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material sweetheart, Fanshawe, in the great garret beneath yonder skylight,—the garret where Lucy retired to read Dr. John’s letter, and wherein M. Paul confined her to learn her part in the vaudeville for Madame Beck’s *fete*-day. In this nook where we sat, Crimsworth, “The Professor,” had walked and talked with and almost made love to Mademoiselle Reuter, and from yonder window overlooking the alley had seen that perfidious fair one in dalliance with his employer, M. Pelet, beneath these pear-trees. From that window M. Paul watched Lucy as she sat or walked in the *allee defendue*, dogged by Madame Beck; from the same window were thrown the love-letters which fell at Lucy’s feet sitting here.

Leaves from the overhanging boughs were plucked for us as souvenirs of the place; then, reverently traversing once more the narrow alley so often traced in weariness by Charlotte Bronte, we turned away. From the garden we entered the long and spacious class-room of the first and second divisions. A movable partition divides it across the middle when the classes are in session; the floor is of bare boards cleanly scoured. There are long ranges of desks and benches upon either side, and a lane through the middle leads up to a raised platform at the end of the room, where the instructor’s chair and desk are placed.

How quickly our fancy peopled the place! On these front seats sat the gay and indocile Belgian girls. There, “in the last row, in the quietest corner, sat Emily and Charlotte side by side, so absorbed in their studies as to be insensible to anything about them;” and at the same desk, “in the farthest seat of the farthest row,” sat Mademoiselle Henri during Crimsworth’s English lessons. Here Lucy’s desk was rummaged by M. Paul and the tell-tale odor of cigars left behind. Here, after school-hours, Miss Bronte taught M. Heger English, he taught her French, and M. Paul taught Lucy arithmetic and (incidentally) love. This was the scene of their *tete-a-tetes*, of his earnest efforts to persuade her into his faith in the Church of Rome, of their ludicrous supper of biscuit and baked apples, and of his final violent outbreak with Madame Beck, when she literally thrust herself between him and his love. From this platform Crimsworth and Lucy Snowe and Charlotte Bronte herself had given instruction to pupils whose insubordination had first to be confronted and overcome. Here M. Paul and M. Heger gave lectures upon literature, and Paul delivered his spiteful tirade against the English on the morning of his *fete*-day. Upon this desk were heaped his bouquets that morning; from its smooth surface poor Lucy dislodged and fractured his cherished spectacles; and here, *now*, seated in Paul’s chair, at Paul’s desk, we saw and were presented to Paul Emanuel himself,—M. Heger.

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It was something more than curiosity which made us alert to note the appearance and manner of this man, who has been so nearly associated with Miss Bronte in an intercourse which colored her whole subsequent life and determined her life work, who has been made the hero of her best novels and has even been deemed the hero of her own heart's romance; and yet we *were* curious to know "what manner of man it is" who has been so much as suspected of being honored with the love and preference of the dainty Charlotte Bronte. During a short conversation with him we had opportunity to observe that in person this "wise, good, and religious" man must, at the time Miss Bronte knew him, have more closely resembled M. Pelet of "The Professor" than any other of her pen-portraits: indeed, after the lapse of more than forty years that delineation still, for the most part, aptly applies to him. He is of middle age, of rather spare habit of body; his face is fair and the features pleasing and regular, the cheeks are thin and the mouth flexible, the eyes—somewhat sunken—are of mild blue and of singularly pleasant expression. We found him elderly, but not infirm; his finely-shaped head is now fringed with white hair, and partial baldness contributes an impressive reverence to his presence and tends to enhance the intellectual effect of his wide brow. In repose his countenance shows a hint of melancholy: as Miss Bronte has said, "his physiognomy is *fine et spirituelle*;" one would hardly imagine it could ever resemble the "visage of a black and sallow tiger." His voice is low and soft, his bow still "very polite, not theatrical, scarcely French," his manner *suave* and courteous, his dress scrupulously neat. He accosted us in the language Miss Bronte taught him forty years ago, and his accent and diction do honor to her instruction. He was, at this time, engaged with some patrons of the school, and, as his daughter had hinted that he was averse to speaking of Miss Bronte, we soon took leave of him and were shown through other parts of the school. The other class-rooms, used for less advanced pupils, are smaller. In one of them, the third, Miss Bronte had ruled as mistress after her return from Haworth. The large dormitory of the *pensionnat* was above the long class-room, and in the time of the Brontes most of the boarders—about twenty in number—slept here. Their cots were arranged along either side, and the position of those occupied by the Brontes was pointed out to us at the extreme end of the long room. It was here that Lucy suffered the horrors of hypochondria, so graphically portrayed in "Villette," and found the discarded costume of the spectral nun lying upon her bed, and here Miss Bronte passed those nights of "dreary, wakeful misery" which Mrs. Gaskell describes.



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A long and rather narrow room in front of the class-rooms was shown us as the *refectoire*, where the Brontes, with the other boarders, took their meals, presided over by M. and Madame Heger, and where, during the evenings, the lessons for the ensuing days were prepared. Here were held the evening prayers, which Charlotte used to avoid by escaping into the garden. This, too, was the scene of M. Paul's whilom readings to teachers and pupils, and of some of his spasms of petulance, which readers of "Villette" will remember. From the *refectoire* we passed again into the corridor, where we made our adieus to our affable conductress. She gave us her card, and explained that, whereas this establishment had formerly been both a *pensionnat* and an *externat*, having about seventy day-pupils and twenty boarders when Miss Bronte was here, it is now, since the death of Madame Heger, used as a day-school only,—the *pensionnat* being at some little distance, in the Avenue Louise, where Mademoiselle is a co-directress.

The genuine local color Miss Bronte gives in "Villette" enabled us to be sure that we had found the sombre old church where Lucy, arrested in passing by the sound of the bells, knelt upon the stone pavement, passing thence into the confessional of Pere Silas. Certain it is that this old church lies upon the route she would naturally take in the walk from the Rue d'Isabelle to the Protestant cemetery, which she had set out to do that dark afternoon, and the narrow streets of picturesque old houses which lie beyond the church correspond to those in which she was lost. Certain, too, it is said to be that this incident is taken directly from Miss Bronte's own experience. A writer in "Macmillan" says, "During one of the long holidays, when her mind was restless and disturbed, she found sympathy, if not peace, in the counsels of a priest in the confessional, who pitied and soothed her troubled spirit without attempting to enmesh it in the folds of Romanism."

Our way to the Protestant cemetery, a spot sadly familiar to Miss Bronte, and the usual termination of her walks, lay past the site of the Porte de Louvain and out to the hills a mile or so beyond the old city limits. From our path we saw more than one tree-surrounded farm-house which might have been the place of M. Paul's breakfast with his school, and at least one old-fashioned manor-house, with green-tufted and terraced lawns, which might have served Miss Bronte as the model for "La Terrasse," the suburban home of the Brettons, and probably the temporary abode of the Taylor sisters whom she visited here. From the cemetery are beautiful vistas of farther lines of hills, of intervening valleys, of farms and villas, and of the great city lying below. Miss Bronte has well described this place: "Here, on pages of stone, of marble, and of brass, are written names, dates, last tributes of pomp or love, in English, French, German, and Latin." There are stone crosses all about, and great thickets of roses and yew-trees,— "cypresses that stand straight and mute, and willows that hang low and still;" and there are "dim garlands of everlasting flowers."



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Here “The Professor” found his long-sought sweetheart kneeling at a new-made grave, under these overhanging trees. And here we found the shrine of poor Charlotte Bronte’s many weary pilgrimages hither,—the burial-place of her friend and schoolmate Martha Taylor, the Jessy Yorke of “Shirley,” the spot where, under “green sod and a gray marble headstone, cold, confined, solitary, Jessy sleeps below.”

THEO. WOLFE.

COOKHAM DEAN.

For a long time “the Dean” had had a certain familiarity for us. We heard it continually spoken of among our artist friends, and had even come to recognize many of its picturesque features as we came across them in our usual studio-haunts and in the exhibitions. We seemed to know those green, billowy swells at sight, as well as the thatched and tiled roofs and old-fashioned gardens, the swinging barred gates and stagnant, goose-tormented pools,—even the coarse-limbed rustics in weather-beaten “store-clothes,” picturesque only in mellow fadedness.

We knew all this; yet, when we set eyes and feet upon Cookham Dean for the first time, behold, the half had not been told us! We had directed many a letter to Cookham Dean, and knew them to have been duly delivered by a bucolic postman on a tricycle. But a hundred canvases, and almost as many tongues, had failed to tell us of the sunny slopes and shadowy glades, the sylvan lanes and ribbon-like roads, the old stone inn with open porch and sign swinging from lofty post set across the way, as Italian campanile stand away from their churches, all coming under the name of “Cookham Dean,” although that “Dean,” properly speaking, is only their geographical and artistic centre.

Long before we reached *Ye Hutte* from Cookham station—*Ye Hutte* set amid bushy and climbing roses upon a prominent knoll of the many-knolled Dean—we ceased to wonder that our picturesque imaginings of the region we were passing through had been so various. Artists were before us, artists behind us, artists on every side of us, two sketching-umbrellas glinting like great tropical flowers in a corn-field, another like a huge daisy in the dim vista of a long lane.

“C—— lodges in that red cottage, B—— in the next one, H—— in this tumble-down farm-house, the L——s in that row of laborers’ cottages, the D——s in the inn,” said Mona, tripping lightly over well-known names, whose most accustomed place is in the exhibition catalogues.

Through the open windows of a hideous brick row, built to hold as many laborers’ families all the year round and as many Bohemian summer artists as can crowd therein, we caught glimpses of tapestries worth their weight in gold. One well-known artist has



taken possession of the end of this uncomely row, intended for a supply-shop to the neighborhood. This shop is his studio, which he has filled with treasures of Japanese art. As a Cookhamite assured us, "Mr. C—— goes in for the *Japanesque*;" and he screens the large display-windows intended for cheese, raisins, and potted meats with smiling mandarins and narrow-eyed houris under octopus-like trees.



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At the rear of the same "Row" we recognized a broad-hatted figure once familiar to us in the Quartier Latin and the artistic *auberges* of the Forest of Fontainebleau. The very personification of *insouciance* and *laissez-aller*, he whose tiny bedroom-studio up-stairs ran riot with color caught among California mountains, in cool gray France and ochreous England, was bending the whole force of his mind to sketching a pouter pigeon preening itself upon a barrel.

Still another of the ugly cottages, cursed by artists but inhabited by them, was hired at ten pounds a year by two young landscapists. A charwoman came every morning to quell the mad riots in which the household gods (or demons) diurnally engaged, but at all other times the landscapists manoeuvred for themselves. That the domestic manoeuvring of young landscapists is not always *toute rose* we saw reason later to believe. For not once, twice, nor yet so seldom as a dozen times, have we seen these young manoeuvrers begin to dine at four, when shadows were growing too long upon field, thicket, and stream, only to finish we knew not when, so late into darkness was that "finish" projected. We could see one of the diners passing along the road from the public house, an eighth of a mile away, at four, with the *piece de resistance* of the meal in an ample dish enveloped in a towel. Ten minutes later the other rushes by, contrariwise of direction, in pursuit of beer and the forgotten bread. A little later, and a scudding white dust-cloud in the road informs us that one of the dining 'scapists flees breathlessly vinegar- or salt-ward. Still another five minutes, and the other diner hies him in chase of the white scud, calling vigorously to it that there is no butter for the rice, no sugar for the fruit.

We saw at once that this Berkshire corner abounds more in dulcet and sylvan landscape bits than in picturesque motifs for those who paint *genre*. The peasants have a certain inchoate picturesqueness, as of beings roughly evolved from the life of this fair material nature, and sometimes, in silhouette against dun-gray skies and amid rugged fields, give one vague feeling of Millet's pathos of peasant life and labor. The yokel himself, however,—and particularly *herself*,—seems determined to deny all poetic and picturesque relations, by clothing himself—and herself—in coarse, shop-made rubbish, in battered, *demode* town-hats and flounced gowns from Petticoat Lane.

From certain points of the "Dean" the distances are dreamy and wide, with high horizon-lines touching wooded hills and shutting the Thames into a middle distance toward which a hundred little hills either descend abruptly or decline gently upon broad green meadows. Nature here smiles, not with pure pagan blitheness, but with a tenderer grace, as of a soul grown human and fraught with countless memories of man's smiles and tears, his hard, bitter labor, his sins, sorrows, and longings. But it is very tender, and not even the wildest storm-effects raise the landscape to any expression of tragic grandeur, but only suede its fair hues and soft outlines to the wan pathos peculiar to English moorlands.



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Ye Hutte is a misnomer for the extraordinary establishment, studio and domicile combined, at which we dismounted. It is not a *hut*, and neither in architectural motive nor the artistic proclivities of its inmates has it aught to do with the centuries when our English tongue was otherwise written or spoken than it is to-day. *Ye Hutte* is a vast, barn-like building, plain and bare save for an inviting vine-grown porch vaguely Gothic in reminiscence, although nondescript in fact. It was erected by some dissenting society for public worship: hence its interior is one immense vaulted room, with cathedral-like windows and choir-gallery across one end. "The body of the house," to speak ecclesiastically, is cumbered with easels and the usual chaotic *impedimenta* of painters. The choir, ascended by a ladder, holds three tiny cot-beds, while beneath the choir and concealed by beautiful draperies are stored the domestic and culinary paraphernalia,—pots, pans, brushes, dishes, and, above all, the multiplicity of petroleum- and spirit-stoves in which the Bohemian artistic soul delights. *Ye Hutte* is an artist's studio, and its name may be found in all the exhibition catalogues, for several generations of painters drift through it every year. As one inmate rushes off to the Continent, the sea-shore, or the mountains, another takes his place. Yet *Ye Hutte* holds scant place in its real owner's esteem compared with that larger studio owned by all the Dean artists in common, where all their summer's work is done, and which is parquettèd with grain-field gold and meadow emerald, walled with rainbow horizons, and roofed with azure festooned with spun silk. *Ye Hutte* is better appreciated as evening rendezvous for the palette-bearing hosts, both male and female, who, sunbrowned and tired, partake there of restful social converse as well as of the hospitable cup that cheers. Evening after evening, by twos and threes, they sit in the moonlight under the silver-touched vines and dewy blossoms of the porch, listening to the far-away cry of night-birds, the murmur of drowsy bells upon cattle stirring in sleep, or of human voices idealized by remoteness into faint haunting music, while before them white light touches the wooded heights of Cliefden,—distant heights full of picturesque mystery and passionate history,—touches and idealizes into a semblance of poetic realism the sham ruins of Hedsor, and spreads a pearly sheen over the unseen Valley of the Shadow of Light through which winds the quiet Thames.

To the usual artistic circle of *Ye Hutte* is often added a not uncongenial element from the outside world, sometimes even from within the borders of Philistia. Story-tellers, moved by the subtle magnetism of the artistic creative faculty, whether of brush, chisel, or pen, come up sometimes from London, bringing with them an atmosphere of publishers' offices, of romance in high and low life, of professional gossip and criticism. Often a stalwart bicyclist rolls up from the capital, bringing with him such a breeze from the world of newspapers, theatres, and crack restaurants that *Ye Hutte* straightway determines to order some weekly journal, waxes ardent for flesh-pots other than of Cookham, and resolves upon having a Lyceum twice a week when the Dean shall be swept by the blasts and St. John's Wood studios swallow us up for the winter.



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The Dean is little favored of the ordinary fashionable visitor, for whom artistic accommodations are quite too scantily luxurious. Now and then, for the sake of the river, a rustic cot is taken for a few weeks by a party of boating-people. Then the quaint, old-fashioned gardens blossom with a sudden luxuriance of striped tents and flaming umbrellas, while bright women in many-hued boating-costumes flit among cabbages and onions like curious tropical birds and butterflies. As a rule, however, the Dean is abandoned to its usual rustic population and to artists, numbers of the latter remaining all winter in the haunts whence the majority of their kind have flown.

The social and artistic peculiarities of the Dean are, of course, too many to be specified. In a collection of various nationalities, many of whose number have drifted like thistledown hither and yon over the fair earth, how could it well be otherwise? It may be observed, however, that here, as everywhere else in this right little tight little isle, where habit is the very antithesis of the airy license of "Abroad," it is *not*, as it is in the artistic haunts of the Continent, *en regle* to vaunt one's self on the paucity of one's shekels or to acknowledge acquaintance with the Medici's pills in their modern form of the Three Golden Balls.

Once upon a time, in a Barbizon *auberge*, a certain famous artist and incorrigible Bohemian brought down the table by describing an incident of his releasing a friend's valuables from durance.

"The moment I turned in at the Mont de Piete," he said, "*my* watch took fright, and stopped ticking on the spot."

That same Bohemian, after years of the Latin Quarter and Mont de Piete, found himself one summer on the Dean. One evening at the porch of Ye Hutte he met a lively group of painters and paintresses, just returned from corn-field and meadow.

During the short halt the Bohemian's watch was so largely and frequently *en evidence* as to attract attention.

"Yes," he said, with colossal, adamantine impudence, "I've just got it back from a two-years' visit to 'my uncle'."

Only a few evenings later the same party met again in the same spot.

"What time is it, Mr. S——?" asked Sophia Primrose, amiably disposed to resuscitate a forlorn joke.

A mammoth blush submerged the luckless Bohemian. For Dean propriety was already becoming engrafted upon Continental habit, and he crimsoned at having to confess what once he would have proclaimed upon the house-top,—that his watch was again with his "uncle."



Probably nine-tenths of the Continental artists who are not entirely beyond the dread of yet eating “mad cow” travel third-class. But Dean artists, however they may travel when out of England, generally slip quietly away from the sight of their acquaintances when their tickets are other than at least second. Our Bohemian was once presented with a second-class ticket to London. As he scrambled in upon the unwonted luxury of cushioned seats, he saw familiar faces blushing furiously.

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“The first time we ever travelled second-class in our lives,” murmured Materfamilias.

“I too,” responded the cheeky Bohemian.

Another difference between Dean Bohemianism and Continental is characteristic of the whole race whose land this is. Whereas artists in France, Italy, and Germany are of gregarious habit and gather for their summers in rural inns, where they form a community by themselves, the Dean artist sets up his own vine and fig-tree and has a temporary home, if ever so small and mean. The farm-houses and cottages of the Dean are filled with lodgers, all dining at separate tables and living as aloof from each other as the true Briton always lives. There are advantages in this aloofness, but it certainly lacks the *camaraderie*, the jolly good-fellowship, of those picturesque *auberges* and *osterie* where twenty or thirty of one calling are gathered together under one roof, meeting daily at table, where artistic criticism is pungent and free, artistic assistance ungrudging, tales of artistic experience and adventure racy, the atmosphere stimulative to the spreading out of every artistic theory possible to the sane and insane mind.

In one of these Continental *auberges* rough boards a foot in width ran in one unbroken line round the four sides of the *salle-a-manger*. These boards were perhaps hazily intended for seats, but their real office was to hold all the artistic rubbish—smashed color-tubes, broken stretchers, ragged canvases, discarded palettes, disreputable paint-rags and oil-tubes—the *auberge* possessed. But every sunset, as the stream of artists set in from forest and field, the boards came into other service. All the work of the day was ranged upon them along the wall, and while the painters sat at meat comment and criticism grew rampant, every canvas coming in for its share. That many good lessons were given and taken in this wise *va sans dire*. That also artistic progress was punctuated not unseldom with “*betise*,” “*imbecile*,” “*nom du chien*,” “you’re a goose,” and “you’re another,” goes equally without saying to all who know the unrestraint of artistic Bohemia and the usual attitude of the human mind under criticism.

The walls of this *salle-a-manger* were—and are—arranged with panels, in which *messieurs les artistes* exercised their skill. It is a marked peculiarity of these artistic communities that no branch of art is so popular as caricature. Sometimes these caricatures are amiable, sometimes the reverse. Thus, when a certain blithe widow was represented colossally upon the wall with a little man in her eye, the likenesses were so good and the truth of the caricature so palpable that the widow herself was moved to as quick laughter as the others. But when American Palmer worked all day upon a panel to create a sunny sea laughing radiantly back at a sunny sky, while fantastic lateen-sailed craft floated like bits of jewelled color between, it was mean, to say the least, of Scotch Willie to take advantage of the American’s departure and paint out those fairy boats, filling their places with horrible bloated corpses, floating upon the bright water like a nightmare upon innocent sleep.



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It was in this same *auberge* that our landlady made this piteous supplication: “Caricature each other on the walls, *messieurs et mesdames, si vous voulez*; make portrait busts of the bread and figurines of the potatoes, and decorate the plates in whatever style of art you please; but don’t, *je vous en supplie*, don’t blacken the tablecloths before they are three days old.”

Alas! this was eloquence lost; for, at that very dinner, conversation chancing to turn upon the subtle malignity of Fanny Matilda’s smiles, Fanny Matilda being there present, in less time than it takes to tell it twenty crayon smiles writhed and wriggled upon the spick-span cloth.

“*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!*” moaned Madame. “And only yesterday every handkerchief upon the line came in bearing the noses of *messieurs et mesdames!*”

Aloofly though the Deanite lives, he is not altogether an unsocial being. Neither are his domestic habits always as invisible to the finite eye as he perhaps intends them to be. Tent-life has scant privacy, and the circumscribed accommodation of the Dean leads to frequent “slopping over” into cloth annexes.

Opposite our windows a certain painter spent no inconsiderable time in the peak-roofed tent upon the grass-plot. There the young foreign-looking wife, in scarlet *birette* and jaunty petticoats just touching high boot-tops, with long, flowing hair, as bright and effective as any pictured *vivandiere*, made tea and coffee over a petroleum-stove, laid the table, sat at her sewing, posed for her husband, received her callers, as charming a gypsy picture as ever brightened canvas.

For the very best of reasons, we were not ‘cyclists, although in a country set with ‘cycles as the fields with flowers or the sky with stars.

For reasons equally good, we were not boatists, although the watery way from Oxford to the sea flowed so near our door, and our village was one of the gayest head-quarters not only of the fresh-water navy, whose arms are flashing oars and whose oaths are of the universities, but equally that of regiments of painters, whose arms are sketching-umbrellas and easels and who swear not at all,—or at least not to feminine hearing.

Our lodgings were among the artists in the region farther back from the river than that monopolized by the boating-people. We were back among the sunny slopes and smiling meadows, the red-tiled farm-houses and dusky lanes, of the still primitive natives of the region, while the navy covered the shining river by day and overran the river-side hostelries by night.



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Our lodgings were not picturesque, if truth must be told, although surrounded by picturesqueness as by a garment,—a circular cloak of it, so to say. We had the chief rooms of a staring new and square brick cottage, glaring with white walls inside, shutterless outside, majestic with a bow-window too high to look from except upon one's legs, owned by my Lady H——'s gardener, and elegantly named "Ethel Cottage," as a stucco plaque in its frieze bore witness. We should have preferred accommodations in any of the ivy-grown, steep-roofed cots about us, or in the old stone inn, with its peaked porch, where honest yokels quaffed nutty ale and a sign-board creaked and groaned from its gibbet across the road. But we had come too late in the painting-season for any other than Hobson's choice: the tidbits of grime and squalor were all taken, and we must e'en content ourselves to be mocked and reviled for the philistinism of our domestic establishing, or else hie us hence where artists were not and Ethel Cottages as yet unknown.

But where, tell me where, are not artists in England? And where, tell me where, do artists gather in squads that Ethel Cottages do not spring up like the tents of an army with banners? For even painters must eat and be lodged, the aboriginal habitations are not of elastic capacity, the inns are of feeble digestion, and the third summer of an artistic invasion is sure to find "Ethels" and "Mabels" in red brick and stunning whitewash, and, like our row of laborers' cottages, cursed by artists, but inhabited by them.

It was a *soulagement* of our aesthetic discomfort that so long as we remained hidden within it we never realized our own hideousness. Now and then we saw the ugly squareness of our afternoon shadow upon our aristocratically-gravelled front yard, but ordinarily we saw only dreamy distances melting into piny duskiness against the far-off sky, the serpent-like windings of the tranquil river, upon which its navy looked like dust-motes, fair fields of golden grain, and the farm-houses and cottages which looked upon our blank brickness with admiration and wondered why we were despised of our less beautifully housed kind, when our forks were four-pronged and of silvery seeming and our floors carpeted to our sybaritic feet. It was only when we returned to our Ethel after long tramps over the country-side, from a four-miles-distant Norman tower or a ten-miles-away pre-Reformation abbey, now stable or granary, that we figuratively beat our breasts and tore our hair because Fate had not made us *real* tramps, privileged to sleep in pre-Reformation stables or 'neath pre-Reformation stars, rather than the imitation tramps we were, wedded to the habits but loathing the aspect of red-faced, staring Ethels.

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What would we not have given for an invitation to pass a time, as Miss Muloch was, in one of those Thames monsters concerning which she wrote her fascinating pages, “A Week in a House-Boat”! We could scarce catch a glimpse of the river upon our tramps—and it was our constant silvery accompaniment, as the treble to a part-song—without coming across these ungraceful, unwieldy creatures, seeming like bloated denizens of depths below come to bask upon the surface. Hundreds of them dot the river between Teddington and Oxford: once we counted ten between Ethel and the wooded island whither we rowed every Sunday to dine from ponderous hampers upon a huge tree-stump. Many of them are owned and occupied by artists, who have them towed by horses up and down the river every week or two, or moor them for months in one place while painting river-scenery. Some are inhabited by maniacal fishermen, who sit day after day all day long at the end of poles protruding from front or back doors or bedroom windows. Some are inhabited by Londoners in whom primeval instincts for air, space, sunshine, and liberty break out every summer from under the thick crust of modern habits and conventions and cause them to breathe, as we did, not angelical aspirations, but “I want to be a gypsy.”

Some of these house-boats are miracles of microscopic luxury, doll-like bedrooms and dining-rooms for pygmies. In some, also, marvels of culinary skill are evolved in pocket-space by French *chefs* who spend their days creating the banquets to which the boaters invite their *convives* at evening, when the cold river-mists have driven the navy into harbor for the night. Others are much simpler in construction and furnishing, and the inhabitants live largely upon tinned and potted viands and such light cooking as comes within the possibilities of oil-stoves and fires of fagots on the banks. Still others—and we often saw their lordly and corpulent owners reading the “Times” upon the handkerchief space which serves for porch or piazza before their front doors—move up and down the river from crack hotel to cracker, taking no note of picturesque “bits” or of mooring-places where Paradise seems come down to lodge between Berks and Bucks, caring naught that at this point four exquisite churches and two interesting manor-houses are within tramping-distance, at that a feudal castle and the fairest inland picture that England and nature can offer their lovers, caring only that at the “King” the trout are the best cooked on the whole river, at the “Queen” the chops are divine, while at the “Prince” the *perdrix aux truffes* are worth mooring there a week for. These house-boaters are generally accompanied by garish wives and daughters, who spend their time in the streets of the town where they chance to be moored,—and they seldom are moored elsewhere than at the larger towns,—exchanging greetings and chatting with such acquaintances as they there meet, or idling up and down the river in the



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luxurious small boats of their river-made friends. This type of house-boater himself is generally spoken of in brisk naval asides as a “duffer,” the kitchen of his boat is a wine-closet, and, to look at him poring for hours over his paper, one may well believe that time is heavy on his hands and that he arrives during every summer vacation at depths of mortal ennui where “nothing new is, and nothing true is, and no matter!”

Americans personally unacquainted with England can form little idea of the extent to which physical culture is carried here, and the universal summer madness for athletic sports and out-of-door amusements. The equable climate, never too hot, never too cold, for river-pull or cricket, is Albion’s advantage in this respect over almost all the rest of the world, and particularly over our fervid and freezing clime. Even although this is pious England, where the gin-shops cannot open after the noon of Sunday until the bells ring for the evening service and “Pub” and church spring open and alight simultaneously, even in pious England Sunday is the day of all the week on which the river takes on its merriest aspect, and from the multitudes of familiar faces and frequency of friendly greetings reminds one of Regent Street and the Parks. All prosperous and proper London—the amusement is too costly for ‘Arry—seems to float itself upon Thames water that day, coming up forty land-miles from the metropolis to do so. Boats are furiously in demand, every picnic nook is pre-empted from earliest morning, the river-side tea-gardens are thronged, the inns are depleted of men and women in yachting-costumes, and the locks are jammed as full as they can be of highly-draped boats, gayly-dressed women, and circus-costumed men, the whole scene gayer, brighter, more fantastic than any Venetian carnival since the days of the most sumptuous of the Adriatic doges.

One or two real Venetian gondolas are kept at that river-reach where we spent our summer. The owner of the principal one is an English nobleman who lived long in Italy and whose twelve daughters were born there. It is a sight to see those twelve beautiful sisters, from six years of age to twenty-four, poled down the river to church every Sunday morning by a swarthy and veritable Venetian gondolier. Whether or not that hearse-like craft has sacred associations in the minds of the twelve maidens all in a row, or whether its grimness and want of swiftness seem out of place amid the carnival brilliancy of Sunday afternoon, it is certain that it is never used except for church-going, and the maidens appear later in the day each in her own swift little canoe, or two or three sisters together in a larger one, darting to and fro, hither and yon, with almost incredible swiftness, almost more like winged thoughts than like even swallows on the wing. The gabled and ivy-wreathed Elizabethan manor-house which is the summer home of the maidens stands but a few rods from the river’s bank. Here,



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amidst decorous shrubbery, upon smooth shaven and rolled turf, where marble vases overflow with gorgeous flowers, sit Pater and Mater among their dozens of guests. Some of the gentlemen are in correct morning dress, some in boating-costumes, and some in that last stage of unclottedness or first of clothedness which is the English bathing-dress. In their striped tights on land these last look exactly like saw-dust and rope ring clowns, but when they dive into the water from that well-bred lawn and dart in wild pursuit of the maidens, who beat them off with oars from climbing into the canoes, amid shouts of aquatic and terrestrial laughter, one would almost swear they were neither the clowns they looked a moment ago, nor yet the English gentlemen they really are, but fantastic mermen bent upon carrying earth-brides back with them into their cool native depths beneath the bright water.

That is what it looks like. But a single glimpse into those cool dappled depths, where the sunny water is shoal enough to show bottom, reveals, alas! how little mermaid and romantic those depths are. For London does not disport itself every Sunday on the Thames without leaving ample traces of that disporting. We see those traces gleaming and glooming there,—empty beer- and wine-bottles, devitalized sardine-boxes, osseous remains of fish, flesh, and fowl, scooped cheese-rinds, egg-shells, the buttons of defrauded raiment, and the parted rims of much-snatched-at and vigorously-squabbled-for straw hats.

A favorite boating-trip is from Teddington up to Oxford, or *vice versa*, spending a week or two on the way, and stopping at river-side inns at night. In the season these inns are full to overflowing, and the roughest and smallest of water-side hamlets holds its accommodations at lofty premiums. A number of public pleasure-steamers and many private steam-launches ply up and down, making the whole trip in two or three days, drawing up at night at towns, and by day provoking curses both loud and deep by the swash of their tidal waves against the liliputian navy. Many of the merry boating-parties of men and women seek only sleeping-accommodations at the inns, and do their own cooking upon bosky islands, on the wooded or sunny banks of the river, by means of kerosene- or charcoal-stoves and tiny tents. How appetizingly we have thus smelt the broiling steak and grilled chop done to a turn even in a camp frying-pan, as we tramped along the river heights and looked down upon chatting groups below! How like airs of Araby the Blest the odors of steaming coffee! how more stimulating than breath of fair Spice Isles the pungent incense of hissing onions!



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As a consequence of this return of Nature's children to Nature's breast, the *genii loci*, the sylvan sprites, are all frightened inland from the borders of the beautiful river. Except here and there where huge boards threaten trespassers and announce that landing is forbidden upon this Private Property, wild flowers will not grow, the grass looks trampled and dim, the soft summer zephyrs play among empty paper bags and relics of grocers' parcels, with sound and sentiment vastly unlike their natural music among green, waving leaves. The river is spoiled for the poet and the dreamer, and even the artist must choose his bits with care. Hyde Park and Piccadilly have come up to the Thames; and what does Hyde Park care for the poetry of dreaming nature, or what the river-madmen for aught else than glorious expansion of muscle and strengthening of sinew and the godlike sense of largeness and lightness which comes with that strengthening and expanding?

Gliding up and down the river, one would suppose all London had taken to boats. But we as trampists came to other conclusions as we pegged along the white Berkshire highways, smooth and even as parquettéd floors, day after day. There the bicycle holds its own, and more too, being largely adopted not only by genuine 'cyclists, but by others as well whose only interest is to cover the ground as quickly as possible,—amateur photographers lashed all over with apparatus, artists shapelessly ditto, and pastoral postmen square-backed with letter-pouches. Women tricyclists are only less numerous, and the dignity and modesty must be crude indeed that find objections to this manner of feminine peregrination. The costume is simple and plain,—close-fitting upper garments, without fuss of furbelow, and plain close skirts, met at the ankles by high buttoned boots. A lady's seat upon a tricycle is far less conspicuous than upon a horse, her bodily motion is less, and the movement of her feet scarcely more than is necessary to run a sewing-machine. She sits at her ease in a perfectly lady-like manner, and flies over the ground like a courser of the desert, if she pleases, or rolls quietly and smoothly along, chatting easily with the pedestrians who amble at her side.

Lady tricyclists attract no attention whatever in Oxford Street. Imagine one flying down Broadway!

As trampists our femininely-encumbered party in those delicious English days considered fourteen quotidian miles not discreditable to us, particularly when taking into consideration the bleats and baas and whimpering laggardness with which we returned from three-mile excursions during the first few days we were in the tramping-line. By degrees we thus explored the whole country within a radius of seven miles of Ethel. With this we were content, yea, even proud; for did not many of our boating women-neighbors grumble even at their walk to the river and declare they would rather row five miles than walk one? We were proud, for we knew every church, every picturesque cottage and ruin, within our radius, while our aquatic friends knew only those bordering the river. We were proud—until, ah me! until that desolate day when a merrily, merrily flying squad swooped down upon us and declared they had 'cycled every inch of the *twenty-mile* periphery of which Ethel's neighboring church tower was the centre!



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That cutting down of our pedal pride resulted in our subscribing to a daily paper. Every morning before stretching out to our regular day's tramp we had been wont to trot through dewy lanes, over stiles, and across subtly-colored turnip- and cabbage-fields, to purchase in the town of M—— a luxury not to be had in our own hamlet,—the “Daily News.” Rain or shine, that trot must be trotted, for there were those among us who would have tramped sulkily all day and sniffed the sniff of wrath at ivied church and thatched cottage were the acid of their natures not made frothy and light by the alkali of their morning paper. It had never occurred to us, not even when we camped beneath wayside shade around our sandwiches and ale or in some stiff and dim inn-parlor and listened to the reading of the “News,” that in reality the town of M——, and not the brickhood of Ethel, was thus the centre of all our ambulatory circumferences. It had never before dawned upon us that we thus added three uncounted miles to our fourteen diurnally counted ones. What astonishment at our own pedometric weakness of calculation! What disgust to find our periphery thus three whole miles smaller than it need have been!

The next day we subscribed to the “News,” and walked nine miles as the bee flies from the front door of Ethel even unto the ruins of Medmenham. And we vowed by all our plaster gods and painted goddesses that another summer we would tramp no more. We would 'cycle.

A mile away from Ethel is the village proper of Cookham. It is a sleepy town, save in the boating-season; and whoever enters the post-office in any season finds it empty and inhospitable. Raps upon a tightly-closed inner door call a woman attendant from rattling sewing or noisy gossip of the invisible penetralia; and as soon as the business is done the inhospitable door swings shut again in the stranger's face.

Cookham houses are quaint, often timbered, frequently ivy-grown from basement to roof. One imagines them assuming a half-sullen air at this yearly breaking of their dreamy repose by incursions of parti-colored hordes for whom life seems to hold but two supreme objects,—boats and pictures.

The most picturesque feature of the place is the old church, set amid tombs whose mossy and time-gnawed cherubs have exchanged grins for two hundred years and more. The old flint tower is grave and grim, but softened by a wonderful centuries old ivy in a veil of living green. A pathetic interest to artists hallows the venerable churchyard. Here sleeps Frederick Walker, a genius cut off before his meridian, and resting now amid his kindred in a lowly grave, over which the Thames waters surge every spring, leaving the grave all the rest of the year the sadder for its cold soddenness and for the humid mildew and decay eating already into the headstone, as yet but twelve years old. In the church itself is Thorneycroft's mural tablet to the dead artist, a portrait head of him who was born almost within the old church's shadow, and whose pencil dealt always so lovingly with the poetic aspects of his native region.



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MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.

BIRDS OF A TEXAN WINTER.

White of Selborne was, on the whole, tolerably content to plunge his swallows, or a good proportion of them, into the mud and deposit them for the winter at the bottom of a pond. Professionally conservative, as a fine old Church-of-England clergyman, though constitutionally sceptical, as became one of the earliest of really observant naturalists, he was loath to break flatly with the consensus of contemporary opinion, rustic and philosophic, and found a *modus vivendi* in the theory that a great many, perhaps a majority, of the swifts and barn-swallows did go to Africa. He had seen them organizing their emigration-parties and holding noisy debate over the best time to start and the best route to take. The sea-part of the travel was of trifling length, and baiting-places were plenty in France, Spain, and Italy. Sometimes, such was their power of wing, they were known to take the outside route and strike boldly across the Bay of Biscay, for they had alighted on vessels. Probably the worthy old man was reluctant to wrench from the rural mind a harmless remnant of superstition,—if superstition it might be called, in view of the fact that sundry saurians and chelonians, held by classifiers to be superior in rank to birds, do hibernate under water, and that, more marvellous than all, the quarrymen of his day, like those of ours, insisted that living frogs occasionally sprang from under their chisel, leaving an unchallengeable impress in the immemorial rock. It must indeed have been up-hill work to extinguish the old belief in the minds of men who had seen the water-ouzel pattering in perfect ease and comfort along the floor of the pellucid pool, and who had heard from their fisher friends from the north coast of the gannets that were drawn up in the herring-nets.

Most of us, even *color chi sanno*, like to retain a spice of mystery in our mental food. It may constitute no part of the nutriment, and may often be deleterious, but it meets a want, somehow or other, and wants, however undefinable, must be recognized. It is a spur that titillates the absorbent surfaces and helps to keep them in action. It is a craving that the race is never going to outlive, and that will afford occupation and subsistence to a considerable class of its most intelligent and respectable members until the year one million, as it has done since the year one. The great mass of us like to see the absolute reign of reason tempered by the incomprehensible, and are ever ready to lend a kindly ear to men and things that humor that liking.

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Where do all the birds, myriads in number and scores in species, go when they leave the North in the winter? A small minority lags, not superfluous, for we are delighted to have them, but in a subdued, pinched, and hand-to-mouth mode of existence in marked contrast to their summer life and perceptibly marring the pleasure of their society. They flock around our homes and assume a mendicant air that is a little depressing. Unlike the featherless tramps, they pay very well for their dole; but we should prefer them, as we do our other friends, to be independent, and that although we know they are but winter friends and will coolly turn their backs upon us as soon as the weather permits. The spryest and least dependent of them all, the snow-bird, who sports perpetual full dress, jerks at us his expressive tail and is off at the first thaw, black coat, white vest, and all. No tropics or sub-tropics for him. He can stand our climate and our company with a certain condescending tolerance so long as we keep the temperature not too much above zero, but grows contemptuous when Fahrenheit grows effeminate and forty. Nothing for it then but to cool off his thin and unprotected legs and toes in the snows of Canada. "The white North hath his" heart. Our winter is his summer. There is nothing in his anatomy to explain this idiosyncrasy. His physical construction closely resembles that of his insessorial brethren, most of whom go when he comes. He has no discoverable provision against cold. Adaptation to environment does not seem to cover his case. It does not cover his legs. They remain unfeathered. We shudder to see his translucent little tarsi on top of the snow, which he obviously prefers as a standpoint to bare spots where the snow has been blown away. Compared with the ptarmigan and the snowy owl, or even the ruffed grouse, all so well blanketed, he suggests a survival of the unfittest.

The movements of this tough little anti-Darwinian are overlapped by the bluebird and the robin,—our robin, best entitled to the name, inasmuch as it is accorded him by fifty-odd millions against thirty millions who give it to the redbreast,—who are usually with him long before he gets away. They never move very far southward, but watch the cantonments of Frost, ready to advance the moment his outposts are drawn in and signs appear of evacuation. Their climate, indeed, is determined in winter rather by altitude than by latitude. The low swamps and pineries that skirt tide-water in the Middle States furnish them a retreat. Thence they scatter themselves over the tertiary plain as it widens southward beneath the granite bench that divides all the great rivers south of the Hudson into an upper and a lower reach. Detachments of them extend their tour to the Gulf. Readers of "A Subaltern on the Campaign of New Orleans in 1814-15" will recall his mention of the assemblage of robins hopping over the Chalmette sward that were the first living inhabitants to welcome the weary invaders on emerging from the palmetto marshes. They can hardly be said to reach the particular region of which we propose to speak, both species, the bluebird especially, being almost strangers to it.

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Other species, the cardinal grosbeak among them, may be said to stop, as it were, just out of hearing, the echo of their song slumbering in the thin, keen air, ready to swell again into unmistakable reality. Between these stubborn fugitives and those who follow the butterflies to the tropics there is a wide variety in the extent of travel in which our winged compatriots indulge.

Quadrupeds, whose movements are less speedy and more limited, have to adapt themselves to the Northern winter as best they may. Hard and long training has made them less the creatures of climate than their feathered associates, who might themselves in many cases have learned perforce to stay where they were reared but for possessing the light and agile wings which woo them to wander. We may fancy Bruin, with his passion for sweet mast and luscious fruits, eying with envy the martin and the wild fowl as they sweep over his head to the teeming Southland, and wondering, as he huddles shivering into his snowy lair, why Nature should be so partial in her gifts. The call of the trumpeting swan, the bugler crane, and the Canada goose falls idly upon his ear. To their breezy challenge, "A new home,—who'll follow?" he cannot respond.

Let us join this tide of travel and move sunward with some of those who take through-tickets. We can easily keep up with them now. Steam is not slower than wings,—often faster. Sitting at ease, yet moved by iron muscles, we can time the coursers of the air. A few decades ago, when this familiar motor was a new thing comparatively, we could not do so. At the jog of twenty miles an hour, even the sparrow could pass us on a short stretch, and the dawdling crow soon left us in the rear. Our gain upon their time is so recent that the birds have not yet fully realized it. Unaccustomed to being beaten by anything *on earth*, they will skim along abreast of a train till, to their unspeakable, or at least unspoken, wonderment, they find that what they are fleeing from is fleeing from them. One morning last winter I was speeding eastward to the Crescent City, the freshest of my memories a struggle at Houston with one of those breakfasts which so atrociously distinguish the reign of the magnate who is said to supply under contract all the meals of the Southern railway-restaurants, and who, "if ever fondest prayer for others' woe avail on high," will certainly be booked, with the vote of some of his victims, for a post-mundane berth a good deal warmer than his coffee and more sulphurous than his eggs. Afar off to the right the sun was rounding up from the Gulf and clearing the haze from his broad, red face, the better to look abroad over the glistening prairie and see if the silhouetted pines and cattle were where he had left them the day before. Glancing to the left, which was my side of the car, I became aware of a large bird suspended in the air, not motionless, for his wings were doing their best, but to all appearance

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as stationary as the scattered trees and cattle, and about fifteen yards distant. Every feature and marking of the “chicken,” or pinnated grouse, was as distinct to the eye as though, instead of making thirty-two miles an hour, he were posing for his photograph. For full two hundred yards he sustained the race, until, finding that his competitor had the better wind, he gave it up and shot suddenly into the sedge. How much longer the match had lasted I could not say. He must have got up near the engine—of course losing some time in the act of rising—and fallen back gradually to my place, which was in a rear car. But when a schedule for birds comes to be framed, it is safe to set down *Tetrao cupido* at about the speed above named. Timed from a rail-car, that is; for, looked at over a gun, he seems to move five times as fast. The double-barrel is a powerful binocular.

Steam, then, soon carries us to the resort of the lost truants, who have travelled with the lines of longitude by guides and tracks over that invisible road as unerring as those of the railway. We shall find them in close companionship with friends unknown in our latitude, whose abiding-places are at the South, as those left behind are fixed dwellers at the North.

From the window at which I sit on this morning late in January and this parallel of thirty degrees,—window open, as well as the door, for no norther is on duty to-day,—I see flocks of our familiar redwings, cowbirds, and blackbirds, all mingled together as though the hard and fast lines of species had been obliterated and made as meaningless as the concededly evanescent shades of variety, trooping busily over the lawn and blackening the leafless China-trees. But they have a crony never seen by us. This is the crow-blackbird of the South, or jackdaw as it is wrongly called, otherwise known as the boat-tailed grackle, from his over-allowance of rudder that pulls him side-wise and ruins his dead-reckoning when a wind is on. His wife is a sober-looking lady in a suit of steel-gray, and the pair are quite conspicuous among their winter guests. The latter are far less shy than we are accustomed to find them, a majority being young in their first season and with little or no experience of human guile. No one cares to shoot them, in the abundance of larger game, and the absence of stones from the fat prairie-soil places them out of danger from the small boy. Their only foe is the hawk, who levies blackmail on them as coolly and regularly as any other plumed cateran. Partly, perhaps, by reason of this outside pressure, they are cheek by jowl with the poultry,—the cow-bunting, which is the pet prey of the hawk, following them into the back porch and insisting sometimes on breakfasting with Tray,—or rather with Legion, for that is the name of the Texas dog. In this familiarity they are approached, though not equalled, by that more home-staying bird the meadow-lark, who is here a dweller of the lawn and garden and adds his mellow



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whistle to the orchestra of the mocking-bird. This so-called lark is classed by most naturalists among the starlings, as are two of the blackbirds, which two he resembles in some of his habits, but not in migrating, being about as much of a continental as any other biped American. Nor is he like his cousins in changes of dress. Out of a dozen of the latter that may be brought down at a shot, you will scarcely find three exactly alike. They moult at the South, and the young pass gradually into adult plumage. The male redwing, up to his first autumn, is hardly distinguishable in dress from his mother. Here he dons his epaulettes, beginning with the threadbare worsted yellow of the private, and rising in grade to the rich scarlet and gold of the officer fully commissioned to flame upon the marsh and carry havoc among its humblest inhabitants.

A month or two hence, the plover, as shy in his Northern haunts as the lark, will, in three species, be as much at home upon the lawn. Youth and inexperience must, as in the case of the other birds, be one explanation of this unwonted familiarity. Among other reasons is the abundance of food, under a mild sky, with but rare frosts to bind the earth and no snows to cover it. The temperature of an average winter day is 60 deg. or 65 deg.. A norther is apt to blow three or four times in the season, and it brings the mercury down to freezing-point or some degrees lower. After the two or three days of its duration, the first warm morning covers the walks and most other bare parts of the soil with worm-casts,—revealing the larders of the smaller birds. At an average, too, of four or five places in an acre one notices a hillock two or three feet in diameter tipped with a yellowish spot that deepens into orange and broadens as the air grows warm. These erections are the work of ants, the emergence of which intelligent insects in greater or less numbers, according to the temperature, causes the coloring which we observe. Intelligent we cannot help terming a creature so remarkable in its various species for the evidences of calculation furnished by its habits of life,—evidences nowhere better worth studying than among the leaf-cutting, slave-holding, and shade-planting ants of Texas; but we are sometimes tempted to deny the character to this particular species when we perceive the utter indifference to safety with which it selects a site for its communistic abode. One of these is located in the middle of the principal (sandy and unpaved) street of a village, within twenty steps of the railroad-track, and subject to the impact of wheels and mule-, ox-, or horse-hoof many times an hour; yet the semblance of a dwelling is maintained, and the little tawny cloud comes up smiling whenever the sun allows, asking no other permission. These ant-hills, I am persuaded, supply a foundation to certain tufts of low trees which spring up in dampish places where the spring fires have less sweep. The hillocks are well drained,



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as appears from their composition of clear gravel, a material of which you will find more in one of them than on a surface of many feet around; and you may see the sweeter grasses gradually mantling them, these being followed by herbage of larger growth, which, accumulating humors at their roots, burgeon into arborescence, until, one vegetable entity shouldered into substance and thrift by another, the nucleus built by our tiny red friends has broadened into a tree-clad knoll. The mezquit, not many years ago confined for the most part to the arid region beyond the Nueces, is spreading eastward, and the clumps of it which begin to skirt the original copses here may be supposed to owe their first foothold to the ant. This humble promoter of forestry is duly appreciated, if only as a viand, by his neighbors. Full-grown, and still more in the larval stage, he is esteemed by them as both a toothsome and a beaksome bit. He—or, more numerous, she, if we insist on sex and decline the more practically correct *it*—forms thus the lowest term in an ascending series of animal life that grows out of the ant-hill like the tree. So much may one such settlement in a rood of ground do for the maintenance of organic existence.

A still more diffused, perhaps, if less productive, source of life exists in another burrower and mound-builder, the crawfish. Unlike the ant, which likes to drain, he is an advocate of irrigation. In this art he can give our well-diggers odds in the game. His genius for striking water is wonderful. On the driest parts of the prairie, miles from any permanent stream, his ejections of mud may be found. Shallow or deep, his borings always reach water. He is always at home, but less accessible to callers than the ant. To the smaller birds he is forbidden fruit. In wet weather, when his vestibule is shallow, the sand-hill crane may burglarize him, or even get a snap judgment on him at the front door. The bill of the great curlew cannot be sent in so effectively, not being so rightly drawn; but that bird, more common in the season than anywhere else away from the coast, finds plenty of other food. He is not here in the winter. His place just now is filled by the jacksnipe, which flutters up from every boggy place and comes to bag in a condition anything but suggestive of short commons. The snipe's terrestrial surface lies two and a half inches beneath ours. At that distance he strikes hard pan; but it is margin enough for his operations, and he is not often caught among the shorts. Gourmands assure us that he lives "by suction," and that there is consequently no harm in eating his trail. There is comfort in this creed, whatever may be our private belief in the substantiality of what the bird absorbs; and we cheerfully eat, after the suggestion of Paul, "asking no questions," the while tacitly assuring ourselves, like old Fuller with the strawberry, that a better bird might doubtless have been made, but as certainly never was. For game flavor not even the partridge (Bob White), also exceptionally abundant here, is his superior.



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But think, ye snow-bound, of the state of things implied in this embarrassment of riches, —of a mid-winter table balanced between such a choice, or, better, balanced by the adoption of both, one at each end! Nor would this be near telling the whole story. Excluding fur and sticking to feather, we have a wide range beyond. The larger birds we may begin on, very moderately, with crane-steak, a transverse section of our stately but distant friend the sand-hill. That is the form in which he is thought to appear to best advantage. By the time you have circumvented him by circumscribing him in the gradually narrowing circuit of a buggy,—for stalking him, unless in higher grass than is common at this season, is but vexation of spirit,—you will feel vicious enough to eat him in any shape. His brother, the beautiful white bugler, you will hardly meet at dinner, he being the shyest of his kind. A Canada goose—not the tough and fishy bird of the Northern coast, but grain- and grass-fed from fledging-time—is tender, delicate, and everyway presentable. From the back upper gallery that looks upon the prairie you are likely to see a company or battalion of his brethren, their long black necks and white ties “dressing” capitally in line, and their invisible legs doing the goose-step as the inventors of that classic manoeuvre ought to do it. This bird seems to affect the *militaire* in all his movements. What can be more regular than the wedge, like that so common in tactical history, in which he begins his march, moving in “a column of attack upon the pole”? Even when startled and put to flight, he goes off smoothly and quietly, company-front. In foraging he is strictly systematic, and never forgets to set sentinels. We cannot fail to respect him while doing him the last honors. Of not inferior claim is his prairie chum and remote cousin the mallard. They are not often in close companionship, though I have seen a dozen and a half of each rise from the border and the bosom of a pond forty yards across,—one loving the open, and the other taking repose, if not food, upon the water. That there should be ponds upon these prairies is as striking to one accustomed to hill and dale as that so unpromising a surface should so teem with life. The prairie is as flat as if cast like plate-glass and rolled out,—only the table is slightly tilted toward the Gulf at the rate of two or three hundred feet in a hundred miles. At night you may see the head-light of an engine fifteen miles away, like a low star that you wonder does not rise. It grows slowly in size, a Sirius, a Venus, a moon, as though the earth had stopped rotating and adopted a direct motion toward the heavenly bodies. Early on fine mornings the horizon gets tired, as it were, of being suppressed, and looms up in a mirage, with an outfit of imaged trees and hills reflected in an imaginary lake,—a pictured protest of Nature against monotony. There are local depressions, nevertheless, which you would not believe in but for



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the shallow little ponds which fill them and which are indicated from a distance at this season by the lead-colored grass that veils them and conceals their glitter. And there are longer swells, begotten of drainage, sometimes of eight or ten feet in a mile, which deceive you, as you advance, into the expectation of a grand prospect when once you shall have got to the top of them. That, practically, you never do. Arrived at what seems to be the crest of a ridge, you see nothing but more flat. The eye, in despair, gives, when you come in sight of it, an inclination to the water. The pond-surface ceases to be horizontal. The principle of gravitation stands contradicted point-blank.

The most frequent vedette of these miniature lakes is the heron,—usually the blue, sometimes the larger white, the latter a most beautiful bird. Yet neither is common. Still rarer in such situations is the bittern, the Timon of birds, the rushes being seldom high enough to afford him the strict concealment he likes. The mallard has to be his own sentinel, as a rule. He does not depend on these ponds for food, and, like other wild creatures, he reserves his chief vigilance for feeding-time. They are places of repose, at mid-day and at night, for the ducks of this and two or three other species, notably the blue- and green-winged teal, which at other times haunt the clumps of oak and pecan that skirt the sparse streams and their summer-dry affluents, where nuts and acorns in great variety, those of the live-oak being very sweet, supply unfailing winter provision. The thickets of ilex that shade off these wooded reaches into the treeless prairie are the resort of many partridges. You are led back into the open ground by another game-bird, the pinnated grouse, the widest ranger of its genus, but at the North disappearing only less rapidly than the buffalo. As yet his most destructive foe in this region is perhaps the hawk, although he is raided from the timber by the opossum, raccoon, and three species of cat, while on the open his nest has marked attractions for the skunk and probably the coyote. He has survived these dumb discouragers so long, and the heat at his proper season is so trying to his human foe, that he may long find a refuge here and proudly lead forth his young Texans for scores of Augusts. He and his family will often quietly walk off while the panting pointer seeks the shade of the wagon and the gunner cools off under the heavy felt sombrero that is here found to be the best headgear for summer. A very moderate game-law, well executed, would sustain this fine bird indefinitely in the struggle for existence. But law of any kind seems a foreign idea on these sea-like primeval plains. It is like thinking of a parliament in the Pleiocene, or of a court-house on the Grand Banks.

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Any transcendentalist who wishes to furbish up his philosophic furniture will find this a good workshop for the purpose. There is ample room for any school, positive or negative,—plenty of cloud-land for all conceits. Kant could have picked up pure reason among the crowds of simply reasoning creatures who have possessed the scene since long before the brain of man was created. Covies of immemorial Thoreaus bivouac under those hazy woods, and pre-glacial Emersons are circling overhead. The problem of successfully living they have all solved. What more have any of us done? The greatest good of the greatest number they unpresumptively display as a practically triumphant principle; and the greatest number is not by any means with them, any more than with us, number one. Had it been, they would all have been extinct long ago. Nature may be “red with tooth and claw,” but not suicidally so. It is to quite a peaceable, if not wholly loving, world that she invites us. And just here we can see so much of it; we can study it so broadly and so freely. Concord and Walden dwindle into the microscopic. It was under precisely such a sun as this, in a warm, dry atmosphere, on a nearly treeless soil, that the Stagyrite did all the thinking of sixty generations. Could he have done it in an overcoat and muffler, with a chronic catarrh?

If, impatient of a host of inarticulate instructors, we prefer communing with our kind and falling back on human story, some of that, too, is at hand. Half a century ago, to a year, a short string of forlorn and forlorn-looking people crossed the prairie close by, from west to east, from the Colorado to the Brazos. The head of it was Sam Houston’s “army,” three or four hundred strong, with all its *materiel* in one wagon. The rest consisted of the debris of all the Anglo-American settlements, women, children, cows, and what poor household stuff could be moved. Slowly ferrying the Brazos, and as slowly making its way down the left bank, picking up as it went the rest of the homesteads and some more fighting-men, it turned to the right at the head of the estuary. Then the little column, strengthened with some sea-borne supplies and relieved of its wards, turned to face its pursuers. These were twice its numbers, with four or five thousand reserves some days behind. Generalship was given the go-by on both sides, the *cul-de-sac* of San Jacinto being closed at both ends. Thirty minutes of noise and smoke, and the empire of Cortez and Montezuma was split in two. Clio nibbed another quill, steel pens not having then been invented. The gray geese who might have supplied it recomposed themselves on the prairie, and all the rest of their feathered friends followed their example, as the military interlude melted away and left them their ancient solitary reign.

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Of the feathered spectators of the scene we have episodically glanced at, the most interested were those constant supervisors, the vultures. Of these there are three species, one of which—the Mexican vulture—is but an occasional visitor. The other two—the black vulture and the turkey-buzzard—are monopolists in their peculiar line. They constitute here, as generally throughout the warmer parts of the continent and its islands, the recognized sanitary police. No law protects them, but they do not need it. They are too useful not to command that popular sympathy which is the higher law. The flocks and herds upon a thousand plains are theirs. Every norther that freezes and every drought that starves some of the wandering cattle and sheep brings to them provision. The railroads also, not less than the winds of heaven, are their friends, the fatal cow-catcher being an ever-busy caterer. The buzzards are, of course, under such circumstances, warm advocates of internal improvement and welcome the opening of every new railway. Their ardor in this respect, however, has of late years been damped by the building of wire fences along the track, an interference with vested rights and an assault upon the hoary claims of infant industries against which in their solemn assemblies they doubtless often condole with each other. Unfortunately for their cause, they cannot lobby.

Somehow, there seems to be always a wag or clown among each group of animals,—some one species in which the amusing or the grotesque is prominent. Among these clownish fellows I should class the black vulture, or john-crow. He is not a crow at all, but gets that name probably because so historic a tribe as *Corvus* must have some representative, and the real crow, so common at the North, is one of the few birds that are not much seen in this quarter. John unites in his ways at once fuss and business. He alternates oddly between bustle and gravity. Seated stately and motionless for hours on a leafless tree, he will suddenly, as if struck by a new idea, start off on a tour that might have been dictated by telegram. He does not sail and circle like his friend and comrade, never being distracted by soaring pretensions, but goes straight to his object. His flight is a regular succession of short flaps, with quiescent intervals between the series. The flaps are usually four, sometimes five or six. I am sure he counts them. You have seen a puffy gentleman in black hurrying along the street and tapping his boot with a cane, as though keeping time. Fancy this gentleman in the air, dressed in feathers, his coat-skirt sheared off alarmingly short and square, and looking like a cherub in jet, all head and wings,—although John is not exactly a cherub in his habits. A white spot on each wing adds a bit of the harlequin to his style.



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Were I to seek a “funny man” among the quadrupeds, I should name another dweller of the Southwestern prairies, the jack-rabbit,—John II. let us call him. Nobody ever gets quite accustomed to the preternatural ears of this hare. In proportion they are to those of others of the Leporidae nearly what the ears of the mule are to those of the horse. When this bit of bad drawing, as big as a fawn and weighing ten pounds or so, jumps up before you and bounds away at railroad speed, he makes you rub your eyes. You expect the apparition to disappear like other apparitions, especially as it moves off with vast rapidity. But it does not. As suddenly as it started it is transformed into a prong like an immense letter V, projecting in perfect stillness from the grass a hundred yards off. You advance, and the same proceeding is repeated. Jack is obviously deep in guns, and knows the difference in power between a muzzle- and a breech-loader, if he has not ascertained, indeed, what number shot you have in your cartridge. He varies his distance according to these contingencies. Only, he has not as yet learned to gauge the greyhound: that dog is frequently kept for his benefit.

A special endowment of this immediate locality is a large and permanent sheet of water, three or four miles by one, which bears, and deserves, the name of Eagle Lake. For, though overhung by no cliffs or lofty pines, it is far more the haunt of eagles, of both the bald and the gray species, than most tarns possessing those appendages of the romantic. Its dense fringe of fine trees, among them live-oaks a single one of which would make the fortune of an average city park, can well spare the Conifers. They are all hung with Spanish moss, a feature which conflicts with the impression of lack of moisture conveyed by the light ashen color of the bark and short annual growth of many of the smaller trees. Here and there tiny inlets are overhung with undergrowth which supplies a safe nesting-place to a multitude of birds of many kinds. The surface of the lake I have never seen free from ducks of one species or another, and generally of half a dozen. Almost the whole family, if we except the canvas-back and the red-head, visit it at one or another period. One item in their bill of fare is the nut of the water-lily, the receptacles of which, resembling the rose of a watering-pot, dot the shallows in great quantity. The green, cable-like roots of this plant are afloat, forming at some points heavy windrows. Some say they are torn up from the bottom by the alligators; but it is more probable that they are loosened and broken by the continual tugging of the divers. The alligators are not vegetarians, and they are not using their snouts much at this season. The young shoots of the Nymphaea are doubtless tempting food, as those of the Vallisneria are on the Chesapeake and the North Carolina sounds. Sustenance may be drawn also from the roots of the rushes and reeds which cover with their yellow stems and leaves many acres of the lake, and are thronged now by several species of small birds.



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Hawks, of course, are always in sight, and that in astonishing variety, from the osprey down to two or three varieties of the sparrow-hawk. A monograph on the Raptores of Eagle Lake would be a most comprehensive work. The osprey, notwithstanding the abundance of his scaly prey, is not common: probably the field is too limited for him. Ducks are the attraction of the other large species. In summer, ducks are rather secondary among the water-birds, the ibis, water-turkey, and flamingo imparting a tropical character to the scene that somewhat obscures the more familiar forms. There is even a survival here of birds that have nearly disappeared from the American fauna, —the paroquet, once so common in the Mississippi Valley as far north as the Ohio, being sometimes seen, and, if I mistake not, a second species of humming-bird straying north by way of Mexico.

From where we stand, under a canopy of rich green leaves, looking out upon the sunny water through a banyan-like colonnade of mighty trunks and hanging vines, the pearly moss tempering the light like jalousies, summer seems but a relative idea. Fly-catchers flit back and forth, barn-swallows and sand-martins skim the lake, and an occasional splash or ripple at our feet shows that humbler life is getting astir. The highest life, or what modest man calls such, we have all to ourselves. Yet not quite; for there is visible yonder, beneath the outer tip of a live-oak which we have found to stretch and droop twenty-four paces from the seven-foot trunk, a little fleet of canoes. They belong to the professional fisherman whose too tarry nets are quite an encumbrance for some yards of the sandy beach, and whose well may be noticed about a rifle-shot out from the shore. More than that, though Piscator is absent, some one is inspecting his boats. In fact,—and it *is simple fact*, and I am not smuggling in a bit of padding in the shape of sentiment,—two persons become perceptible, both with their backs towards us, now and studiously all the time. One, a man, chooses a boat after trying several, and, with similar show of unavoidable delay, is cushioning the seats with carefully-arranged moss in four times the necessary quantity. During this absorbing process he rips one of his cuffs, or tears off a button from it, or smears it with the tar that besets the boat and its oars. This calamity supplies the lady, a neat young person, with a pretext for occupation, and she uses it to the fullest and most affectionate extent. It is growing late, and unless we relieve the couple of our obviously detected presence we shall deprive them of their Sunday-afternoon row. That it is a row with the stream we find ten days later, when their wedding becomes the sensation of the little village.

The old, old story! how pat it comes in! How could it have failed to come in, when the talk is of birds?

EDWARD C. BRUCE.

THE FERRYMAN'S FEE.



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I.

"I am going," said the professor to his friend Miss Eldridge, "to marry a young woman whose mind I can mould."

Somebody was uncharitable enough to say that he couldn't possibly make it any mouldier than his own. This was a slander. In the high dry Greek atmosphere which surrounded and enclosed his mind, mould, which requires dampness before it can exist, was an impossibility.

When an engagement is announced, it is almost invariably followed by one question, with a variable termination. The dear five hundred friends exclaim, with uplifted hands,

—
"What could have possessed him," or "her"?

In the present case the latter termination was adopted, with but one dissenting voice: Miss Christina Eldridge said, in low, shocked tones, "Alas that a man of his simply colossal mind should have been ensnared by a pretty face, whose soulless beauty will depart in a few short years!"

The professor would have been very indignant had any one ventured to suggest to him that the pretty face had anything to do with it. He imagined himself entirely above and beyond such flimsy considerations. Yet it is sadly doubtful whether an example in long division, on a smeared slate, brought to him with tears and faltering accents by Miss Christina, would have produced the effect which followed when Miss Rosamond May betrayed her shameful ignorance by handing him the slate and saying forlornly, "I've done it seven times, and it comes out differently wrong every time. Can *you* see what's the matter?" and two wet blue eyes looked into his through his spectacles, with an expression which said plainly, "You are my last and only hope."

She was standing by the massive marble-topped table which was the central feature of the parlor of their boarding-house. One plump hand—with dimples where the knuckles should have been—rested upon the unresponsive marble, in the other she held the slate. She was a teacher of some of the lowest classes in Miss Christina Eldridge's academy for young ladies, and only Miss Christina knew the almost fathomless depths of her ignorance.

But her father had been a professor, and a widower; and shortly before he died he had manifested an appreciation of the stately principal which, but for his untimely death,—he was only seventy,—might have expanded into "that perfect union of souls" for which her disciplined heart secretly pined.



So when it was first whispered, and then exclaimed, that Professor May had left nothing, absolutely nothing, for his daughter but a very small life-insurance premium and the furniture of their rented house, with a little old-fashioned jewelry and silverware of the smallest possible intrinsic value, Miss Christina called upon Miss May and told her that, if she would accept it, there was a vacancy in the academy, with a salary of two hundred dollars a year and board, but not lodging.



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“And if you remain with me, my dear, as I hope you will, I can give you a room next year, after the new wing is added; and, meanwhile, I know of a vacant room, at two dollars a week, in a highly-respectable lodging-house.”

“You are very kind,” replied Rosamond, in a quivering voice. “But indeed I am afraid I don’t know enough to teach even the very little girls. So I’m afraid you’d better get somebody else. Don’t you think you had?”

“No,” said Miss Christina, patting the useless little hand which lay on her lap. “You will only be obliged to hear spelling- and reading-lessons, and teach the class of little girls who have not gone beyond the first four rules of arithmetic, and perhaps you will help them to play on their holidays: you could impart an element of refinement to their recreations more readily than an older teacher could.”

“Is *that* all?” exclaimed Rosamond, almost cheerfully. “Oh, I can easily do that much. I love little girls. I will be so good to all the homesick ones. When shall I come?”

“As soon as you can, my dear,” replied Miss Christina.

In a few weeks Rosamond had settled into the routine of her new life,—going every morning to the academy, where she spent the day in hearing lessons, binding up broken hearts, playing heartily with her scholars in the intermissions, and being idolized by them in each of her various capacities. She did not forget her father, but it was impossible for her sweet and childlike nature to remain in mourning long.

Professor Silex had felt a profound pity for his old friend’s daughter, and had come down out of the clouds long enough to express it in scholarly terms and to offer any assistance in his power. They met sometimes on the stairs and in the dreary parlor, and his eyes beamed with such a friendly light upon her over the top of his spectacles that she began to tell him her small troubles and to ask his advice in a manner which sometimes completely took his breath away. He had never had a sister, his mother died before his remembrance, and he had been brought up by two elderly aunts. Fancy, then, his consternation when he was suddenly and beseechingly asked, “Oh, Professor Silex, *would* you get a little felt bonnet, if you were me, or one of those lovely wide-brimmed beaver hats? The hats are a dollar more; but they *are* so lovely and so becoming!”

“My dear child,” stammered the professor, “have you no female friend with whom you can consult? I am profoundly ignorant. Miss Eldridge—”

“She says to get the felt,” pouted the dear child; “just because it’s cheaper. And papa used always to advise me, when I asked him, to get what I liked best.” The blue eyes filled, as they still did at the mention of her father.



“My dear,” said the professor hurriedly,—they were standing on the first landing, and he heard the feet of students coming down the stairs,—“I should advise you, by all means, to get the—the one you like best. Excuse my haste, but I—I have a class.”



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She was wearing the beaver when she next met him, and she beamed with smiles as she called his attention to it. He looked at her more seeingly than he had yet done, and a feeling like a very slight electric shock penetrated his brain.

“See!” she cried gayly. “It *is* becoming, isn’t it?”

“It is, indeed,” he answered cordially. “And I should think it would be quite—quite warm, —there is so much of it, and it looks so soft.”

“I told Miss Eldridge you advised me to get it,” continued she triumphantly, “and she didn’t say another word.”

The professor was aghast. He felt a warm wave stealing over his face. This must be stopped, and at once. Fancy his class, his brother professors, getting hold of such a rare bit of gossip! But he would not hurt her feelings. She was so young, so innocent, and her frank blue eyes were so like those of his dead friend.

“My child,” he said softly, “you honor me by your confidence; but may I—might I ask you, when you seek my advice upon subjects—ah—not congruous to my age and profession, not to repeat the result of our conferences? With thoughtless people it might in some slight measure be considered derogatory to my professional dignity. Not that I think it so,” he hastily added. “All that concerns you is of great, of heartfelt interest to me.”

“I didn’t tell anybody but Miss Eldridge,” said the culprit penitently; “and I know she won’t repeat it; and I’ll never do so any more, if you’ll let me come to you with my foolish little troubles. It seems something like having papa again.”

Now, why this touching tribute should have irritated the professor who can say? He was startled, shocked, at the irritation, and he strove to banish all trace of it from his voice and manner as he said, gravely and kindly, “Continue to come to me with your troubles, my dear, if I can afford you either help or comfort.”

A few days passed, and she waylaid him again. Her pretty face was pale, and her soft yellow hair was pushed back from her forehead, showing the blue veins in her temples.

“I don’t know what I shall do,” she said, in a troubled voice. “Those children have caught up with me in arithmetic, and by next week they’ll be ahead of me; and I feel as if I oughtn’t to take Miss Eldridge’s money if I can’t do all she engaged me for. What would *you* do if you were me?”

“Could you not prepare yourself by study, and so keep in advance of your little pupils?” he inquired kindly.



“I don’t believe I could,” she replied despondently. “I tried to do the sums that came next, last night, and they wouldn’t come right, all I could do; and I got a headache besides.”

“I have an hour to spare,” said the professor, pulling out his watch: “perhaps, if you will bring me your book and slate, I can elucidate the rule which is perplexing you.”



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“Oh, will you *really?*” she exclaimed, a radiant smile lighting up her troubled face. “I’ll bring them right away. How kind, how *very* kind you are, to bother with my sums, when you have so much Greek in your head!” And, obeying an impulse, as she so often did, she caught his hand in both her own and kissed it heartily. Then she skimmed across the parlor, and he heard her child’s voice “lilting lightly up the” stairs as he stood—in a position suggestive of Mrs. Jarley’s wax-works—gazing fixedly at the hand which she had kissed.

“She regards me as a father,” he said to himself severely. “Am I going mad? Or becoming childish? No; I am only sixty. But, even if it were possible, it would be base, unmanly, to take advantage of her loneliness, her gratitude. No, I will be firm.”

So, when the offending “example” was handed to him, with the above-quoted touching statement as to its total depravity, he looked only at the slate. Gently and patiently, as if to a little child, he pointed out the errors and expounded the rule, amply rewarded by her joyful exclamation, “Oh, I see *exactly* how it’s done, now! You do explain things beautifully. I really think I could have learned a good deal if I’d had a teacher like you when I went to school.”

“Come to me whenever your lessons perplex you, my dear,” he answered, still looking at the slate; “come freely, as if—as if I were your father.”

“Ah, how kind, how good you are to me!” she cried, seizing his slender, wrinkled hand and holding it between her soft palms. “How glad papa must be to know it! It almost seems like having him again. Must you go? Good-night.”

And, innocently, as if to her father, she held up her face for a kiss.

The professor turned red, turned pale, hesitated, faltered, and then kissed her reverently on her forehead,—or, if the truth must be told, on her soft, frizzled hair, which, according to the fashion of the day, hung almost over her eyes.

Two evenings in the week after this were devoted to arithmetic. The professor was firm—as a rule; but when her joyous “Oh, I see *exactly* how it’s done, now!” followed his patient reiteration of rules and explanations, how could he help rewarding himself by a glance at the glowing face? how could he keep his eyes permanently fixed upon that stony-hearted slate?

So it went on through the winter and spring, till it was nearing the time for the summer vacation. The professor knew only too well that Rosamond had been invited to spend it with some distant cousins,—distant in both senses of the word,—and that on her return she would be swallowed up by the academy and would brighten the dingy boarding-house no more. How could he bear it? His arid, silent life had never had a song in it before. Must the song die out in silence?



When the last evening came, and when, realizing the long separation before them, she once more held up her face for a kiss, with trembling lips and blue eyes swimming in tears, as she told him how she should miss him, how she did not see what she should do without him, his hardly-won firmness was as chaff before the wind. He implored her to marry him; he told her of the beautiful home he would make for her.



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“For I am rich, Rosamond,” he said hurriedly, before, in her surprise, she could speak. “I have not cared for money, and I believe I have a great deal. You shall do what you will with it, and with me. We will travel: you shall see the Old World, with all its wonders. And I will shield you: you shall never know a trouble or a care that I can take on myself; for—I love you.”

Then, as she remained silent, too much astonished to speak, he said beseechingly,—

“You *do* love me a little? You could not come to me as you do, with all your little cares and perplexities, if you did not: could you?”

“But I came just so to papa,” she said, finding voice at last; and her childish face grew perplexed and troubled.

The professor had no answer for that. He hid his face in his hands. In a moment her arms were about his neck, her kisses were falling on his hands.

“You have been so good to me,” she cried, “and I am making you unhappy, ungrateful wretch that I am! Of course I love you; of course I will marry you. Take away your hands and look at me—Paul!”

Ah, well! they tell in fairy-stories of the fountain of youth, and even amid the briers of this work-a-day world it is found sometimes, I think, by the divining-rod of Love. But many students gnashed their teeth, and, as we have said, Miss Christina Eldridge alone, of all the dear five hundred, said, “What possessed *him*?”

II.

The summer vacation was over, and students, more or less reluctantly, had returned to college and academy. The professor came back in a brand-new and very becoming suit of clothes; his hair and beard had been trimmed by a fashionable barber, and his old-fashioned high “stock” exchanged for a modern scarf, in the centre of which gleamed a modern scarf-pin. He ran lightly up the steps of the academy and inquired for Miss May. Courtesy, as his uneasy conscience told him, dictated an inquiry for Miss Eldridge also, but he compounded with conscience: he would ask to see her after he had seen Rosamond.

“Why, how very nice you look! You are really handsome!” And the dignified professor was turned about, as if he had been a graven image, by two soft little hands, which he caught in his own, and—so forth.

She was very sure now that she loved him, as in a certain sense she did. But she would not consent to an immediate marriage, nor to the building of a miniature palace for her reception. She owed it to Miss Eldridge, she said, to fulfil her engagement and



not to go away just as she was beginning to be really useful. And as for a house, would it not be pleasanter to live in lodgings and be free to come and go as they would? So his wishes, as usual, were deferred to hers. The long fall evenings began, and he brought, at her request, carefully-selected "improving" books, to be interrupted, as he read, by earnest questions, such as,—



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“*Would* you embroider this linen dress with its own color or a contrasting one, if you were me?”

Spring came again, and the professor, looking ten years younger than he had looked a year ago, brought to his “rose of all the world” a bunch of the first May roses.

“Oh, the lovely, lovely things!” she exclaimed delightedly. “You shall have two kisses for them, Paul. Where *did* they come from, so early in May?”

“From the south side of the wall of an old garden which I used to weed when I was a boy.”

“Will you take me there? Is it near here?” she asked eagerly.

“I will take you there,” he answered, “some day; but it is not near here: it is more than a hundred miles away.”

“And you sent all that way for them just for me? How good, how kind you are! There, I will take two of the half-blown ones for my hat, and two for my neck, and one for your button-hole—oh, yes, you shall! Hold still till I pin it. Now just see how nice you look! And the rest I will put in this glass, and then Miss Christina can enjoy them too; she’s so kind, and I can’t do anything for her. Oh, that makes me think! I have to go across the river this afternoon to hunt up a dress-maker she told me about, a delightfully cheap and good one, and she said you would know if there were any way of crossing anywhere near — Street, the bridge is so far from where I want to go. Is there?”

“Yes,” he replied, “there’s a rather uncertain way: an old fellow who owns a boat lives close by there, and if he’s at home he will be only too glad to row you over for a few cents. It would not make your walk much longer to go round that way first and see. I have often crossed in his boat, and I like to talk with him: he’s an original character.”

“Oh, that is charming!” she said delightedly. “Can’t you come too? You can sit and talk with him while I’m talking to the dress-maker.”

“I wish I could,” he answered, “but I promised to meet the president in the college library at four, and—bless me! it only wants ten minutes of it now. Try to get back by sunset, dear: the evenings are chilly yet.”

“Yes, I will; I’m going right away,” she said, with the deference to his least wish which so often gave him a heartache. “You’ll be in this evening? Of course you will. Thank you so very, very much for the roses.”

She watched him go down the steps, waving her hand to him as she closed the door, and then, with the roses still in her hat and at her throat, walked toward the river-bank, whispering a gay little song to herself. It was such a bright day! she was so glad “the



winter was over and gone!" how good and kind everybody was! how grateful she ought to be!

III.

"I wish," said Mr. Symington bitterly, "that I could find a commodious desert island containing a first-class college and not a single girl. I would have the island fortified, and death by slow torture inflicted upon any woman who managed—as some of them would, in spite of all precautions—to effect a landing."



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“But the married girls are so stupid, my dear boy,” ejaculated his room-mate, Mr. Fielding. “You must admit that, if one must have either, the single ones are decidedly preferable, or at least the young single ones.”

“Don’t try to be funny,” said Symington savagely: “you only succeed in being weak. I have”—and he pulled out a note-book and glared at its contents—“an engagement to take two to a concert this evening, other two to a tennis-match on Saturday, and another one out rowing this afternoon. And it’s time for me to go now.”

“It strikes me *you’ve* been pretty middling weak,” commented Fielding. “Either that, or you’re yarning tremendously about its being a bore: you can take your choice.”

“I leave it with you,” said Symington wearily. “That Glover girl is probably cooling her heels on the bank, and I must go.”

“Alas, my brother! it is long since one of those Glover girls captured me!”

The victim was a little late for his engagement, but no indignant Glover girl lay in wait for him. The bank, green with the first soft grass of spring, was deserted. Had she come and gone? He arranged himself comfortably in the boat and began to sing, the balmy air and the surroundings suggesting his song,—

Oh, hoi-ye-ho, ho-ye-ho, who’s for the ferry?

and went through the first verse, beginning softly, but unconsciously raising his voice as he went on, until, as he came to the second, he was singing very audibly indeed, and Rosamond, standing on the bank, looking uncertainly about her for the old boatman, was in time to hear,

She’d a rose in her bonnet, and, oh, she looked sweet
As the little pink flower that grows in the wheat,
With her cheeks like a rose and her lips like a cherry,—
“And sure and you’re welcome to Twickenham town.”

The curious feeling which makes one aware of being looked at caused him to turn and look up as he finished the verse, and he longed for the self-possession of his room-mate as he vainly struggled to think of something to say which should not be utterly inane. He felt himself blushing, but he was well aware that a blush on his sunburned face was not so charmingly becoming as it was to the vision on the bank. It was she who spoke at last, with the ghost of a smile accompanying her speech.

“I beg your pardon,” she said, “but I was told that I should probably find an old man here who would row me across. Do you know where he’s gone?”



“He is—that is—I think—I believe he’s gone to dinner,” stammered this usually inflexible advocate of truth.

And it did not occur to Rosamond to suggest that between four and five in the afternoon was an unusual dinner-hour for a ferryman.

She looked very much disappointed, and turned as if to go.

“Won’t you—may I—” eagerly stammered the youth, and added desperately, “I’m here in his place,” mentally explaining to an outraged conscience that this was literally true, for was not his boat tied to a stake, and must not that stake have been driven by the old man for *his* boat? Dr. Watts has told us that



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Sinners who grow old in sin
Are hardened in their crimes,

and the hardening process must sometimes take place with fearful rapidity, for when Rosamond, having guilelessly accepted the statement and allowed the ferryman to help her to the broad cushioned seat in the stern of the boat, asked innocently, "How much is it—for both ways, I mean? for I want to come back, if you don't mind waiting a little," he answered, with a look of becoming humility, "It is five cents, please."

"You mean for one way?" she inquired, as she fished a very small purse up from the depths of her pocket.

And he, reflecting that two and a half cents for one way would have an air of improbability about it, answered promptly, "Yes, if you please."

She opened her purse and introduced a thumb and finger, but she withdrew them with a promptness and a look of horror upon her face which suggested the presence of some noxious insect.

"You'll have to take me back, please," she said faintly. "I forgot to put any money in my purse, and I've only just found it out."

"It is not of the least consequence," he began hurriedly, adding, in business-like tones, "You can make it all right the next time, you know. I suppose it will not be long before you cross again?"

"I don't know," she replied. "That depends upon whether or not I find—" and then, remembering that the professor had gently cautioned her about talking over her small affairs with any one but himself, she changed the end of her sentence into "I have to. But I will bring you the money to-morrow afternoon, if you will be here," she went on. "I am so ashamed that I forgot it; and you're very kind to trust me, when I'm such a perfect stranger to you. Don't people ever cheat you?"

"Sometimes," replied the ferryman; "and I don't trust everybody. I go a good deal by people's faces."

It did not seem to Rosamond that this remark required an answer, so she sat silent, while his vigorous strokes sent the little boat swiftly across the river, when he beached it, and, giving her his hand, helped her to spring to dry ground. Then she said,—

"That's where I'm going,—that white house across the first street; and I shall only be a few minutes."

"Don't hurry," he said, as she turned away. "I've nothing more to do this evening after I take you back."



He really did forget for the moment the “other two” and the concert.

The blissful meditation which enwrapped him made the fifteen minutes of her absence seem as five. She came down the bank, blushing and smiling.

“And, oh, she looked sweet!” mentally ejaculated the ferryman.

“Did I keep you long?” she said, as he helped her in. “I hurried as much as I could. And if you, or the old man, will be here to-morrow at half-past four, I should like to cross again: it saves me such a long walk. And I’ll be *sure* to bring the money.”



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“You didn’t keep me—that is, waiting—at all,” he answered dreamily; “and I’ll be here at half-past four, sharp, to-morrow. You may depend on me.”

“Very well,” she said contentedly, as she settled herself among the cushions, which in her absence he had arranged for her greater comfort, adding, “What a very nice boat you have! I don’t see how you keep it so neat and fresh, taking so many people across, and being out, as I suppose you must be, in all sorts of weather.”

“It’s a new boat,” he said hurriedly, “and you’re my first passenger. Would you mind telling me your name?—your first name I mean, of course?”—for the horrible idea occurred to him that she might think he was anxious about his fare. “I haven’t named her yet, and I thought, perhaps, as you’re my first fare, you’d let me name her after you,—for luck, you know.”

“Is that considered lucky?” she asked innocently, “If it is, of course you may. My name is Rosamond; but it seems to me that’s rather long for a boat. Suppose you call her the Rose. Papa—my father, I mean—used to call me that oftener than Rosamond, and—one or two other people do yet.”

“I don’t think Rosamond would be too long,” he said thoughtfully, “but it shall be as you wish, of course. I will have ‘Rose’ painted on the stern, and I can call her Rosamond to myself. May I have one of your roses, just to—to remember it by, till I can see the painter?”

“Why, yes, I suppose so.” And she unfastened one of the two at her throat, and handed it to him.

He placed it carefully in his pocket-book, which, as she observed with some surprise, was of the finest Russia leather. Ferrying must be profitable work, to provide the ferryman with such boats and pocket-books.

There was a brief silence, and then she said, “You were singing as I came down the bank. Would you mind singing again? It sounds so pretty on the water.”

He made no answer in words, but presently his voice arose, softly at first, and then with passionate fervor, and this time his song was, “Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast!”

“Thank you; that was beautiful,” said Rosamond calmly, as he finished and the boat grazed the bank at one and the same moment. “What a good voice you have! And you must have taken lessons, to sing so correctly: haven’t you?”

“Yes,—a few,” he answered, springing from the boat and drawing it up on the bank. She rose to follow him, but stopped short, with a little exclamation of dismay.



“Why, this isn’t where we ought to have landed!” she exclaimed. “It’s a place a mile farther down the river.”

He looked very much confused.

“I have made some stupid blunder,” he stammered. “I owe you a thousand apologies, but I was singing, and I suppose I passed the landing without noticing it. I will not keep you long, though. I can row back in ten minutes.”

“I oughtn’t to have asked you to sing when you were rowing,” she said remorsefully. “I’m so sorry you should have all that extra work.”



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“Oh, I don’t mind that,” he said, trying to speak coolly, “if the delay won’t incommode you.”

“No,” she said. “We shall be back before dark, and that will be time enough. I *shouldn’t* like to have to walk home after dark.”

Eager words rose to the ferryman’s lips, but he wisely suppressed them, bending to his oars till the little boat sprang through the water.

The sun dropped into the river, allowing the faintly-traced sickle of the new moon to show, as the boat once more touched land,—at the right place this time.

Rosamond tripped up the bank, with a friendly “Good-evening,” and at the top she met the professor. “Oh, how nice of you to come and meet me!” she cried, slipping her hand through his arm. “It grows dark so quickly after the sun goes down that I was beginning to be just a little scared.”

“I would have been here an hour ago,” he said, “but the president kept me. I called at Miss Eldridge’s, thinking to find you returned, and then, when she said you were still absent, I hurried down here, feeling unaccountably disquieted. It was absurd, of course. But were you not detained longer than you anticipated?”

“No, it wasn’t absurd,” she said, clasping her other hand over his arm and giving it a little squeeze. The spring dusk had fallen around them like a veil by this time, and they were still a little way from any much-travelled street.

“It wasn’t absurd *at all*,” she repeated “there’s nobody but you to care whether I come in or go out, and I like you to be worried,—just a little, I mean,—not enough to make you, really wretched. I’ve had the funniest time! The old man wasn’t there, and I was turning back, quite disappointed, when a young man,—quite young, and very nice looking,—who was singing in a foolish sort of way in a pretty little boat tied to a stake, said he was there in the old boatman’s place, and asked me to go with him; and I went. At first I was puzzled, for he looked like a gentleman in most respects, and I didn’t think he could be the son of the old man you told me about; but the longer I was with him the more I saw that there was something queer about him. He was very kind and polite, but had a sort of abrupt, startled manner, as if he were afraid of something, and I came to the conclusion that he must be a harmless insane person, and that they let him have the ferry because there isn’t anything else much that he could do. He had a most lovely little boat, all cushioned at one end, and he rowed beautifully.”

“But it was not safe,” said the professor, in alarm. “If a man be ever so slightly insane, there is no telling what form his insanity will take: he might have imagined you to be inimical to him, and have thrown you overboard.” And Rosamond felt a nervous tremor through the arm upon which she leaned. She laughed heartily.



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“You’d not feel that way if you could see him, dear,” she said. “He’s as gentle as a lamb, and a little sheepish into the bargain. And I promised to let him row me over to-morrow afternoon at half-past four. Indeed, there’s no danger. The only really queer thing he did was to carry me a mile down the river; and that was my fault, for I asked him to sing again. He has a delightful voice, and he sang that song you like so much,—’Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast!’—and while he was singing he missed the landing. But he apologized, and rowed me back like lightning: so it really didn’t matter,—especially as you met me, like the dear that you are.”

If a member of the professor’s class had used the figures of speech too frequently employed by Rosamond, he would have received a dignified rebuke for “hyperbolic and inelegant language;” but it never occurred to the deluded man that anything but pearls of thought and diamonds of speech could fall from those rosy lips.

“I prefer, however, that you should run no risk, however slight, my Rose,” said the professor, so gently that the words were more an entreaty than a command.

“But I don’t see how I can help it,” she said, in dismayed tones, “for I did such a dreadful thing that I shouldn’t tell you of it if I hadn’t firmly made up my mind to tell you everything. I think engaged—and—and—married people always ought to do that. I forgot to take any money, and it was ten cents there and back, you know; and he was so kind and polite about trusting me. I wanted him to take me back as soon as I found it out, but he said he would trust me, that I could bring it to him next time; and I promised to go to-morrow and pay him for both trips at once: so, you see, I *must*.”

“Very well,” said the professor, after a moment’s thought. “I do not wish you to break your word, of course: so I will go with you. I can have a little talk with this unfortunate young man while you are engaged with your dress-maker, and perhaps his condition may be ameliorated. He could surely engage in some more remunerative occupation than that which he is at present pursuing; and there are institutions, you know, where much light has been thrown upon darkened minds.”

“How good, how kind you are!” she cried, her sweet eyes filling with happy tears, unseen in the gathering darkness. “You’re sure you’ve made up your mind not to be disappointed when you find out just how foolish and trifling I really am?” she asked timidly.

The professor’s answer need not be recorded. It was satisfactory.

It is a curious thing that the “sixth sense,” which draws our thoughts to long-forgotten friends just before we hear from them, which leads our eyes to meet other eyes fixed earnestly upon them, which enables people to wake other people by staring at them, and does a variety of similar things, admitted, but not accounted for, fails to warn the victims of approaching fate. Serenely, blissfully, did Mr. Symington wend his way to the



bank on that golden afternoon. It had occurred to him to exchange his faultless and too expensive boating-costume for a cheap jersey and trousers; but he feared that this might excite suspicion: he had still sense enough left to be aware that there had been no shadow of this in the sweet blue eyes yesterday.



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He had not sung

She'd a rose in her bonnet, and, oh, she looked sweet!

more than five hundred times since the previous evening: so, by way of variety, he was humming it softly to himself as he approached the bank. He was a little early, of course. She had not come yet. So he dusted the cushions, and sponged up a few drops of water from the bottom of the boat, and then sat down to wait. He was not kept waiting long. He heard voices approaching, then a clear, soft laugh, and she was there; but—oh, retribution!—with her, supporting her on his arm, was Professor Silex! Wild thoughts of leaping into the river and swimming—under water—to the opposite bank passed through the brain of this victim of his own duplicity; but he checked himself sternly,—he was proposing to himself to act the part of a coward, and before her, of all the world. No, he would face the music, were it the “Rogue’s March” itself. And then a faint, a very faint hope sprang up in his heart: the professor was noted for his absent-mindedness: perhaps there would be no recognition. Vain delusion.

“Your boatman has not kept his appointment,” said the professor, advancing inexorably down the bank; “but I see a member of my class—an unusually promising young man—with whom I wish to speak. Will you excuse me for a moment?”

Rosamond turned her puzzled face from one to the other, finally ejaculating, “Why, *that’s* the ferryman!”

“There is some mistake here,” said the professor, unaware of the sternness of his tones.

They had continued to advance as they spoke, and the ferryman could not avoid hearing the last words. He sprang from the boat and up the bank with the expression of a whole forlorn hope storming an impregnable fortress, and spoke before the professor could ask a question.

“I beg your pardon, Professor Silex,” he said; “there is no mistake. Miss—this lady, who is, I imagine, Miss May” (the professor bowed gravely), “was looking yesterday for the old man who acts as ferryman here sometimes. He was absent, and, seeing that Miss May seemed disturbed, I volunteered to take his place. It gave me great pleasure to be of even that small amount of use.”

The professor’s grave face relaxed into a smile. Memories of his youth had of late been very present with him, and to them were added those of Rosamond’s estimate of the amateur boatman. He waved his hand graciously; but, before he could speak, Rosamond indignantly exclaimed, “But you told me it was ten cents, and that people sometimes cheated you, and that you were here in that poor old man’s place, and—oh, I can’t *think* of all the—things you told me.”

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A burning blush scorched the face of the ferryman. This was speedy judgment indeed. But his courage rose to the emergency. He met the blue eyes steadily with his dark-brown ones as he said, "I told you no untruths, Miss May. My boat was, literally speaking, in the place of that which the old man actually keeps here: I knew it must be, because there was only one stake. I have been cheated, frequently and egregiously: few men of my age, I imagine, have not. And I have great faith in physiognomy. You *were* my first fare; and I meant to accept the ten cents,—I assure you I did. If you can think of any of the other 'things,' I shall be happy to explain them."

"It's all sophistry," she began, with something very like a pout.

But the professor gently interrupted her: "Let us not judge a kind action harshly. Mr. Symington meant only to relieve you from an annoying dilemma, and he naturally concluded that this would be impossible should he disclose his real name and position. It seems that he merely allowed your inferences to go uncontradicted, and was, practically, most kind. An introduction between you is now scarcely necessary; but I am glad that you have met. But for the fact that a selection would have looked invidious, I should have asked you ere this to permit me to bring Mr. Symington to see you."

"And will you—may I?" asked the culprit eagerly, glancing from one to the other.

"That must be as Miss May says," replied the professor, with a kind smile.

And Rosamond, ashamed of her unwonted outburst, gave Mr. Louis Symington her hand, saying penitently, "I was very rude just now, and unjust besides: will you forgive me and come with the professor to see me?"

"With pleasure,—with the greatest pleasure," he answered eagerly. "And you will let me row you across? You will not make me miserable by refusing?"

Rosamond glanced at the professor.

"To be sure we will," he said cheerfully. "I shall be glad of the opportunity for a little conversation with you while Miss May is executing her errand."

So he rowed them across; and then, while Rosamond discussed plaits and gores with the new dress-maker, he discoursed his best eloquence and learning to the professor, with such good effect that the latter said to Rosamond, as they walked home through the twilight, having been persuaded to extend the row a little, "I am glad, dear, that this opportunity of presenting young Symington to you without apparent favoritism has arisen. He is a most promising young man, but a little inclined, I fear, from what I hear of him in his social capacity, to be frivolous. We may together exercise a restraining influence over him."



“I thought he talked most dreadfully sensibly,” said Rosamond, laughing; “but I like him, and I hope we shall see him often.”

They did. He called at first with the professor, afterward, at odd times,—never in the evening,—without him. He persuaded Rosamond to continue her patronage of his boat. Sometimes the professor went, sometimes he did not. Mr. Symington was frequently induced to sing when they were upon the water, and once or twice Rosamond joined her voice to his.



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The 30th of June had at last been appointed for the wedding-day. They were to go to Europe at once, and spend the vacation travelling wherever Rosamond's fancy should dictate. All through the winter she had discussed their journey with the liveliest interest, sometimes making and rejecting a dozen plans in one evening. But of late she had ceased to speak of it unless the professor spoke first; and this, with the gentle tact which he had always possessed, but which had wonderfully developed of late, he soon ceased to do.

She was sometimes unwarrantably irritable with him now, but each little fit of petulance was always followed by a disproportionate penitence and remorse. At such times she hovered about him, eagerly anxious to render him some of the small services which he found so sweet. But she was paler and thinner than she had ever been, and Miss Christina noticed, with a kindly anxiety which did her credit, that Rosamond ate less and less.

May was gone. It was the first day of June,—and such a day! Trees and shrubs were in that loveliest of all states,—that of a half-fulfilled promise of loveliness. Rosamond felt the spell, and, in spite of all that was in her heart, an unreasoning gladness took possession of her. She danced down the path of the long garden behind the seminary and danced back again, stopping to pick a handful of the first June roses. It was early morning, and the professor stopped—as he often did—for a moment's sight of her on his way from the dreary boarding-house to the equally dreary college. She caught both his hands and held up her face for a kiss. Then she fastened a rosebud in his button-hole.

"You are not to take that out until it withers, Paul," she said, laughing and shaking a threatening finger at him. "Do you know what it means,—a rosebud? I don't believe you do, for all your Greek. It means 'confession of love;' and I *do* love you,—I do, I do."

"I know you do, my darling," he said gently; "and it shall stay there—till it withers. But that will not be long. I stopped to tell you that I cannot go with you this afternoon; but you must not disappoint Mr. Symington. I met him just now, and told him I should be detained, but that you would go."

"You had no right to say so without asking me first," she said sharply. "I don't wish to go. I *won't* go without you. There!"

He was silent, but his deep, kind eyes were fixed pityingly upon her flushed, excited face.

She dropped it on his arm and burst into tears, and he stroked her hair gently, as if she had been a little child and he a patient, loving father. She raised her face presently, smiling, though her lips still quivered.



“Do you really and truly wish me to go with—this afternoon?”

It seemed to him that for a full minute he could not speak, but in reality the pause was so brief that she did not notice it.

“Yes,” he said quietly, “I really and truly do. It would not be fair to disappoint Mr. Symington, after making the engagement.”



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“And can’t you possibly go, dear?” she asked entreatingly.

I think only one man was ever known to pull the cord which set in motion a guillotine that took off his own head. But there is much unknown, as well as unwritten, history.

“Not without neglecting some work which I ought to do to-day,” he said.

“I think you care more for your work sometimes than you do for me.” There was a little quaver in her voice as she spoke. “And I wish you’d stop behaving as if I were your daughter. I don’t know what ails you this morning; but if you go on this way I shall call you Professor Silex all the time. How would you like that?”

A passionate exclamation rose to his lips, and died there. A spasm of bitter pain made his face for a moment hard and stern. Then he smiled, and said gently, “I should not like it at all, as you know very well. But I must go now, or I shall be late for my class. Good-by, dear child.” And, parting her soft, curling hair, he pressed a fatherly kiss upon her forehead.

She threw her arms about his neck, crying, “No!—on my lips.” And, pressing an eager kiss upon his mouth, she added, “There! that is a sealing, a fresh sealing, of our engagement; and I wish—oh, how I wish!—that we were to be married to-morrow—to-day!”

The professor gently disengaged himself from her clinging arms, saying, still with a smile, “But I thought the wedding-gown was still to make? Good-by. I will come early this evening and hear all about the enchanted island.”

For the expedition which had been planned by the three for that afternoon was to explore a little island far down the river, farther than any of them had yet gone.

Rosamond wore no roses when she went slowly down the bank that day,—not even in her cheeks.

And when Louis Symington saw her coming alone, only the sunbrown on his face concealed the sudden rush of blood from it to his heart.

“The professor could not come,” she said hurriedly, “so he made me come without him; that is—I mean—” And she stopped, confused.

“If you prefer to wait until he can go with us, pray do not hesitate to say so,” he replied stiffly, and pausing—with her hand in his—in the act of helping her into the boat.

“Oh, I did not mean to say anything rude,” she exclaimed penitently; and she stepped across the seats to the cushioned end of the boat. “Of course we will go; but perhaps



—would you mind—couldn't we just take a little row to-day, and save the island until the professor can go?"

"Certainly," he said, still in the same constrained tone; and, without another word, he helped her to her place and arranged the cushions about her.

The silence lasted so long that she felt she could bear it no longer.

"Will you please sing something?" she said at last, desperately, "You know you sang that first day; and it sounded so lovely on the water. Do you remember?"



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He looked at her fixedly for a moment. Then he said simply, "Yes, I remember," and began at once to sing. But he did not sing "Twickenham Ferry" to day. He would have given all he was worth, when he had sung one line, if he could have changed it into a college song, a negro melody,—anything. For this was what he found himself singing:

"How can I bear to leave thee?
One parting kiss I give thee,
And then, whate'er befalls me,
I go where Honor calls me."

She would not hide her face in her hands, but she might turn it away: how was he to know that she was not watching with breathless interest the young couple straying along the bank, arm closely linked in arm, in the sweet June sunshine?

"Thank you," she said faintly, when the last trembling note had died away: "that was—very pretty."

"I am glad you liked it," he said, with quiet irony in his tones.

And then there was another alarming pause. Anything was better than that, and she began to talk almost at random, telling of various laughable things which had occurred among her scholars, laughing herself, somewhat shrilly, at the places where laughter was due.

He sat silent, unsmiling, through it all until they stepped from the boat. Then he said, "It is really refreshing to see you in such good spirits. I had always understood that even the happiest *fiancee* was somewhat pensive and melancholy as the day of fate drew near."

"You have no right to speak to me in that way,—in that tone," she cried, with sudden heat.

He bowed low, saying, "Pardon me; I am only too well aware that I have no rights of any kind so far as you are concerned. But it is impossible to efface one's self entirely."

"Now you are angry with me," she said forlornly; "and I don't know what I have done."

"I angry with *you!*" he cried. "Oh, Rosamond! Rosamond!"

"I am glad if you are not," she said,—"very glad; but I must go—the professor—" And she sped up the bank before he could speak again.



IV.

The professor came early to the seminary that evening, but Rosamond was ready for him, dressed in a gown of some soft white fabric which he had noticed and praised. She had roses in her hair, at her throat, in her belt, but the bright, soft color in her cheeks out-shone them all.

She began, almost as soon as they had exchanged greetings, to talk about her father, asking the professor how long he had known him, and what Dr. May had been like as a young man.

“Very shy and retiring,” he replied. “I think that was the first link in our friendship: we both disliked society, and finally made an agreement with each other to decline all invitations and give up visiting. We found that everything of the kind interfered materially with advancement in our studies. But your father had already met your mother several times when we made this agreement. Their tastes were very similar, and her quiet, tranquil manner was extremely pleasant to him,—for, as you know, he was somewhat nervous and excitable,—so he claimed an exception in her favor; and, after two years of most pleasing intellectual companionship, they were married. It was a rarely complete and happy union.”



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“And I suppose,” said Rosamond, with a curious touch of resentment in her voice, “that because he had never been like other young people, had never cared for young friends and pleasant times, it did not occur to him that I ought to have them? Oh, I don’t see how he dared to rob me of my rights,—of my youth, which could only come once, of all life and pleasure and sunshine!”

“My dear,” said the professor, looking very much startled and shocked, “he had no thought of robbing you: he loved you far too tenderly for that. You always seemed happy and bright, and you were very young when he died. No doubt, had he lived until you were of an age to enter society—”

But here she interrupted him with bitter self-reproaches.

“Oh, what have I said?” she cried. “He was all goodness, all love to me, and I have dared to find fault with him! Oh, what a base, wicked girl I am!”

A choking sob stopped her, but only one. She conquered the rest, and made a forlorn attempt to change the subject.

“I had something to tell you to-night, dear child,” said the professor, when she was quiet again: “you seem tired, so I will make it as brief as possible.”

A startled look came into her eyes, and she was about to speak, when he continued:

“Let me first say what is upon my mind, and then you shall have your turn. I wished to tell you that I think we—I—have made a mistake. I am too confirmed an old bachelor to fall into home ways and make a good husband. I shall always love you as a dear young daughter, I shall ask you to let me take in every way your father’s place, but I think, if you will let me off, that we will not have that wedding on the 30th of June, my little girl.”

She raised her eyes in wondering incredulity to his face. He was smiling! He was speaking playfully! He was giving her back her freedom with a light heart and a good will. Plainly, the relief would be as great for him as for her. Laughing and crying in a breath, she clasped her arms about his neck.

“Ah, how good you are! How I love you *now!*” she said, as soon as she could speak. “All the time we have been engaged,—yes, even before,—from the first I have longed to tell you that I would so much rather be your daughter than your wife; but I thought it would be so ungracious, after all your kindness to me. *Now* we shall be happy; you will see how happy I shall make you. And, oh, how good, how noble you are to tell me, when, if you had not spoken,—yes, I should have married you, dear father. I shall always call you father now: papa will not mind it, I know.”

The professor had nothing more to do or say after that until he rose to go. But when she held up her glowing, sparkling face for his good-night kiss, he once more parted the



curls and kissed her on her forehead, whereat she pouted a little, saying, with half-pretended displeasure, "Papa didn't kiss my forehead: he kissed me *right*."



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The professor passed his hand, which trembled a little, over her shining hair, saying, with a paternal smile, "I shall kiss my daughter in the way that best pleases me. I am going to be a very strict and exacting father."

She laughed gleefully, as if it were the best joke in the world, and her merry "Good-night, dear father," followed him as he went out into the darkness.

He held Mr. Symington to his engagement to row Rosamond and himself to the island, but he took with him a large canvas bag and a geological hammer. And how, pray, could any one talk to, or even stand very near, him, when he was pounding off bits of rock for specimens with such energy that fragments flew in all directions? The sound of the hammer ceased as soon as his companions had disappeared among the trees; they were going to look for a spring, but, strangely enough, they did not notice this. No need now for him to school his face, his voice, his trembling hands. They found the spring.

And did my professor die of a broken heart, and leave a lock of Rosamond's hair and a thrilling heart-history, in the shape of a neatly-written journal, to proclaim to the world his sacrifice? No; that was not his idea of a sacrifice. He burnt that very night each token—and there were many—which he had so jealously cherished,—each little, crookedly-written, careless note, and, last, the long bright curl which, before her heart awoke, she had so freely given him.

It is true that there was a gradual but very perceptible change in him. He had been indifferent formerly to the members of his class, excepting from an intellectual standpoint. Now he began to take an interest in that part of their lives which lay outside his jurisdiction, to ask them to his rooms of an evening, to walk with them and win their confidence. Not one of them ever regretted that it had been bestowed.

MARGARET VANDEGRIFT.

"WHAT DO I WISH FOR YOU?"

What do I wish for you? Such swift, keen pain
As though all griefs that human hearts have known
Were joined in one to wound and tear your own.
Such joy as though all heaven had come again
Into your earth, and tears that fall like rain,
And all the roses that have ever blown,
The sharpest thorn, the sceptre and the throne,
The truest liberty, the captive's chain.

Cruel, you say? Alas! I've only prayed
Such fate for you as everywhere, above
All others, women wish,—that unafraid



They clasp in eager arms. So, little dove,
I give you to the hawk. Nay, nay, upbraid
Me not. Have you not longed for love?

CARLOTTA PERRY.

LETTERS AND REMINISCENCES OF CHARLES READE.



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I knew Charles Reade in England far back in “the days that are no more,” and dined with him at the Garrick Club on the evening before I left London for New York in 1860, when he gave me parting words of good advice and asked me to write to him often. Then he added, “I am very sorry you are going away, my dear boy; but perhaps you are doing a good thing for yourself in getting out of this God-forsaken country. If I were twenty years younger, and enjoyed the sea as you do, I might go with you; but, if travel puts vitality into some men and kills others, I should be one of the killed. What is one man’s food is another’s poison.”

He was my senior by more than twenty years, and no man that I have known well was more calculated to inspire love and respect among his friends. To know him personally, after only knowing him through his writings and his tilts with those with whom he had “a crow to pick,” was a revelation. He had the reputation of being always “spoiling for a fight,” and the most touchy, crusty, and aggressive author of his time, surpassing in this respect even Walter Savage Landor. But, though his trenchant pen was sometimes made to do almost savage work, it was generally in the chivalric exposure of some abuse or in the effort to redress some grievous wrong. Then indeed he was fired with righteous indignation. The cause had to be a just one, however, before he did battle in its behalf, for no bold champion of the right ever had more sterling honesty and sincerity in his character, or more common sense and less quixotism.

His placid and genial manner and amiable characteristics in his every-day home-life presented a striking contrast to his irritability and indignation under a sense of injury; for whenever he considered himself wronged or insulted his wrath boiled up with the suddenness of a squall at sea. He resented a slight, real or imaginary, with unusual outspokenness and vigor, and said, “I never forgive an injury or an insult.” But in this he may have done himself injustice. Generally, he was one of the most sympathetic and even lovable of men, and his pure and resolute manhood appeared in its truest light to those who knew him best.

While genial in disposition, he could not be called either mirthful or jovial, and so could neither easily turn any unpleasant incident off with a joke or be turned off by one. He needed a little more of the easy-going good humor and freedom from anxiety that fat men are popularly supposed to possess to break the force of collisions with the world. Had he been more of an actor and less of a student in the drama of life, he would have been less sensitive.



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His conscientiousness and honesty of purpose were really admirable; and rather than break a contract or disappoint any one to whom he had made a promise he would subject himself to any amount of inconvenience. For example, he would, whenever necessary, retire to Oxford and write against time in order to have his manuscript ready for the printer when wanted. Much, too, as he disliked burning the midnight oil or any kind of night-work, and the strain that artificial light imposed upon his eyes, he would write late in his rooms, or read up on subjects he was writing about in the reading-room in the Radcliffe Library building till it closed at ten P.M. He had, it will be seen, a high sense of duty, and “business before pleasure” was a precept he never neglected.

In personal appearance Charles Reade, without being handsome, was strongly built and fine-looking. He was about six feet in height, broad-chested and well proportioned, and without any noticeable physical peculiarity. His head was well set on his shoulders, and, though not unusually small, might have been a trifle larger without marring the symmetry of his figure.

His features were not massive, but prominent, strong, and regular, and his large, keen, grayish-brown eyes were the windows of his mind, through which he looked out upon the world with an expressive, eager, and inquiring gaze, and through which those who conversed with him could almost read his thoughts before he uttered them. He had a good broad forehead, well-arched eyebrows, and straight, dark-brown hair, parted at the side, which, like his entirely unshaven beard, he wore short until late in life. In his dress and manner he was rather *neglige* than precise, and he bestowed little thought on his personal appearance or what Mrs. Grundy might say. Taking him all in all, the champion of James Lambert looked the lion-hearted hero that he was.

In his personal habits and tastes he was always simple, quiet, regular, and he was strictly temperate. He had no liking for dissipation of any kind. He found his pleasure in his work, as all true workers in the pursuit for which they are best fitted always do. The proper care he took of himself accounted in part for his well-developed muscular system and his good health until within a few years of his death, notwithstanding his studious and sedentary life.

Among literary men he had few intimates, and he was not connected with any clique of authors or journalists. He thought this was one reason why the London reviewers—whom he once styled “those asses the critics”—were so unfriendly toward him. He was not of their set, and some of them regarded him as a sort of literary Ishmael, who had his hand raised against all his contemporaries, a quarrelsome and cantankerous although very able man, and therefore to be ignored or sat down upon whenever possible. He once said, “I don’t know a man on the press who would do me a favor. The press is a great engine, of course, but its influence is vastly overrated. It has the credit of leading public opinion, when it only follows it; and look at the rag-tag-and-bobtail that contribute to it. Even the London ‘Times’ only lives for a day. My books have made their way in spite of the press.”



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Speaking of publishers, he said, "They want all the fat, and they all lie about their sales. Unless you have somebody in the press-room to watch, it is almost impossible to find out how many copies of a book they print. Then there is a detestable fashion about publishers. I had to fight a very hard battle to get the public to take a novel published by Truebner, simply because he was not known as a novel-publisher; but I was determined not to let Bentley or any of his kidney have all the fat any longer."

Truebner, I may mention, published for him on commission, and under this arrangement he manufactured his own books and assumed all risks.

In the sense of humor and quick perception of the ludicrous he was somewhat deficient, and he was too passionately in earnest and too matter-of-fact about everything ever to attempt a joke, practical or otherwise. Life to him was always a serious drama, calling for tireless vigilance; and he watched all the details of its gradual unfolding with constant anxiety and care, in so far as it concerned himself.

His love for the glamour of the stage led him often to the theatre; but whenever he saw anything "murdered" there, especially one of his own plays, it incensed him, and sometimes almost to fury. He loved music,—not, as he said, the bray of trumpets and the squeak of fiddles, but melody; and occasionally, seated at a piano, he sang, in a voice sweet and low and full of pathos, some tender English ditty.

Charles Reade had a real talent for hard work, not that occasional exclusive devotion to it during the throes of composition to which Balzac gave himself up night and day to an extent that utterly isolated him from the world for the time being, but steady, systematic, willing labor,—a labor, I might say, of love, for he never begrudged it,—which began every morning, when nothing special interfered with it, after a nine-o'clock breakfast and continued until late in the afternoon. He was too practical and methodical to work by fits and starts. Generally he laid down his pen soon after four P.M.; but often he continued writing till it was time to dress for dinner, which he took either at home or at the Garrick Club, as the spirit moved him, except when he dined out, which was not very often,—for, although he was most genial and social in a quiet way among his intimates, he had no fondness for general society or large dinner-parties. Yet his town residence, at No. 6 Bolton Row, was not only at the West End, but in Mayfair, the best part of it; and, although a bachelor to the end of his days, he kept house. He afterwards resided at No. 6 Curzon Street, also in Mayfair, and then took a house at No. 2 Albert Terrace, Knightsbridge, but gave it up not long before his death, which occurred in Blomfield Terrace, Shepherd's Bush, a London suburb.

"This capacity, this zest of yours for steady work," I once remarked to him, "almost equals Sir Walter Scott's. With your encyclopaedic, classified, and indexed note-books and scrap-books, you are one of the wonders of literature."



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“Well,” he replied, “these are the tools of my trade, and the time and labor I spend on them are well invested.” Then he went on to say of literary composition, “Genius without labor, we all know, will not keep the pot boiling. But I doubt whether one may not put too much labor into his work as well as too little, and spend too much time in polishing. Rough vigor often hits the nail better than the most studied and polished sentences. It doesn’t do to write above the heads or the tastes of the people. I make it a rule to put a little good and a little bad into every page I write, and in that way I am likely to suit the taste of the average reader. The average reader is no fool, neither is he an embodiment of all the knowledge, wit, and wisdom in the world.”

He valued success as a dramatic author more highly than as a novelist, and was always yearning for some great triumph on the stage. In this respect he was like Bulwer Lytton, who once said to me, “I think more of my poems and ‘The Lady of Lyons’ and ‘Richelieu’ than of all my novels, from ‘Pelham’ to ‘What will he do with it?’” (which was the last he had then written). “A poet’s fame is lasting, a novelist’s is comparatively ephemeral.” Moved by a similar sentiment, Reade once said, “The most famous name in English literature and all literature is a dramatist’s; and what pygmies Fielding and Smollett, and all the modern novelists, from Dickens, the head and front of them, down to that milk-and-water specimen of mediocrity, Anthony Trollope, seem beside him!”[1]

He had little taste for poetry, because of his strong preference for prose as a vehicle of thought and expression. He, however, greatly admired Byron, Shelley, and Scott, and paid a passing compliment to Swinburne, except as to the too fiery amatory ardor of his first poems; but he considered Tennyson, with all his polish, little better than a versifier, and said his plays of “Dora” and “The Cup” would have been “nice enough as spectacles without words.” For those great masters of prose fiction and dramatic art, Victor Hugo and Dumas *pere*, he had unbounded admiration, and of the former in particular he always spoke with enthusiasm as the literary giant of his age, and to him, notwithstanding his extravagances, assigned the first place among literary Frenchmen. Dumas he ranked second, except as a dramatist; and here he believed him to be without a superior among his contemporaries.

For several years after I came to New York Charles Reade and I kept up a close friendly correspondence, and he sent me proof-sheets of “The Cloister and the Hearth” in advance of its publication in England, so that the American reprint of the work might appear simultaneously therewith, which it did through my arrangements with Rudd & Carleton. He also sent me two of his own plays,—“Nobs and Snobs” and “It is Never Too Late to Mend,” drawn from his novel of that name,—in the hope that the managers of some of the American theatres would produce them; but, notwithstanding their author’s fame, their own superior merit, and my personal efforts, the expectation was disappointed, owing, as Mr. Reade said, to their preferring to steal rather than to buy plays,—a charge only too well sustained by the facts. Another play, written by a friend of his, that he sent me, met with a like reception.



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The first letter I received from Charles Reade after my arrival in New York ran thus:

“6 BOLTON ROW, MAYFAIR, July 14 [1860].

“Dear Cornwallis,—I was much pleased to hear from you, and to find you were one of the editors of the ‘New York Herald.’ A young man of talent like you ought to succeed, when so many muffs roll in one clover-field all their days.

“Not to be behindhand in co-operating with your fortunes, I called on Truebner at once about your Japanese letters....

“If you will be my prime minister and battle the sharps for me over there, I shall be very glad. I am much obliged by your advice and friendly information. Pray continue to keep me *au fait*.

“My forthcoming work, ‘The Eighth Commandment,’ is a treatise. It is partly autobiographical. You shall have a copy....

“I should take it very kindly of you if you would buy for me any copies (I don’t care if the collection should grow to a bushel of them, or a sack) of any American papers containing characteristic matter,—melodramas, trials, anything spicy and more fully reported than in the ‘Weekly Tribune,’ which I take in. Don’t be afraid to lay out money for me in this way, which I will duly repay; only please write on the margin what the paper contains that is curious. You see I am not very modest in making use of you. You do the same with me. You will find I shall not forget you.

“Yours, very sincerely,
“CHARLES READE.”

In a letter dated February 8, 1861, he wrote me, “Your London publishers sent me a copy of your narrative of your tour with the Prince of Wales” (“Royalty in the New World, or The Prince of Wales in America”), “which I have read with much pleasure....

“I have on hand just now one or two transactions which require so much intelligence, firmness, and friendly feeling to bring them to a successful issue that, as far as I am concerned, I would naturally much rather profit by your kind offer than risk matters so delicate in busy, careless, and uninventive hands. I will, therefore, take you at your word, and make you my plenipotentiary.

“I produced some time ago a short story, called ‘A Good Fight,’ in ‘Once a Week.’ I am now building on the basis of that short tale a large and very important mediaeval novel in three volumes” (“The Cloister and the Hearth”), “full of incident, character, and research. Naturally, I do not like to take nothing for manuscript for, say, seven hundred pages at least of fresh and good matter. But here pinches the shoe.... Please not to show this to any publisher, but only the enclosed, with which you can take the field as



my plenipotentiary. I think this affair will tax your generalship. I shall be grateful in proportion as you can steer my bark safe through the shoals. Shall be glad to have a line from you by return, and will send a part of the sheets out in a fortnight. I think you may speak with confidence of this work as likely to produce some sensation in England."



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In July he wrote, "You had better agree with them" (Rudd & Carleton) "for twenty per cent., and let me take care of you, or I foresee you will get nothing for your trouble. I only want fifteen for myself, and a *true return* of the copies sold. That is where we poor authors are done. Will you look to that? I have placed five pounds to your credit,—this with the double object of enabling you to buy me an American scrap-book or two (no poetry, for God's sake!) of newspaper-cuttings, and also to reimburse a number of little expenses you have been at for me and too liberal to mention."

On September 12, 1861, he wrote, "I send you herewith the first instalment of early sheets of my new novel. The title is 'The Cloister and the Hearth.' I am ashamed to say the work will contain fifteen hundred of these pages. If you are out of it, I will take fifteen per cent.; if you are in it, twelve. But I look to you to secure a genuine return, for that is the difficulty with these publishers. There is considerable competition among publishers here to have the book, and I am only hanging back to get you out the sheets. Now you know the number of pages (for the work is written), it would be advisable to set up type."

On September 26, 1861, he wrote, "As we shall certainly come out next week, I shall be in considerable anxiety until I hear from you that all the instalments sent by me have safely arrived and are in type. To secure despatch, I have sent them all by post, and, owing to the greediness of the United States government, it has cost me five pounds. I do not for a moment suppose the work will sell well during the civil war; but it is none the less important to occupy the shops with it, and then perhaps on the return of peace and the fine arts it will not be pirated away from us. I hope I have been sufficiently explicit to make you master of this book's destiny."

On October 18, 1861, he wrote, "We have now been out a fortnight, and, as it is my greatest success, we are gone coons if you are not out by this time."

A week later his uneasiness had been allayed by a letter from me announcing the publication of the work in New York, and he wrote, "I think you have done very well, considering the complicated difficulties you have had to contend against in this particular transaction. The work is quite the rage here, I assure you. We sold the first edition (a thousand) at one pound eleven shillings and sixpence in one fortnight from date of publication, and have already orders for over two hundred of the second at same price, which we are now printing.

"I will this day place in S. Low's hands for you the manuscript of 'Nobs and Snobs,' a successful play of mine, luckily unpublished. Treat with a New York manager or a Boston manager for this on these terms. Sell them the sole use of it in one city only for ten dollars per night of representation, the play not to be locked up or shelved, but to return to you at the conclusion of the run."



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Then follows a “sketch of agreement” to be made with managers; for in all business-matters he was extremely particular, and sometimes needlessly anxious about trifles.

In the same letter he went on to remark, “I say ten dollars as being enough and not a halfpenny too much. It is all I ask. If you can get fifteen dollars on these terms, pocket the balance. But never sell the provincial right to a New York manager. It is worth a great deal more than the New York right, properly worked. It is no use showing it to Laura Keene. I spoke to her in England about it.

“With many thanks for your zeal and intelligence, and hoping that we may contrive, somehow or other, one day or other to make a hit together, I am yours, *etc.*”

On November 19, 1861, he wrote, “Now for your book. Truebner is fair-dealing, but powerless as a publisher. All the pushing is done by me. I have had a long and hard fight to get the public here to buy a novel published by him, and could hardly recommend another to go through it. If done on commission and by Truebner, I could take it under my wing in the advertisements.

“Next week I expect to plead the great case of *Reade v. Conquest*” (manager of the Grecian Theatre, London) “in the Court of Common Pleas. If I win, I shall bring out my drama ‘Never Too Late to Mend’ and send it out to you to deal with. Please collect Yankee critiques (on ‘The Cloister and the Hearth’) for me; the more the better.”

On November 1, 1861, he wrote, “I send you ‘Saunders & Otley’s Monthly,’ containing an elaborate review of ‘The Cloister,’ *etc.* I don’t know the writer, but he seems to be no fool. I do hope, my dear fellow, you will watch the printers closely, and so get me some money, for I am weighed down by *law-expenses*,—*Reade v. Bentley*, *Reade v. Lacy*, *Reade v. Conquest*,—all in defence of my own. And don’t trust the play above twenty-four hours out of your own hand. Theatricals are awful liars and thieves. I co-operate by writing to Ticknors and H—— not to pirate you if they wish to remain on business terms with me. Second edition all but gone; third goes to press Monday. Everybody says it is my best book.”

On the next day he wrote, “I am a careful man, and counted every page I sent you, and sealed and posted them with my own hand. I am quite satisfied with the agreement with Rudd & Carleton, if there is to be no false printer’s return. The only thing that makes me a little uneasy is your apparent confidence that they could not cheat us out of twenty thousand dollars by this means if extraordinary vigilance were not used. They can, and will, with as little remorse as a Newgate thief would, unless singular precautions are used. If I was there I would have a secret agent in the printing-house to note each order, its date and amount, in writing. The plates being yours, you have, in fact, a legal right to inspect the printer’s books. But this is valueless. The printer would cook his books to please the publisher. You can have no conception of the villany done under all these sharing agreements. But forewarned forearmed. Think of some way of baffling

this invariable fraud. Ask a knowing printer some way. Do anything but underrate the danger.



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“The importance of the work not being the least foreseen, I believe Rudd & Carleton have ‘The Cloister’ all to themselves.... Every American who has seen Ticknors’ returns assures me they are false, and ridiculously so. It goes against my heart to believe it, but everybody is seldom wrong. My opinion is they will all make a false return if they can. *Verbum sap.* And now, my dear boy, let me thank you for all the trouble you have taken in this complicated affair, and assure you that if I am anxious for a just return it is partly in order that I may be in a position to take care of *you*. For I am sure if *I* don’t nobody else will.

“‘Nobs and Snobs,’ a play, has gone out in Low’s parcel. If the managers will be quick, you can make this copyright by not calling it ‘Honor before Titles’” (the sub-title under which it had been copyrighted in England). “Then, to bind the thing together, I write a different conclusion to the second act, and send it you enclosed. It is hasty, but it will do; and if you can get Jem Wallack to play Pierre, he will do wonders with the change from drunkenness to sobriety and then to incipient madness. The only stage directions required will occur at once to you. Drop should fall on Pierre with a ghastly look, like a man turned to stone, between the two females. I now close, wishing us both success in this attempt to open new veins of ore. I have other plays in manuscript, and one in progress.”

On November 9 he wrote under a misapprehension of the terms of an agreement about which I had written to him, and evinced his usual anxiety and impatience when anything seemed to go wrong. If, said he, this and that happens, “Rudd & Carleton can swindle us out of every dollar. I confess this stipulation terrifies me. If you have not done so, for God’s sake draw a written agreement in these terms. I shall pass a period of great anxiety until I hear from you. But, for heaven’s sake, a written agreement, or you will never get one halfpenny. These fears seem ungracious, after all the trouble you have taken. But it is a most dangerous situation, and not to be remained in a day or an hour. Draw on Rudd & Carleton as soon as ever you can.”

On the 9th of December following he had heard from me again, and found he was mistaken. He wrote, “I am in receipt of your last, which is very encouraging. You were quite right to do as you did. Give Rudd & Carleton no loop-hole. They will soon owe us a good round sum, and will writhe like Proteus to escape paying it.”

On January 17, 1862, he wrote, “It puts me in some little doubt whether to take your book ‘Pilgrims of Fashion’ to Truebner or Low. Low will sell more copies if he tries, but he will charge more percentage, and I shall not be able to creep you in among my own advertisements. However, you give me discretion, and I shall look to your advantage as well as I can. To-day I had to argue the great case of Reade v. Conquest. I argued it in person. Judgment is deferred. The court raised no grave objections to my reasoning, but many to the conclusions of defendant’s counsel: so it looks pretty well.



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“As to ‘Nobs and Snobs,’ I know the theatrical managers: they will not deal except with thieves, if they can help it. Keep it ten years, if necessary, till some theatre will play it. You will find that all those reasons they have given you will disappear the moment it is played in England, and then the game will be to steal it. Copyright it in your name and mine, if a manuscript can be so protected, and I will enter it here in my name and yours.

“Considering the terrible financial crisis impending over the United States, I feel sad misgivings as to my poor ‘Cloister.’ It would indeed be a relief if the next mail would bring me a remittance,—not out of your pocket, but by way of discount from the publishers. I am much burdened with lawsuits and the outlay, without immediate return, of publishing four editions” (of “The Cloister and the Hearth”). “Will you think of this, and try them, if not done already? Many thanks for the scrap-book and for making one. Mind and classify yours. You will never regret it. Dickens and Thackeray both offer liberally to me for a serial story.” (Dickens then edited “All the Year Bound,” and Thackeray “The Cornhill Magazine.”)

On January 27, 1862, he wrote, “The theatrical managers are all liars and thieves. The reason they decline my play is, they hope to get it by stealing it. They will play it fast enough the moment it has been brought out here and they can get it without paying a shilling for it. Your only plan is to let them know it shall never come into their hands gratis.”

In a letter undated, but written in the same month, he wrote, “My next story” (“Very Hard Cash”). “This is a matter of considerable importance. It is to come out first in ‘All the Year Round,’ and, foreseeing a difficulty in America, I have protected myself in that country by a stringent clause. The English publishers bind themselves to furnish me very early sheets and not to furnish them to any other person but my agent. This and another clause enable me to offer the consecutive early sheets to a paper or periodical, and the complete work in advance on that to a book-publisher. I am quite content with three hundred pounds for the periodical, but ask five per cent. on the book. It will be a three-volume novel,—a story of the day, with love, money, fighting, manoeuvring, medicine, religion, adventures by sea and land, and some extraordinary revelations of fact clothed in the garb of fiction. In short, unless I deceive myself, it will make a stir. Please to settle this one way or other, and let me know. I wrote to this effect to Messrs. Harper. Will you be kind enough to place this before them? If they consent, you can conclude with them at once.”

Messrs. Harper Brothers had always dealt very generously and courteously toward Mr. Reade, and they were offered “The Cloister and the Hearth” in the first instance, but did not feel willing to pay as high a royalty as Messrs. Rudd & Carleton did, in the then depressed condition of the book-trade and in view of their having previously published and paid for “A Good Fight,” and hence the agreement made with the latter firm. They evinced a spirit of kind forbearance in refraining from printing a rival edition of the work, and Mr. Reade remained on very friendly terms with them to the end of his days.



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On February 13, 1862, he wrote from Magdalen College, Oxford, "I have defeated Conquest, and am just concluding the greatest drama I ever wrote,—viz., my own version of 'Never Too Late to Mend.' I will send you out a copy in manuscript, and hold back for publication. But I fear you will find that no amount of general reputation or particular merit of the composition offered will ever open the door of a Yankee theatre to a dramatic inventor. The managers are 'fences,' or receivers of stolen goods. They would rather steal and lose money than buy and make it. However, we will give the blackguards a trial."

On March 22, 1862, he wrote, "Only yesterday I wrote to you in considerable alarm and anxiety. This anxiety has been happily removed by the arrival of your letter enclosing a draft for the amount and Rudd & Carleton's account up to date. I think you showed great judgment in the middle course you have taken by accepting their figures *on account*. All that remains now is to suspect them and to watch them and get what evidence is attainable. The printers are better than the binders for that, if accessible. But I know by experience the heads of the printing-house will league with the publisher to hoodwink the author. I have little doubt they have sold more than appear on the account."

On March 7, 1862, he wrote, "Many thanks, my dear fellow, for your zeal; rely on it, I will not be backward in pushing your interests here, and we will have a success or two together on both sides of the Atlantic. I mean soon to have a publishing organ completely devoted to my views, and then, if you will look out sharp for the best American books and serial stories, I think we could put a good deal of money into your hands in return for judgment, expedition, and zeal."

On March 28, 1862, he wrote, "You are advertised with me this week in the 'Saturday' and 'London' Reviews. Next week you will be in the 'Athenaeum,' 'Times,' 'Post,' and other dailies. The cross-column advertisements in 'Athenaeum' cost thirty shillings, 'Literary Gazette' fifteen shillings, and so on. You will see at once this could not have been done except by junction. I propose to bind in maroon cloth, like 'The Cloister:' it looks very handsome. I congratulate you on being a publicist. Political disturbances are bad for books, but journals thrive on them. Do not give up the search for scrap-books, especially classified ones."

He wrote me on April 2, 1862, "This will probably reach you before my great original drama 'It is Never Too Late to Mend,' which has gone by a slower conveyance. When you receive, please take it to Miss Kean" (Laura Keane), "and with it the enclosed page. You will tell her that, as this is by far the most important drama I have ever written, and entirely original, I wish her to have the refusal, and, if she will not do it herself, I hope she will advise you how to place it. Here in England we are at the dead-lock. The provincial



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theatres and the second-class theatres are pestering me daily for it. But I will not allow it to be produced except at a first-class theatre. I have wrested it by four actions in law and equity from the hands of pirates, and now they shall smart for pirating me. At the present time, therefore, any American manager who may have the sense and honesty to treat with me will be quite secure from the competition of English copies. I have licked old Conquest, and the lawyers are now fighting tooth and nail over the costs. The judges gave me one hundred and sixty pounds damages, but, as I lost the demurrer with costs, the balance will doubtless be small. But, if the pecuniary result is small, the victory over the pirates and the venal part of the press is great.”

He wrote on May 30, 1862, “As for writing a short story on the spur, it is a thing I never could do in my life. My success in literature is owing to my throwing my whole soul into the one thing I am doing. And at present I am over head and ears in the story for Dickens” (“Very Hard Cash”). “Write to me often. The grand mistake of friends at a distance is not corresponding frequently enough. Thus the threads of business are broken, as well as the silken threads of sentiment. Thanks about the drama” (“It is Never Too Late to Mend”). “I have but faint hopes. It is the best thing I ever wrote of any kind, and therefore I fear no manager will ever have brains to take it.”

On June 20, 1862, he wrote of his forthcoming story, “Between ourselves, the story” (“Very Hard Cash”) “will be worth as many thousands as I have asked hundreds. I suppose they think I am an idiot, or else that I have no idea of the value of my works in the United States. I put 6 Bolton Row” (the usual address on his letters) “because that is the safest address for you to write to; but in reality I have been for the last month, and still am, buried in Oxford, working hard upon the story. My advice to you is to enter into no literary speculations during this frightful war. Upon its conclusion, by working in concert, we might do something considerable together.”

On August 5, 1862, he wrote from Magdalen College, where he was to remain until the 1st of October, “I shall be truly thankful if you postpone your venture till peace is re-established. I am quite sure that a new weekly started now would inevitably fail. You could not print the war as Leslie and Harper do, and who cares for the still small voice of literature and fiction amongst the braying of trumpets and the roll of drums? Do the right thing at the right time, my boy: that is how hits are made. If you will postpone till a convenient season, I will work with you and will hold myself free of all engagements in order to do so. I am myself accumulating subjects with a similar view, and we might do something more than a serial story, though a serial story must always be the mainspring of success.”

He wrote on September 6, 1862, “I am glad you have varied your project by purchasing an established monthly” (“The Knickerbocker Magazine”) “instead of starting a new weekly. I will form no new engagements nor promise early sheets without first

consulting you. I will look out for you, and as soon as my large story is completed will try if I cannot do something for you myself.”



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On the 29th of June, 1863, he wrote, "I am much pleased with your 'Knickerbocker Magazine,' and cannot too much admire your energy and versatility. Take notice, I recommended you Miss Braddon's works while they were to be had for a song. 'Lost and Saved,' by Mrs. Norton, will make you a good deal of money if you venture boldly on it and publish it. It is out-and-out the best new thing, and rather American. If you hear of any scrap-books containing copious extracts from American papers, I am open to purchase at a fair price, especially if the extracts are miscellaneous and dated, and, above all, if classified. I shall, also be grateful if you will tell me whether there is not a journal that reports trials, and send me a specimen. Command me whenever you think I can be of an atom of use to you."

Charles Reade's letters were always highly characteristic of him. In these he mentally photographed himself, for he always wrote with candid unreserve, whether to friend or foe, and he liked to talk with the pen. Both by nature and education he was fitted for a quiet, studious, scholarly life, and with pen and paper and books he was always at home. He liked, too, at intervals the cloister-like life he led at Magdalen College. With nothing to disturb him in his studies and his work, with glimpses of bright green turf and umbrageous recesses and gray old buildings with oriel windows that were there before England saw the Wars of the Roses, his environment was picturesque, and his bursar's cap and gown became him well, yet seemed to remove him still further from the busy world and suggest some ecclesiastical figure of the fifteenth century. He was a D.C.L., and known as Dr. Reade in the college, just as if he had never written a novel or a play and had been untrumpeted by fame.

There, in his rooms on "Staircase No. 2," with "Dr. Reade" over the door, he labored *con amore*. Indeed, he was amid more congenial surroundings and more truly in his element in the atmosphere of the ancient university than in London or anywhere else. By both nature and habit he was more fitted to enjoy the cloister than the hearth, although he by no means undervalued the pleasures of society and domestic life. The children of his brain—his own works—seemed to be the only ones he cared for; and, loving and feeling proud of his literary family, he was mentally satisfied. Yet no man was a keener observer of home-life, and his portraiture of women and analysis of female character, although unvarying as to types, were singularly true and penetrating. His Fellowship was the principal cause of his never marrying, the next most important one being that he was always wedded to his pen; and literature, like law, is a jealous mistress. He had some idea of this kind when he said, "An author married is an author marred,"—an adaptation from Shakespeare, who was ungallant enough to say, "A young man married is a man that's marred." But a good and suitable wife would have given *eclat* to his social life.



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His splendid courage and the manliness of his character always commanded admiration, and his hatred of injustice and wrong, cant and hypocrisy, was in harmony with the nobility and passionate earnestness of his nature. He was the friend of the workingman, the poor, and the oppressed; and he exposed the abuses of jails and lunatic-asylums and trades-unions, and much besides, in the interest of humanity and as a disinterested philanthropist. He fought, too, the battles of his fellow-authors on the copyright questions with the same tremendous energy that he displayed in his struggles for practical reform in other directions; and as a practical reformer through his novels he, like Dickens, accomplished a great deal of good. When moved by strong impulses in this direction, he seemed indeed to write with a quivering pen, dipped not in ink, but in fire and gall and blood, and to imbue what he wrote with his own vital force and magnetic spirit.

Measuring his literary stature at a glance, it must, however, be admitted that, notwithstanding his high average of excellence, he was a very uneven writer, and hence between his worst and his best work there is a wide distance in point of merit. But the best of his writings as well deserves immortality as anything ever penned in fiction. Although inferior to them in some respects, he was superior in epigrammatic descriptive power to the most famous of his English and French contemporaries, and particularly in his descriptions of what he had never seen or experienced, but only read about. Take, for instance, his Australian scenes in "It is Never Too Late to Mend," where the effect of the song of the English skylark in the gold-diggings is told with touching brevity and pathos. Yet all his information concerning Australia had been gained by reading newspaper correspondence and books on that country. He made no secret of this, and said in substance, as frankly as he spoke of his scrap-books, "I read these to save me from the usual trick of describing a bit of England and calling it the antipodes." He could infuse life into the dry figures of a blue-book; but in the mere portraiture of ordinary conventional society manners, free from the sway of strong passions and emotions, he did not greatly excel writers of far inferior ability. He had the graphic simplicity and realism of De Foe in describing places he had never seen; and as the historian of a country or a period in which he felt interested he would have been unusually brilliant, for he was an adept in picturesque condensation, and knew how to improve upon his originals and use them without copying a word. He was a master of vigorous English.

KINAHAN CORNWALLIS.

IN A SUPPRESSED TUSCAN MONASTERY.



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We have left the golden hills and laughing valleys of Tuscany behind us as we approach that desert part of it where the gray chalk cliffs stretch out into the Maremma in long narrow tongues of rock, not far from Siena. A frightful convulsion of nature in prehistoric times rent the solid rock, seaming it with chasms so wide and deep that the region is almost depopulated, not only because man can with difficulty find room for the sole of his foot, but because the gases which lie over the Maremma in vapors thick enough to destroy life in a single night rise up to the top of these cliffs and reduce the dwellers there to fever-worn shadows. Even the scattered olive-trees that have taken root in the thin layer of soil are of the same hue, and the few clumps of cypresses add to the pallor of the scene with their dark funereal shafts. The only bit of color is where a cluster of low red-washed houses have found room for their scanty foundations on a knot of rock where several chasms converge. Where the sides of the chasms slope gently enough to admit of being terraced, vineyards are planted, which yield famous wines, the red Aleatico and the white Vino Santo, rivalling in quality the Monte Pulciano, which grows only a short distance away. Farther down in the depths thickets of scrub oak and wild vines form oases that are invisible unless one is standing on the brink.

The epithet "God-forsaken," so often applied to regions like this, would, however, be inappropriate here, for in God's name the locality is famous. On a promontory whose sides fall down in sheer precipices all about, except where a narrow neck of rock connects it with the net-work of cliffs, is a vast monastery, the Mother Abbey of the Olivetani. In 1313 a noble of Siena, Bernardo Tolomei, in the midst of a life of literary distinctions and pleasures, received, it is said, the grace of God. He was struck blind, and in his prayers vowed if he recovered his sight to embrace a life of penitence. It was the divine will that his vows should be fulfilled, and his sight was immediately restored. Two friends of the noblest Italian families, the Patrizzi and Piccolomini, joined him in leaving the world to become hermits in the desert. The chalky cliffs overhanging the Maremma on Bernardo's estates were selected as a fitting retreat: here they dug grottoes in the sides of a precipice and lived on roots and water. They were soon followed by so many penitents as to form a community requiring a government, and, the necessity of this being made plain to them through a vision, in which Bernardo saw a silver ladder suspended between heaven and earth, on which white-robed monks were ascending accompanied by angels, he was urged to go to Avignon and obtain an audience of the Pope, who gave to the community the rule of St. Benedict.

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For a century the friars labored in building their convent to accommodate the needs of their ever-increasing numbers: the one vast cloister was not enough, and another was added; the primitive chapel was enlarged into a stately church, and the abbey walls were extended until, enclosing the garden, they covered the entire promontory. Then they ceased from their labors, and began to establish other monasteries and send out swarms from the mother-hive to fill them, until the executive and administrative ability to govern a small kingdom had to be supplied from their numbers, and manual work had to give way to mental.

Another century found the abbey governed by men of culture and lovers of the fine arts; and the celebrated painted cloister, the intarsia-work, and the wooden sculptures, which now attract so many visitors, date from that time. Nearly all the movable works of art, the pictures, illuminated missals, and precious manuscripts, were confiscated at the time of the first suppression under Napoleon, in 1810; and whatever else could be carried off went in 1866, when the religious orders were suppressed by the Italian government, to embellish the museums. Still, the empty cloister, with Signorelli's and Sodoma's frescos on the walls, Fra Giovanni of Verona's intarsia-work in the church, and the solitary monastery itself, so silent after centuries of activity, have an inexpressible charm, and travellers who undertake a pilgrimage hither can never forget their impressions.

On a sunny autumn afternoon three ladies left Siena in a light wagon, and drove over the gray upland, which was shrouded in a pale blue mist, through the picturesque hamlet of Buonconvento. Here they changed their horse and left the Roman highway for the road cut in the rocks five centuries ago by the monks of Monte Oliveto. These pious men understood little of engineering, of the art of throwing bridges across ravines. Their road simply followed the course pointed out by nature, winding in serpentine folds through the labyrinth of chasms which begin at Buonconvento.

It was toward evening when the party drove over a narrow bridge across a half-filled moat, and under the arch of a massive crenellated tower whose unguarded gates stood wide open. A hundred years ago they would have found the portcullis drawn, and, being women, if they had attempted to force an entrance would have been excommunicated, for until the suppression no woman's foot was allowed across this threshold. The tower was built as a protection against bandits, and the grated windows which give it a sinister look to-day lighted the cells of refractory brothers, placed here to catch the eye of novices as they entered the outer portal and serve as a silent warning.

The convent was still invisible, and our three visitors were speculating on what they would find at the end of the grass-grown *allee* bordered with cypresses, when they saw, in a ravine below, a white-robed figure hastening toward them.



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“That must be the Padre Abbate,” one of them exclaimed. “I hope he has received our padre’s letter telling of our coming, for it would be worse than an attack of the bandits of old, our falling upon him at this hour on a Saturday evening without any warning.”

They had alighted in front of the church when the padre arrived quite out of breath,—a tall, stately old man, with white hair flowing over the turned-back cowl of his spotless white robe. If they had known nothing of him before, his courtly manner and easy reception would have revealed his noble lineage.

“Be welcome, be welcome, my daughters, to the lonely Thebaid. I have received the padre’s letter, and am happy to receive his friends as my honored guests for a month, if you can support the solitude so long,” he added, smiling. “And, now, which is the signora, and which the Signorina Giulia and the Signorina Margherita?”

“I am the signora,” said one of the three, laughing, the last one would have suspected of being a matron. She had lost her husband at twenty, and her four years of European travel had been a seeking after forgetfulness, until she had grown to be satisfied with the companionship of two gentle women artists, who, absorbed in their vocation, walked in God’s ways and were blessed with peace and happiness.

After each had found her place and name in the padre’s pure, soft Tuscan accent, he led the way to the convent door, apologizing for the meagre hospitality he could offer them. “Would the signore like some bread and wine before supper?” What could they know of the hours in an abbey, where it was an almost unheard-of distinction to be received as personal guests, tourists in general having their own refectory set apart for them during their stay? and so they declined. They had by this time reached a low, arched side-door, which grated on its hinges after the padre had turned the huge key in the rusty lock and opened it. They entered a wide stone vestibule, and found themselves opposite another arched door set in arabesque stone carvings: the flags echoed under their feet as they turned to the right and traversed a low, vaulted passage that ended in an open cloister. An arched gallery ran round the four sides, held up by slender, dark stone pillars, above which was a row of small arched cell windows. The court was paved with flags, and in the centre was a well, divested of pulley and rope. An impression of melancholy began to weigh upon the guests, when a great shaggy dog came springing toward them, barking. The padre quieted him with, “Down, Piro! down!” adding, “He is very good, though his manner is a little rough: he is not used to ladies. But he will not be so impolite again, I am sure.”

“Oh, I hope he will,” said Julia: “it is delightful to see him bound about here, where it is so strange and quiet.”



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They traversed one side of the gallery, another low, vaulted corridor, and came to another cloister, with painted walls, more arches, more columns, lighter and more graceful, above which, around the three sides, were two rows this time of cell windows; a beautiful open vaulted gallery filled the third side, and was carried up through the second story. Here was another well, out of which ivy-branches had grown and twined until the curb was one mass of dark-green, shining vines lying on a bed of moss. Presently they came to a broad stone staircase, at the head of which "*Silenzio*" was written over an archway that led into a corridor so long and wide as to seem a world of empty space; on either side was an unending row of doors, all of them closed.

On many of the doors were inscriptions in Latin: eight, one after the other, were marked, "*Visitor primus, secundus,*" etc.

"These are our quarters, then," said Julia. "But are only eight visitors allowed at a time?"

The padre laughed at the question. "These rooms were intended for the visitors appointed to attend our general convocations, at which eight hundred of our order met here every three years to elect a new general and discuss our welfare; but the necessity for such visitors has passed away with our existence. I can remember when all these cells were filled; and there are three hundred on this floor, and as many more above. You are surprised, I see, at the number of doors: there are so many because each cell has its anteroom, where we studied and meditated and prayed."

They stopped at length before a door marked "*Rev. Pater Vicar. Generalis,*" which was at the end of the corridor. Unlocking the door, the padre invited them in.

"One of you will be lodged here, and, if you are not too tired, we will look at your other quarters before you sit down to rest."

So saying, he led the way through five rooms, unlocked a door at the farther end, conducted them across another corridor of the same dimensions as the firsthand unlocked another door; when, suddenly recollecting himself, he said, "You will not be afraid to be separated? There is nothing here to disturb you,—nothing but these cats; and I will see that they do not annoy you."

Then the ladies noticed for the first time in the growing darkness four cats, which turned out to be the padre's bodyguard, attending him wherever he went. Of course they were not afraid: they were only sorry to put their kind host to so much trouble. And so they proceeded to inspect a small cell with a bed and praying-stool and tripod with a basin for all the furniture. The anteroom had a table and chair, and an engraving or two on the walls. Next to this cell was another just like it, for which they agreed to draw lots, and then went to the padre's anteroom for a book which he said would tell all about the history of the abbey.



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Such masses of keys as were everywhere in this room made it a perfect curiosity,—keys for every one of the cells on this floor and above, for the refectories, church, offices, *etc.*, below, for rooms enough to accommodate the emperor Charles V. and his suite of two thousand men for a night, festooned in bunches around the walls,—so that in the dusk the room seemed lined with curious bas-reliefs in steel. Piles of books were heaped on the table with surgical instruments, medicine-bottles, and bags of dried seeds.

After this inspection in the twilight, they went back to the padre vicar's *salon* to rest, when their host took leave of them to give orders to Beppo about the rooms and to send a light. Then they sank into what seats they could find, and tried to collect themselves.

Presently a low knock was heard, the door was pushed open, and a tall, dark youth in sandals and white apron came in, with "*Buona sera, signore,*" and left a lucerna—the graceful brass Tuscan lamp, with three branches for oil and wick—on the table. A large room with two windows now became visible, with a sofa, chairs, a table, and white-tiled stove, and many engravings on the white walls.

At nine o'clock the prospect of supper was almost too faint to be entertained, and the signora was just opening her mouth to say, "Of course the padre has forgotten all about us," when they heard in the distance a faint footstep approaching, and the padre appeared with a taper in one hand and a magnificent red silk coverlet in the other. "For the signora's bed," he explained, and went to leave it in the bedroom. Then he came and sat down, apologizing for having left them so long, and commenced what would have been for his listeners a most interesting conversation if it had been after supper. He told how he had been there thirty years,—first as student, then as frate, and finally as abbot. Since 1866 he had been alone with two monks. To-morrow he would show them the cell just above their heads, which he had occupied seventeen years in silence, except when he had permission to speak. Suddenly, looking at his watch, he said, "It is half-past nine o'clock, and no doubt you are now hungry." And, no one gainsaying the supposition, he relighted his taper and led the way to the refectory. The shadows all about were black and mysterious enough, but they were too tired to be troubled about them, and were already half-way down a staircase, when the signora looked back, and, if she had not seized the balustrade, would have fallen; for standing at the head of the staircase was a white figure, holding a taper above a cowed head, out of which a pair of dark eyes was looking at her steadfastly. The padre's voice, calling out, "Signora, you are left in the dark," reassured her and gave her courage to turn and run down to join the others, who were disappearing through a low door. This led into what seemed an immense hall, judging from the echoes. They



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passed by heavy stone columns supporting a ceiling in round Romanesque arches on their way toward the one spot of light which came from a lucerna that stood on one end of a very long table spread for supper. They were looking around bewildered for their places, when they were not a little startled to hear the padre say, "Signore, this is Fra Lorenzo, my son in the Lord." The signora was of course the least surprised, for she recognized her apparition. They received a silent salutation from a young spiritual-looking monk, with the handsomest face, they afterward agreed, they had ever seen. The four cats, Piro, and another shaggy monster of a dog completed the company and shared the visitors' supper, preferring their soup and chicken to the Saturday-evening fare of the monks of boiled beans and olive oil. The strangely-mixed party found much to interest each other, and, as the signora laughed once or twice merrily over the division of the chicken-bones between the dogs and the cats, she found Fra Lorenzo's eyes fixed upon her with a look of wonder; at other times he kept his eyes on his plate and uttered not a word. The chicken was followed by figs and peaches, cheese and *Vino Santo*, which the signora drank out of a tall glass with the arms of the order engraved on it.

When they returned to their *salon*, the padre followed them to say, "You were surprised at Fra Lorenzo's appearance,—I think a little startled, too. He is gentle and good as an angel, and this is the first time he ever inspired fear in any one,—poor boy! He is my nephew, and I have had him with me ever since his infancy, when his parents died. I am his guardian, and have made him a priest and Benedictine as the best thing I could do for him, although his rank and talents would enable him to play a distinguished *role* in the world. But, thanks be to God, he is a devout follower of Christ, and a most useful one. He is now twenty-five years of age; and I do not think we have a better decipherer of manuscripts in the Church than he, since he is conversant with most of the Oriental tongues, although so young. I sometimes fear God will visit me for bestowing too much affection upon the boy. I strive against it, but he remains the light of my eyes. If it be a sin, God forgive me."

As the signora was putting out the light at her bedside, her eyes fell upon the basin of holy water hanging above it. She wondered who had dipped his fingers last in it, and if any one had ever before slept in that bed without first kneeling before the ivory crucifix above the praying-stool. And with these conjectures she fell asleep. It seemed to her that she had been lying there only a short time when she heard a distant door open and shut softly, then another and another, all the way down the corridor, until the sound seemed very near; then a breath of wind struck her cheek, which came through the outer door of her boudoir, which she had forgotten to lock, and which



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some one had just opened. She was on the point of springing out of bed to try to reach the door of the bedroom before any one could enter, when a monk came through and stopped at the foot of her bed. His cowl was drawn so far down over his eyes that the point of it stood straight up above his head. His hands were crossed over his breast, under his white robe; when, drawing his right one out and pointing his bony finger, he said, "You heretic, what are you doing here?" Without waiting for an answer, he passed on, and another took his place, repeating the question. This was the beginning of a procession of all the monks who had ever been in the monastery. From time to time one particularly old and gaunt left the line and came and sat down by the bedside, until there were eight, four on each side of it. After a while Fra Lorenzo came walking with the others. He looked at her with his melancholy eyes and made a motion to stop, but the friar behind gave him a push and forced him forward. His low voice came to her as he was passing through the door: "I would sprinkle you with the holy water if I could, signora: but you see I must obey my superiors." Then the procession ended, and she was left alone with the eight, one of whom said to her, "Now you must go down to the crypt under the church, to be judged for your presumption." And as they rose to seize her, she found they were skeletons. In her effort to escape from them she awoke, trembling in every fibre. Her waking sensations were scarcely less terrible than her dream, for she shook so that she imagined some one was pulling at the bedclothes. The strain could be borne no longer, and with a spring she sat up, and her hand touched the silk coverlet. It was like the hand of a friend. She thought of the padre, of his angelic goodness. How could she be afraid here, where he was sovereign priest? Still, she must satisfy herself about the door: so, lighting the lamp, she went through all the rooms, and found both the outer doors locked. She was again putting out the light, when a prolonged cry sounded outside the window. It flashed through her mind that she had read somewhere that brigands repeat the cry of wild birds as a signal when making an attack. Perhaps a whole band was preparing to come in upon her through the windows she had forgotten to examine. There is no knowing to what desperate fancies her fevered imagination might have tortured her, if a whole chorus of hoots had not commenced. So, concluding that if they were not real owls, but men with evil intentions so stupid as to make so much noise, they were not worth lying awake for, she resolutely turned over and went to sleep, and only awoke as the convent-bell was ringing for mass.

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As she opened the windows and looked across the ravine to the gray rocks beyond, the scene was so peaceful, such a reproachful commentary upon the troubled night, that she concluded to keep silent about it. And then, since neither her friends nor the coffee presented themselves, she set to work to examine the engravings. The first one her eye fell upon made her start, look again, and finally climb up on the bed and lift it off the rusty nail, covering herself with dust in the operation, and carry it to the window. "Yes," she said finally, after having examined it and the text, a mixture of Latin and old Italian, very thoroughly, "it is the same, the very same: this discovery would compensate for a whole series of nights such as I have just been through." And, putting it down, she ran to her travelling-bag and drew from its depths a very small painting on copper, and compared them. Hearing just then her friends at the door, she ran to open it with both pictures in her hands. "What do you think? I have made a discovery. Look! My picture on copper, which Pippo in Siena found in the little dark antiquary-shop after his brother's death and sold to me for sixty cents, is the same as this old engraving of the famous Annunciation picture in the Church of the Santissima Annunziata in Florence, which is only unveiled in times of national calamity. You know, the people believe it was painted by angels. Here, you see, the text says it was revered in 1252, the artist being unknown. I knew the original of my picture must be very old, for Mary is saying in this Latin scroll coming out of her mouth, 'Behold, the servant of the Lord,' and only the earliest painters, unable to express their idea by the vivacity of their figures, made their mission apparent by the scrolls coming from their mouths." They were still examining the engraving, when the padre came to take coffee with them and to ask if they would go down to mass, which would commence in a few minutes. There was only time for him to say that he hoped the owls had not disturbed them, adding, as they were on their way to the church, "They are our bane, devouring the chickens and keeping us awake. It is a never-ending, but perhaps needful, discipline."

Fra Lorenzo was officiating at the altar as they entered the large church, before a small number of peasants, the women making a picturesque group in their light flowered bodices and their red petticoats visible from beneath their tucked-up gowns, and their gay cotton handkerchiefs knotted about their heads, since no woman's head may be uncovered in the Catholic Church.

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The padre came soon to escort them about the church, and “to show them what little had been left,” he said, pointing to the empty chapels. They found enough, however, to fill them with admiration in dear, good Fra Giovanni of Verona’s marqueterie-work in the backs of the stalls, which extended the whole length of the long church, as is customary in monasteries where the monks are the sole participants at the holy offices. “While Fra Giovanni was here as one of our order,” the padre explained, “he finished the stalls which are now in the cathedral of Siena. They were taken from us in 1813. After we were allowed to come back, we asked to have our stalls replaced by those in a monastery in Siena which was being torn down, and so these stalls were sent us: they are by Fra Giovanni’s own hand. He has never been equalled in this kind of work, for which he invented the staining of the woods to produce light and shade, and perfected the perspective which Brunelleschi invented while resting from his labors on the Florentine dome. The different Italian cities on the hill-sides, the vistas down the long streets, with palaces and churches on either side, half-open missals, Biblical musical instruments, rolls of manuscript music, birds in gay plumage, all perfectly represented in minute pieces of wood, excite the wonder of every one whose privilege it is to examine them at leisure.”

As on their way to the cloister they passed through the sacristy, once heaped with vessels of gold and silver, embroidered vestures, ivory and ebony sculptures, and splendid illuminated missals, now bare and empty, the padre said sorrowfully, “Only the walls are left to the guardianship of these feeble hands, which must soon give up their trust.” When, however, they emerged into the cloister he brightened up, saying, “Here you will have enough to occupy you the whole month;” and the two artists of the party drew a breath of satisfaction at finding themselves at last before the object of their pilgrimage,—the frescos of Signorelli and Sodoma, representing scenes in the life of St. Benedict, which they were going to copy. They walked slowly round the four sides, lingering where Signorelli’s deeper sentiment gave them cause for study. He was called to Monte Oliveto first, and painted only one wall. It was only after three years that the young unknown Bazzi was summoned, and in an incredibly short time he completed the other three with his fanciful creations, as graceful and airy as his character was light and frivolous. His beautiful faces and figures came from his heart; his brain had little to do with his work, as, without the evidence of sight of it, the name given to him by the public—Sodoma, meaning arch-fool—would indicate. Signorelli, on the contrary, had his ideal in his brain, and labored to reproduce it; and his efforts are graver and more elevated. It is to be lamented that his mineral paints have changed their colors in many places from white to black, and that his green trees have become blue.

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The padre had studied these frescos so thoroughly as to discover that Sodoma had sometimes spent only three days on a fresco, by tracing the joinings where the fresh plaster had been applied, which had to be finished before it dried. This gifted, careless painter had the habit of scratching out his heads, if they did not please him, with the handle of his brush; and thus some of them appear to us in the nineteenth century, four hundred years after.

They spent the rest of the day here. Fra Lorenzo joined them at dinner, and in the evening they walked with the padre beyond the tower to see the spires of the Siena cathedral through the lovely poisonous blue mist. On the way back they stopped in the tangled, overgrown garden at the foot of the tower, which had once been filled with rare medicinal plants, and peeped into the deserted pharmacy in the lower story, where the shelves were still filled with rare old pottery jars with the three mounts and cross and olive-branches upon them. "I am the only physician now," said the padre, "and must have my medicines nearer home." In walking over the rocks the visitors noticed, to their surprise, that, instead of being barren, they were covered with the thick growth of a short plant, which, like the chameleon, had made itself invisible by turning gray like the rock. In answer to their inquiries they learned that it was the absinthe plant, belonging to the same family as the Swiss plant from which the liquor is made that is eating up the brains of the French nation; but here it forms the harmless food of the sheep, and from their milk the famous creta cheese is made,—"called creta from the rock, which means in English chalk, I think," continued the padre. "You have noticed its pungent taste at table, have you not?" The ladies hastened to repair their omission, for it is so celebrated that they ought to have said something about it. After age has hardened and mellowed it, no cheese in Italy is so highly esteemed.

They went, too, to see how the young eucalyptus-trees were flourishing,—the object of the padre's great solicitude. "We cannot sleep with our windows open, on account of the bad air, and I have been corresponding with the Father Trappists in the Roman Campagna about the cultivation of these trees as a purifier, and am most anxious as to the result. If I could reduce the fever among the poor people about here, I should be more content to leave them when my summons comes."

The owls were flying above them in the cypresses as they neared the convent, and came swooping down above their heads as the padre imitated their melancholy hoot. Seeing Beppo in the distance, he called to him to go for the guns. Whether owls merit to be the symbol of wisdom or no, they flew away in ever wider circles as soon as the guns and dogs appeared, and could not be decoyed back. The last rays of light lit up the gun-barrels as the party went in at the heavy door: the clashing sound of the bolt and chains, the yelping of the dogs, the guns glistening in the glimmer of light which came in through the cloister, made a scene which must often have had its counterparts in the feudal keeps of the Middle Ages, when the robber knights returned with their booty.



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After supper they went to see a marvel of concealed treasure stored away in one of the upper cells,—priestly robes and altar-cloths shimmering in gold and silver: some of these robes were more beautiful than any they had seen in the treasuries of Rome. Pure gold they were, wrought in emblems of divinity. “These are presents to the monastery from our family,” said Fra Lorenzo. “These simpler ones, embroidered with the silk flowers, are Fra Giorgio’s work. He is now away from the convent, and I am sorry he cannot hear you admire his robes.” It was midnight before the glittering heap was folded away, and the night which followed was one of sound repose.

Next morning the signora was leaning over the brink of the ivy-crowned well, trying to reach a spray twined thick with moss that grew in a crevice of the stones just beyond her reach. “Signora,” a low voice said, “you ought not to lean so far: you might fall in, and the water is very deep. What is it you want? Let me get it for you.” And Fra Lorenzo, following her direction, drew up the spray sparkling with moisture.

“It is beautiful enough for a crown for a god,” said she, twining it together at the ends. “Will you let me turn you into Apollo for a moment?” And, without thinking, she let it fall lightly on his head. “No Apollo was ever so beautiful,” she involuntarily exclaimed. “If only you had a lyre!”

The action, not the admiration, was reprehensible. She was a woman of the world, and should have thought; and this she realized as her eyes fell upon his face, where a revelation was unfolding itself. There was something in this life which he had never thought about, never dreamed of; and the light which shone out of his dark eyes was deeper than that of wonder. She would have given the world to take back her thoughtlessness, for she felt she had given an angel to eat of the forbidden fruit.

The signora was a good woman, with all her worldly knowledge, but a subtle charm of expression and manner made her a very beautiful woman at times, and this moment, unfortunately for two good persons, was one of these. She was just reaching for the crown, when the padre came into the cloister and stopped with amazement as his eye fell on the group. “Fra Lorenzo,” said he, after a moment, “you are sent for to go to Casale Montalcino: Giuseppe is dying; and you will stay there until the last offices are finished.”

The young monk seemed under a spell which he shook off with difficulty. “I go, padre,” he said, and started.

As he passed before the padre, the latter reached for the crown and threw it into the well, saying, “This beseemeth little a tonsured head.” Then he turned to the signora and asked her if she had examined the fresco just behind them. “It is worth much study,” he went on, “for many reasons. The subject enabled Sodoma to throw more expression into it than usual. You see, St. Benedict is resisting the temptation his enemies



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prepared for him in introducing these beautiful women secretly into the monastery. Being so completely a man of God, he overcame the evil one without an effort; but it is not given to us all to overcome as he did, and a zephyr from the outer world may waft us an evil which must be atoned for by long penitence in our lonely cells. Not that I liken you to a tempter," he added, seeing her confusion and distress: "you have only forgotten that we are servants of God and must think of nothing but our duty in serving him."

"Oh, padre, I would give everything if I had not forgotten it! You must think of me as a good woman, for indeed I deserve it."

"I do think of you as such, and am sure the lesson will not be forgotten," was the crumb of comfort upon which she fed all the rest of the day and for several days following, during which Fra Lorenzo had not reappeared. The fountain-scene had not been mentioned to her friends, so one day at dinner Margaret said, "Do the offices for the dead generally require so much time, that Lorenzo does not return?"

"Fra Lorenzo is here," was the answer. "He was only absent one night. He is very much occupied: that is why you do not see him."

The next day they were to be shown the library, and at the hour set the signora went to the padre's reception-room to see if he were ready. He was just reaching for the key, when a peasant appeared, his hand bleeding from a cut which had nearly dismembered the thumb. This necessitated a delay, and the padre went down with him to the dispensary. "While you are waiting," he said, "perhaps you would like to go up into the pavilion, where you can look over the Maremma to the sea. Go up that stair," and he pointed to the end of a corridor, "to the first landing, then turn to the left."

As she went up the stair her eye was caught by a carved ceiling at the top of it. "I suppose I ought to go that far," she thought, and up she went, until she found herself in a room frescoed with portraits of the distinguished men of the order. In the middle of one wall was a magnificently-carved folding-door, with fruits and flowers and twining foliage with rare birds sitting among the tendrils. She was examining these details, when she discovered that the door was ajar. A slight push, and she was in a large, beautiful hall, where three lofty vaulted aisles were supported by slender marble columns with richly-carved capitals. At the end of the centre aisle a staircase in the form of a horseshoe led to a gallery. The walls up-stairs and down, sparsely filled with books, told her she was in the library.

"It will be all the same to the padre," she thought, "if I wait here instead of in the pavilion," and she was half-way down the hall, her eyes glued to the shelves, when she came suddenly upon Fra Lorenzo sitting before a table covered with manuscripts in the

niche of a deep window. He must have been aware of her presence from the first, for his eyes were fixed upon her with a look of intense expectancy.



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"I was thinking of you, signora, and you come to me," was his strange salutation.

She felt she must be composed at any cost: so she said, in as easy a tone as she could command, "I should like to know what resemblance there is between me and these dusty old manuscripts, that you think of me as you copy them. You are copying them, are you not?"

"No, signora, I do nothing: you are always between me and my work. Why did you look at me so at the fountain? But no; forgive me: I was thinking of you before that. From the first evening in the refectory your laugh has been ringing in my heart. You seemed to me like a beautiful light in the shadows of our old hall."

She was moving quickly away, when he reached after her and touched her sleeve. "You are not angry?"

"No," she answered. "I would only remind you that you belong to God in body and soul, and when you think of me you commit a deadly sin, for which never-ending penance can scarcely atone."

"Signora, you are right. The penance does so little for me now. All night long I was before the crucifix in the church, and while I prayed I felt better; but when morning came and I thought of the long, lonely years I must spend here sinning against God and finding no rest, with you always in my heart—What can I do? You are good; tell me what I can do."

The pain of this innocent, beautiful life was a weight too heavy for her to bear, and she felt herself giving way under it. "Pray," she stammered,—"pray for us both, for we must never meet again." She reached the door, went down the stair, and, turning mechanically to the right, found herself at last in the pavilion, where she leaned against the parapet and looked into space. She had lost the capacity of thinking.

It was fortunate the padre was so long delayed, for when he came up at last with the signorine she had so far recovered herself as to be standing upright, apparently absorbed in the view.

"I don't wonder this view has made you speechless," her friends called out. "It is simply glorious."

"Yes," said the padre: "on these cliffs we seem on the brink of eternity; down there among the morasses of the Maremma man cannot stay his feet; and beyond is the sea."

"How beautiful the thought," said Julia, "that good men dying here have no longer need to stay their feet! One step from these cliffs, and they must be in heaven."

“Who knows, who knows,” sighed the padre, “if any of us have found it so? But now let us go to the library.”

The signora followed them, since she could not do otherwise. They stopped before the carved door, which the padre said was undoubtedly Fra Giovanni’s own work, and he pointed out the details of the beautiful workmanship. At length he opened the door, which the signora felt sure she had not closed. One glance around the hall showed her it was empty.



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The padre was too much occupied with his emotions over the scantily-supplied shelves, and the ladies with their surprise and admiration, to notice her excited condition, which she at length succeeded in quieting enough to hear the padre say, "They have taken our precious manuscripts from us, dating as far back as the eleventh century. Many of our order had spent their lives translating and copying manuscripts, and our greatest loss is here. Fra Lorenzo is just now translating some Latin chronicles of our first history into Italian. You can see by his beautiful handwriting that he is a worthy disciple of his learned predecessors. But how is this?"—as he searched among the rolls of yellow parchment. "I see he has not yet commenced it." The old man looked troubled, and, turning from the table, went on: "These carved depositories for the choral-books, and the frescos at the head of the stairs, are about all you can admire here now, except the architecture of the hall."

The padre was very silent at dinner. He only said, noticing that the signora ate nothing, "This will not do, my daughter. You look ill. You must eat something, or I shall have two patients on my hands."

"Who is the other?" asked Margaret and Julia in a breath.

"Fra Lorenzo."

The signora longed to speak with him in private. She must go away at once, but she must speak with him before she said anything to her friends. All the afternoon she watched for an opportunity, but found none. At length, when it was growing dark, she went to walk in the corridor, hoping to meet him. She had come to the open gallery looking into the cloister. Here she would wait for him; and, leaning against the open-work railing, she looked down. A white figure was walking to and fro. Finally it came to the well and looked into it. Now another white figure emerged from the shadows, and, laying an arm around the first, led it gently away out of sight. Then her overstrained nerves gave way, and she fainted.

When she recovered her senses she found herself in bed. The padre and her friends were talking in whispers in the next room, but the former's voice came to her distinctly. He was saying, "Now you know all. You must take her away as soon as possible."

A year after, in Naples, the ladies received these few lines from the padre: "God in his infinite mercy has taken my son to himself."

KATE JOHNSTON MATSON.

THE SUBSTITUTE.

CHARACTERS.



MR. NATHANIEL NOKES, *a Retired Wine-Merchant.*

MR. CHARLES NOKES, *his Nephew.*

MR. ROBINSON, MR. SPONGE, MR. RASPER, *Friends of Mr. Nokes the Elder.*

Waiter.

SUSAN, *Housemaid at the Hotel of the Four Seasons.*

MRS. CHARLES NOKES.

Landlady.

SCENE I.—*A handsome first-floor apartment in the Hotel of the Four Seasons, Paris. Outside the window, the court-yard, with fountain, and little trees in large pots.*



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Enter MR. NATHANIEL NOKES, with a small book in his hand, very smartly dressed, but in great haste, and with his shirt-collar much dishevelled. [Rings the bell violently.]

What's the good of these confounded French phrase-books? Who wants to know how to ask for artichoke soup, or how far it is to Dijon? I want a button sewn on my shirt-collar, and there's not one word about that.

Enter Waiter.

Nokes. Hi! what's-your-name! *Voulez-vous—avoir—la—bonte—de—*[I'm always civil and very distinct, but, somehow, I can never make myself understood.] I am going to be married, my good man; to be married—*tout de suite—*immediately, and there is no time to change my—my *chemise d'homme*. [Come, he'll understand *that*.] I want this button—button, button, button sewn on. Here, here—*here*. [*Points to his throat.*] Don't you see, you fool? [He thinks I want him to cut my throat. I shall never be in time at the Legation!] Idiot! Dolt! Send *Susan*, Susan, *a moi*, to me—or I'll kick you into the courtyard. [*Exit Waiter, with precipitation.*]

Nokes [alone]. And this is what they call a highly-civilized country! Talk of “a strong government” at home: what's the use of its being strong, if it can't make foreigners speak our language? What's the good of missionary enterprise, when here's a Christian man, within twelve hours of London, who can't get a shirt-button sewn on for want of the Parisian accent? I said “button, button, button,” plain enough, I'm sure; and a button's a button all the world over. If it had not been for that excellent Susan, the English chambermaid, I should have perished in this place, of what the coroner's inquests call “want of the necessaries of life.” All depends, as every one knows, on a man's shirt-button: if *that* goes wrong, everything goes, and one's attire is a wreck. But I suppose after to-day my wife will see to that,—though she is a Montmorenci. Constance de Montmorenci, that's her name: she's descended (she says) from a Constable of France. It's a more English-seeming name than *gendarme*, and I like her for that; but I am afraid we shan't have much in common—except my property. She don't speak English very fluently: she called me “my dove” the other day, instead of “my duck,” which is ridiculous. She is not twenty, and I am over sixty,—which is perhaps also ridiculous.

Well, it's all Charles's fault, not mine. If he chooses to go and marry a beggar-girl without my consent, he must take the consequences,—if there are a dozen of them,—and support them how he can. “If you persist in this wicked and perverse resolve,” said I, “I'll marry also, before the year's out.” And now I'm going to do it,—if I can only get this shirt-button sewn on. He shall not have a penny of what I have to leave behind me. The little Nokes-Montmorencis shall have it all. She's a most accomplished creature is Constance. Sings, they tell me,—for it's not in English, so I don't understand

it,—divinely; plays ditto; draws ditto. Speaks every language (except English) with equal facility and—Thank goodness, here's Susan.



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Enter SUSAN, with housemaid's broom.

Susan. What do you please to want, sir?

Nokes. You, Susan; you, first of all, and then a shirt-button. I have not five minutes to spare. My bride is probably already at the Embassy, expressing her impatience in various continental tongues. *Vite*,—look sharp, Susan. [*Aside.*] Admirable woman!—she carries buttons about with her. I wonder whether the Montmorenci will do that.—Take care!—don't run the needle into me!

Susan. You must not talk, sir, or else I can't help it. Please to hold your head up a little higher.

Nokes. I shall do that when I've married the Montmorenci. [*She pricks him.*] Oh! oh!

Susan. I'm sure I hope as you'll be happy with her, sir; but you seem so fond of old England that I doubt whether you ought not to have chosen your wife from your native land. It seems a pity to be marrying in such haste, just because your poor nephew—*pray* don't speak, sir, or I shall certainly run the needle into you—just because Mr. Charles has gone and wedded the girl of his choice.

Nokes [passionately]. Hold your tongue, Susan! [*She pricks him again.*] Oh! oh!

Susan. There, sir, I told you what would happen. All I say is, I hope you may not marry in haste to repent at leisure. A fortnight is such a very short time to have known a lady before making her your bride. There, sir; I think the button will keep on now.

Nokes. Then I'm off, Susan. But, before I go, I must express my thanks to you for looking after me so attentively in this place. Here's a five-pound note for you. [*Aside*] I could almost find it in my heart to give her a kiss; but perhaps the Montmorenci wouldn't like it.

Susan [gratefully]. Oh, thank you, sir. May all happiness attend you, sir! and when you're married yourself, sir, don't be too hard upon that poor nephew of yours—

Nokes [angrily]. Be quiet. [*Exit hastily.*]

Susan [alone]. Now, there's as kind-hearted an old gentleman as ever lived,—and as good a one, too, if it was not for pigheadedness and tantrums. The idea of a five-pound note merely for helping him to get his victuals! He's been just like a baby in this 'ere 'otel, and I've been a mother to him. He couldn't 'a' got a drop o' milk if it hadn't been for me. Poor dear old soul! What a pity it is he should have such a temper! He is taking a wife to-day solely to keep a hasty word uttered agen his nephew and heir. Mademoiselle Constance de Montmorenci! ah, I've heard of her before to-day. Nanette, the head-chambermaid here, was once her lady's-maid. *She's* known her for more than



a fortnight. Constance is a fine name, but it ain't quite the same as Constancy. Poor Mr. Nokes! What a mistake it was in him to drive all thoughts of matrimony off to the last,



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and then to come to Paris—of all places—to do it! What a curious thing is sympathy! He met her in the tidal train, and they were taken ill together on board the steamboat; that's how it came about. Poor old soul! He deserves a better fate. [*Takes her broom and leans on it reflectively.*] Heigh-ho! His honest English face was pleasant to look upon in this here outlandish spot; and none has been so kind to me since my poor missis died and left me under this roof, without money enough to pay my passage back to England. I was glad enough to take service here; for why should I go back to a country where there is not a soul to welcome me? And yet I should like to see dear old England again, too. [*Tumult without. Mr. Nokes is seen rushing madly up the courtyard. Tumult in the passage; French and English voices at high pitch. Nokes without: Idiots! Frog-eaters! What is it I want? Nothing! nothing but to see France sunk in the sea!*]

Enter NOKES (dishevelled and purple with passion, with an open letter in his hand; bangs the door behind him).

Susan. What is the matter, sir?

Nokes. Everything is the matter. You see this lily-white waistcoat; you see these matrimonial does [*points to his trousers*], these polished-leather boots, which are at this moment pinching me most confoundedly, though I don't feel it, because I'm in such a passion: well, they have been put on for nothing. I've been made a fool of by the Montmorenci. But if there's justice in heaven,—that is, in Paris,—if there's law in France, and blighted hopes are compensated in this country as they are at home, the hussy shall smart for it. Directly I'm married myself, I'll bring an action against her for breach of promise.

Susan. Married yourself, sir?

Nokes. Of course I'm going to be married,—at once, immediately,—within the week. There's only a week left to the end of the year. Do you suppose—does my nephew Charles suppose—no, for he knows me better—that I am not going to keep my word? that because the Montmorenci has played me false at the eleventh hour I am going to remain a bachelor for seven days longer? Never, Susan, never! [*Walks hastily up and down the room.*]

Susan. Lor, sir, do pray be a little quiet, I am sure if any young woman was to see you in this state she must be uncommonly courageous to take charge of such a husband. Do, pray, tell me what has happened.

Nokes. Nothing has happened. That's what I complain of. Just as I drove up to the Legation this letter was handed to me. It is from the brother of the Montmorenci, and is



supposed to be written in the English tongue. He regrets that matters between Mademoiselle his sister and myself have been advanced with such precipitation.

Susan. Well, sir, you *were* rather in a hurry about it, I must say.

Nokes. Hurry! I was in nothing of the sort. We were in the same boat together for hours. We suffered agonies in company. And, besides, I had only three weeks at farthest to waste in making love to anybody. And now I've only one week,—all because this woman did not know her own mind.



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Susan. How so, sir?

Nokes. Why, it seems she loves somebody else better. Her brother tells me—confound his impudence!—that this is only natural. At the same time, he allows I have some cause to complain, and therefore offers me the opportunity of a personal combat with what he is pleased to call the peculiar weapon of my countrymen, the pistol. Now, I should have said the peculiar weapon of my country was the umbrella. That is certainly the instrument I should choose if I were compelled to engage in mortal strife. But the idea of being shot in the liver in reparation for one's matrimonial injuries! To be laid up in that way when there is only a week left in which to woo and win another Mrs. Nokes! But what am I to do now? How am I to find a respectable young woman to take me at so short a notice?

Susan. There isn't many of that sort in Paris, sir, even if you gave 'em longer.

Nokes. Just so. Come, you're a sensible, good girl, and have helped me out of several difficulties; now, do you think you can help me out of this one?

Susan [demurely]. Have you got an almanac about you, sir?

Nokes. An almanac? Of course I have. I have given up the wine-trade, but I have not given up the habit so essential to business-men of carrying an almanac in my breast-pocket. Here it is.

Susan [takes almanac and looks through it attentively]. No, sir [*sighs*], it won't do.

Nokes. What won't do? What did you expect to find that *would* do—in an almanac—in such a crisis as this?

Susan. Well, sir [*casting down her eyes*], I was looking to see if it was leap-year; but it isn't.

Nokes. What! You were going to offer to fill the place of the Montmorenci. You impudent little hussy! [*Aside*] Gad, she's uncommonly pretty, though. Prettier than the other. I noticed that when she was sewing on my shirt-button; only I didn't think it right, under the circumstances, to dwell upon the idea. But there can't be any harm in it *now*.

Susan [sobbing]. I am afraid I have made you angry with me, Mr. Nokes. I was only in fun, but I see now that it was taking a liberty.

Nokes [very tenderly and chucking her under the chin]. We should never take liberties, Susan. [*Kisses her.*] Never. But don't cry, or you'll make your eyes red; and I rather like your eyes. [*Aside*] I didn't like to dwell upon the idea before, but she has got remarkably pretty eyes. It's a dreadful come-down from the Montmorenci, to be sure: still, one must marry *somebody*—within seven days. But then, again, I've written such flaming



accounts of the other one to all my friends. I've asked Sponge and Rasper and Robinson to come down, and see us after the honeymoon at "the Tamarisks," my little place near Dover. And they are all eager to hear her sing and play, and to see her beautiful sketches in oil—Can *you* sing, and play, and sketch in oil, Susan?



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Susan [gravely]. I don't know, sir; I never tried.

Nokes [aside]. Then there's her hands. The Montmorenci's, as I wrote to Rasper, were like the driven snow; and Susan's—though I didn't like to dwell upon the idea—are more like snow on the second day, in London. To be sure she will have nothing to do as Mrs. Nokes except to wash 'em. Then she can speak French like a native, or at least what will seem to Robinson and the others like a native. Upon my life, I think I might do worse. But then, again, she'll have relatives,—awful relatives, whom I shall have to buy off, or, worse, who will *not* be bought off. It's certainly a dreadful come-down. *Susan [hesitatingly],* Susan dear, what is your name?

Susan. Montem, sir; Susan Montem.

Nokes [aside]. By Jove! why, that's half-way to Montmorenci. It's not at all a bad name. But then what's the good of that if she's going to change it for Nokes? Oh, Montem, is it, Susan? And is your papa—your father—alive?

Susan [sorrowfully]. No, sir.

Nokes. That's capital!—I mean I'm so sorry. Poor girl! Your father's dead, is he? You're sure he's dead?

Susan [with her pocket-handkerchief to her eyes]. Quite sure, sir.

Nokes. And your mamma,—your excellent mamma,—she's alive, at all events?

Susan. No, sir; I am an orphan.

Nokes [aside]. How delightful! I love orphans. I'm an orphan myself. Ah, but then she's sure to have brothers and sisters,—pipe-smoking, gin-drinking brothers, and sisters who will have married idle mechanics, with executions in their houses every quarter-day. Susan, my dear, how many brothers and sisters have you?

Susan [sorrowfully]. I have none, sir. When my dear missis died I was left quite alone in the world.

Nokes. I'm charmed to hear it [*embracing her*], adorable young woman! [*Bell rings without.*] What are they pulling that bell about for? Confound them, it makes me nervous.

Susan [meekly]. I think they're wanting me, sir: you see, sir, I'm neglecting my work.

Nokes [kissing her]. No, you're not, Susan [*kisses her again*]: quite the contrary. So your name's Montem,—at present,—is it? How came that about?



Susan. Well, sir, I was left a foundling in the parish workhouse, at Salthill, near Eton. Nobody knew anything about me, and as I made my appearance there one Montem day, the board of guardians named me Montem.

Nokes. And how came you to be chambermaid at this hotel?

Susan [seriously]. It was through good Mr. Woodward, the curate at Salthill, that it happened, sir: he was my benefactor through life. Always kind to me at the workhouse, where he was chaplain, he got me a situation, as soon as I was old enough, with a lady. I lived with her first as housemaid, and then as her personal attendant, till she died under this roof.



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Nokes [aside]. I don't wonder at that.

Susan. The people of the hotel here wanted an English chambermaid, and offered me the place, which, since my benefactor the clergyman was dead, I accepted thankfully.

Nokes. Poor girl! poor girl! [*Pats Susan's head.*] There, there! your feelings do you the greatest credit; but don't cry, because it makes your eyes red. Now, look here, Susan; there's only one thing more. You are very soft-hearted, I perceive, and it must be distinctly understood between us that you need never intercede with me in favor of that scoundrel Charles. I won't have it. You wouldn't succeed, of course, but if I ever happen to get fond of you—I mean foolishly fond of you, of course—your importunity might be annoying. When you are once my wife, however, and keeping your own carriage, I confidently expect that you will behave as other people do in that station of life, and show no weakness in favor of your poor relations.

Susan. I will endeavor, sir, in case you are so good as to marry a humble girl like me, to do my dooty and please you in every way.

Nokes. That's well said, Susan. [*Kisses her.*] You *have* pleased me in a good many ways already. [*Aside*] I must say, though I didn't like to dwell upon the idea before— [*Tremendous ringing of bells, and sudden appearance of the mistress of the hotel. Tableau.*]

Mistress of the hotel [to Nokes]. *O vieux polisson!* [*To Susan*] *Coquine abominable!*

Nokes [to Susan]. What is this lunatic raving about?

Susan. She remarks that I haven't finished my work on the second floor.

Nokes [impatiently]. Tell her to go to—the ground floor. Tell her you are going to be married to me within the week, and order a wedding-breakfast—for two—immediately.

Susan [aside]. I can never tell her that, for she is a Frenchwoman, and wouldn't believe it. I'll tell her something more melodramatic. I'll say that Mr. Nokes is my father, who has suddenly recognized and discovered his long-lost child.—*Madame, c'est mon pere longtemps absent, qui vous en prie d'accepter ses remerciements pour votre bonte a son enfant.*

Mistress of the hotel [all smiles, and with both hands outstretched]. Milor, I do congratulate you. Fortunate Susan! You will nevare forget to recommend de hotel?

Nokes. Thank you, thank you; you're a sensible old woman. [*Aside*] She evidently sees no absurd disproportion in our years.—Breakfast, breakfast!—*dejeuner a la what-do-you-call-it! champagne!* [*Exit landlady, smiling and bowing.*]



Nokes. In the mean time, Susan, put on your bonnet and let's go out to—whatever they call Doctors' Commons here—and order a special license. [*Susan goes.*] Stop a bit, Susan; you forget something. [*Kisses her.*] [*Aside*] I did not like to dwell upon the idea before, but she's got a most uncommon pretty mouth.



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SCENE II.—*Drawing-room at the Tamarisks. Garden and Sea in the distance. Grand piano, harp, sketch-book; and huge portfolio.*

Nokes [*less gayly attired: solus*]. Gad, I feel rather nervous. There's Sponge, and Rasper, and Robinson, all coming down by the mid-day train to lunch with me and my new wife,—the Montmorenci, as they imagine. It's impossible that Susan can keep up such a delusion, and especially as she insists on talking English. She says her *French* is so vulgar. But there! I don't care how she talks or what she talks, bless her. Everything sounds well from those charming lips. She's a kind-hearted, good girl, and worth eight hundred dozen (as I should say if I hadn't left the wine-trade) of the other one. There was something wrong about that Montmorenci vintage, for all her sparkle; corked or something. Now, my Susan's *all* good,—good the second day, good the third day, good every day. She's like port—all the better for keeping; and she's not like port—because there's no crustiness about her. She's a deuced clever woman. To hear her talk broken English when the squire's wife called here the other day was as good as a play. Everybody hereabouts believes she's a Frenchwoman; but then they're all country-people, and they'll believe anything. Sponge and Rasper and Robinson are all London born,—especially Rasper,—and London people believe nothing. They only give credit.

Enter SUSAN, in an in-door morning dress, but gloved.

Nokes. Well, my darling, have you screwed your courage up to meet these three gentlemen? Upon my life, I think it would be better if I told them at once that I had been jilted, and instead of the Montmorenci had found The Substitute infinitely preferable to the original; for I'm sure I *have*, Susan [*fondly*].

Susan [*holding up her finger*]. Constance, if you please, my dear. I'm continually correcting that little mistake of yours. How can I possibly keep up my dignity as a Montmorenci while you are always calling me Susan?

Nokes. Then why keep it up at all, my dear? Why not stand at once upon your merits, which I am sure are quite sufficient? Of course it would be a little come-down for *me* just at first; but that's no matter.

Susan. My good, kind husband! [*Kisses his forehead.*] No, dear; let me first show your friends that you have no cause to be ashamed of me. It will be much easier to do that if they think I am a born lady. Appearances do such a deal in the world.

Nokes. Yes, my dear, I've noticed that in the wine-trade. If you were to sell cider at eighty shillings a dozen, it would be considered uncommon good tipples by the customer who bought it. Tell them Madeira has been twice to China—twice to China [*chuckles to himself*—and how they smack their lips! That reminds me, by the bye [*seriously*], of another set of appearances,



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Susan, which we have to guard against,—the pretence and show of poverty. You must learn to steel your heart against *that*, my dear. There's that nephew of mine been writing one of his persistent and appealing letters again. He adjures me to have pity, if not upon him, at all events upon his innocent Clara. But she ought not to have been his innocent Clara, and so I've told him. She ought not to have been his Clara at all. Now, do you remember your solemn promise to me about that young man?

Susan [sighing]. Yes, sir, I remember.

Nokes [angrily]. Why do you call me "sir," Susan?

Susan. Because when you look so stern and talk so severely you don't seem to be the same good, kind-hearted husband that I know you are. I'll keep my promise, sir, not to hold out my hand to your unfortunate nephew, but please don't let us talk about it. It makes me feel less reverence, less respect, and even less gratitude, sir,—it does, indeed,—since your very generosity toward me has made me the instrument of punishment, and—as I feel—of wrong. I have been poor myself, and what must that young couple think of my never answering their touching letter, put in my hands as I first crossed this threshold?

Nokes [testily]. Touching letter, indeed! Any begging-letter impostor would have written as good a one. It's all humbug, Susan. Mrs. Charles would like to see you whipped, if I know women. And as for my nephew—[*Noises of wheels heard, and bell rings.*] But there's the front-door bell. Here are our visitors from town. Had you not better leave the room for a minute or two, to wash those tears away? It would never do, you know, to exhibit a Montmorenci with red eyes. [*Exit SUSAN.*]

Nokes [solus]. That's the only matter about which my dear Susan and I are ever likely to fall out,—the extending what she calls the hand of forgiveness to Charles and his wife, just because they've got a baby. I'll never do it if they have twelve. I said to myself I wouldn't when he wrote to me about this marriage, and I always keep my word.

Enter SPONGE, RASPER, and ROBINSON.

Nokes [shaking hands with all]. Welcome, my friends, welcome to the Tamarisks.

Robinson. Thank ye, Nokes, thank ye. But how changed we are at the Tamarisks! [*Pointing to the piano and portfolio.*] I mean how changed we are for the better! ain't we, Sponge? ain't we, Rasper?

Sponge [fawningly]. It was always a charming retreat, but we now see everywhere, in addition to its former beauties, the magical influence of a female hand.



Rasper [vulgarly]. Yes; no doubt of that. Directly I saw the new coach-house, I said, "By Jove, that's Mrs. N——'s doing! *She'll* spend his money for him, will Mrs. N——."

Nokes [annoyed]. You were very good, I'm sure.

Sponge. But it is here, within-doors, my dear Nokes, that the great transformation-scene has been effected. Pianos, harpsichords, sketch-books,—these all bespeak the presence of lovely and accomplished woman.



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Robinson. May we venture to peep into this portfolio, my good fellow?—that is, if the contents have the interest for us that we believe them to have. It holds Mrs. Nokes's sketches, I presume.

Nokes. Yes, yes; they are her sketches and nobody else's. [*Aside*] Certainly they are, for I bought them for her in Piccadilly.—But here she comes to answer for herself. [*Enter SUSAN.*] Sus—I mean Constance, my dear, let me introduce to you three friends of my bachelor days, Mr. Sponge, Mr. Rasper, Mr. Robinson.

Susan [speaking broken English]. Gentlemens, I am mos glad to see you. My husband—hees friends are mai friends.

Rasper [aside]. She's devilish civil. If she had been English I should almost think she was afraid of us.

Sponge [bowing]. You are most kind, madam. The noble are always kind. [*Aside to Nokes.*] She's all blood, my dear fellow.

Nokes [looking toward her in alarm]. What? Where?

Sponge. No, no; don't misunderstand me. I mean she's all high birth. If I had met your wife anywhere—in an omnibus, for instance—and only heard her speak, I should have exclaimed, "There's a Montmorenci!"

Nokes [pleased]. Should you really, now, my dear Sponge? Well, that shows you are a man of discernment.

Robinson [to Susan]. It is such a real pleasure to us, Mrs. Nokes, that you speak English. We were afraid we should find it difficult to converse with you. Sponge is the only one of us who understands—

Sponge. Yes, madam, we did fear that since no other tongue is spoken in courts and camps—or, at all events, in courts—we should have some difficulty in following your ideas. But you speak English like a native.

Susan [emphatically]. I believe you. [*Recollecting and correcting herself*] Dat is, I do trai mai best. It please my *mari*—my what ees it?—my husband. He don't talk French heemself—not mooch.

Nokes. Well, I don't think you should quite say that, my dear. I could always make myself understood abroad, you know, though my accent is perhaps a little anglicized.

Susan [laughing]. Rayther so.

[*Guests exchange looks of astonishment.*]



Nokes [with precipitation]. My dear, what an expression! The fact is, my friends, that madame has a young brother—Count Maximilian de Montmorenci—at school in England, and what she knows of our language she has mainly acquired from him. The consequence is, she occasionally talks—in point of fact—slang.

Susan [in broken English]. Cherk the tinklare, coot your luckies, whos your hattar? [*To Rasper*] Have your moder sold her mangle?

[*NOKES, SPONGE, and ROBINSON* roar with laughter.]

Rasper [aside]. Confound that Nokes! He must have told her about my family. [*With indignation*] Madam, I—[*Points by accident to the portfolio.*]



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Susan. What? you weesh to see mai sketch? Oh, yas! [*Opens the portfolio; the three guests crowd round it. Nokes comes down to the front.*]

Nokes [aside]. I wish they'd take their lunch and go away. They put me in a profuse perspiration. I know they'll find her out.

Robinson [with a sketch-book in his hand]. Beautiful!

Sponge [looking over his shoulder on tiptoe]. Exquisite! most lovely! it's what I call perfection.

Rasper. First-rate—only I've seen something like it before. [*Aside*] If I haven't seen that in some print-shop. I'll be hanged. [*Blows.*]

Susan. Ha! ha! you halve seen eet beefore, Mr.—*Gasper?* Think of that, my husband, —Mr. Gasper has seen it beefore!

Nokes [laughing uncomfortably]. Ha! ha! What a funny idea!

Rasper [obstinately]. But I *have*, though; and in a shop-window, too.

Susan [delightedly]. That is superbe, magnifique! I am so happy, so proud! My husband, they have copied this leetle work of mine in London!

[*ROBINSON and SPONGE clap their hands applaudingly.*]

Rasper [shakes his head; aside]. Dashed if I don't believe it's a chromolithograph! [*To Nokes*] I say, Nokes, you wrote to us in such raptures about your wife's hands. Why does she keep her gloves on?

Nokes [confused]. Keep her gloves on? You mean why does she wear them in-doors? Well, the fact is, the Montmorencis always do it. It's been a family peculiarity for centuries,—like the Banshee. And, besides, she does it to keep her hands delicate: they're just like roses—I mean *white* roses,—if you could only see 'em. But then she always wears gloves.

Rasper [grunts disapproval]. Then I suppose it's no use asking her to give us a tune on the piano?

Nokes [hastily]. Not a bit, not a bit; of course not; and, besides, we shall have lunch directly.

Susan [approaching them]. What is dat, Mr. Gasper? Did you not ask for a leetle music? What you like for me to play?



Nokes [aside to Susan]. How can you be such a fool? Why, this is suicide! [*To Rasper*] My dear fellow, my wife would be delighted, but the fact is the piano is out of order. The tuner is coming to-morrow.

Susan [seats herself at the piano]. My dear husband, it weel do very well. He only said we must note “thomp, thomp” until he had seen it; dat is all. Now, gentlemens, what would you like?

Sponge [with an armful of music-books]. Nay, madam, what will you do us the favor to choose? [*Aside*] There is nothing I love so much in this world as turning over the leaves of a music-book for a lady of birth!

Susan. Ah, I am so sorry, because I do only play by de ear, here [*points to her ear*]. But what would you like, gentlemens? Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, *it is all exactly de same to me.*



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Robinson. Oh, then, pray let us have Mendelssohn,—one of those exquisite Songs without Words of his.

Susan. Yas? with plaisir. I like dose songs best myself,—de songs without words.

Nokes [aside, despairingly]. It's impossible she can get out of this. Now we shall have an *eclaircissement*, an exposure, an explosion.

Susan [strikes piano violently with both hands, and a string breaks with a loud report]. Ah, *quel dommage!* How stupide, too, when he told me not to “thomp, thomp”! I am so sorry, gentemens! I did hope to give you a song, but I cannot sing without an accompaniment.

Rasper [maliciously]. There's the harp, ma'am,—unless its strings are in the same unsatisfactory state as those of the piano.

Susan [with affected delight]. What, you play de harp, Mr. Gasper? I *am* so glad, because I do not play it yet myself: I am only learning. Come, I shall sing, and you shall play upon de harp.

Rasper [angrily]. I play the harp, madam! what rubbish! of course I can't.

Sponge [eagerly]. But *I* can, just a little,—just enough to accompany one of Mrs. Nokes's charming songs. [*Brings the harp down to the front, and sits down to it, trying the strings.*]

Nokes [aside]. The nasty little accomplished beast! He'll ruin everything. Susan is at her wits' end. [*Aside to Susan*] What on earth are we to do now?

Enter SERVANT.

[*In stentorian tones*] Luncheon is on the table! [*Then, approaching Susan, he adds, in lower but distinct tones*] A lady wishes to see you, madam, upon very particular business.

Susan [surprised]. A lady! what lady?

Nokes [to Susan, aside and impatiently]. Never mind *what* lady; see her at once, whoever she is: it will be an excuse for getting away from these people.—My wife is engaged for the present, my good friends, so we'll sit down to lunch without her.

[*All bow and leave the room, receiving in return from Susan a stately courtesy. Nokes, the last to leave, kisses his hand to her.*] Adorable Susan, you have conquered, you remain in possession of the field; but you must not risk another engagement. I will see to that. Champagne shall do its work on Rasper—Gasper.



Enter MRS. CHARLES NOKES, neatly but cheaply attired. SUSAN rises, bows, and looks toward her interrogatively.

Mrs. Charles Nokes. I did not send in my name, madam, because I feared it would but prejudice you against your visitor. I am Charles's—that is, your husband's niece by marriage; not a near relation to yourself, you might say, if you wished to be unkind,—which [*with earnestness*] I do not think you do.

Susan [distressed, but endeavoring to remain firm]. Oh, but I do, ma'am. I wish to be as hard as a stone. [*Aside*] Only I can't. What a pretty, modest young creature she is!



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Mrs. C.N. The poor give you no such severe character, madam; and, taking courage by their report, and being poor myself, and, alas! having been the innocent cause of making others poor, I have ventured hither.

Susan [aside]. Oh, I wish she wouldn't! I can't stand this. There's something in her face, too, that reminds me—but there! have I not promised my husband to be brutal and unfeeling? [*Aloud*] Madame, I am sorry, but I have nothing for you. Mr. Noke, my husband, he tell me dat hees nephew is very foolish, weeked *jeune homme*—

Mrs. C.N. [interrupting]. Foolish, madam, he may have been, nay, he was, to fall in love with a poor orphan like myself, who had nothing to give him *but* my love,—but not wicked. He has a noble heart. His sorrow is not upon his own account, but for his wife and child. He has bent his proud spirit twice to entreat his uncle's forgiveness, but in vain. And now *I* have come to appeal to *you*,—though you are not of my own country,—a woman to a woman.

Susan [aside]. Dear heart alive! I'm melting like a tallow candle.

Mrs. C.N. I was a poor Berkshire curate's daughter—

Susan [interrupting hastily]. A what? [*Recollecting herself.*] A poor *cure's* daughter—yas, yas—in Berkishire, *qu'est-ce que c'est* Berkishire?

Mrs. C.N. It is in the south of England, madam. We were poor, I say, and I had been used to straits, even before my poor father died. But my husband has been always accustomed to luxury and comfort, and now that poverty has come suddenly upon us—

Susan [interrupting with emotion, but still speaking broken English.] Were you considaired like your fader?

Mrs. C.N. Yes, madam, very like.

Susan [anxiously and tremblingly]. What was his name?

Mrs. C.N. Woodward, madam. He was curate of Salthill, near Eton.

Susan [throwing herself at her feet and kissing her hands]. Why, you're Miss Clara! and I'm Susan,—Susan Montem, to whom he was so kind and noble [*sobbing*]. I'm no more a Montmorenci than you are,—nor half as much. I'm a workhouse orphan, and—and—your aunt by marriage. [*Aside, and clasping her hands*]. Oh, what *can* I do to help them? what *can* I do?

Mrs. C.N. [fervently]. I thank heaven. There is genuine gratitude in your kind face. I remember you now, though I am sure I should never have recognized you, Susan.



Susan. I dare say not, Miss Clara [*rising and wiping her eyes*]. Fine feathers make fine birds. Lor, how I should like to have a talk with you about old times! But there, we've got something else to do first. Where's your good husband?

Mrs. C.N. In the garden, hiding in the laurel-bed, with Chickabiddy. That's our baby, you know.



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[Carriage heard departing; they listen. Enter Mr. Nokes, slightly elevated with champagne, and not perceiving Mrs. C.N.]

Nokes. Hurrah, my dear! they're off, all three of them,—all five of them, for each of them sees two of the others; they have no notion that your name is Susan—*[sees Mrs. C.N.]* I mean Constance. *[Aside]* Oh, Lor! just as I thought we'd weathered the storm, too, and got into still water!

Susan *[gravely]*. She knows all about it, husband. That lady is the daughter of my benefactor, Mr. Woodward, to whom I owed everything on earth till I met you.

Nokes *[with enthusiasm, and holding out both hands]*. The deuce she is! I am most uncommonly glad to see you, ma'am, under this roof. *[Aside to Susan]* She don't look very prosperous, Susan: if there's anything that money can get for her, I'll see she has it; mind that.

Susan *[aloud]*. She is poor, sir, and much in need of home and friends.

Nokes *[to Mrs. C.N.]*. Then you have found them here, ma'am. You're a fixture at "the Tamarisks" for life, if it so pleases you.

Mrs. C.N. You are most kind, sir, but I have a husband and one *little* child.

Nokes. Never mind that: he'll grow. There's room here for you and your husband and the little child, even if he does grow. Where are they? Show them up.

Mrs. C.N. *runs to window and calls, "Charles, Charles."*

Nokes *[aside]*. I think I've had quite as much champagne as is good for me; just enough; the golden mean.

Enter CHARLES with baby, which he holds at full stretch of his arms.

Nokes *[indignantly]*. You young scoundrel! How dare you show your face in this house?

Mrs. C.N. *[interfering]*. You sent for him, sir.

Nokes. I sent for nothing of the sort. I sent for your husband.

Mrs. C.N. That is my husband, sir, and our little child. You promised us an asylum for life under your roof; and I am certain you will keep your word.

Nokes *[to Susan, endeavoring to be severe]*. Now, this is all *your* fault; and yet you promised me never to interfere on behalf of these people.



Susan. Nor *did* I, my dear husband. You have done it all yourself.

Nokes [aside]. It was all that last glass of champagne.

Charles [giving up the baby to his wife, and coming up with outstretched hand to his uncle]. Come, sir, pray forgive me. I could not enjoy your favors without your forgiveness, believe me.

Nokes [holding out his hand unwillingly]. There. [*Aside*] How *could* I be such a fool, knowing so well what champagne is made of?—Well, sir, if you have regained your place here, remember it has all happened through your aunt's goodness. Let nobody ever show any of their airs to my Susan.



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Charles and his wife [together]. We shall never forget her kindness, sir.

Nokes. Mind you don't, then. For, you see, it's to her own disadvantage, since when I die—and supposing I have forgiven you—the child that has to grow will inherit everything, and Susan only have a life-interest in it.

Charles [hopefully]. I don't see that, sir. Why shouldn't you have children of your own?

Nokes [complacently]. True, true. Why shouldn't we? I didn't like to dwell upon the idea before, but why shouldn't we? At all events, Susan [*comes forward with Susan*], I am sure I shall never repent having shot at the pigeon—I mean, having wooed the Montmorenci, but won THE SUBSTITUTE.

JAMES PAYN.

NEW YORK LIBRARIES

New York has been accused of being purely commercial in tone, and there was a period in her history when she must have pleaded guilty to the indictment. That day, however, is past: she has now many interests—scientific, artistic, literary, musical—as influential as that mentioned, though not perhaps numerically so important. Of the fine arts the city is the acknowledged New World centre, and it is fast forming a literary circle as noteworthy as that of any other capital. The latter owes its existence in part, no doubt, to the great publishing-houses, but has been attracted chiefly by the facilities for research afforded by those great storehouses of learning, the city libraries. Few old residents are aware of the literary wealth stored in these depositories, or of the extent to which they are consulted by scholars and by writers generally.

There are four large libraries in the city whose interest is almost purely literary,—the Society, the Astor, the Lenox, and the Historical Society's,—one both literary and popular,—the Mercantile,—one interesting as being the outcome of a great trades' guild,—the Apprentices',—and one purely popular,—the Free Circulating Library. There are others, of course, but the above are such as from their character and history seem best calculated for treatment in a magazine paper. The oldest of these is the Society Library, which is located in its own commodious fire-proof building at No. 67 University Place. This library is perhaps the oldest in the United States: its origin dates back to the year 1700, when, Lord Bellamont being governor and New York a police-precinct of five thousand inhabitants, the worthy burghers founded the Public Library. For many years it seems to have flourished in the slow, dignified way peculiar to Knickerbocker institutions. In 1729 it received an accession in the library of the Rev. Dr. Millington, rector of Newington, England, which was bequeathed to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and by it transferred to the New York Public Library. The institution remained under the care of the city until 1754, when

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a company of gentlemen formed an association to enhance its usefulness by bringing it under private control. They collected a number of books, and on application the Public Library was incorporated with these, and the whole placed under the care of trustees chosen by the shareholders. Believing that "a public library would be very useful as well as ornamental to the city," and also advantageous to "our intended college," the shareholders agreed to pay "five pounds each on the first day of May, and ten shillings each on every first of May forever thereafter." Subscribers had the right to take out one book at a time by depositing one-third more than the value of it with the library-keeper. Rights could be alienated or bequeathed "like any other chattel." No person, even if he owned several shares, could have more than one vote, nor could a part of a subscription-right entitle the holder to any privileges. By 1772 the Society had increased to such an extent that it was thought best to incorporate it, and a charter was secured from the crown. In its preamble seven "esquires," two "merchants," two "gentlemen," and one "physician" appear as petitioners, and fifty-six gentlemen, with one lady, Mrs. Anne Waddel, are named members of the corporation. The style of the latter was changed to the "New York Society Library," and the usual corporate privileges were granted, including the right to purchase and hold real estate of the yearly value of one thousand pounds sterling. The Society is practically working under this charter today, the legislature of New York having confirmed it in 1789. The earliest printed catalogue known to be in existence was issued about 1758: it gives the titles of nine hundred and twenty-two volumes, with a list of members, one hundred and eighteen in all. A second catalogue followed in 1761. During the Revolution many of the volumes were scattered or destroyed. The first catalogue printed after the war enumerates five thousand volumes; these had increased in 1813 to thirteen thousand, in 1838 to twenty-five thousand, and the present number is estimated at seventy-five thousand. Down to 1795 the library was housed in the City Hall, and during the sessions of Congress was used by that body as a Congressional Library. Its first building was erected in 1795, in Nassau Street, opposite the Middle Dutch Church, and here the library remained until 1836, when, its premises becoming in demand for business purposes, it was sold, and the Society purchased a lot on the corner of Broadway and Leonard Street. A building was completed on this lot in 1840, and the library removed thither from the rooms of the Mechanics' Society in Chambers Street, where it had been placed on the sale of its property in 1836. In 1853 a third removal was made, to the Bible House, its property on Broadway being again swallowed up by the advancing tide of business. In the same year its present property on University Place was purchased, on which, two years later, in



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1855, the commodious building which it now occupies was erected, the Society taking possession in May, 1856. Many features of the Society Library are unique, to be met with, perhaps, in no other organization of the kind in the world. Many of its members hold shares that have descended to them from father to son from the time of the first founders. The annual dues are placed at such a figure (ten dollars) as practically to debar people with slender purses. The scholar, however, may have the range of its treasures on paying a fee of twenty-five cents, and the stranger may enjoy the use of the library for one month on being introduced by a member. The market value of a share is now one hundred and fifty dollars, with the annual dues of ten dollars commuted, but shares may be purchased for twenty-five dollars, subject to the annual dues. The library proper occupies the whole of the second floor. On the first floor, besides the large hall, is a well-lighted drawing-room, filled with periodicals in all languages, a ladies' parlor, and a conversation-room. The library-room is a large, airy, well-lighted apartment, with a series of artistic alcoves ranged about two of its sides. Here are to be found the Winthrop Collection, comprising some three hundred curious and ancient tomes, chiefly in Latin, which formed a part of the library of John Winthrop, "the founder of Connecticut," the De Peyster Alcove, containing one thousand volumes, very full in special subjects, the Hammond Library, collected by a Newport scholar, comprising some eighteen hundred quaint and curious volumes, and a collection of over six hundred rare and costly works on art contained in the John C. Green Alcove. This last alcove, which was fitted up and presented to the library by Mr. Robert Lenox Kennedy as a memorial of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Green, benefactors of the Society, is an artistic gem. The sides and ceilings are finished in hard woods by Marcotte, after designs by the architect, Sidney Stratton. Opposite the entrance is a memorial window, its centre-pie representing two female figures,—Knowledge and Prudence,—with the four great poets, Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Chaucer, in the corners. On the east wall is a portrait of Mr. Green by Madrazo, and on the west a tablet with an inscription informing the visitor that, the library having received a donation of fifty thousand dollars from the estate of John Cleve Green, the trustees had placed the tablet as a memento of this munificence. There are books in this alcove not to be duplicated in European libraries. A work on Russian antiquities, for instance, containing beautifully-colored lithographs of the Russian crown-jewels, royal robes, ecclesiastical vestments, and the like, cannot be found, it is said, either in Paris or London. The scope of the collection may be seen by a glance at the catalogue, whose departments embrace architecture, art-study, anatomy, biography, book-illustration, cathedrals and churches, costumes, decorative, domestic, and industrial art, heraldry, painting, and picturesque art.



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It is a coincidence merely, but nearly all the great libraries of the city are grouped within a block or two of Astor Place, making that short thoroughfare the scholarly centre of the town. In its immediate vicinity, on the corner of Second Avenue and Eleventh Street, stands the fire-proof building of the New York Historical Society, whose library and collection of paintings and relics form one of the features of the city. This Society dates back to the year 1804, when Egbert Benson, De Witt Clinton, Rev. William Linn, Rev. Samuel Miller, Rev. John N. Abeel, Rev. John M. Mason, Dr. David Hosack, Anthony Bleecker, Samuel Bayard, Peter G. Stuyvesant, and John Pintard, met by appointment at the City Hall and agreed to form a society "the principal design of which should be to collect and preserve whatever might relate to the natural, civil, or ecclesiastical history of the United States in general and of the State of New York in particular." Active measures were at once taken for the formation of a library and museum, special committees being appointed for the purpose. The range of the collection embraced books, manuscripts, statistics, newspapers, pictures, antiquities, medals, coins, and specimens in natural history. The Society made the usual number of removals before being finally established as a householder. From 1804 to 1809 it met in the old City Hall, from 1809 to 1816 in the Government House, from 1816 to 1832 in the New York Institution, from 1832 to 1837 in Remsen's Building, Broadway, from 1837 to 1841 in the Stuyvesant Institute, from 1841 to 1857 in the New York University, and at length, after surmounting many pecuniary obstacles, celebrated its fifty-third anniversary by taking possession of its present structure. Meantime, the efforts of the library committees had resulted in a collection of Americana of exceeding interest and value, the nucleus of the present library. In its one specialty this library is believed to be unrivalled. The Society has issued some twenty-four volumes of its own publications, in addition to numerous essays and addresses. Besides these, its library contains some seventy-three thousand volumes of printed works, chiefly Americana, many of them relating to the Indians and obscure early colonial history. Eight hundred and eleven genealogies of American families—the fountain-head of the national history—are a feature of the collection. The library also possesses one of the best sets of Congressional documents extant, also complete sets of State and city documents. There are four thousand volumes of newspapers, beginning with the first journal published in America,—the "Boston News-Letter" of 1704,—and comprising a complete record to the present day. There are also tons of pamphlets and "broadsides," and several hundred copies of the inflammatory hand-bills posted on the trees and fences of New York during the Revolution. The library is also rich in old family letters and documents containing much curious and interesting history. The Society is very conservative in its ways,—more so than most institutions of the kind. Theoretically, its stores of information can be drawn on by members only, but, as a general thing, properly accredited scholars, non-residents, have little difficulty in gaining access to them, provided the material sought is not elsewhere accessible.



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Lafayette Place is a wide, quiet thoroughfare, a few blocks in extent, opening into Astor Place on the north. On the left, a few doors from the latter street, stands the Astor Library, in some respects one of the noteworthy libraries of the world. John Jacob Astor died March 29, 1848, leaving a will which contained a codicil in these words: "Desiring to render a public benefit to the city of New York, and to contribute to the advancement of useful knowledge and the general good of society, I do by this codicil appoint four hundred thousand dollars out of my residuary estate to the establishment of a public library in the city of New York." The instrument then proceeded to give specific directions as to how the money was to be applied: first, in the erection of a suitable building; second, in supplying the same with books, maps, charts, models, drawings, paintings, engravings, casts, statues, furniture, and other things appropriate to a library upon the most ample scale and liberal character; and, third, in maintaining and upholding the buildings and other property, and in paying the necessary expenses of the care of the same, and the salaries of the persons connected with the library, said library to be accessible at all reasonable hours and times for general use, free of expense, and subject only to such conditions as the trustees may exact. It was further provided that its affairs should be managed by eleven trustees, "selected from the different liberal professions and employments of life and the classes of educated men." The mayor was also to be a trustee by virtue of his office. The entire fund was vested in this board, with power to expend and invest moneys, and to appoint, direct, control, and remove the superintendent, librarian, and others employed about the library. The first trustees were named in the will, and Washington Irving was chosen president.

Dr. Joseph G. Cogswell, who it is said first suggested the idea of a library to Mr. Astor, was appointed first superintendent and despatched to Europe to purchase books, which he succeeded in doing to the best advantage, the political disturbances of 1848 having thrown many valuable libraries on the market. Meantime, a building had been commenced on the east side of Lafayette Place, on a lot sixty-five feet front by one hundred and twenty deep; but as the books arrived before this was completed they were placed temporarily in a hired house in Bond Street. The new building, which was opened January 9, 1854, was in the Byzantine style, after the design by Alexander Saeltzer, the lower story being of brownstone and the two upper stories of red brick. The main hall or library-room, beginning on the second floor, was carried up through two stories and lighted by a large skylight in the roof. Around the sides of this room were built two tiers of alcoves capable of holding about one hundred thousand books. The library opened on the date mentioned with about eighty thousand volumes, devoted chiefly to science, history, art, and kindred topics, the trustees agreeing with the superintendent that the design of the founder could only be carried out and the "advancement of knowledge" and "general good of society" be best secured by making the new library one of reference only.



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In October, 1855, Mr. William B. Astor, son of the founder, conveyed to the trustees the lot, eighty feet front by one hundred and twenty deep, adjoining the library on the north, and proceeded to erect upon it an addition similar in all respects to the existing structure, the library thus enlarged being opened September 1, 1859, with one hundred and ten thousand volumes on its shelves. The addition led to a rearrangement of the material, the old hall being devoted to science and the industrial arts, and the new to history and general literature. In 1866 Mr. Astor further signified his interest in the library by a gift of fifty thousand dollars, twenty thousand dollars of it to be expended in the purchase of books, and on his death in 1875 left it a bequest of two hundred and forty-nine thousand dollars. In 1879 Mr. John Jacob Astor, grandson of the founder, added to this enduring monument of his family by building a second addition, seventy-five feet front and one hundred and twenty feet deep, on the lot adjoining on the north, making the entire building two hundred feet front by one hundred deep. At the same time an additional story was placed on the Middle Hall, and a new entrance and stairway constructed. The enlarged building, the present Astor Library, was opened in October, 1881, with two hundred thousand volumes and a shelf-capacity of three hundred thousand. Its present contents are estimated at two hundred and twenty thousand volumes, exclusive of pamphlets. The shelves are ranged in alcoves extending around the sides of the three main halls and subdivided into sections of six shelves each, each section being designated by a numeral. Each shelf is designated by a letter of the alphabet, beginning at the bottom with A. The alcoves have no distinguishing mark, the books being arranged therein by subjects which the distributing librarian is expected to carry in his mind. The first catalogue, in four volumes, was compiled by Dr. Cogswell and printed in 1861. This was followed in 1866 by an index of subjects from the same hand. Recently a catalogue in continuation of Dr. Cogswell's, bringing the work down to the end of 1880, has been prepared, and is being printed at the Riverside Press, Boston. The current card catalogue is arranged on the dictionary plan, giving author and subject under one alphabet. Opposite each title is written the number of the alcove and the letter designating the shelf. By the regulations the reader is required to find the title of the book desired in the catalogue, write it with the number and letter on a slip of paper provided for the purpose, and give it to the distributing librarian, who despatches one of his boy Mercuries to the shelf designated for the work. More often than not, however, the reader asks directly for the book desired, without consulting the catalogue, and it is rarely that the librarian cannot from memory direct his messenger to the section and shelf containing it. In the matter of theft and mutilation of books

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the library depends largely on the honor of readers, although some safeguards are provided. All readers are required to enter their names and addresses in a book, and the volume on being given out is charged to them, to be checked off on its return: it would be difficult, too, for a thief to purloin books without being detected by the employees or the porter in the vestibule. Yet books are stolen occasionally. In June, 1881, a four-volume work by Bentley on "Medicinal Plants," valued at sixty dollars, was taken from the library. It was soon missed, and search made for it without avail. A few weeks later, however, it was discovered by the principal librarian in a Broadway book-stall and recovered.

Few strangers in the city depart without paying a visit to the Astor Library, and it is one of the few lions of the city that do not disappoint. The main entrance is approached by two flights of stone steps, from the north and south, leading to a brownstone platform enclosed by the same material. From this, broad door-ways give entrance to the vestibule, sixty feet by forty, paved in black and white marble, and wainscoted four feet above the floor with beautifully variegated marble from Vermont. The panelled ceiling is elaborately frescoed, as well as the upper part of the walls. Busts of the sages and heroes of antiquity adorn the hall. From the vestibule a stairway of white marble, with massive newels of variegated marble, leads up to the library proper. The visitor enters this in the centre of Middle Hall. Before him, separated by a balustrade, are the desks and tables of the distributing librarian and his assistants. The ladies' reading-room is in the rear. On the left and right arched passages give access to the North and South Halls, in which the main reading-rooms are situated. The ceiling above is the skylight of the roof, and the alcoves, filled with the wealth of learning of all ages and peoples, rise on either hand quite to the ceiling. At long, green-covered tables, ranged in two parallel lines through the halls, are seated the readers, in themselves an interesting study. Scientists, artists, literary men, special students, inventors, and *dilettante* loungers make up the company. They come with the opening of the doors at nine in the morning, and remain, some of them, until they close at five in the evening. There are daily desertions from their ranks, but always new-comers enough to fill the gaps. Their wants are as various as their conditions. This well-dressed, self-respectful mechanic wishes to consult the patent-office reports of various countries, in which the library is rich. His long-haired Saxon neighbor is poring over a Chinese manuscript, German scholars being the only ones so far who have attacked the fine collection of Chinese and Japanese works in the library. Next him is a *dilettante* reader languidly poring over "Lothair:" were the trustees to fill their shelves with trashy fiction, readers

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of his class would soon crowd out the more earnest workers. Here is a student with the thirty or more volumes of the "New England Historic Genealogical Register" piled before him, flanked on one side by the huge volumes of Burke's "Peerage" and on the other by Walford's "County Families." There are many readers of this class, the library's department of Genealogy and Heraldry being well filled. There is a lady here and there at the tables working with a male companion, but, as a rule, they are to be found at the ladies' tables in the Middle Hall. There seem to be but two classes of readers here,—the lady in silken attire, engaged in looking out some item of family history or question of decorative art, and the brisk business-like literary lady, seeking material for story or sketch. Any student or literary worker who can show to the satisfaction of one of the trustees that he is engaged in work requiring free access to the library receives a card from the superintendent which admits him to the alcoves and places all the treasures of the library at his command. A register is placed near the distributing librarian's desk, in which on entering each visitor to the alcove is required to sign his name, and in this register each year is accumulated a roll of autographs of which any institution might be proud. Famous scholars, scientists, authors, journalists, poets, artists, and divines, both of this country and of Europe, are included in the lists.

Of its treasures of literary and artistic interest it is impossible to give categorical details. Perhaps the library prizes most the magnificent elephant folio edition, in four volumes, of Audubon's "Birds and Quadrupeds of North America," with its colored plates, heavy paper, and general air of sumptuousness. The work is rare as well as magnificent, and, though the library does not set a price upon its books, it is known that three thousand dollars would not replace a missing copy. In an adjoining alcove is an equally sumptuous but more ancient volume, the Antiphonale, or mammoth manuscript of the chants for the Christian year. This volume was used at the coronation of Charles X., King of France. The covers of this huge folio are bound with brass, beautiful illuminations by Le Brun adorn its title-pages, and then follows, in huge black characters, the music of the chants. In its immediate vicinity are many of the treasures of the library,—Zahn's great work on Pompeii, three volumes of very large folios, containing splendidly-colored frescos from the walls of the dead city; Sylvester's elaborate work of "Fac-Similes of the Illuminated Manuscripts of the Middle Ages," in four large folios; and also Count Bastard's great work on the same, seeming more sumptuous in gold, silver, and colors. Another notable work is Count Littar's "Genealogies of Celebrated Italian Families," in ten folio volumes, emblazoned in gold, and illustrated with richly-colored portraits finished like ivory miniatures.



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There are whole galleries of European art,—Versailles, Florence, Spain, the Vatican, Nash's Portfolio of Colored Pictures of Windsor Castle and Palace, the Royal Pitti Gallery, Munich, Dresden, and others. A work on the "Archaeology of the Bosphorus," presented by the Emperor of Russia to the library, is in three folio volumes, printed on thick vellum paper, with two folding maps and ninety-four illuminated plates: but two hundred copies of the book were printed, for presentation solely. Other notable gifts are the publications of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences, in seventeen volumes, catalogue of antiquities, chiefly British, at Alnwick Castle, and one of Egyptian antiquities at the same, from the Duke of Northumberland, a complete file of the "Liberator," from Mr. Wendell Phillips, numerous works on Oriental art, from the imperial governments of Japan and China, and many thousand folio volumes of Parliamentary papers and British patents, from the British government. Of its Orientalia and its department of Egyptology the library is especially proud. The latter so good an authority as Professor Seyffarth pronounces second only to that of the British Museum.

In addition to the large collection of costly books of art with which this library is enriched, there are some of the rarest manuscripts and earliest printed books to be seen kept in glass cases in the Middle Hall. Among these may be mentioned the superbly illuminated manuscript of the ninth century entitled "Evangelistarium,"—one of the finest existing productions of the revival of learning under Charlemagne; the "Sarum Missal," a richly-emblazoned manuscript of the tenth century; some choice Greek and Latin codices once belonging to the library of Pope Pius VI.; and the Persian manuscripts recently acquired, which formerly were in the library of the Mogul emperors at Delhi, bearing the stamp of Shah Akbar and Shah Jehan. The writing is by the famous calligrapher Sultan Alee Meshedee (896 A.H., or 1518 A.D.).

There is as great a popular misconception of the character and purpose of the Lenox Library as of the Astor. The two are like and yet unlike,—alike in the rich treasures which they contain, but quite unlike in their scope and purposes. In reality the Lenox is a museum of art rather than a library: its books are, with few exceptions, rarities, "first editions," illuminated manuscripts, specimens showing the advance of the typographic art from the beginning, books of artistic interest, and works not to be found in this country, and sometimes not in Europe. Its collection of paintings and sculpture is important as well as its literary treasures. It is not a library of general reference, though many of its works will be sought by scholars for the value of their contents: it is, in short, a private art-gallery and library thrown open at stated times and under certain restrictions to the public. The library owes its existence to the munificence of Mr. James



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Lenox, a wealthy and educated gentleman of New York, who determined to establish permanently in his native city his fine collection of manuscripts, printed books, engravings and maps, statuary, paintings, drawings, and other works of art, by giving the land and money necessary to provide a building and a permanent fund for the maintenance of the same. In January, 1870, the legislature of New York passed an act "creating a body corporate by the name and style of 'The Trustees of the Lenox Library.'" Nine trustees were named, and these gentlemen organized by electing Mr. Lenox president and Mr. A.B. Belknap secretary. In the succeeding March Mr. Lenox conveyed to the trustees three hundred thousand dollars in stocks of the county of New York and bonds and mortgage securities, and also the ten lots of land fronting on Fifth Avenue on which the library-building now stands. One hundred thousand dollars were set apart for the formation of a permanent fund, and two hundred thousand dollars for a building-fund. Contracts for a library-building were made early in 1872, and work on it was begun in May of the same year,—the structure being finished in 1875. It has a frontage of one hundred and ninety-two feet on Fifth Avenue, overlooking the Park, and a depth of one hundred and fourteen feet on both Seventieth and Seventy-first Streets. The general plan is that of a central structure connecting two turreted wings which enclose a spacious entrance-court. From the court the visitor enters a grand hall or vestibule, from which every part of the building is reached. At either end is a spacious library-room. Stone stairways lead from each end of the vestibule to the mezzanine, or half-story, and the second-story landings. From the latter one enters the principal gallery, ninety-six by twenty-four, devoted to sculpture, and opening on the east into the picture-gallery. At either end of the hall of sculpture are library- and reading-rooms similar to those on the first floor. The stairway on the north continues the ascent to an attic or third-floor gallery. The building throughout is fitted up in a style befitting a shrine of the arts. The first-floor library-rooms are one hundred and eight feet long by thirty feet wide and twenty-four feet high, with level ceilings, beautifully panelled and corniced. The sides of the hall of sculpture are divided by five arcades, resting on piers decorated with niches, pilasters, and other architectural ornaments; the ceiling has deep panels resting on and supported by the pilasters; the walls are wainscoted in oak to the height of the niches. The picture-gallery is forty by fifty-six, well lighted from above by three large skylights. Iron book-cases, with a capacity for eighty thousand volumes, are arranged in two tiers on the sides of the galleries. The whole structure is as nearly fire-proof as it could possibly be made, and its massive walls and stone towers make it one of the prominent architectural features of the avenue. While the building was

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in progress, several benefactions of interest had accrued to the library. Mr. Lenox had given an additional one hundred thousand dollars, and in 1872 one hundred thousand dollars more, and Mr. Felix Astoin had promised to bestow his fine collection of some five thousand rare French works. On the 15th of January, 1877, the first exhibition of paintings and sculptures was opened to the public, and continued on two days of the week to the end of the year, and on the 1st of the following December an apartment for the exhibition of rare works and manuscripts was also opened to the public. Fifteen thousand people visited the library during this first year, thus indicating the popular appreciation of a collection of this kind. In 1881 nineteen thousand eight hundred and thirty-three admission-tickets were issued,—the largest number of visitors on any one day being eleven hundred, on the anniversary of Washington's birthday.

The scope and objects of this unique institution are so admirably set forth by the trustees in their report to the legislature for 1881 that we append an extract. "The library," they observe, "differs from most public libraries. It is not a great general library intended in its endowment and present equipment for the use of readers in all or most of the departments of human knowledge.... Beyond its special collections it should be regarded as supplementary to others more general and numerous and directly adapted to popular use. It is not like the British Museum, but rather like the Grenville collection in the British Museum, or perhaps still more like the house and museum of Sir John Soane in Lincoln's Inn's Fields, in London, both lasting monuments of the learning and liberality of their honored founders. Thus, while the library does not profess to be a general or universal collection of all the knowledge stored up in the world of books, it is absolutely without a peer or a rival here in the special collections to which the generous taste and liberal scholarship of its founder devoted his best gifts of intellectual ability and ample resources of fortune. It represents the favorite studies of a lifetime consecrated after due offices of religion and charity to the choicest pursuits of literature and art. It would be difficult to estimate the value or importance of these marvellous treasures, whose exhibition hitherto only in part has challenged the admiration of all scholars and given a new impulse to those studies for which they furnish an apparatus before unseen in America.... The countless myriads of volumes produced in the past four centuries of printing with movable types have left in all the libraries of all the nations comparatively few monuments, or even memorials, of so many eager, patient, or weary generations of men whose works have followed them when they have rested from their labors. The Lenox Library was established for the public exhibition and scholarly use of some of the most rare and precious



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of such monuments and memorials of the typographic art and the historic past as have escaped the wreck and been preserved to this day. That exhibition and use must be governed by regulations which will insure to the fullest extent the security and preservation of the treasures intrusted to our care, in the enforcement of which the trustees anticipate the sympathy and co-operation of all scholars and men of letters, through whose use and labors alone the public at large must chiefly derive real and permanent benefit from this and all similar institutions." The "regulations" adopted by the trustees for the preservation of their treasures do not seem unreasonable. Admission is by ticket, which may be procured of the librarian by addressing him by mail. We have space for but the briefest possible glimpses at these treasures. The chief rarities in typography are found in the north and south libraries on the first floor. In "first editions" it would be difficult to say whether the library prides itself most on its Bibles, its Miltoniana, or its Shakesperiana. In Bibles the whole art of printing with movable types is fully portrayed, the series beginning with the "Mazarin," or Gutenberg, Bible, the first book ever printed with movable types. There are Bibles in all languages. There is the first complete edition of the New Testament in Greek ever published, its title-page dated Basle, 1516. In a glass case in the north library are the four huge "Polyglot" Bibles, marvels of typography, known as the Complutensian, Antwerp, Paris, and English Polyglots. In the same case repose the Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, and Codex Vaticanus,—three great folios, in the original Greek and Hebrew, sacred to scholars as the works on which all authority for the Scriptures rests. Tyndale's New Testament, the first ever printed on English ground, dated London, 1536, is here, and that rare copy of the King James version known as the "Wicked Bible." In this copy the printer, as a satire on the age, omitted the word "not" from the seventh commandment, and for this piece of waggery was heavily fined, the money going, it is said, to establish the first Greek press ever erected at Oxford. Among its "first editions" the library has that of Homer, 1488, and that of Dante, 1472. The Milton collection deserves special notice: in addition to the first editions of the poet's various works, it contains a folio volume of letters and documents pertaining to Milton and his family, with autograph manuscripts giving exceedingly interesting details of the poet's private life and fortunes. One of these is a long original letter from Milton himself to his friend Carlo Dati, the Florentine, with the latter's reply; there are also three receipts or releases signed by Milton's three daughters, Anne Milton, Mary Milton, and Deborah Clarke, a bond from Elizabeth Milton, his widow, to one Randle Timmis, and several other agreements and assignments, with the autographs of attesting witnesses. In folio editions of Shakespeare,

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and in commentaries, glossaries, and dissertations, the library is also exceedingly rich. Its collection of Americana is the wonder and delight of scholars. We must mention the first publication of the printed letter of Columbus, one in each of its four editions, giving the first account of his discoveries in the West, with three autograph letters of Diego Columbus, his son; the "Cosmographia Introductio," printed at St. Die, 1507,—the first book in which a suggestion of the name "America" occurs; and also the first map, printed in 1520, in which the name appears. Here is the first American book printed,—a Mexican work, dated 1543-44; the Bay Psalm-Book, 1640, the first work printed in New England; and the first book printed in New York,—the Laws of the Province, by Bradford, issued in 1691: the Puritan evidently placing the gospel first, and the Knickerbocker the law.

Leaving the typographical treasures of the library, we ascend the broad marble stairway to the floor above, for a brief glance at the paintings and statuary. In the hall devoted to sculpture are many noble and beautiful works of art in marble, the most noticeable perhaps being Powers's "Il Penseroso," the bust of Washington and the "Babes in the Wood" by Crawford, and the statue of Lincoln by Ball. In the picture-gallery on the east are a hundred and fifty subjects. On the south wall hangs a canvas which is at once recognized as the masterpiece. It is Munkacsy's "Blind Milton dictating 'Paradise Lost' to his Daughters." This painting is fitly supported on one side by a portrait of Milton owned for many years by Charles Lamb, and on the other by a copy of Lely's fine portrait of Cromwell.

The Mercantile is the popular library of the city; in no sense a public library, however, for the student or stranger must advance a pretty liberal entrance-fee before he can avail himself of its benefits. This institution is a pleasing example of what can be done by many hands, even though there be little in them: it has reached its present proportions without endowment or State aid, chiefly through the steady, continuous efforts of the merchants' clerks of the city. They have always managed it, one generation succeeding another, and they have in it to-day the largest circulating library in America. Mr. William Wood, a benevolent gentleman who devoted many of his later years to improving the condition of clerks, apprentices, and sailors, is regarded as the founder. Mr. Wood was a native of Boston, and in business there during early life, but later removed to London. After distributing much dole to the poor of that city, he founded a library for clerks in Liverpool, and subsequently one in Boston, the latter being the first of its kind in this country. The various mercantile libraries at Albany, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and other places are said to have been founded on the plan of this. In 1820 Mr. Wood began interesting the merchants' clerks of New York in the project of a library for themselves.

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The first meeting to consider it was held at the Tontine Coffee-House, in Wall Street, on November 9 of that year; and at an adjourned meeting on the 27th of the same month a constitution was formed and officers elected. The young men contributed a little money for the purchase of books, the merchants more, many books were begged or purchased by Mr. Wood, and on the 12th of February, 1821, the library was formally opened, with seven hundred volumes, in an upper room at No. 49 Fulton Street. The first librarian was Mr. John Thompson, who received, it is remembered, one hundred and fifty dollars a year as salary. It was not long before the library, like its fellows, began its migrations up town, Harpers' Building, on Cliff Street, being its second abode. This removal occurred in 1826, and the association had then become so strong that it was able to open a reading-room in connection with its library. Old readers remember that there were four weekly newspapers and seven magazines in this first reading-room. Its membership at that time numbered twelve hundred, there were four thousand four hundred volumes on its shelves, and its annual income amounted to seventeen hundred and fifty dollars.

In 1828 the library was desirous of building: many of the merchants and substantial men of the city were willing to aid it, but doubted the wisdom of trusting such large property interests to the management of young men. They formed, therefore, the Clinton Hall Association, to hold and control real estate for the benefit of the library, with fund shares of one hundred dollars each. The first year thirty-three thousand five hundred dollars had been subscribed, and the corporation began erecting the first Clinton Hall, at the corner of Nassau and Beekman Streets. Here the library remained for nearly a score of years, or until 1853, when a brisk agitation was begun for its removal up-town. A small but determined party favored its removal. The more conservative objected. At length, in January, 1853, the question was put to the vote, and lost by a large majority. But while the excitement was still at its height it was learned that the association had sold Clinton Hall and had purchased the old Italian Opera-House in Astor Place. Here, in May, 1855, the library opened, and here it has since remained, although for several years past the question of a farther removal up-town has been agitated. The constitution of this excellent institution provides that it shall be composed of three classes of members,—active, subscribing, and honorary. Any person engaged on a salary as clerk may become an active member, if approved by the board of directors, on subscribing to the constitution and paying an initiation-fee of one dollar, and two dollars for the first six months, his regular dues thereafter being two dollars semi-annually, in advance. Active members only may vote or hold office. Subscribing members may become such by a payment of five dollars annually or three dollars semi-annually.



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Persons of distinction may be elected honorary members by a vote of three-fourths of the members of the board of direction. The board of direction is composed of a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and eight directors, the former elected annually, the directors four for one year and four for two years. There is also a book committee, which reports one month previous to each annual meeting. From the last annual report of the board it appears that in April, 1883, there were 198,858 books in the library. The total number of members at the same time was 3136, and the honorary members (71), the editors using the library (54), and the Clinton Hall stockholders (1701) swelled the total number of those availing themselves of its privileges to 4962. The total circulation for the year was 112,375 volumes, of which 27,549 were distributed from the branch office, No. 2 Liberty Place, and 1695 books were delivered by messengers at members' residences. In 1870 the circulation was 234,120, the large falling off—over one-half—being due to the era of cheap books. The department of fiction, of course, suffers most. This in 1870 formed about seventy per cent. of the circulation. In 1883 the number of works of fiction circulated was 53,937,—not quite fifty per cent.

To gain a fair idea of the popularity of the library one should spend a mid-winter Saturday afternoon and evening with the librarian and his busy assistants. Early in the afternoon numbers of young ladies leave the shopping and fashionable thoroughfares up-town and throng the library-room. The attendants, all young men, work with increased animation under the stimulus. Books fly from counter to alcoves and return, messenger-boys dart hither and thither, the fair patrons thumb the catalogues and chatter in sad defiance of the rules. They are long in making their selections, and appeal for aid to the librarians. But the last of this class of visitors departs before the six-o'clock dinner or tea, and the attendants have a respite for an hour. At seven the real rush begins, with the advent of the clerks and other patrons employed in store or office during the day, each intent on supplying himself with reading-matter for the next day. From this hour until the closing at nine the librarians are as busy as bees: there is a continual running from counter to alcove and from gallery to gallery. In some of the reports of the librarian interesting data are given of the tastes of readers and the popularity of books. Fiction, as we have seen, leads; but there is a growing taste for scientific and historical works. Buckle, Mill, and Macaulay are favorites, and Tyndall, Huxley, and Lubbock have many readers. The theft of its books is a serious drain on the library each year, but the destruction of its rare and valuable works of reference is still more provoking. Common gratitude, it might seem, would deter persons admitted to the privileges of its alcoves from injuring its



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property. What shall we think, then, of the vandals who during the past year twice cut out the article on political economy in "Appletons' Cyclopaedia," so mutilated Thomson's "Cyclopaedia of the Useful Arts" as to render it valueless, and bore off bodily Storer's "Dictionary of the Solubilities," the second volume of the new edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," Andrews's "Latin Dictionary," and several other valuable works?

There is a library in the city, the Apprentices', on Sixteenth Street, whose existence is hardly known even to New-Yorkers, which is exceedingly interesting to the student as an instance of the good a trades' union may accomplish when its energies are rightly directed. Here is a library of about sixty thousand volumes, with a supplementary reference library of forty thousand seven hundred and fifty works, and a well-equipped reading-room, free of debt, and free to its patrons, and all the result of the well-directed efforts of the "Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen." This society first organized for charitable purposes in 1792, receiving its first charter on the 14th of March of that year. In January, 1821, its charter was amended, the society being empowered to support a school for the education of the children of its deceased and indigent members and for the establishment of an "Apprentices' Library for the use of the apprentices of mechanics in the City of New York." A small library had been opened the year before at 12 Chambers Street, and there the library remained, constantly growing in number of volumes and patrons, till 1835, when it was removed to the old High-School Building, at 472 Broadway, which the society about that time purchased. It remained there until 1878, when it followed the march of population up-town, removing to its present spacious and convenient rooms in Mechanics' Hall, in Sixteenth Street. Strange as it may seem, the Apprentices' is the nearest approach to a public library on a large scale that the city can boast. It is absolutely free to males up to the age of eighteen; after that age it is required of the beneficiaries that they be engaged in some mechanical employment. Ladies who are engaged in any legitimate occupation may partake of its benefits. Books are loaned, the applicants, besides meeting the above conditions, being only required to furnish a guarantor. The total circulation of this excellent institution for 1881-82 was 164,100 volumes, and its beneficial influence on the class reached may be imagined. It is nevertheless a class library; and the fact still remains that New York, with her vast wealth and her splendid public and private charities, has yet to endow the great public library which will place within reach of her citizens the literary wealth of the ages. There is scarcely a disease, it is said, but has its richly-endowed hospital in the city, the number of eleemosynary institutions is legion, but the establishment of a public library, which is usually the first care of a free, rich, intelligent



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community, has been unaccountably neglected. The subject is now receiving the earnest thought of the best people of the city. Considerable difference of opinion exists as to the best method of founding and supporting such an institution. Some argue that this should be done by the city alone, holding that the self-respecting workingman and workingwoman will never patronize a free library instituted solely by private charity. Others urge that such an institution to be successful should be free from city control and entirely the result of private munificence. The latter gentlemen have added to the cogency of their arguments by a practical demonstration. Early in 1880 they organized on a small scale a free circulating library which should exist solely by the benefactions of the public, with the object of furnishing free reading at their homes to the people. The general plan adopted was a central library, with branches in the various wards, by this means bringing the centres of distribution within easy reach of the city's homes. The success of the institution has been such that its development should be carefully followed. It began operations by leasing two rooms of the old mansion, No. 36 Bond Street, and in March, 1880, "moved in," opening with a few hundred volumes donated chiefly from the libraries of its projectors. The first month—March—1044 volumes were circulated. By October this had grown to 4212. The next year—1881-82—the circulation reached 69,280, and it continued to increase until in 1883 it reached 81,233,—an increase of nearly 10,000 over the preceding year. In May, 1883, the library was removed to the comfortable and roomy building, No. 49 Bond Street, which had been purchased and fitted up for it by the trustees. Early in December, 1884, the Ottendorfer Library, at 135 Second Avenue, the first of the projected branch libraries, was opened with 8819 volumes, 4784 of which were in English and 4035 in German, the whole, with the library building, being the gift of Mr. Oswald Ottendorfer, of New York. The branch proved equally popular, having circulated during the past year—1885—97,000 volumes, while the circulation of the main library has increased to 104,000 volumes, the combined circulation of both libraries exceeding that of any other in the city. The percentage of loss has been only one book for 31,768 circulated. The report of the treasurer shows that the annual expenses of the library—about twelve thousand dollars—have been met by voluntary contributions, and that it has a permanent fund of about thirty-two thousand dollars besides its books. These figures prove that libraries of this character will be appreciated, and used by the people. The library committee say, in their last report, that after four years' experience they feel competent to begin the establishment of branch libraries, and observe that at least six of these centres of light and intelligence should be opened in various quarters of the city. It is understood that lack of funds alone prevents the institution from entering on this wider field. When one considers the liberal and too often indiscriminate charities of the metropolis, and reflects that the need and utility of this excellent enterprise have been demonstrated, it seems impossible that pecuniary obstacles will long be allowed to stand in the way of its legitimate development.



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CHARLES BURR TODD.

THE DRAMA IN THE NURSERY.

A Darwinian might find evidence of the pedigree of our species in the inherent taste for mimicry which we share, at all events, with the anthropoid apes. This instinct of mimicry I take to be the humble beginning from which dramatic art has sprung, and it appears in the individual at a very early stage. Perhaps it is even expressed in the first squalls of infancy, though this possibility has been overlooked or obscured by philosophic pedantry. Now anent these squalls. Hegel gravely declares that they indicate a revelation of the baby's exalted nature (oh!), and are meant to inform the public that it feels itself "permeated with the certitude" that it has a right to exact from the external world the satisfaction of its needs. Michelet opines that the squalls reveal the horror felt by the soul at being enslaved to nature. Another writer regards them as an outburst of wrath on the part of the baby at finding itself powerless against environing circumstances. Some early theologians, on the other hand, pronounced squalling to be a proof of innate wickedness; and this view strikes one as being much nearer the mark. But none of these accounts are completely satisfactory. Innate wickedness may supply the conception; it is the dramatic instinct that suggests the means. Here is the real explanation of those yells which embitter the life of a young father and drive the veteran into temporary exile. It happens in this wise. The first aim of a baby—not yours, madam; yours is well known to be an exception, but of other and common babies—is to make itself as widely offensive as possible. The end, indeed, is execrable, but the method is masterly. The baby has an *a priori* intuition that the note of the domestic cat is repulsive to the ear of the human adult. Consequently, what does your baby do but betake itself to a practical study of the caterwaul! After a few conscientious rehearsals a creditable degree of perfection is usually reached, and a series of excruciating performances are forthwith commenced, which last with unbroken success until the stage arrives when correction becomes possible. This process may check the child's taste for imitating the lower animals in some of their less engaging peculiarities, but his dramatic instincts will be diverted with a refreshing promptness to the congenial subjects of parent or nurse.

No sooner is your son and heir invested with the full dignity of knickerbockers than he begins to celebrate this rise in the social scale by "playing at being papa." The author of "Vice Versa" has drawn an amusing picture of the discomforts to papa which an exchange of environment with his school-boy son might involve. But there is another side to the question; and at Christmas-time, for instance, most papas would probably be glad enough to exchange the joys and responsibilities of paternity for the simple taste which can tackle plum-pudding and the youthful digestion for which this delicacy has no terrors. However, while it is impossible, or at least inexpedient, for papa to play at being his own urchin, the latter is restrained by no considerations, moral or otherwise, from attempting to personate his papa.



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It is often said sententiously that the child is the father of the man. In this case most of us should blush for our parentage. It will be conceded at once (subject, of course, to special reservations in favor of individual brats) that the baby is the most detestable of created beings. But its physical impotence to some extent neutralizes its moral baseness. In the child the deviltries of the baby are partially curbed, but this loss is compensated for by superior bodily powers. Now, the virtuous child—if such a conception can be framed—when representing papa would delight to dwell on the better side of the paternal character, the finer feelings, the flashes of genius, the sallies of wit, the little touches of tenderness and romance, and so forth. Very likely; but the actual child does just the reverse of this. Is there a trivial weakness, a venial shortcoming, a microscopic spot of imperfection anywhere? The ruthless little imp has marked it for his own, and will infallibly reproduce it, certainly before your servants, and possibly before your friends.

“Now we’ll play at being in church,” quoth Master George in lordly wise to his little sisters. “I’m papa.” Whereupon he will twist himself into an unseemly tangle of legs and arms which is simply a barbarous travesty of the attitude of studied grace with which you drink in the sermon in the corner of your family pew.

“Master George, you mustn’t,” interposes the housemaid, in a tone of faint rebuke, adding, however, with a thrill of generous appreciation, “Law, ’ow funny the child is, and as like as like!” Applause is delicious to every actor, and under its stimulus your first-born essays a fresh flight. Above the laughter of the nurses and the admiring shrieks of his sisters there rises a weird sound, as of a sucking pig *in extremis*. Your son, my unfortunate friend, is attempting, with his childish treble pipes, to formulate a masculine snore. This is a gross calumny. You never—stop!—well, on one occasion perhaps—but then there were extenuating circumstances. Very likely; but the child has grasped the fact without the circumstances, and has framed his conclusion as a universal proposition. It is a most improper induction, I admit; but logic, like some other things, is not to be looked for in children.

Next comes mamma’s turn. Perhaps she has weakly yielded on some occasion to young hopeful’s entreaties that he might come down to the kitchen with her to order dinner. By the perverse luck that waits on poor mortals, there happened on that very day to be a passage of arms between mistress and cook. Rapidly forgotten by the principals, it has been carefully stored up in the memory of the witness, who will subsequently bestow an immense amount of misguided energy in teaching a young sister to reproduce, with appropriate gesture and intonation, “Cook, I desire that you will not speak to me in that way. I am extremely displeased with you, and I shall acquaint your master with your conduct.”



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Small sisters, by the way, may be made to serve a variety of useful purposes of a dramatic or semi-dramatic nature. They may safely be cast for the unpleasant or uninteresting characters of the nursery drama. They form convenient targets for the development of their brothers' marksmanship; and they make excellent horses for their brothers to drive, and, it may be added, for their brothers to flog.

When the subjects afforded by its immediate surroundings are exhausted, Theatre Royal Nursery turns to fiction or history for materials. And here, too, the perversity of childhood is displayed. It is not the virtuous, the benevolent, the amiable, that your child delights to imitate, but rather the tyrant and the destroyer, the ogre who subsists in rude plenty on the peasantry of the neighborhood, or the dragon who is restricted by taste or convention to one young lady *per diem*, till the national stock is exhausted, or the inevitable knight turns up to supply the proper dramatic finale.

The varied incident of the "Pilgrim's Progress," its romance, and the weird fascination of its goblins and monsters, make it a favorite source of dramatic adaptations. And here, if any man doubt the doctrine of original sin, let him note the fierce competition among the youngsters for the part of Apollyon, and put his doubts from him. With a little care a great many scenes may be selected from this inimitable work. Christian's entry into the haven of refuge in the early part of his pilgrimage can be effectively reproduced in the nursery. It will be remembered that the approach was commanded by a castle of Beelzebub's, from which pilgrims were assailed by a shower of arrows. It is this that gives the episode its charm. One child is of course obliged to sacrifice his inclinations and personate Christian. The rest eagerly take service under Beelzebub and become the persecuting garrison. The "properties" required are of the simplest kind. The nursery sofa or settee—a position of great natural strength—is further fortified with chairs and other furniture to represent the stronghold of the enemy. Christian should be equipped with a wide-awake hat, a stick, and a great-coat (papa's will do, or, better still, a visitor's), with a stool wrapped up in a towel and slung over his shoulders to do duty as the bundle of sins. He is then made to totter along to a "practical" gate (two chairs are the right thing) at the far end of the room, while the hosts of darkness hurl boots, balls, and other suitable missiles at him from the sofa. Sometimes the original is faithfully copied, and bows and arrows are employed; but this is, on the whole, a mistake: there is some chance of Christian being really injured, and this, though of course no objection in itself, is apt to provoke a summary interference by the authorities. Christian's passage through the Valley of the Shadow of Death is another favorite piece. Here, too, there are great opportunities for an enterprising demon. It will be necessary, however, for the success of the performance that Christian should abandon his strictly defensive attitude in the narrative and lay about him with sufficient energy to produce a general scrimmage.



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“Robinson Crusoe” is a treasure-house of situations, some of which gain a piquancy from the dash of the diabolical with which Crusoe’s terrors invested them. Even where this is wanting there is plenty of bloodshed to take its place, and a happy combination of horrors is supplied by the cannibal feast which Crusoe interrupts. The youngest member of the troupe is, on the whole, the best victim; but, failing this, any pet animal sufficiently lazy or good-tempered to endure the process makes a tolerable substitute. “Masterman Ready,” “The Swiss Family Robinson,” and other cognate works, together with appropriate selections from sacred and profane history, are adapted with a shamelessness which would make a dramatic author’s blood run cold.

Lions, tigers, and wild beasts generally are common objects of nursery imitation, either from a genuine admiration of their qualities or from the mysterious craving for locomotion on all-fours with which children seem possessed. This branch of the art, however, struggles under some difficulties. It has, of course, to contend with the undisguised opposition of authority. This is hardly a matter for marvel, and perhaps not even a matter for regret. A prudential regard for the knees of puerile knickerbockers and the corresponding region of feminine frocks may explain a good deal of parental discouragement in the matter; and there is little public sympathy to counteract this, for it is felt that the total decay of these mimes would not be a serious loss either to dramatic art or to peace and quietness.

In one sense, no doubt, these amusements of childhood are matters of little moment; but, in spite of their seeming triviality, they have a genuine importance which should not be overlooked. The spontaneous exhibitions of children at play often reveal latent tastes, tendencies, or traits of character to one who is able to interpret them aright. If this be so,—and it is no longer open to doubt,—it is clear that even infant acting may furnish hints and assistance of the highest value to an intelligent system of education. It is true, no doubt, that till quite lately any such possibility was steadily ignored; but it is only quite lately that anything like an intelligent system of early education has been attempted. The idiosyncrasies of a child, instead of being carefully observed, were either disregarded as meaningless or repressed as being naughty. No greater mistake could be possible; and this at last is beginning to be understood. The first struggles of a young consciousness to express itself externally are nearly always eccentric, and often seem perverse. But this is nothing more than we ought to expect. The oddities of a child’s conduct are in reality nothing else than direct expressions of character, uncurbed by the conventions which regulate the demeanor of adults, or direct revelations of some taste or aptitude, which education may foster, but which neglect will hardly crush. The world contains a woful



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number of human pegs thrust forcibly into holes which do not fit them, and the world's work suffers proportionately from this misapplication of energy. The mischief is abundantly clear, but the remedy, if we do not shut our eyes to it, is tolerably clear also. Just as this condition of things is largely due to our unscientific neglect of variations in character and the wooden system of education which this neglect has produced, so we may expect to see its evils disappear by an abolition of the one and a reform of the other. If the world be indeed a stage, with all humanity for its *corps dramatique* it must surely be well for the success of the performance that the cast should take account of individual aptitudes, and that to each player should be allotted the part which he can best support in the great drama of Life.

NORMAN PEARSON.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

"The Man who Laughs."

The degree of culture and good breeding which a man possesses may be very correctly determined by the way he laughs. The primeval savage, from whom we trace descent, was distinguished above everything else by his demonstrativeness; and there is much in our present type of social manners and conduct which betrays our barbarous origin. The brute-like sounds that escape from the human throat in the exercise of laughter, the coarse guffaw, the hoarse chuckle, and the high, cackling tones in which many of the feminine half of the world express their sense of amusement, attest very painfully the animal nature within us. It was Emerson, I believe, who expressed a dislike of all loud laughter; and it is difficult to imagine the scene or occasion which could draw from that serene and even-minded philosopher a broader expression of amusement than that conveyed in the "inscrutable smile" which Whipple describes as his most characteristic feature. Yet Emerson was by no means wanting in appreciation of the comic. On the contrary, he had an abiding sense of humor, and it was this—a keen and lively perception of the grotesque, derived as part of his Yankee inheritance—that kept him from uniting in many of the extravagant reform movements of the day. Few of us, however, even under the sanction of an Emerson, would wish to dispense with all sound of laughter.

The memory of a friend's voice, in which certain laughing notes and tones are inextricably mingled with the graver inflections of common speech, is almost as dear as the vision of his countenance or the warm pressure of his hand. Yet among such remembrances we hold others, of those from whom the sound of open laughter is seldom heard, the absence of which, however, denotes no diminished sense of the humorous and amusing. A quick, responsive smile, a flash or glance of the eye, a

kindling countenance, serve as substitutes for true laughter, and we do not miss the sound of that which is supplied in a finer and often truer quality.



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The freest, purest laughter is that of childhood, which is as spontaneous as the song of birds. It is impossible that the laughter of older people should retain this sound of perfect music. Knowledge of life and the world has entered in to mar the natural harmonics of the human voice, which not all the skill and efforts of the vocal culturists can ever again restore. It is only those who in attaining the years and stature of manhood have retained the nature of the child, its first unconscious truth and simplicity, whose laughter is wholly pleasant to hear. I recall the laugh of a friend which corresponds to this description, a laugh as pure and melodious, as guiltless of premeditated art or intention, as the notes of the rising lark; yet its owner is a man of wide worldly experience. It is natural that I, who know my friend so well, should find in this peculiarly happy laugh of his the sign and test of that type of high, sincere manhood which he represents; but it is a dangerous business, this attempting to define the character and disposition of people by the turn of an eyelid, the curve of a lip, or a particular vocal shade and inflection. Not only has Art learned to imitate Nature very closely, but Nature herself plays many a trick upon our credulity in matters of this kind. Upon a woman who owns no higher motive than low and selfish cunning she bestows the musical tones of a seraph, as she sheathes the sharp claws of all her feline progeny in cases of softest fur. Rosamond Vincy is not the only example which might be furnished, either in or out of print, in proof that a low, soft voice, that excellent thing in woman, may have a wrongly persuasive accent, luring to disappointment and death, like the Lorelei's song, to which the harsh tones of the most strong-minded Xantippe are to be preferred.

Still, it does seem that, however right Shakespeare was when he said a man may smile and smile and be a villain still, no real villain could indulge in hearty, spontaneous laughter. Much smiling is one of the thin disguises in which a certain kind of knavery seeks to hide itself, but it is easy to conjecture that the low ruffian type of villain, like that seen in Bill Sykes and Jonas Chuzzlewit, neither laughs nor smiles, being as destitute of the courage to listen to the sound of its own voice as of the wit that summons artifice to its aid in protection of its guilty devices.

The ghastly effect of guilt laughing with constrained glee to hide suspicion of itself from the eyes of innocence is vividly portrayed in Irving's performance of "The Bells," in the scene where Mathias, by a supreme effort of will, joins in Christian's laugh over the supposition that it might have been his, the respected burgomaster's, limekiln in which the body of the Polish Jew was burned. Genuine laughter must spring from a pure and undefiled source. It may not always be of tuneful quality, but it must at least contain the note of sincerity. I have



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in mind the outbursts of deep-chested sound with which another friend evinces his appreciation of a humorous remark or incident, a laugh which many fastidious people would pronounce too hard and rough by half, bending their heads and darting from under, as if suddenly assailed by some rude nor'wester. But I like the pleasant shock bestowed in those strong, breezy tones, and the feeling of rejuvenation and new expectancy which it imparts.

Another laugh echoes in memory as I write, a girl's laugh this time, not "idle and foolish and sweet," as such have been described, but clear, and strong, and odd almost to the point of the ludicrous, yet charmingly natural withal. A young woman's laugh is apt to begin at the highest note, and, running down the scale, to end in a sigh of mingled relief and exhaustion an octave or so lower down. This particular girl, however, takes the other way, and, running her chromatic neatly up from about middle C, pauses for a breath, and then astonishes her audience by striking off two perfectly attuned notes several degrees higher up, hitting her mark with the ease and deftness of a prima donna. So odd and surprising a laugh is sure to be quickly infectious, and its owner is never at a loss for company in her merriment, while a cheerful temper, unclouded by a shade of envy or suspicion, is not in the least disturbed by the knowledge that others are laughing at as well as with her.

The question of what we shall laugh at deserves more attention than our manner of laughing. "There is nothing," says Goethe, "in which people more betray their character than in what they find to laugh at," adding, "The man of understanding finds almost everything ridiculous, the man of thought scarcely anything." This last corresponds somewhat to a sentiment found in Horace Walpole: "Life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel."

With many people laughter seems to be an appetite, which grows by what it feeds on, until all power of discrimination between the finer and the more vulgar forms of wit is lost. Certain it is that the habit of laughter is as easy to fall into as it is dangerous to all social dignity. The muscles of the mouth have a natural upward curve,—a fact which speaks well for the disposition of Mother Nature who made us, and may also be held to signify that there are more things in the world deserving our approval than our condemnation. But the hideous spectacle presented in the contorted visage of Hugo's great character contains a wholesome warning even for us of a later age; for there is a social tyranny, almost as potent as the kingly despotism which ruled the world centuries ago, that would fain shape the features of its victims after one artificial pattern. We laugh too much, from which it necessarily follows that we often laugh at the wrong things, a fault which betrays intellectual weakness as well as moral cupidity. The determining quality in true laughter lies in the degree of innocent mirth it gives expression to; and when jealous satire, envy, or malice add their dissonant note to its sound, its finest effect is destroyed and its opportunity lost.



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C.P.W.

Why we Forget Names.

In the last years of his life the venerated Emerson lost his memory of names. In instance of this many will remember the story told about him when returning from the funeral of his friend Longfellow. Walking away from the cemetery with his companion, he said, "That gentleman whose funeral we have just attended was a sweet and beautiful soul, but I cannot recall his name." The little anecdote has something very touching about it,—the old man asking for the name of the life-long friend, "the gentleman whose funeral we have just attended."

When I saw Mr. Emerson a year prior to his own death, this defect of memory was very noticeable, and extended even to the names of common objects, so that in talking he would use quaint, roundabout expressions to supply the place of missing words. He would call a church, for instance, "that building in the town where all the people go on Sunday."

This loss of memory of names is very common with old people, but it is not confined to them. Almost every one has at some time experienced the peculiar, the almost desperate, feeling of trying to recall a name that will not come. It is at our tongue's end; we know just what sort of a name it is; it begins with a *B*; yet did we try for a year it would not come. One curious fact about the phenomenon is that it seems to be contagious. If one person suddenly finds himself unable to recall a name, the person with whom he is talking will stick at it also. The name almost always gets the best of them, and they have to say, "Yes, I know what you mean," and go on with their talk.

I have never seen an explanation of this name-forgetfulness; but it is not difficult to find a reason for it. What needs explaining is that names are so obstinate, and grow more obstinate the harder we try, while other things we have forgotten and are trying to recall generally yield themselves to our efforts. Moreover, in other cases of forgetfulness we never experience that peculiar and most exasperating feature of name-forgetfulness,—the feeling that we know the word perfectly well all the time. This last fact, indeed, seems to show that we have not forgotten the name at all, but have simply lost the clue to it.

Now, let us inquire why this clue is so hard to find. Scientific men who study the human mind and make a business of explaining thought, emotion, memory, and the like, have an expression which they use frequently, and which sounds difficult, but which really it is very easy as well as interesting to understand. They speak of the *association of ideas*. The association of ideas means simply the fact which every one has noticed, that one thing tends to call up another in the mind. When you recall a certain sleigh-ride last winter, you remember that you put hot bricks in the sleigh; and this reminds you that you

were intending to heat a warming-pan for the bed to-night; and the thought of warming the bed makes



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you think of poor President Garfield's sickness, during which they tried to cool his room with ice. Each of these thoughts (ideas) has evidently called up another connected—associated—with it in some way. This is the association of ideas: it is a law that governs almost all our thinking, as any one may discover by going back over his own thoughts. Perhaps an easier way to discover it will be to observe the rapid talk of an afternoon caller on the family, and see how the conversation skips from one subject to another which the last suggested, and from that to another suggested by this, and so on.

Just this association of ideas it is which enables us to recall things we have forgotten. Our ideas on any subject—say that sleigh-ride last winter—resemble a lot of balls some distance apart in a room, but all connected by strings. If there is any particular ball we cannot find,—that is, some fact we cannot remember,—then if we pull the neighboring balls it is likely that they by the connecting strings will bring the missing ball into sight. To illustrate this, suppose that you cannot remember the route of that sleigh-ride. You recall carefully all the circumstances associated with the ride, in hopes that some one of them will suggest the route that was taken. You think of your companions, of the moon being full, of having borrowed extra robes, of the hot bricks—Ah, there is a clue! The bricks were reheated somewhere. Where was it? They were placed on a stove,—on a red-hot stove with a loafers' foot-rail about it. That settles it. Such stoves are found only in country grocery-stores; and now it all comes back to you. The ride was by the hill road to Smith's Corners. It is as if there were a string from the hot-bricks idea to the idea that the bricks were reheated, to this necessarily being done on a stove, to the peculiar kind of stove it was done on, to the only place in the neighborhood where such a stove could be, to Smith's Corners; and this string has led you, like a clue, to the fact you desired to remember.

We can now return to the question asked above: In trying to recall names, why is it so difficult to find a clue? After what has been said, the question can be put in a better form: Why does not the association of ideas enable us to recall names as it does other things? The answer is, that names (proper names) have very few associations, very few strings, or clues, leading to them. It is easy to see this; for suppose you moved away from the neighborhood of that sleigh-ride many years before, and in thinking over past times find yourself unable to recall the name of the Corners where the store stood. The place can be remembered perfectly, and a thousand circumstances connected with it, but they furnish no clue to the name: the circumstances might all remain the same and the name be any other as well. The only association the name has is with an indistinct memory of how it sounded. It was of two words: the second was something like Hollow, or Cross roads, or Crossing; the first began with an S. But it is vain to seek for it: no clue leads to it. Were it the ride you sought to remember, many of its details could be recalled, some of which might lead to the desired fact; but a name has no

details, and it is only possible to say of it that it sounded so and so, if it is possible to say that.



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It may be asked, how, then, is it that we do remember some names, as those in use every day? Just as the multiplication-table is remembered,—by force of familiarity. Constant repetition engraves them in the mind. When in old age the vigor of the mind lessens, the engraving wears out and names are hard to recall, since there is no other clue to them than this engraved record.

There may be mentioned one slight help in recalling names when the case is important or desperate. It consists in going back to the period when the name was known and deliberately writing out a circumstantial account of all the connected incidents, mentioning names of persons and places whenever they can be remembered. If this is done in a casual way, without thinking of the purpose in view,—as if one were sending a gossipy letter of personal history to a friend,—the mind falls into an automatic condition that may result in producing the desired name itself. Every one must have observed that it is this automatic activity of the mind, and not conscious effort, which recovers lost names most successfully. We “think of them afterwards.”

XENOS CLARK.

A Reminiscence of Harriet Martineau.

It is more than fifty years since I, a mere child, spent a summer with my parents in a sandy young city of Indiana. Eight or nine hundred souls, perhaps more, were already anchored within its borders. Chicago, a lusty infant just over the line, her feet blackened with prairie mud, made faces, called names, and ridiculed its soil and architecture. Nevertheless it was a valiant little city, even though its streets were rivers of shifting sand, through which “prairie-schooners” were toilsomely dragged by heavy oxen or a string of chubby ponies,—these last a gift from the coppery Indian to the country he was fast forsaking. Clouds of clear grit drifted into open casements on every passing breeze, or, if a gale arose, were driven through every crevice. Our little city was cradled amid the shifting sand-hills on Michigan’s wave-beaten shore. Indeed, it had received the name of the grand old lake in loving baptism, and was pluckily determined to wear it worthily. Its buildings were wholly of wood, and hastily constructed, some not entirely unpretentious, while others tilted on legs, as if in readiness at shortest notice to take to their heels and skip away. In those early days there was only the round yellow-bodied coach swinging on leathern straps, or the heavy lumber-wagon, to accommodate the tide of travel already setting westward. It was a daily delight to listen to the inspiring toot of the driver’s horn and the crack of his long whip, as, with six steaming horses, he swung his dusty passengers in a final grand flourish up to the hospitable door of the inn.



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One memorable morning brought to the unique little town a literary lion,—a woman of great heart, clear brain, and powerful pen,—in short, Harriet Martineau. Her travelling companions were a professor, his comely wife, and their eight-year-old son. The last-named was much petted by Miss Martineau, and still flourishes in perennial youth on many pages of her books of American travel. Michigan City felt honored in its transient guest. The whisper that a real live author was among us filled the inn hall with a changing throng eager to obtain a glimpse of the celebrity. Not among the least of these were “the two little girls” she mentions in her “Society in America,” page 253. At breakfast the party served their sharpened appetites quite like ordinary folk,—Miss Martineau in thoughtful quiet, broken now and again by a brisk question darted at the professor, who answered in a deliberate learned way that was quite impressive. A shiver of disgust ruffled his plump features at the absence of cream, which the host excused by the statement that, the population having outgrown its flocks and herds, milk was held sacred to the use of babes. Miss Martineau listened to the professor’s complaints with a twinkle of mirth in her eyes, while that indignant gentleman vigorously applied himself to the solid edibles at hand. Shortly after breakfast the strangers sallied forth in search of floral treasures, over the low sand-hills stretching toward the lake (a spur of which penetrated the main street), where in the face of the sandy drift nestled a shanty quite like the “dug-out” of the timberless lands in Kansas and New Mexico. The tomb-like structure, half buried in sand, only its front being visible, seemed to afford Miss Martineau no end of surprised amusement as she climbed to its submerged roof on her way to the summit of the hill. A window-garden of tittering young women merrily watched the progress of the quick-stepping Englishwoman, and, really, there was some provocation to mirth, from their stand-point. Anything approaching a *blanket*, plain, plaided, or striped, had never disported itself before their astonished gaze as a part of feminine apparel, except on the back of a grimy squaw. Of blanket-shawls, soon to become a staple article of trade, the Western women had not then even heard; and here was a civilized and cultivated creature enveloped in what seemed to be a gay trophy wrested from the bed-furniture! Then, too, the “only sweet thing” in bonnets was the demure “cottage,” fashioned of fine straw, while the woman in view sported a coarse, pied affair, whose turret-like crown and flaring brim pointed ambitiously skyward. Stout boots completed the costume criticised and laughed over by the merry maidens who yet stood in wholesome awe of the presence of the wearer. With what a wealth of gorgeous wild flowers and plummy ferns the pilgrims came laden on their return! Quoting from “Society in America,” page 253, Miss Martineau says, “The scene was like what I had always fancied the Norway coast, but for the wild flowers, which grew among the pines on the slope almost into the tide. I longed to spend an entire day on this flowery and shadowy margin of the inland sea. I plucked handfuls of pea-vine and other trailing flowers, which seemed to run all over the ground.”



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Miss Martineau piled her treasures on a table and culled the specimens worthy of pressing, and it seemed to pain her to reject the least promising of her perishable plunder. She must have had a passion for flowers, judging from the tenderness with which she handled the lovely fronds and delicate petals under inspection, while her mouth was continually open in admiring exclamation.

And now came what I still fondly remember as the *Musical*. A little comrade came in the twilight to sing songs with me. With arms interlaced, we paced the upper hall, vociferously warbling as breath was given us, when a door opened, and the gifted, dark-faced woman, with kindly eyes, beamed out on us. "Come," she called, "come in here, children, and sing your songs for me: I am very fond of music." Very bashfully we signified our willingness to oblige,—indeed, we dared not do otherwise,—and sidled into the room. Closing the door, our hostess curled herself comfortably on a gayly-cushioned lounge, and proceeded to adjust a serpent-like, squirming appendage to her ear. With an encouraging nod, she bade us commence, closing her eyes meanwhile with an air of expectant rapture. But the vibrating trumpet stirred our foolish souls to explosive laughter, partially smothered in a simultaneous strangled cough. Wondering at the double paroxysm and subsequent hush of shame, she unclosed her eyes, softly murmuring, "Don't be bashful nor afraid, my dears. I am very far from home, and you can make me very happy, if you will. Pray begin at once, and then I will also sing for you." Taking courage, we piped as bidden, rendering in a childish way the strains of "Blue-Eyed Mary," "Comin' through the Rye," "I'd be a Butterfly," and "Auld Lang Syne," Our audience, with bright, attentive looks, regarded the performance in pleased approval, softly tapping time on her knee with a slender finger.

"Now it is my turn," said Miss Martineau. Straightening herself and casting aside the trumpet, primly folding her hands and pursing her mouth curiously, she began, in a high, quavering voice, a song whose burden was the fixed objection on the part of a certain damsel to forsaking the pleasures of the world for the seclusion and safety of a convent:

Now, is it not a pity such a pretty girl as I
Should be sent to a nunnery to pine away and die?
But I *won't* be a nun,— no, I *won't* be a *nun*;
I'm so fond of *pleasure* that I *cannot* be a nun.

It is impossible to give an idea of the jerky style of the lady's singing which so tickled our sensitive ears. At every repetition of the refrain, Susy and I squeezed our locked fingers spasmodically in order to suppress the unseemly laughter bubbling to our lips. At every emphatic word she nodded at us merrily, thus adding to our inward disquiet.

I like now, when picturing Harriet Martineau entertaining with noble themes the men and women of letters she drew around her in England and America, to remember, in

connection with her strong, plain face and brilliant intellect, the simple kindness with which she once unbent to a brace of little Hoosier maids in the “Far West.”



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F.C.M.

LITERATURE OF THE DAY.

“Louis Agassiz: His Life and Correspondence[A].” Edited by Elizabeth Cary Agassiz. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The northeastern corner of the ancient Pays de Vaud, only part of which is included in the modern canton, is little known to tourists. It lies away from the chief lines of travel, and it has neither the magnificent views that draw the visitor aside to Orbe nor the associations that induce him to stop at Coppet or Clarens. Yet its breezy upland plains and its quiet villages—some of them once populous and prosperous towns—are not devoid of charm, or of the interest connected with historical epochs and famous names. The “lone wall” and “lonelier column” at Avenches date from the period when this was the Roman capital of Helvetia. Morat still shows many a mark and relic of its siege by Charles the Bold and of the overthrow of his forces by the Swiss. Payerne was the birthplace, in 1779, of Jomini, the greatest of all writers on military operations, whose precocious genius, while he was a mere stripling and before he had witnessed any battles or manoeuvres, penetrated the secret of Bonaparte’s combinations and victorious campaigns, which veteran commanders were watching with mere wonderment and dismay. At Motiers, a few miles farther north, was born, in 1807, Louis Agassiz, who at an equally early age displayed a like intuitive comprehension of many of the workings of Nature, and who subsequently became the chief exponent of the glacial theory and the highest authority on the structure and classification of fishes. Each of these two men gave his ripest powers and longest labors to a great country far from their common home,—Jomini to Russia, Agassiz to the United States; and, dissimilar as were their objects and pursuits, their intellectual resemblance was fundamental. The pre-eminent quality of each was the power of rapid generalization, of mastering and subordinating details, of grasping and applying principles and laws. Agassiz differed as much from an animal-loving collector like Frank Buckland, whose father was one of his stanchest friends and co-workers, as Jomini differed from a fighting general like Ney, to whom he suggested the movements that resulted in the French victory at Bautzen. Switzerland is equally proud of the great strategist and the great naturalist, but to Americans in general the former is at the most a mere name, while the career of the latter is an object of wide-spread and even national interest.

In the volumes before us the story of that career is clearly and completely, yet concisely, set forth. Readers of biography who delight mainly in social gossip may complain of the absence of everything of the kind; but such matter neither belonged to the subject nor was required for its elucidation. We are prone to draw a distinction between what we call a man’s personal life and the larger and



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more active part of his existence, and to fancy that the clue to his character lies in some minor idiosyncrasies, or in habits and tastes that were perhaps accidentally formed. But every earnest worker reveals in his methods and achievements not alone his intellectual capacities, but all the deep and essential qualities of his nature. With Agassiz this was conspicuously the case. The enthusiasm, the singleness of purpose, and the indefatigable energy that constituted the *fond*, so to speak, of his character were as open to view as the features of his countenance. Hence the single and strong impression he produced on all with whom he came in contact, the sympathy he so quickly kindled, and the co-operation he so readily enlisted. It was easily perceived that he was no self-seeker, that no thought of personal interest mingled with his devotion to science, and that he was not more intent on absorbing knowledge than desirous of diffusing it. No one has ever more fully and happily blended the qualities of student and teacher, and it was in this double capacity that he became so public and prominent a figure and exerted so wide an influence in the country of his adoption.

Some men overcome obstacles and attain their ends by sheer persistency of will, others by tact and persuasiveness, while there is a third class, before whom the barred doors open as they are successively approached, through what are called either fortunate accidents or Providential interventions, but are seen, on closer inspection, to have been the direct and natural effects of the force unconsciously exerted by an harmonious combination of qualities. Agassiz's career was full of such instances. The insistent desire of his parents, while stinting themselves to secure his education, that he should adopt a bread-winning profession, yielded, not to any urgent appeals or dogged display of resolution, but to the proof given by his labors that he was choosing more wisely for himself. Cuvier, without any request or expectation, resigned to the neophyte who, after following in his footsteps, was outstripping him in certain lines, drawings and notes prepared for his own use. Humboldt, at a critical moment, saved him from the necessity for abandoning his projects by an unsolicited loan, supplemented by many further acts of assistance of a different kind. In England every possible facility and aid was afforded to him as well by private individuals as by public institutions. In America, men like Mr. Nathaniel Thayer and Mr. John Anderson needed only in some chance way to become acquainted with his plans to be ready to provide the means for carrying them out. It was the same on all occasions. The United States government, the Coast Survey, the legislature of Massachusetts, private individuals throughout the country, showed a rare willingness, and even eagerness, to forward his views. The man and the object were identified in people's minds, and, as in all such cases, a feeling was roused and an impulse generated which could have sprung from no other source.

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The attractiveness and charm which everybody seems to have found in him had perhaps the same origin. It does not appear that his nature was peculiarly sympathetic, that it was through any unusual flow and warmth of feeling toward others that he so quickly became the object of their attachment or regard. Of course, we do not intend to intimate that he was deficient in strength of affection or in the least degree cold or unresponsive. But his "magnetism," to use the current word, lay in the ardor and singleness of his devotion to science, not as an abstraction, but as a potent agency in civilization, in the union of elevation with enthusiasm, in an openness that seemed to reveal everything, yet nothing that should have been hidden. Hence this biography, little as it deals with purely personal matters, awakens an interest of precisely the same kind as that which the living Agassiz was accustomed to excite. For the student of comparative zoology or of glacial action all that is here told about these subjects can have only an historical value. But no reader can follow the successive steps of a career that was always in the truest sense upward without being touched by that inspiring influence which it constantly diffused, and which Americans, above all others, have reason to hold in grateful remembrance.

Illustrated Books.

"The Sermon on the Mount." Boston: Roberts Brothers.

"Poems of Nature." By John Greenleaf Whittier. Illustrated from Nature by Elbridge Kingsley. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

"Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." A Romaunt. By Lord Byron. Boston: Ticknor & Co.

"The Last Leaf." Poem. By Oliver Wendell Holmes. Illustrated by George Wharton Edwards and F. Hopkinson Smith. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

"Pepper and Salt; or, Seasoning for Young Folks." Prepared by Howard Pyle. New York: Harper & Brothers.

"Davy the Goblin; or, What Followed Reading 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,'" By Charles E. Carryl. Boston; Ticknor & Co.

"Bric-a-Brac Stories." By Mrs. Burton Harrison. Illustrated by Walter Crane. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Rudder Grange." By Frank R. Stockton. Illustrated by A.B. Frost. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

In turning over the pictorial books of the season one experiences a genuine pleasure in coming upon this illustrated edition of "The Sermon on the Mount," which belongs to a high order of merit from its satisfactory interpretation of the subject and the beauty of its general design and careful detail. It is, of course, a modern performance, and nothing is

more characteristic of most modern art than that it does consciously, from reminiscence and with a reaching after certain effects, what was once done simply, intuitively, and from the urgency of poetic feeling. A great difference must naturally exist not only in the outward mode but in the spirit of



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a group of modern artists who set to work to illuminate a sacred text, and that in which the task was undertaken by cloistered monks in whose gray lives a longing for beauty, for color, found expression only here. Thus one realizes that the decorative borders—which one looks at over and over again in this volume, and which actually satisfy the eye—do not represent the artist's own actual dreams, but are founded instead upon the ecstatic visions of Fra Angelico and others as they bent over their work in their silent cells; but they are beautiful nevertheless, far transcend what is merely decorative, and are full of imagination and feeling. In fact, into this frame-work, which might have contained nothing beyond conventional imitation, Mr. Smith has put vivid touches which show that he has the faculty to conceive and the skill to handle which belong to the true artist. It would be easy to instance several of these borders as remarkably good in their way: that which surrounds the "Lord's Prayer" suggests dazzling effects in jewelled glass. The book is made up in a delightful way, with full-page pictures interspersed with vignettes illustrating the text and set round with those richly-designed borders to which we have alluded. Mr. Fenn's pictures of actual places in the Holy Land, besides striking the key-note of veracity which puts us in a mood to see the whole story under fresh lights, are full of beauty and charm. We are inclined to like everything in the book, although in the various ways in which the beatitudes are interpreted we are conscious of some incongruities, and wish that certain illustrations had made way for designs showing more unity of conception among the artists. For instance, Mr. Church's introduction of a New England scene of tomahawking Indians cannot be said to throw a flood of light upon the meaning of "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Mr. St. John Harper's pictures are a trifle obscure; but their obscurity veils their want of pertinence and suggests subtleties that flatter the imagination into fitting the application to suit itself. Any mention of the book which failed to include Mr. Copeland's work on the engrossed text would be altogether inadequate, for it is very perfect, very beautiful, full of surprises and delightful quaintnesses, and helps to make the book what it actually is, a complete whole, which really answers our wishes of what an illustrated book should be.

Mr. Whittier's "Poems of Nature" make the felicitous occasion this year for one of Messrs. Houghton & Mifflin's rich and attractive series of their authors' selected works. An admirable etching of the poet faces the title-page, and the poems, chiefly descriptive of New England scenes, are illustrated by designs from nature, the work of a single artist. That Mr. Kingsley is in sympathy with the poet, and that he is an impassioned lover of nature and the various moods of nature, no one can doubt, and the impression of truthfulness

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which his work produces on the mind makes his pictures interesting and full of sentiment even when they are not entirely successful. Perhaps he aims in general at rather too large effects to bring them out vividly; for when the scene he chooses is least composite he is at his best. "Deer Island Pines," for example, and "The Merrimac" are excellent, and we find much charm in "A Winter Scene" and in a Boughton-like "November Afternoon."

There is a certain temerity in undertaking to illustrate a work like "Childe Harold," which, if it has been read at all, has aroused its own distinct conceptions of scenery in the mind of its reader which must make any ordinary pictures setting off familiar lines tame and insipid. It is the triumph of art when the artist can bring out meanings and beauties in the text hitherto undreamed of; but we acquit the artists of the present book of any failure in that respect, for their intention seems never to have gone beyond amiable commonplace. The little cuts are all pleasant, trim, and, if not suggestive, at least not sufficiently the reverse to be displeasing. The head-pieces to the cantos are extremely good, and the two scenes "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods" and "There is a rapture on the lonely shore" we like sufficiently well to exempt them from the accusation of insipidity.

Happy the poet who lives to see one of the poems he carelessly flung off in early youth come back to him in his old age in such a setting as is here given to Dr. Holmes's "Last Leaf." "Just when it was written," the author says in his delightful and characteristic "Envoi" to the reader, "I cannot exactly say, nor in what paper or periodical it was first published. It must have been written before April, 1833,"—that is, when he was in the early twenties. The poem has always been a favorite, its sentiment suggesting Lamb's "All, all are gone, the old familiar faces." It must henceforth be ranked as a classic, for it is the happy destiny of the two artists who have worked together to give it this exquisite setting forth to make its actual worth clear to every reader. They have put nothing into the lines which was not there already, but they have shown fine insight in their choice of subjects and in conveying delicate and far-reaching meanings. They have subordinated—as designers do not invariably do—their instinctive methods and capricious inclinations to a careful study of their subject. The result is—instead of a pretty but chaotic decorativeness interspersed with florid and meaningless exaggerations—a complete and beautiful whole marred by no redundancy or incongruity. Their full play of intelligence brought to bear upon the suggestions of the poet has developed a series of pictures which give occasionally a delightful sense of surprise at their grace and unexpectedness. For example, the three which illustrate

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom



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have absolutely a magical effect. Besides the full-page pictures, etchings, and photo-gravures, the minor details of title-lines, head- and tail-pieces, and the like, are executed in a way so pretty and clever as to leave nothing to be desired. The rich quarto is sumptuously bound, and, altogether, as a holiday gift-book the work has every element of beauty and appropriateness.

“Pepper and Salt” is one of those brilliantly clever books for little people which rouse a wonder as to whether the juvenile mind keeps pace with the highly stimulated imaginative powers of modern artists and finds solid entertainment in the richly-seasoned feast prepared for it. There is plenty of humor and whim in this volume, in which many old apologues appear in new shapes; wit, too, is to be found, and a sprinkling of wisdom. Effective designs, droll, fantastic, and invariably ingenious, set off the least of the poems and stories, and make it as striking and attractive a quarto as will be found among the young people’s books this season.

“Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” gave a new stimulus to children’s literature, with its effective magic for youthful minds and its brilliant success among all classes of readers. “Davy the Goblin” is one of the many volumes which have been founded, so to say, on its idea and been carried along by its impulse. Thus little can be said for the actual originality of the book, although it deals in new combinations and abounds in droll situations. It is well printed and illustrated, and most children will be glad to have a new excursion into Wonderland.

Mrs. Burton Harrison’s “Bric-a-Brac Stories,” illustrated by Walter Crane, make an attractive volume with a good deal of solid reading within its covers. The stories are told with the *verve* and skill of a genuine story-teller, old themes are reset, and new material dexterously worked in, with characters drawn from fairy- and dream-land, and, set off by Mr. Crane’s delightful drawings, the whole book is particularly attractive.

“Rudder Grange” is one of the books which it is essential to have always with us, and we are glad to see the stories so well illustrated, although the subject passes the domain of the artist, Mr. Stockton’s humor being of that delicate and elusive order which strikes the inward and not the outward sense. “Pomona reading” in the wrecked canal-boat is a droll contribution, and many of the cuts show that the artist is in full harmony with the spirit of the author.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 1: On another occasion he remarked of Trollope, “What drivels the man writes! He is the very essence of the commonplace.”]

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

[Note A: Original reads 'Correspondence']