

The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories eBook

The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories by Mark Twain

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	12
Page 1.....	14
Page 2.....	15
Page 3.....	17
Page 4.....	19
Page 5.....	21
Page 6.....	23
Page 7.....	24
Page 8.....	26
Page 9.....	28
Page 10.....	30
Page 11.....	32
Page 12.....	33
Page 13.....	35
Page 14.....	36
Page 15.....	37
Page 16.....	38
Page 17.....	40
Page 18.....	41
Page 19.....	43
Page 20.....	45
Page 21.....	47
Page 22.....	48

Page 23.....	50
Page 24.....	52
Page 25.....	54
Page 26.....	56
Page 27.....	58
Page 28.....	59
Page 29.....	61
Page 30.....	62
Page 31.....	64
Page 32.....	66
Page 33.....	68
Page 34.....	69
Page 35.....	71
Page 36.....	73
Page 37.....	74
Page 38.....	75
Page 39.....	77
Page 40.....	79
Page 41.....	81
Page 42.....	82
Page 43.....	83
Page 44.....	85
Page 45.....	87
Page 46.....	89
Page 47.....	91
Page 48.....	92

Page 49.....	94
Page 50.....	96
Page 51.....	98
Page 52.....	100
Page 53.....	102
Page 54.....	104
Page 55.....	106
Page 56.....	108
Page 57.....	110
Page 58.....	112
Page 59.....	114
Page 60.....	116
Page 61.....	117
Page 62.....	118
Page 63.....	120
Page 64.....	122
Page 65.....	123
Page 66.....	125
Page 67.....	127
Page 68.....	129
Page 69.....	130
Page 70.....	131
Page 71.....	132
Page 72.....	134
Page 73.....	136
Page 74.....	137

Page 75.....	138
Page 76.....	139
Page 77.....	140
Page 78.....	141
Page 79.....	142
Page 80.....	143
Page 81.....	145
Page 82.....	147
Page 83.....	149
Page 84.....	151
Page 85.....	153
Page 86.....	155
Page 87.....	157
Page 88.....	159
Page 89.....	160
Page 90.....	161
Page 91.....	163
Page 92.....	164
Page 93.....	166
Page 94.....	167
Page 95.....	169
Page 96.....	171
Page 97.....	172
Page 98.....	173
Page 99.....	174
Page 100.....	175

Page 101.....	176
Page 102.....	177
Page 103.....	178
Page 104.....	179
Page 105.....	180
Page 106.....	181
Page 107.....	182
Page 108.....	183
Page 109.....	184
Page 110.....	186
Page 111.....	188
Page 112.....	190
Page 113.....	192
Page 114.....	194
Page 115.....	196
Page 116.....	198
Page 117.....	200
Page 118.....	201
Page 119.....	202
Page 120.....	203
Page 121.....	205
Page 122.....	206
Page 123.....	208
Page 124.....	209
Page 125.....	210
Page 126.....	212

Page 127.....	213
Page 128.....	214
Page 129.....	216
Page 130.....	218
Page 131.....	220
Page 132.....	222
Page 133.....	223
Page 134.....	225
Page 135.....	227
Page 136.....	229
Page 137.....	231
Page 138.....	233
Page 139.....	235
Page 140.....	236
Page 141.....	237
Page 142.....	238
Page 143.....	239
Page 144.....	240
Page 145.....	242
Page 146.....	244
Page 147.....	246
Page 148.....	248
Page 149.....	250
Page 150.....	252
Page 151.....	254
Page 152.....	256

Page 153.....	258
Page 154.....	260
Page 155.....	261
Page 156.....	262
Page 157.....	263
Page 158.....	265
Page 159.....	267
Page 160.....	268
Page 161.....	269
Page 162.....	271
Page 163.....	272
Page 164.....	273
Page 165.....	274
Page 166.....	276
Page 167.....	277
Page 168.....	279
Page 169.....	280
Page 170.....	281
Page 171.....	282
Page 172.....	283
Page 173.....	284
Page 174.....	285
Page 175.....	287
Page 176.....	289
Page 177.....	291
Page 178.....	292

Page 179.....	293
Page 180.....	295
Page 181.....	296
Page 182.....	298
Page 183.....	300
Page 184.....	302
Page 185.....	304
Page 186.....	306
Page 187.....	307
Page 188.....	309
Page 189.....	310
Page 190.....	311
Page 191.....	313
Page 192.....	315
Page 193.....	317
Page 194.....	319
Page 195.....	320
Page 196.....	321
Page 197.....	323
Page 198.....	325
Page 199.....	327
Page 200.....	328
Page 201.....	330
Page 202.....	331
Page 203.....	332
Page 204.....	333

Page 205.....	334
Page 206.....	335
Page 207.....	336
Page 208.....	337
Page 209.....	339
Page 210.....	340
Page 211.....	341
Page 212.....	342
Page 213.....	343
Page 214.....	345
Page 215.....	347
Page 216.....	349
Page 217.....	351
Page 218.....	352
Page 219.....	354
Page 220.....	356
Page 221.....	358
Page 222.....	360
Page 223.....	362
Page 224.....	364
Page 225.....	366
Page 226.....	368
Page 227.....	370
Page 228.....	372
Page 229.....	374
Page 230.....	375

Page 231.....	376
Page 232.....	377
Page 233.....	379
Page 234.....	381
Page 235.....	383

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
THE MAN THAT CORRUPTED HADLEYBURG		1
MY FIRST LIE, AND HOW I GOT OUT OF IT		35
THE ESQUIMAUX MAIDEN'S ROMANCE		41
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE BOOK OF MRS. EDDY		52
I		52
II		53
III		59
IV		62
V		64
VI		65
VII		70
VIII		75
IX		80
IS HE LIVING OR IS HE DEAD?		81
MY DEBUT AS A LITERARY PERSON		87
HENRY FERGUSON'S DIARY TO DATE, GIVEN IN FULL:		94
AT THE APPETITE-CURE		108
II		112
CONCERNING THE JEWS		116
Postscript—THE JEW AS SOLDIER		128
FROM THE 'LONDON TIMES' OF 1904		130
II		135
III		135
ABOUT PLAY-ACTING		137
I		137
II		141
TRAVELLING WITH A REFORMER		143
DIPLOMATIC PAY AND CLOTHES		153
LUCK		160
THE CAPTAIN'S STORY		163
STIRRING TIMES IN AUSTRIA		167
II. A MEMORABLE SITTING.		172



III.—CURIOUS PARLIAMENTARY ETIQUETTE.	180
IV.—THE HISTORIC CLIMAX	187
PRIVATE HISTORY OF THE 'JUMPING FROG' STORY	191
THE ATHENIAN AND THE FROG.[1]	192
THE FROG JUMPING OF THE COUNTY OF CALAVERAS	195
MY MILITARY CAMPAIGN	198
MEISTERSCHAFT	213
DRAMATIS PERSONAE:	213
ACT I. SCENE I.	213
ACT II. SCENE I.	218
ACT III.	224
MY BOYHOOD DREAMS	229
TO THE ABOVE OLD PEOPLE	232
EDITORIAL NOTE	233
IN MEMORIAM	234
DIED AUGUST 18, 1896; AGED 24	234

Page 1

THE MAN THAT CORRUPTED HADLEYBURG

It was many years ago. Hadleyburg was the most honest and upright town in all the region round about. It had kept that reputation unsmirched during three generations, and was prouder of it than of any other of its possessions. It was so proud of it, and so anxious to insure its perpetuation, that it began to teach the principles of honest dealing to its babies in the cradle, and made the like teachings the staple of their culture thenceforward through all the years devoted to their education. Also, throughout the formative years temptations were kept out of the way of the young people, so that their honesty could have every chance to harden and solidify, and become a part of their very bone. The neighbouring towns were jealous of this honourable supremacy, and affected to sneer at Hadleyburg's pride in it and call it vanity; but all the same they were obliged to acknowledge that Hadleyburg was in reality an incorruptible town; and if pressed they would also acknowledge that the mere fact that a young man hailed from Hadleyburg was all the recommendation he needed when he went forth from his natal town to seek for responsible employment.

But at last, in the drift of time, Hadleyburg had the ill luck to offend a passing stranger—possibly without knowing it, certainly without caring, for Hadleyburg was sufficient unto itself, and cared not a rap for strangers or their opinions. Still, it would have been well to make an exception in this one's case, for he was a bitter man, and revengeful. All through his wanderings during a whole year he kept his injury in mind, and gave all his leisure moments to trying to invent a compensating satisfaction for it. He contrived many plans, and all of them were good, but none of them was quite sweeping enough: the poorest of them would hurt a great many individuals, but what he wanted was a plan which would comprehend the entire town, and not let so much as one person escape unhurt. At last he had a fortunate idea, and when it fell into his brain it lit up his whole head with an evil joy. He began to form a plan at once, saying to himself "That is the thing to do—I will corrupt the town."

Six months later he went to Hadleyburg, and arrived in a buggy at the house of the old cashier of the bank about ten at night. He got a sack out of the buggy, shouldered it, and staggered with it through the cottage yard, and knocked at the door. A woman's voice said "Come in," and he entered, and set his sack behind the stove in the parlour, saying politely to the old lady who sat reading the "Missionary Herald" by the lamp:

"Pray keep your seat, madam, I will not disturb you. There—now it is pretty well concealed; one would hardly know it was there. Can I see your husband a moment, madam?"

No, he was gone to Brixton, and might not return before morning.

Page 2

"Very well, madam, it is no matter. I merely wanted to leave that sack in his care, to be delivered to the rightful owner when he shall be found. I am a stranger; he does not know me; I am merely passing through the town to-night to discharge a matter which has been long in my mind. My errand is now completed, and I go pleased and a little proud, and you will never see me again. There is a paper attached to the sack which will explain everything. Good-night, madam."

The old lady was afraid of the mysterious big stranger, and was glad to see him go. But her curiosity was roused, and she went straight to the sack and brought away the paper. It began as follows:

"*To be published*, or, the right man sought out by private inquiry —either will answer. This sack contains gold coin weighing a hundred and sixty pounds four ounces—"

"Mercy on us, and the door not locked!"

Mrs. Richards flew to it all in a tremble and locked it, then pulled down the window-shades and stood frightened, worried, and wondering if there was anything else she could do toward making herself and the money more safe. She listened awhile for burglars, then surrendered to curiosity, and went back to the lamp and finished reading the paper:

"I am a foreigner, and am presently going back to my own country, to remain there permanently. I am grateful to America for what I have received at her hands during my long stay under her flag; and to one of her citizens—a citizen of Hadleyburg—I am especially grateful for a great kindness done me a year or two ago. Two great kindnesses in fact. I will explain. I was a gambler. I say I was. I was a ruined gambler. I arrived in this village at night, hungry and without a penny. I asked for help—in the dark; I was ashamed to beg in the light. I begged of the right man. He gave me twenty dollars—that is to say, he gave me life, as I considered it. He also gave me fortune; for out of that money I have made myself rich at the gaming-table. And finally, a remark which he made to me has remained with me to this day, and has at last conquered me; and in conquering has saved the remnant of my morals: I shall gamble no more. Now I have no idea who that man was, but I want him found, and I want him to have this money, to give away, throw away, or keep, as he pleases. It is merely my way of testifying my gratitude to him. If I could stay, I would find him myself; but no matter, he will be found. This is an honest town, an incorruptible town, and I know I can trust it without fear. This man can be identified by the remark which he made to me; I feel persuaded that he will remember it.

"And now my plan is this: If you prefer to conduct the inquiry privately, do so. Tell the contents of this present writing to any one who is likely to be the right man. If he shall answer, 'I am the man; the remark I made was so-and-so,' apply the test—to wit: open the sack, and in it you will find a sealed envelope containing that remark. If the remark

mentioned by the candidate tallies with it, give him the money, and ask no further questions, for he is certainly the right man.

Page 3

“But if you shall prefer a public inquiry, then publish this present writing in the local paper—with these instructions added, to wit: Thirty days from now, let the candidate appear at the town-hall at eight in the evening (Friday), and hand his remark, in a sealed envelope, to the Rev. Mr. Burgess (if he will be kind enough to act); and let Mr. Burgess there and then destroy the seals of the sack, open it, and see if the remark is correct: if correct, let the money be delivered, with my sincere gratitude, to my benefactor thus identified.”

Mrs. Richards sat down, gently quivering with excitement, and was soon lost in thinkings—after this pattern: “What a strange thing it is! . . . And what a fortune for that kind man who set his bread afloat upon the waters! . . . If it had only been my husband that did it!—for we are so poor, so old and poor! . . .” Then, with a sigh—“But it was not my Edward; no, it was not he that gave a stranger twenty dollars. It is a pity too; I see it now. . . .” Then, with a shudder—“But it is *gamblers’* money! the wages of sin; we couldn’t take it; we couldn’t touch it. I don’t like to be near it; it seems a defilement.” She moved to a farther chair. . . . “I wish Edward would come, and take it to the bank; a burglar might come at any moment; it is dreadful to be here all alone with it.”

At eleven Mr. Richards arrived, and while his wife was saying “I am so glad you’ve come!” he was saying, “I am so tired—tired clear out; it is dreadful to be poor, and have to make these dismal journeys at my time of life. Always at the grind, grind, grind, on a salary—another man’s slave, and he sitting at home in his slippers, rich and comfortable.”

“I am so sorry for you, Edward, you know that; but be comforted; we have our livelihood; we have our good name—”

“Yes, Mary, and that is everything. Don’t mind my talk—it’s just a moment’s irritation and doesn’t mean anything. Kiss me—there, it’s all gone now, and I am not complaining any more. What have you been getting? What’s in the sack?”

Then his wife told him the great secret. It dazed him for a moment; then he said:

“It weighs a hundred and sixty pounds? Why, Mary, it’s for-ty thousand dollars—think of it—a whole fortune! Not ten men in this village are worth that much. Give me the paper.”

He skimmed through it and said:

“Isn’t it an adventure! Why, it’s a romance; it’s like the impossible things one reads about in books, and never sees in life.” He was well stirred up now; cheerful, even gleeful. He tapped his old wife on the cheek, and said humorously, “Why, we’re rich, Mary, rich; all we’ve got to do is to bury the money and burn the papers. If the gambler ever comes to inquire, we’ll merely look coldly upon him and say: ‘What is this

nonsense you are talking? We have never heard of you and your sack of gold before; and then he would look foolish, and—”

Page 4

“And in the meantime, while you are running on with your jokes, the money is still here, and it is fast getting along toward burglar-time.”

“True. Very well, what shall we do—make the inquiry private? No, not that; it would spoil the romance. The public method is better. Think what a noise it will make! And it will make all the other towns jealous; for no stranger would trust such a thing to any town but Hadleyburg, and they know it. It’s a great card for us. I must get to the printing-office now, or I shall be too late.”

“But stop—stop—don’t leave me here alone with it, Edward!”

But he was gone. For only a little while, however. Not far from his own house he met the editor—proprietor of the paper, and gave him the document, and said “Here is a good thing for you, Cox—put it in.”

“It may be too late, Mr. Richards, but I’ll see.”

At home again, he and his wife sat down to talk the charming mystery over; they were in no condition for sleep. The first question was, Who could the citizen have been who gave the stranger the twenty dollars? It seemed a simple one; both answered it in the same breath—

“Barclay Goodson.”

“Yes,” said Richards, “he could have done it, and it would have been like him, but there’s not another in the town.”

“Everybody will grant that, Edward—grant it privately, anyway. For six months, now, the village has been its own proper self once more—honest, narrow, self-righteous, and stingy.”

“It is what he always called it, to the day of his death—said it right out publicly, too.”

“Yes, and he was hated for it.”

“Oh, of course; but he didn’t care. I reckon he was the best-hated man among us, except the Reverend Burgess.”

“Well, Burgess deserves it—he will never get another congregation here. Mean as the town is, it knows how to estimate *him*. Edward, doesn’t it seem odd that the stranger should appoint Burgess to deliver the money?”

“Well, yes—it does. That is—that is—”

“Why so much that-*is*-ing? Would *you* select him?”

“Mary, maybe the stranger knows him better than this village does.”

“Much *that* would help Burgess!”

The husband seemed perplexed for an answer; the wife kept a steady eye upon him, and waited. Finally Richards said, with the hesitancy of one who is making a statement which is likely to encounter doubt,

“Mary, Burgess is not a bad man.”

His wife was certainly surprised.

“Nonsense!” she exclaimed.

“He is not a bad man. I know. The whole of his unpopularity had its foundation in that one thing—the thing that made so much noise.”

“That ‘one thing,’ indeed! As if that ‘one thing’ wasn’t enough, all by itself.”

“Plenty. Plenty. Only he wasn’t guilty of it.”

“How you talk! Not guilty of it! Everybody knows he *was* guilty.”

Page 5

"Mary, I give you my word—he was innocent."

"I can't believe it and I don't. How do you know?"

"It is a confession. I am ashamed, but I will make it. I was the only man who knew he was innocent. I could have saved him, and—and—well, you know how the town was wrought up—I hadn't the pluck to do it. It would have turned everybody against me. I felt mean, ever so mean; ut I didn't dare; I hadn't the manliness to face that."

Mary looked troubled, and for a while was silent. Then she said stammeringly:

"I—I don't think it would have done for you to—to—One mustn't —er—public opinion—one has to be so careful—so—" It was a difficult road, and she got mired; but after a little she got started again. "It was a great pity, but—Why, we couldn't afford it, Edward—we couldn't indeed. Oh, I wouldn't have had you do it for anything!"

"It would have lost us the good-will of so many people, Mary; and then—and then—"

"What troubles me now is, what *he* thinks of us, Edward."

"He? *He* doesn't suspect that I could have saved him."

"Oh," exclaimed the wife, in a tone of relief, "I am glad of that. As long as he doesn't know that you could have saved him, he—he—well that makes it a great deal better. Why, I might have known he didn't know, because he is always trying to be friendly with us, as little encouragement as we give him. More than once people have twitted me with it. There's the Wilsons, and the Wilcoxes, and the Harknesses, they take a mean pleasure in saying '*your friend* Burgess,' because they know it pesters me. I wish he wouldn't persist in liking us so; I can't think why he keeps it up."

"I can explain it. It's another confession. When the thing was new and hot, and the town made a plan to ride him on a rail, my conscience hurt me so that I couldn't stand it, and I went privately and gave him notice, and he got out of the town and stayed out till it was safe to come back."

"Edward! If the town had found it out—"

"*Don't!* It scares me yet, to think of it. I repented of it the minute it was done; and I was even afraid to tell you lest your face might betray it to somebody. I didn't sleep any that night, for worrying. But after a few days I saw that no one was going to suspect me, and after that I got to feeling glad I did it. And I feel glad yet, Mary—glad through and through."



“So do I, now, for it would have been a dreadful way to treat him. Yes, I’m glad; for really you did owe him that, you know. But, Edward, suppose it should come out yet, some day!”

“It won’t.”

“Why?”

“Because everybody thinks it was Goodson.”

“Of course they would!”

Page 6

"Certainly. And of course *he* didn't care. They persuaded poor old Sawlsberry to go and charge it on him, and he went blustering over there and did it. Goodson looked him over, like as if he was hunting for a place on him that he could despise the most; then he says, 'So you are the Committee of Inquiry, are you?' Sawlsberry said that was about what he was. 'H'm. Do they require particulars, or do you reckon a kind of a *general* answer will do?' 'If they require particulars, I will come back, Mr. Goodson; I will take the general answer first.' 'Very well, then, tell them to go to hell—I reckon that's general enough. And I'll give you some advice, Sawlsberry; when you come back for the particulars, fetch a basket to carry what is left of yourself home in.'"

"Just like Goodson; it's got all the marks. He had only one vanity; he thought he could give advice better than any other person."

"It settled the business, and saved us, Mary. The subject was dropped."

"Bless you, I'm not doubting *that*."

Then they took up the gold-sack mystery again, with strong interest. Soon the conversation began to suffer breaks—interruptions caused by absorbed thinkings. The breaks grew more and more frequent. At last Richards lost himself wholly in thought. He sat long, gazing vacantly at the floor, and by-and-by he began to punctuate his thoughts with little nervous movements of his hands that seemed to indicate vexation. Meantime his wife too had relapsed into a thoughtful silence, and her movements were beginning to show a troubled discomfort. Finally Richards got up and strode aimlessly about the room, ploughing his hands through his hair, much as a somnambulist might do who was having a bad dream. Then he seemed to arrive at a definite purpose; and without a word he put on his hat and passed quickly out of the house. His wife sat brooding, with a drawn face, and did not seem to be aware that she was alone. Now and then she murmured, "Lead us not into t . . . but—but—we are so poor, so poor! . . . Lead us not into . . . Ah, who would be hurt by it?—and no one would ever know . . . Lead us . . ." The voice died out in mumblings. After a little she glanced up and muttered in a half-frightened, half-glad way—

"He is gone! But, oh dear, he may be too late—too late . . . Maybe not—maybe there is still time." She rose and stood thinking, nervously clasping and unclasping her hands. A slight shudder shook her frame, and she said, out of a dry throat, "God forgive me—it's awful to think such things—but . . . Lord, how we are made—how strangely we are made!"

She turned the light low, and slipped stealthily over and knelt down by the sack and felt of its ridgy sides with her hands, and fondled them lovingly; and there was a gloating light in her poor old eyes. She fell into fits of absence; and came half out of them at times to mutter "If we had only waited!—oh, if we had only waited a little, and not been in such a hurry!"

Page 7

Meantime Cox had gone home from his office and told his wife all about the strange thing that had happened, and they had talked it over eagerly, and guessed that the late Goodson was the only man in the town who could have helped a suffering stranger with so noble a sum as twenty dollars. Then there was a pause, and the two became thoughtful and silent. And by-and-by nervous and fidgety. At last the wife said, as if to herself,

“Nobody knows this secret but the Richardses . . . and us . . . nobody.”

The husband came out of his thinkings with a slight start, and gazed wistfully at his wife, whose face was become very pale; then he hesitatingly rose, and glanced furtively at his hat, then at his wife—a sort of mute inquiry. Mrs. Cox swallowed once or twice, with her hand at her throat, then in place of speech she nodded her head. In a moment she was alone, and mumbling to herself.

And now Richards and Cox were hurrying through the deserted streets, from opposite directions. They met, panting, at the foot of the printing-office stairs; by the night-light there they read each other’s face. Cox whispered:

“Nobody knows about this but us?”

The whispered answer was:

“Not a soul—on honour, not a soul!”

“If it isn’t too late to—”

The men were starting up-stairs; at this moment they were overtaken by a boy, and Cox asked,

“Is that you, Johnny?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You needn’t ship the early mail—nor *any* mail; wait till I tell you.”

“It’s already gone, sir.”

“*Gone?*” It had the sound of an unspeakable disappointment in it.

“Yes, sir. Time-table for Brixton and all the towns beyond changed to-day, sir—had to get the papers in twenty minutes earlier than common. I had to rush; if I had been two minutes later—”

The men turned and walked slowly away, not waiting to hear the rest. Neither of them spoke during ten minutes; then Cox said, in a vexed tone,

“What possessed you to be in such a hurry, I can’t make out.”

The answer was humble enough:

“I see it now, but somehow I never thought, you know, until it was too late. But the next time—”

“Next time be hanged! It won’t come in a thousand years.”

Then the friends separated without a good-night, and dragged themselves home with the gait of mortally stricken men. At their homes their wives sprang up with an eager “Well?”—then saw the answer with their eyes and sank down sorrowing, without waiting for it to come in words. In both houses a discussion followed of a heated sort—a new thing; there had been discussions before, but not heated ones, not ungentle ones. The discussions to-night were a sort of seeming plagiarisms of each other. Mrs. Richards said:

“If you had only waited, Edward—if you had only stopped to think; but no, you must run straight to the printing-office and spread it all over the world.”

Page 8

"It *said* publish it."

"That is nothing; it also said do it privately, if you liked. There, now—is that true, or not?"

"Why, yes—yes, it is true; but when I thought what a stir it would make, and what a compliment it was to Hadleyburg that a stranger should trust it so—"

"Oh, certainly, I know all that; but if you had only stopped to think, you would have seen that you *couldn't* find the right man, because he is in his grave, and hasn't left chick nor child nor relation behind him; and as long as the money went to somebody that awfully needed it, and nobody would be hurt by it, and—and—"

She broke down, crying. Her husband tried to think of some comforting thing to say, and presently came out with this:

"But after all, Mary, it must be for the best—it must be; we know that. And we must remember that it was so ordered—"

"Ordered! Oh, everything's *ordered*, when a person has to find some way out when he has been stupid. Just the same, it was *ordered* that the money should come to us in this special way, and it was you that must take it on yourself to go meddling with the designs of Providence—and who gave you the right? It was wicked, that is what it was—just blasphemous presumption, and no more becoming to a meek and humble professor of—"

"But, Mary, you know how we have been trained all our lives long, like the whole village, till it is absolutely second nature to us to stop not a single moment to think when there's an honest thing to be done—"

"Oh, I know it, I know it—it's been one everlasting training and training and training in honesty—honesty shielded, from the very cradle, against every possible temptation, and so it's *artificial* honesty, and weak as water when temptation comes, as we have seen this night. God knows I never had shade nor shadow of a doubt of my petrified and indestructible honesty until now—and now, under the very first big and real temptation, I—Edward, it is my belief that this town's honesty is as rotten as mine is; as rotten as yours. It is a mean town, a hard, stingy town, and hasn't a virtue in the world but this honesty it is so celebrated for and so conceited about; and so help me, I do believe that if ever the day comes that its honesty falls under great temptation, its grand reputation will go to ruin like a house of cards. There, now, I've made confession, and I feel better; I am a humbug, and I've been one all my life, without knowing it. Let no man call me honest again—I will not have it."



"I—Well, Mary, I feel a good deal as you do: I certainly do. It seems strange, too, so strange. I never could have believed it—never."

A long silence followed; both were sunk in thought. At last the wife looked up and said:

"I know what you are thinking, Edward."

Richards had the embarrassed look of a person who is caught.

Page 9

"I am ashamed to confess it, Mary, but—"

"It's no matter, Edward, I was thinking the same question myself."

"I hope so. State it."

"You were thinking, if a body could only guess out *what the remark was* that Goodson made to the stranger."

"It's perfectly true. I feel guilty and ashamed. And you?"

"I'm past it. Let us make a pallet here; we've got to stand watch till the bank vault opens in the morning and admits the sack. . . Oh dear, oh dear—if we hadn't made the mistake!"

The pallet was made, and Mary said:

"The open sesame—what could it have been? I do wonder what that remark could have been. But come; we will get to bed now."

"And sleep?"

"No; think."

"Yes; think."

By this time the Coxes too had completed their spat and their reconciliation, and were turning in—to think, to think, and toss, and fret, and worry over what the remark could possibly have been which Goodson made to the stranded derelict; that golden remark; that remark worth forty thousand dollars, cash.

The reason that the village telegraph-office was open later than usual that night was this: The foreman of Cox's paper was the local representative of the Associated Press. One might say its honorary representative, for it wasn't four times a year that he could furnish thirty words that would be accepted. But this time it was different. His despatch stating what he had caught got an instant answer:

"Send the whole thing—all the details—twelve hundred words."

A colossal order! The foreman filled the bill; and he was the proudest man in the State. By breakfast-time the next morning the name of Hadleyburg the Incorruptible was on every lip in America, from Montreal to the Gulf, from the glaciers of Alaska to the orange-groves of Florida; and millions and millions of people were discussing the stranger and his money-sack, and wondering if the right man would be found, and hoping some more news about the matter would come soon—right away.

II

Hadleyburg village woke up world-celebrated—astonished—happy—vain. Vain beyond imagination. Its nineteen principal citizens and their wives went about shaking hands with each other, and beaming, and smiling, and congratulating, and saying *this* thing adds a new word to the dictionary—*Hadleyburg*, synonym for *incorruptible*—destined to live in dictionaries for ever! And the minor and unimportant citizens and their wives went around acting in much the same way. Everybody ran to the bank to see the gold-sack; and before noon grieved and envious crowds began to flock in from Brixton and all neighbouring towns; and that afternoon and next day reporters began to arrive from everywhere to verify the sack and its history and write the whole thing up anew, and make dashing free-hand pictures of the sack, and of Richards's

Page 10

house, and the bank, and the Presbyterian church, and the Baptist church, and the public square, and the town-hall where the test would be applied and the money delivered; and damnable portraits of the Richardses, and Pinkerton the banker, and Cox, and the foreman, and Reverend Burgess, and the postmaster—and even of Jack Halliday, who was the loafing, good-natured, no-account, irreverent fisherman, hunter, boys' friend, stray-dogs' friend, typical "Sam Lawson" of the town. The little mean, smirking, oily Pinkerton showed the sack to all comers, and rubbed his sleek palms together pleasantly, and enlarged upon the town's fine old reputation for honesty and upon this wonderful endorsement of it, and hoped and believed that the example would now spread far and wide over the American world, and be epoch-making in the matter of moral regeneration. And so on, and so on.

By the end of a week things had quieted down again; the wild intoxication of pride and joy had sobered to a soft, sweet, silent delight—a sort of deep, nameless, unutterable content. All faces bore a look of peaceful, holy happiness.

Then a change came. It was a gradual change; so gradual that its beginnings were hardly noticed; maybe were not noticed at all, except by Jack Halliday, who always noticed everything; and always made fun of it, too, no matter what it was. He began to throw out chaffing remarks about people not looking quite so happy as they did a day or two ago; and next he claimed that the new aspect was deepening to positive sadness; next, that it was taking on a sick look; and finally he said that everybody was become so moody, thoughtful, and absent-minded that he could rob the meanest man in town of a cent out of the bottom of his breeches pocket and not disturb his reverie.

At this stage—or at about this stage—a saying like this was dropped at bedtime—with a sigh, usually—by the head of each of the nineteen principal households:

"Ah, what *could* have been the remark that Goodson made?"

And straightway—with a shudder—came this, from the man's wife:

"Oh, *don't!* What horrible thing are you mulling in your mind? Put it away from you, for God's sake!"

But that question was wrung from those men again the next night—and got the same retort. But weaker.

And the third night the men uttered the question yet again—with anguish, and absently. This time—and the following night—the wives fidgeted feebly, and tried to say something. But didn't.

And the night after that they found their tongues and responded —longingly:

“Oh, if we *could* only guess!”

Halliday's comments grew daily more and more sparkingly disagreeable and disparaging. He went diligently about, laughing at the town, individually and in mass. But his laugh was the only one left in the village: it fell upon a hollow and mournful vacancy and emptiness. Not even a smile was findable anywhere. Halliday carried a cigar-box around on a tripod, playing that it was a camera, and halted all passers and aimed the thing and said “Ready!—now look pleasant, please,” but not even this capital joke could surprise the dreary faces into any softening.

Page 11

So three weeks passed—one week was left. It was Saturday evening after supper. Instead of the aforetime Saturday-evening flutter and bustle and shopping and larking, the streets were empty and desolate. Richards and his old wife sat apart in their little parlour—miserable and thinking. This was become their evening habit now: the life-long habit which had preceded it, of reading, knitting, and contented chat, or receiving or paying neighbourly calls, was dead and gone and forgotten, ages ago—two or three weeks ago; nobody talked now, nobody read, nobody visited—the whole village sat at home, sighing, worrying, silent. Trying to guess out that remark.

The postman left a letter. Richards glanced listlessly at the superscription and the postmark—unfamiliar, both—and tossed the letter on the table and resumed his might-have-beens and his hopeless dull miseries where he had left them off. Two or three hours later his wife got wearily up and was going away to bed without a good-night—custom now—but she stopped near the letter and eyed it awhile with a dead interest, then broke it open, and began to skim it over. Richards, sitting there with his chair tilted back against the wall and his chin between his knees, heard something fall. It was his wife. He sprang to her side, but she cried out:

“Leave me alone, I am too happy. Read the letter—read it!”

He did. He devoured it, his brain reeling. The letter was from a distant State, and it said:

“I am a stranger to you, but no matter: I have something to tell. I have just arrived home from Mexico, and learned about that episode. Of course you do not know who made that remark, but I know, and I am the only person living who does know. It was *Goodson*. I knew him well, many years ago. I passed through your village that very night, and was his guest till the midnight train came along. I overheard him make that remark to the stranger in the dark—it was in Hale Alley. He and I talked of it the rest of the way home, and while smoking in his house. He mentioned many of your villagers in the course of his talk—most of them in a very uncomplimentary way, but two or three favourably: among these latter yourself. I say ‘favourably’—nothing stronger. I remember his saying he did not actually *like* any person in the town—not one; but that you—I *think* he said you—am almost sure—had done him a very great service once, possibly without knowing the full value of it, and he wished he had a fortune, he would leave it to you when he died, and a curse apiece for the rest of the citizens. Now, then, if it was you that did him that service, you are his legitimate heir, and entitled to the sack of gold. I know that I can trust to your honour and honesty, for in a citizen of Hadleyburg these virtues are an unfailing inheritance, and so I am going to reveal to you the remark, well satisfied that if you are not the right man you will seek and find the right one and see that poor Goodson’s debt of gratitude for the service referred to is paid. This is the remark ‘*you are far from being A bad man: Go, and reform.*’

Page 12

“Howard L. Stephenson.”

“Oh, Edward, the money is ours, and I am so grateful, *oh*, so grateful,—kiss me, dear, it’s for ever since we kissed—and we needed it so—the money—and now you are free of Pinkerton and his bank, and nobody’s slave any more; it seems to me I could fly for joy.”

It was a happy half-hour that the couple spent there on the settee caressing each other; it was the old days come again—days that had begun with their courtship and lasted without a break till the stranger brought the deadly money. By-and-by the wife said:

“Oh, Edward, how lucky it was you did him that grand service, poor Goodson! I never liked him, but I love him now. And it was fine and beautiful of you never to mention it or brag about it.” Then, with a touch of reproach, “But you ought to have told *me*, Edward, you ought to have told your wife, you know.”

“Well, I—er—well, Mary, you see—”

“Now stop hemming and hawing, and tell me about it, Edward. I always loved you, and now I’m proud of you. Everybody believes there was only one good generous soul in this village, and now it turns out that you—Edward, why don’t you tell me?”

“Well—er—er—Why, Mary, I can’t!”

“You *can’t*? *Why* can’t you?”

“You see, he—well, he—he made me promise I wouldn’t.”

The wife looked him over, and said, very slowly:

“Made—you—promise? Edward, what do you tell me that for?”

“Mary, do you think I would lie?”

She was troubled and silent for a moment, then she laid her hand within his and said:

“No . . . no. We have wandered far enough from our bearings—God spare us that! In all your life you have never uttered a lie. But now—now that the foundations of things seem to be crumbling from under us, we—we—” She lost her voice for a moment, then said, brokenly, “Lead us not into temptation. . . I think you made the promise, Edward. Let it rest so. Let us keep away from that ground. Now—that is all gone by; let us be happy again; it is no time for clouds.”

Edward found it something of an effort to comply, for his mind kept wandering—trying to remember what the service was that he had done Goodson.

The couple lay awake the most of the night, Mary happy and busy, Edward busy, but not so happy. Mary was planning what she would do with the money. Edward was trying to recall that service. At first his conscience was sore on account of the lie he had told Mary—if it was a lie. After much reflection—suppose it *was* a lie? What then? Was it such a great matter? Aren't we always *acting* lies? Then why not tell them? Look at Mary—look what she had done. While he was hurrying off on his honest errand, what was she doing? Lamenting because the papers hadn't been destroyed and the money kept. Is theft better than lying?

Page 13

That point lost its sting—the lie dropped into the background and left comfort behind it. The next point came to the front: *Had* he rendered that service? Well, here was Goodson's own evidence as reported in Stephenson's letter; there could be no better evidence than that—it was even *proof* that he had rendered it. Of course. So that point was settled. . . No, not quite. He recalled with a wince that this unknown Mr. Stephenson was just a trifle unsure as to whether the performer of it was Richards or some other—and, oh dear, he had put Richards on his honour! He must himself decide whither that money must go—and Mr. Stephenson was not doubting that if he was the wrong man he would go honourably and find the right one. Oh, it was odious to put a man in such a situation—ah, why couldn't Stephenson have left out that doubt? What did he want to intrude that for?

Further reflection. How did it happen that *Richards's* name remained in Stephenson's mind as indicating the right man, and not some other man's name? That looked good. Yes, that looked very good. In fact it went on looking better and better, straight along—until by-and-by it grew into positive *proof*. And then Richards put the matter at once out of his mind, for he had a private instinct that a proof once established is better left so.

He was feeling reasonably comfortable now, but there was still one other detail that kept pushing itself on his notice: of course he had done that service—that was settled; but what was that service? He must recall it—he would not go to sleep till he had recalled it; it would make his peace of mind perfect. And so he thought and thought. He thought of a dozen things—possible services, even probable services—but none of them seemed adequate, none of them seemed large enough, none of them seemed worth the money—worth the fortune Goodson had wished he could leave in his will. And besides, he couldn't remember having done them, anyway. Now, then—now, then—what *kind* of a service would it be that would make a man so inordinately grateful? Ah—the saving of his soul! That must be it. Yes, he could remember, now, how he once set himself the task of converting Goodson, and laboured at it as much as—he was going to say three months; but upon closer examination it shrunk to a month, then to a week, then to a day, then to nothing. Yes, he remembered now, and with unwelcome vividness, that Goodson had told him to go to thunder and mind his own business—*he* wasn't hankering to follow Hadleyburg to heaven!

So that solution was a failure—he hadn't saved Goodson's soul. Richards was discouraged. Then after a little came another idea: had he saved Goodson's property? No, that wouldn't do—he hadn't any. His life? That is it! Of course. Why, he might have thought of it before. This time he was on the right track, sure. His imagination-mill was hard at work in a minute, now.

Page 14

Thereafter, during a stretch of two exhausting hours, he was busy saving Goodson's life. He saved it in all kinds of difficult and perilous ways. In every case he got it saved satisfactorily up to a certain point; then, just as he was beginning to get well persuaded that it had really happened, a troublesome detail would turn up which made the whole thing impossible. As in the matter of drowning, for instance. In that case he had swum out and tugged Goodson ashore in an unconscious state with a great crowd looking on and applauding, but when he had got it all thought out and was just beginning to remember all about it, a whole swarm of disqualifying details arrived on the ground: the town would have known of the circumstance, Mary would have known of it, it would glare like a limelight in his own memory instead of being an inconspicuous service which he had possibly rendered "without knowing its full value." And at this point he remembered that he couldn't swim anyway.

Ah—*there* was a point which he had been overlooking from the start: it had to be a service which he had rendered "possibly without knowing the full value of it." Why, really, that ought to be an easy hunt—much easier than those others. And sure enough, by-and-by he found it. Goodson, years and years ago, came near marrying a very sweet and pretty girl, named Nancy Hewitt, but in some way or other the match had been broken off; the girl died, Goodson remained a bachelor, and by-and-by became a soured one and a frank despiser of the human species. Soon after the girl's death the village found out, or thought it had found out, that she carried a spoonful of negro blood in her veins. Richards worked at these details a good while, and in the end he thought he remembered things concerning them which must have gotten mislaid in his memory through long neglect. He seemed to dimly remember that it was *he* that found out about the negro blood; that it was he that told the village; that the village told Goodson where they got it; that he thus saved Goodson from marrying the tainted girl; that he had done him this great service "without knowing the full value of it," in fact without knowing that he was doing it; but that Goodson knew the value of it, and what a narrow escape he had had, and so went to his grave grateful to his benefactor and wishing he had a fortune to leave him. It was all clear and simple, now, and the more he went over it the more luminous and certain it grew; and at last, when he nestled to sleep, satisfied and happy, he remembered the whole thing just as if it had been yesterday. In fact, he dimly remembered Goodson's *telling* him his gratitude once. Meantime Mary had spent six thousand dollars on a new house for herself and a pair of slippers for her pastor, and then had fallen peacefully to rest.

That same Saturday evening the postman had delivered a letter to each of the other principal citizens—nineteen letters in all. No two of the envelopes were alike, and no two of the superscriptions were in the same hand, but the letters inside were just like each other in every detail but one. They were exact copies of the letter received by Richards—handwriting and all—and were all signed by Stephenson, but in place of Richards's name each receiver's own name appeared.

Page 15

All night long eighteen principal citizens did what their caste-brother Richards was doing at the same time—they put in their energies trying to remember what notable service it was that they had unconsciously done Barclay Goodson. In no case was it a holiday job; still they succeeded.

And while they were at this work, which was difficult, their wives put in the night spending the money, which was easy. During that one night the nineteen wives spent an average of seven thousand dollars each out of the forty thousand in the sack—a hundred and thirty-three thousand altogether.

Next day there was a surprise for Jack Halliday. He noticed that the faces of the nineteen chief citizens and their wives bore that expression of peaceful and holy happiness again. He could not understand it, neither was he able to invent any remarks about it that could damage it or disturb it. And so it was his turn to be dissatisfied with life. His private guesses at the reasons for the happiness failed in all instances, upon examination. When he met Mrs. Wilcox and noticed the placid ecstasy in her face, he said to himself, “Her cat has had kittens”—and went and asked the cook; it was not so, the cook had detected the happiness, but did not know the cause. When Halliday found the duplicate ecstasy in the face of “Shadbelly” Billson (village nickname), he was sure some neighbour of Billson’s had broken his leg, but inquiry showed that this had not happened. The subdued ecstasy in Gregory Yates’s face could mean but one thing—he was a mother-in-law short; it was another mistake. “And Pinkerton—Pinkerton—he has collected ten cents that he thought he was going to lose.” And so on, and so on. In some cases the guesses had to remain in doubt, in the others they proved distinct errors. In the end Halliday said to himself, “Anyway it roots up that there’s nineteen Hadleyburg families temporarily in heaven: I don’t know how it happened; I only know Providence is off duty to-day.”

An architect and builder from the next State had lately ventured to set up a small business in this unpromising village, and his sign had now been hanging out a week. Not a customer yet; he was a discouraged man, and sorry he had come. But his weather changed suddenly now. First one and then another chief citizen’s wife said to him privately:

“Come to my house Monday week—but say nothing about it for the present. We think of building.”

He got eleven invitations that day. That night he wrote his daughter and broke off her match with her student. He said she could marry a mile higher than that.

Pinkerton the banker and two or three other well-to-do men planned country-seats—but waited. That kind don’t count their chickens until they are hatched.

Page 16

The Wilsons devised a grand new thing—a fancy-dress ball. They made no actual promises, but told all their acquaintanceship in confidence that they were thinking the matter over and thought they should give it—“and if we do, you will be invited, of course.” People were surprised, and said, one to another, “Why, they are crazy, those poor Wilsons, they can’t afford it.” Several among the nineteen said privately to their husbands, “It is a good idea, we will keep still till their cheap thing is over, then we will give one that will make it sick.”

The days drifted along, and the bill of future squanderings rose higher and higher, wilder and wilder, more and more foolish and reckless. It began to look as if every member of the nineteen would not only spend his whole forty thousand dollars before receiving-day, but be actually in debt by the time he got the money. In some cases light-headed people did not stop with planning to spend, they really spent—on credit. They bought land, mortgages, farms, speculative stocks, fine clothes, horses, and various other things, paid down the bonus, and made themselves liable for the rest—at ten days. Presently the sober second thought came, and Halliday noticed that a ghastly anxiety was beginning to show up in a good many faces. Again he was puzzled, and didn’t know what to make of it. “The Wilcox kittens aren’t dead, for they weren’t born; nobody’s broken a leg; there’s no shrinkage in mother-in-laws; *nothing* has happened—it is an insolvable mystery.”

There was another puzzled man, too—the Rev. Mr. Burgess. For days, wherever he went, people seemed to follow him or to be watching out for him; and if he ever found himself in a retired spot, a member of the nineteen would be sure to appear, thrust an envelope privately into his hand, whisper “To be opened at the town-hall Friday evening,” then vanish away like a guilty thing. He was expecting that there might be one claimant for the sack—doubtful, however, Goodson being dead—but it never occurred to him that all this crowd might be claimants. When the great Friday came at last, he found that he had nineteen envelopes.

III

The town-hall had never looked finer. The platform at the end of it was backed by a showy draping of flags; at intervals along the walls were festoons of flags; the gallery fronts were clothed in flags; the supporting columns were swathed in flags; all this was to impress the stranger, for he would be there in considerable force, and in a large degree he would be connected with the press. The house was full. The 412 fixed seats were occupied; also the 68 extra chairs which had been packed into the aisles; the steps of the platform were occupied; some distinguished strangers were given seats on the platform; at the horseshoe of tables which fenced the front and sides of the platform sat a strong force of special correspondents who had come from everywhere. It was the best-dressed house the town had ever produced. There were some tolerably expensive toilets there, and in several cases the ladies who wore them had the look of being unfamiliar with that kind of clothes. At least the town thought they had that look,

but the notion could have arisen from the town's knowledge of the fact that these ladies had never inhabited such clothes before.

Page 17

The gold-sack stood on a little table at the front of the platform where all the house could see it. The bulk of the house gazed at it with a burning interest, a mouth-watering interest, a wistful and pathetic interest; a minority of nineteen couples gazed at it tenderly, lovingly, proprietarily, and the male half of this minority kept saying over to themselves the moving little impromptu speeches of thankfulness for the audience's applause and congratulations which they were presently going to get up and deliver. Every now and then one of these got a piece of paper out of his vest pocket and privately glanced at it to refresh his memory.

Of course there was a buzz of conversation going on—there always is; but at last, when the Rev. Mr. Burgess rose and laid his hand on the sack, he could hear his microbes gnaw, the place was so still. He related the curious history of the sack, then went on to speak in warm terms of Hadleyburg's old and well-earned reputation for spotless honesty, and of the town's just pride in this reputation. He said that this reputation was a treasure of priceless value; that under Providence its value had now become inestimably enhanced, for the recent episode had spread this fame far and wide, and thus had focussed the eyes of the American world upon this village, and made its name for all time, as he hoped and believed, a synonym for commercial incorruptibility. [Applause.] "And who is to be the guardian of this noble fame—the community as a whole? No! The responsibility is individual, not communal. From this day forth each and every one of you is in his own person its special guardian, and individually responsible that no harm shall come to it. Do you—does each of you—accept this great trust? [Tumultuous assent.] Then all is well. Transmit it to your children and to your children's children. To-day your purity is beyond reproach—see to it that it shall remain so. To-day there is not a person in your community who could be beguiled to touch a penny not his own—see to it that you abide in this grace. ["We will! we will!"] This is not the place to make comparisons between ourselves and other communities—some of them ungracious towards us; they have their ways, we have ours; let us be content. [Applause.] I am done. Under my hand, my friends, rests a stranger's eloquent recognition of what we are; through him the world will always henceforth know what we are. We do not know who he is, but in your name I utter your gratitude, and ask you to raise your voices in indorsement."

The house rose in a body and made the walls quake with the thunders of its thankfulness for the space of a long minute. Then it sat down, and Mr. Burgess took an envelope out of his pocket. The house held its breath while he slit the envelope open and took from it a slip of paper. He read its contents—slowly and impressively—the audience listening with tranced attention to this magic document, each of whose words stood for an ingot of gold:

Page 18

“The remark which I made to the distressed stranger was this: “You are very far from being a bad man; go, and reform.” Then he continued:—“We shall know in a moment now whether the remark here quoted corresponds with the one concealed in the sack; and if that shall prove to be so—and it undoubtedly will—this sack of gold belongs to a fellow-citizen who will henceforth stand before the nation as the symbol of the special virtue which has made our town famous throughout the land—Mr. Billson!”

The house had gotten itself all ready to burst into the proper tornado of applause; but instead of doing it, it seemed stricken with a paralysis; there was a deep hush for a moment or two, then a wave of whispered murmurs swept the place—of about this tenor: “*Billson!* oh, come, this is *too* thin! Twenty dollars to a stranger—or *anybody*—*Billson!* Tell it to the marines!” And now at this point the house caught its breath all of a sudden in a new access of astonishment, for it discovered that whereas in one part of the hall Deacon Billson was standing up with his head weekly bowed, in another part of it Lawyer Wilson was doing the same. There was a wondering silence now for a while. Everybody was puzzled, and nineteen couples were surprised and indignant.

Billson and Wilson turned and stared at each other. Billson asked, bitingly:

“Why do *you* rise, Mr. Wilson?”

“Because I have a right to. Perhaps you will be good enough to explain to the house why *you* rise.”

“With great pleasure. Because I wrote that paper.”

“It is an impudent falsity! I wrote it myself.”

It was Burgess’s turn to be paralysed. He stood looking vacantly at first one of the men and then the other, and did not seem to know what to do. The house was stupefied. Lawyer Wilson spoke up now, and said:

“I ask the Chair to read the name signed to that paper.”

That brought the Chair to itself, and it read out the name:

“John Wharton *Billson.*”

“There!” shouted Billson, “what have you got to say for yourself now? And what kind of apology are you going to make to me and to this insulted house for the imposture which you have attempted to play here?”

“No apologies are due, sir; and as for the rest of it, I publicly charge you with pilfering my note from Mr. Burgess and substituting a copy of it signed with your own name.

There is no other way by which you could have gotten hold of the test-remark; I alone, of living men, possessed the secret of its wording.”

There was likely to be a scandalous state of things if this went on; everybody noticed with distress that the shorthand scribes were scribbling like mad; many people were crying “Chair, chair! Order! order!” Burgess rapped with his gavel, and said:

“Let us not forget the proprieties due. There has evidently been a mistake somewhere, but surely that is all. If Mr. Wilson gave me an envelope—and I remember now that he did—I still have it.”

Page 19

He took one out of his pocket, opened it, glanced at it, looked surprised and worried, and stood silent a few moments. Then he waved his hand in a wandering and mechanical way, and made an effort or two to say something, then gave it up, despondently. Several voices cried out:

“Read it! read it! What is it?”

So he began, in a dazed and sleep-walker fashion:

“The remark which I made to the unhappy stranger was this: “You are far from being a bad man. [The house gazed at him marvelling.] Go, and reform.”” [Murmurs: “Amazing! what can this mean?”] “This one,” said the Chair, “is signed Thurlow G. Wilson.”

“There!” cried Wilson, “I reckon that settles it! I knew perfectly well my note was purloined.”

“Purloined!” retorted Billson. “I’ll let you know that neither you nor any man of your kidney must venture to—”

The Chair: “Order, gentlemen, order! Take your seats, both of you, please.”

They obeyed, shaking their heads and grumbling angrily. The house was profoundly puzzled; it did not know what to do with this curious emergency. Presently Thompson got up. Thompson was the hatter. He would have liked to be a Nineteener; but such was not for him; his stock of hats was not considerable enough for the position. He said:

“Mr. Chairman, if I may be permitted to make a suggestion, can both of these gentlemen be right? I put it to you, sir, can both have happened to say the very same words to the stranger? It seems to me—”

The tanner got up and interrupted him. The tanner was a disgruntled man; he believed himself entitled to be a Nineteener, but he couldn’t get recognition. It made him a little unpleasant in his ways and speech. Said he:

“Sho, *that’s* not the point! *That* could happen—twice in a hundred years—but not the other thing. *Neither* of them gave the twenty dollars!” [A ripple of applause.]

Billson. “I did!”

Wilson. “I did!”

Then each accused the other of pilfering.

The Chair. "Order! Sit down, if you please—both of you. Neither of the notes has been out of my possession at any moment."

A Voice. "Good—that settles *that!*"

The Tanner. "Mr. Chairman, one thing is now plain: one of these men has been eavesdropping under the other one's bed, and filching family secrets. If it is not unparliamentary to suggest it, I will remark that both are equal to it. [The Chair. "Order! order!"] I withdraw the remark, sir, and will confine myself to suggesting that *if* one of them has overheard the other reveal the test-remark to his wife, we shall catch him now."

A Voice. "How?"

The Tanner. "Easily. The two have not quoted the remark in exactly the same words. You would have noticed that, if there hadn't been a considerable stretch of time and an exciting quarrel inserted between the two readings."

Page 20

A Voice. "Name the difference."

The Tanner. "The word *very* is in Billson's note, and not in the other."

Many Voices. "That's so—he's right!"

The Tanner. "And so, if the Chair will examine the test-remark in the sack, we shall know which of these two frauds—[The Chair. "Order!"]—which of these two adventurers—[The Chair. "Order! order!"]—which of these two gentlemen—[laughter and applause]—is entitled to wear the belt as being the first dishonest blatherskite ever bred in this town—which he has dishonoured, and which will be a sultry place for him from now out!" [Vigorous applause.]

Many Voices. "Open it!—open the sack!"

Mr. Burgess made a slit in the sack, slid his hand in, and brought out an envelope. In it were a couple of folded notes. He said:

"One of these is marked, 'Not to be examined until all written communications which have been addressed to the Chair—if any—shall have been read.' The other is marked '*the test.*' Allow me. It is worded—to wit:

"'I do not require that the first half of the remark which was made to me by my benefactor shall be quoted with exactness, for it was not striking, and could be forgotten; but its closing fifteen words are quite striking, and I think easily rememberable; unless *these* shall be accurately reproduced, let the applicant be regarded as an impostor. My benefactor began by saying he seldom gave advice to anyone, but that it always bore the hallmark of high value when he did give it. Then he said this—and it has never faded from my memory: '*You are far from being A bad man* —'"

Fifty Voices. "That settles it—the money's Wilson's! Wilson! Wilson! Speech! Speech!"

People jumped up and crowded around Wilson, wringing his hand and congratulating fervently—meantime the Chair was hammering with the gavel and shouting:

"Order, gentlemen! Order! Order! Let me finish reading, please." When quiet was restored, the reading was resumed—as follows:

"'*Go, and reform—or, mark my words—some day, for your sins you will die and go to hell or Hadleyburg—try and make it the former.*'"

A ghastly silence followed. First an angry cloud began to settle darkly upon the faces of the citizenship; after a pause the cloud began to rise, and a tickled expression tried to

take its place; tried so hard that it was only kept under with great and painful difficulty; the reporters, the Brixtonites, and other strangers bent their heads down and shielded their faces with their hands, and managed to hold in by main strength and heroic courtesy. At this most inopportune time burst upon the stillness the roar of a solitary voice—Jack Halliday's:

Page 21

“*That’s* got the hall-mark on it!”

Then the house let go, strangers and all. Even Mr. Burgess’s gravity broke down presently, then the audience considered itself officially absolved from all restraint, and it made the most of its privilege. It was a good long laugh, and a tempestuously wholehearted one, but it ceased at last—long enough for Mr. Burgess to try to resume, and for the people to get their eyes partially wiped; then it broke out again, and afterward yet again; then at last Burgess was able to get out these serious words:

“It is useless to try to disguise the fact—we find ourselves in the presence of a matter of grave import. It involves the honour of your town—it strikes at the town’s good name. The difference of a single word between the test-remarks offered by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Billson was itself a serious thing, since it indicated that one or the other of these gentlemen had committed a theft—”

The two men were sitting limp, nerveless, crushed; but at these words both were electrified into movement, and started to get up.

“Sit down!” said the Chair, sharply, and they obeyed. “That, as I have said, was a serious thing. And it was—but for only one of them. But the matter has become graver; for the honour of *both* is now in formidable peril. Shall I go even further, and say in inextricable peril? *Both* left out the crucial fifteen words.” He paused. During several moments he allowed the pervading stillness to gather and deepen its impressive effects, then added: “There would seem to be but one way whereby this could happen. I ask these gentlemen—Was there *collusion*?—*Agreement*?”

A low murmur sifted through the house; its import was, “He’s got them both.”

Billson was not used to emergencies; he sat in a helpless collapse. But Wilson was a lawyer. He struggled to his feet, pale and worried, and said:

“I ask the indulgence of the house while I explain this most painful matter. I am sorry to say what I am about to say, since it must inflict irreparable injury upon Mr. Billson, whom I have always esteemed and respected until now, and in whose invulnerability to temptation I entirely believed—as did you all. But for the preservation of my own honour I must speak—and with frankness. I confess with shame—and I now beseech your pardon for it—that I said to the ruined stranger all of the words contained in the test-remark, including the disparaging fifteen. [Sensation.] When the late publication was made I recalled them, and I resolved to claim the sack of coin, for by every right I was entitled to it. Now I will ask you to consider this point, and weigh it well; that stranger’s gratitude to me that night knew no bounds; he said himself that he could find no words for it that were adequate, and that if he should ever be able he would repay me a thousandfold. Now, then, I ask you

Page 22

this; could I expect—could I believe—could I even remotely imagine—that, feeling as he did, he would do so ungrateful a thing as to add those quite unnecessary fifteen words to his test?—set a trap for me?—expose me as a slanderer of my own town before my own people assembled in a public hall? It was preposterous; it was impossible. His test would contain only the kindly opening clause of my remark. Of that I had no shadow of doubt. You would have thought as I did. You would not have expected a base betrayal from one whom you had befriended and against whom you had committed no offence. And so with perfect confidence, perfect trust, I wrote on a piece of paper the opening words—ending with “Go, and reform,”—and signed it. When I was about to put it in an envelope I was called into my back office, and without thinking I left the paper lying open on my desk.” He stopped, turned his head slowly toward Billson, waited a moment, then added: “I ask you to note this; when I returned, a little latter, Mr. Billson was retiring by my street door.” [Sensation.]

In a moment Billson was on his feet and shouting:

“It’s a lie! It’s an infamous lie!”

The Chair. “Be seated, sir! Mr. Wilson has the floor.”

Billson’s friends pulled him into his seat and quieted him, and Wilson went on:

“Those are the simple facts. My note was now lying in a different place on the table from where I had left it. I noticed that, but attached no importance to it, thinking a draught had blown it there. That Mr. Billson would read a private paper was a thing which could not occur to me; he was an honourable man, and he would be above that. If you will allow me to say it, I think his extra word ‘very’ stands explained: it is attributable to a defect of memory. I was the only man in the world who could furnish here any detail of the test-mark—by *honourable* means. I have finished.”

There is nothing in the world like a persuasive speech to fuddle the mental apparatus and upset the convictions and debauch the emotions of an audience not practised in the tricks and delusions of oratory. Wilson sat down victorious. The house submerged him in tides of approving applause; friends swarmed to him and shook him by the hand and congratulated him, and Billson was shouted down and not allowed to say a word. The Chair hammered and hammered with its gavel, and kept shouting:

“But let us proceed, gentlemen, let us proceed!”

At last there was a measurable degree of quiet, and the hatter said:

“But what is there to proceed with, sir, but to deliver the money?”

Voices. "That's it! That's it! Come forward, Wilson!"

The Hatter. "I move three cheers for Mr. Wilson, Symbol of the special virtue which—"

The cheers burst forth before he could finish; and in the midst of them—and in the midst of the clamour of the gavel also—some enthusiasts mounted Wilson on a big friend's shoulder and were going to fetch him in triumph to the platform. The Chair's voice now rose above the noise:

Page 23

“Order! To your places! You forget that there is still a document to be read.” When quiet had been restored he took up the document, and was going to read it, but laid it down again saying “I forgot; this is not to be read until all written communications received by me have first been read.” He took an envelope out of his pocket, removed its enclosure, glanced at it—seemed astonished—held it out and gazed at it—stared at it.

Twenty or thirty voices cried out:

“What is it? Read it! read it!”

And he did—slowly, and wondering:

“The remark which I made to the stranger—[Voices. “Hello! how’s this?”]—was this: “You are far from being a bad man. [Voices. “Great Scott!”] Go, and reform.” [Voice. “Oh, saw my leg off!”] Signed by Mr. Pinkerton the banker.”

The pandemonium of delight which turned itself loose now was of a sort to make the judicious weep. Those whose withers were unwrung laughed till the tears ran down; the reporters, in throes of laughter, set down disordered pot-hooks which would never in the world be decipherable; and a sleeping dog jumped up scared out of its wits, and barked itself crazy at the turmoil. All manner of cries were scattered through the din: “We’re getting rich—*two* Symbols of Incorruptibility!—without counting Billson!” “*Three!*—count Shadbelly in—we can’t have too many!” “All right—Billson’s elected!” “Alas, poor Wilson! victim of *two* thieves!”

A Powerful Voice. “Silence! The Chair’s fished up something more out of its pocket.”

Voices. “Hurrah! Is it something fresh? Read it! read! read!”

The Chair [reading]. “‘The remark which I made,’ etc. ‘You are far from being a bad man. Go,’ etc. Signed, ‘Gregory Yates.’”

Tornado of Voices. “Four Symbols!” “Rah for Yates!” “Fish again!”

The house was in a roaring humour now, and ready to get all the fun out of the occasion that might be in it. Several Nineteeners, looking pale and distressed, got up and began to work their way towards the aisles, but a score of shouts went up:

“The doors, the doors—close the doors; no Incorruptible shall leave this place! Sit down, everybody!” The mandate was obeyed.

“Fish again! Read! read!”

The Chair fished again, and once more the familiar words began to fall from its lips—
“You are far from being a bad man—”

“Name! name! What’s his name?”

“L. Ingoldsby Sargent.”

“Five elected! Pile up the Symbols! Go on, go on!”

“You are far from being a bad—”

“Name! name!”

“Nicholas Whitworth.”

“Hooray! hooray! it’s a symbolical day!”

Somebody wailed in, and began to sing this rhyme (leaving out “it’s”) to the lovely
“Mikado” tune of “When a man’s afraid of a beautiful maid;” the audience joined in, with
joy; then, just in time, somebody contributed another line—

Page 24

“And don’t you this forget—”

The house roared it out. A third line was at once furnished—

“Corruptibles far from Hadleyburg are—”

The house roared that one too. As the last note died, Jack Halliday’s voice rose high and clear, freighted with a final line—

“But the Symbols are here, you bet!”

That was sung, with booming enthusiasm. Then the happy house started in at the beginning and sang the four lines through twice, with immense swing and dash, and finished up with a crashing three-times-three and a tiger for “Hadleyburg the Incorruptible and all Symbols of it which we shall find worthy to receive the hall-mark to-night.”

Then the shoutings at the Chair began again, all over the place:

“Go on! go on! Read! read some more! Read all you’ve got!”

“That’s it—go on! We are winning eternal celebrity!”

A dozen men got up now and began to protest. They said that this farce was the work of some abandoned joker, and was an insult to the whole community. Without a doubt these signatures were all forgeries—

“Sit down! sit down! Shut up! You are confessing. We’ll find your names in the lot.”

“Mr. Chairman, how many of those envelopes have you got?”

The Chair counted.

“Together with those that have been already examined, there are nineteen.”

A storm of derisive applause broke out.

“Perhaps they all contain the secret. I move that you open them all and read every signature that is attached to a note of that sort—and read also the first eight words of the note.”

“Second the motion!”

It was put and carried—uproariously. Then poor old Richards got up, and his wife rose and stood at his side. Her head was bent down, so that none might see that she was

crying. Her husband gave her his arm, and so supporting her, he began to speak in a quavering voice:

“My friends, you have known us two—Mary and me—all our lives, and I think you have liked us and respected us—”

The Chair interrupted him:

“Allow me. It is quite true—that which you are saying, Mr. Richards; this town *does* know you two; it *does* like you; it *does* respect you; more—it honours you and *loves* you —”

Halliday’s voice rang out:

“That’s the hall-marked truth, too! If the Chair is right, let the house speak up and say it. Rise! Now, then—hip! hip! hip!—all together!”

The house rose in mass, faced toward the old couple eagerly, filled the air with a snow-storm of waving handkerchiefs, and delivered the cheers with all its affectionate heart.

The Chair then continued:

“What I was going to say is this: We know your good heart, Mr. Richards, but this is not a time for the exercise of charity toward offenders. [Shouts of “Right! right!”] I see your generous purpose in your face, but I cannot allow you to plead for these men—”

Page 25

"But I was going to—"

"Please take your seat, Mr. Richards. We must examine the rest of these notes—simple fairness to the men who have already been exposed requires this. As soon as that has been done—I give you my word for this—you shall be heard."

Many voices. "Right!—the Chair is right—no interruption can be permitted at this stage! Go on!—the names! the names!—according to the terms of the motion!"

The old couple sat reluctantly down, and the husband whispered to the wife, "It is pitifully hard to have to wait; the shame will be greater than ever when they find we were only going to plead for *ourselves*."

Straightway the jollity broke loose again with the reading of the names.

"'You are far from being a bad man—' Signature, 'Robert J. Titmarsh.'"

"'You are far from being a bad man—' Signature, 'Eliphalet Weeks.'"

"'You are far from being a bad man—' Signature, 'Oscar B. Wilder.'"

At this point the house lit upon the idea of taking the eight words out of the Chairman's hands. He was not unthankful for that. Thenceforward he held up each note in its turn and waited. The house droned out the eight words in a massed and measured and musical deep volume of sound (with a daringly close resemblance to a well-known church chant)—"You are f-a-r from being a b-a-a-a-d man." Then the Chair said, "Signature, 'Archibald Wilcox.'" And so on, and so on, name after name, and everybody had an increasingly and gloriously good time except the wretched Nineteen. Now and then, when a particularly shining name was called, the house made the Chair wait while it chanted the whole of the test-remark from the beginning to the closing words, "And go to hell or Hadleyburg—try and make it the for-or-m-e-r!" and in these special cases they added a grand and agonised and imposing "A-a-a-a-men!"

The list dwindled, dwindled, dwindled, poor old Richards keeping tally of the count, wincing when a name resembling his own was pronounced, and waiting in miserable suspense for the time to come when it would be his humiliating privilege to rise with Mary and finish his plea, which he was intending to word thus: ". . . for until now we have never done any wrong thing, but have gone our humble way unreprieved. We are very poor, we are old, and, have no chick nor child to help us; we were sorely tempted, and we fell. It was my purpose when I got up before to make confession and beg that my name might not be read out in this public place, for it seemed to us that we could not bear it; but I was prevented. It was just; it was our place to suffer with the rest. It has been hard for us. It is the first time we have ever heard our name fall from any one's lips—sullied. Be merciful—for the sake of the better days; make our shame

as light to bear as in your charity you can.” At this point in his reverie Mary nudged him, perceiving that his mind was absent. The house was chanting, “You are f-a-r,” etc.

Page 26

“Be ready,” Mary whispered. “Your name comes now; he has read eighteen.”

The chant ended.

“Next! next! next!” came volleying from all over the house.

Burgess put his hand into his pocket. The old couple, trembling, began to rise. Burgess fumbled a moment, then said:

“I find I have read them all.”

Faint with joy and surprise, the couple sank into their seats, and Mary whispered:

“Oh, bless God, we are saved!—he has lost ours—I wouldn’t give this for a hundred of those sacks!”

The house burst out with its “Mikado” travesty, and sang it three times with ever-increasing enthusiasm, rising to its feet when it reached for the third time the closing line

“But the Symbols are here, you bet!”

and finishing up with cheers and a tiger for “Hadleyburg purity and our eighteen immortal representatives of it.”

Then Wingate, the saddler, got up and proposed cheers “for the cleanest man in town, the one solitary important citizen in it who didn’t try to steal that money—Edward Richards.”

They were given with great and moving heartiness; then somebody proposed that “Richards be elected sole Guardian and Symbol of the now Sacred Hadleyburg Tradition, with power and right to stand up and look the whole sarcastic world in the face.”

Passed, by acclamation; then they sang the “Mikado” again, and ended it with—

“And there’s *one* Symbol left, you bet!”

There was a pause; then—

A Voice. “Now, then, who’s to get the sack?”

The Tanner (with bitter sarcasm). “That’s easy. The money has to be divided among the eighteen Incorruptibles. They gave the suffering stranger twenty dollars apiece—and that remark—each in his turn—it took twenty-two minutes for the procession to

move past. Staked the stranger—total contribution, \$360. All they want is just the loan back—and interest—forty thousand dollars altogether.”

Many Voices [derisively.] “That’s it! Divvy! divvy! Be kind to the poor—don’t keep them waiting!”

The Chair. “Order! I now offer the stranger’s remaining document. It says: ‘If no claimant shall appear [grand chorus of groans], I desire that you open the sack and count out the money to the principal citizens of your town, they to take it in trust [Cries of “Oh! Oh! Oh!”], and use it in such ways as to them shall seem best for the propagation and preservation of your community’s noble reputation for incorruptible honesty [more cries]—a reputation to which their names and their efforts will add a new and far-reaching lustre.” [Enthusiastic outburst of sarcastic applause.] That seems to be all. No—here is a postscript:

Page 27

“P.S.—*Citizens of Hadleyburg*: There *is* no test-remark—nobody made one. [Great sensation.] There wasn’t any pauper stranger, nor any twenty-dollar contribution, nor any accompanying benediction and compliment—these are all inventions. [General buzz and hum of astonishment and delight.] Allow me to tell my story—it will take but a word or two. I passed through your town at a certain time, and received a deep offence which I had not earned. Any other man would have been content to kill one or two of you and call it square, but to me that would have been a trivial revenge, and inadequate; for the dead do not *suffer*. Besides I could not kill you all—and, anyway, made as I am, even that would not have satisfied me. I wanted to damage every man in the place, and every woman—and not in their bodies or in their estate, but in their vanity—the place where feeble and foolish people are most vulnerable. So I disguised myself and came back and studied you. You were easy game. You had an old and lofty reputation for honesty, and naturally you were proud of it—it was your treasure of treasures, the very apple of your eye. As soon as I found out that you carefully and vigilantly kept yourselves and your children *out of temptation*, I knew how to proceed. Why, you simple creatures, the weakest of all weak things is a virtue which has not been tested in the fire. I laid a plan, and gathered a list of names. My project was to corrupt Hadleyburg the Incorruptible. My idea was to make liars and thieves of nearly half a hundred smirchless men and women who had never in their lives uttered a lie or stolen a penny. I was afraid of Goodson. He was neither born nor reared in Hadleyburg. I was afraid that if I started to operate my scheme by getting my letter laid before you, you would say to yourselves, ‘Goodson is the only man among us who would give away twenty dollars to a poor devil’—and then you might not bite at my bait. But heaven took Goodson; then I knew I was safe, and I set my trap and baited it. It may be that I shall not catch all the men to whom I mailed the pretended test-secret, but I shall catch the most of them, if I know Hadleyburg nature. [Voices. “Right—he got every last one of them.”] I believe they will even steal ostensible *gamble*-money, rather than miss, poor, tempted, and mistreated fellows. I am hoping to eternally and everlastingly squelch your vanity and give Hadleyburg a new renown—one that will *stick*—and spread far. If I have succeeded, open the sack and summon the Committee on Propagation and Preservation of the Hadleyburg Reputation.”

A Cyclone of Voices. “Open it! Open it! The Eighteen to the front! Committee on Propagation of the Tradition! Forward—the Incorruptibles!”

The Chair ripped the sack wide, and gathered up a handful of bright, broad, yellow coins, shook them together, then examined them.

Page 28

"Friends, they are only gilded disks of lead!"

There was a crashing outbreak of delight over this news, and when the noise had subsided, the tanner called out:

"By right of apparent seniority in this business, Mr. Wilson is Chairman of the Committee on Propagation of the Tradition. I suggest that he step forward on behalf of his pals, and receive in trust the money."

A Hundred Voices. "Wilson! Wilson! Wilson! Speech! Speech!"

Wilson [in a voice trembling with anger]. "You will allow me to say, and without apologies for my language, *damn* the money!"

A Voice. "Oh, and him a Baptist!"

A Voice. "Seventeen Symbols left! Step up, gentlemen, and assume your trust!"

There was a pause—no response.

The Saddler. "Mr. Chairman, we've got *one* clean man left, anyway, out of the late aristocracy; and he needs money, and deserves it. I move that you appoint Jack Halliday to get up there and auction off that sack of gilt twenty-dollar pieces, and give the result to the right man—the man whom Hadleyburg delights to honour—Edward Richards."

This was received with great enthusiasm, the dog taking a hand again; the saddler started the bids at a dollar, the Brixton folk and Barnum's representative fought hard for it, the people cheered every jump that the bids made, the excitement climbed moment by moment higher and higher, the bidders got on their mettle and grew steadily more and more daring, more and more determined, the jumps went from a dollar up to five, then to ten, then to twenty, then fifty, then to a hundred, then—

At the beginning of the auction Richards whispered in distress to his wife: "Oh, Mary, can we allow it? It—it—you see, it is an honour—reward, a testimonial to purity of character, and—and—can we allow it? Hadn't I better get up and—Oh, Mary, what ought we to do?—what do you think we—" [Halliday's voice. "Fifteen I'm bid! —fifteen for the sack!—twenty!—ah, thanks!—thirty—thanks again! Thirty, thirty, thirty!—do I hear forty?—forty it is! Keep the ball rolling, gentlemen, keep it rolling!—fifty!—thanks, noble Roman!—going at fifty, fifty, fifty!—seventy!—ninety!—splendid!—a hundred!—pile it up, pile it up!—hundred and twenty—forty!—just in time!—hundred and fifty!—Two hundred!—superb! Do I hear two h—thanks!—two hundred and fifty!—"]

"It is another temptation, Edward—I'm all in a tremble—but, oh, we've escaped one temptation, and that ought to warn us, to—" ["Six did I hear?—thanks!—six fifty, six f—



seven hundred!"] And yet, Edward, when you think—nobody susp—["Eight hundred dollars!—hurrah!—make it nine!—Mr. Parsons, did I hear you say—thanks!—nine!—this noble sack of virgin lead going at only nine hundred dollars, gilding and all—come! do I hear—a thousand!—gratefully yours!—did some one say eleven?—a sack which is going to be the most celebrated in the whole Uni—""] Oh, Edward (beginning to sob), we are so poor!—but—but—do as you think best—do as you think best."

Page 29

Edward fell—that is, he sat still; sat with a conscience which was not satisfied, but which was overpowered by circumstances.

Meantime a stranger, who looked like an amateur detective gotten up as an impossible English earl, had been watching the evening's proceedings with manifest interest, and with a contented expression in his face; and he had been privately commenting to himself. He was now soliloquising somewhat like this: 'None of the Eighteen are bidding; that is not satisfactory; I must change that—the dramatic unities require it; they must buy the sack they tried to steal; they must pay a heavy price, too—some of them are rich. And another thing, when I make a mistake in Hadleyburg nature the man that puts that error upon me is entitled to a high honorarium, and some one must pay. This poor old Richards has brought my judgment to shame; he is an honest man:—I don't understand it, but I acknowledge it. Yes, he saw my deuces—*and* with a straight flush, and by rights the pot is his. And it shall be a jack-pot, too, if I can manage it. He disappointed me, but let that pass.'

He was watching the bidding. At a thousand, the market broke: the prices tumbled swiftly. He waited—and still watched. One competitor dropped out; then another, and another. He put in a bid or two now. When the bids had sunk to ten dollars, he added a five; some one raised him a three; he waited a moment, then flung in a fifty-dollar jump, and the sack was his—at \$1,282. The house broke out in cheers—then stopped; for he was on his feet, and had lifted his hand. He began to speak.

"I desire to say a word, and ask a favour. I am a speculator in rarities, and I have dealings with persons interested in numismatics all over the world. I can make a profit on this purchase, just as it stands; but there is a way, if I can get your approval, whereby I can make every one of these leaden twenty-dollar pieces worth its face in gold, and perhaps more. Grant me that approval, and I will give part of my gains to your Mr. Richards, whose invulnerable probity you have so justly and so cordially recognised tonight; his share shall be ten thousand dollars, and I will hand him the money to-morrow. [Great applause from the house. But the "invulnerable probity" made the Richardses blush prettily; however, it went for modesty, and did no harm.] If you will pass my proposition by a good majority—I would like a two-thirds vote—I will regard that as the town's consent, and that is all I ask. Rarities are always helped by any device which will rouse curiosity and compel remark. Now if I may have your permission to stamp upon the faces of each of these ostensible coins the names of the eighteen gentlemen who—"

Nine-tenths of the audience were on their feet in a moment—dog and all—and the proposition was carried with a whirlwind of approving applause and laughter.

They sat down, and all the Symbols except "Dr." Clay Harkness got up, violently protesting against the proposed outrage, and threatening to—

Page 30

"I beg you not to threaten me," said the stranger calmly. "I know my legal rights, and am not accustomed to being frightened at bluster." [Applause.] He sat down. "Dr." Harkness saw an opportunity here. He was one of the two very rich men of the place, and Pinkerton was the other. Harkness was proprietor of a mint; that is to say, a popular patent medicine. He was running for the Legislature on one ticket, and Pinkerton on the other. It was a close race and a hot one, and getting hotter every day. Both had strong appetites for money; each had bought a great tract of land, with a purpose; there was going to be a new railway, and each wanted to be in the Legislature and help locate the route to his own advantage; a single vote might make the decision, and with it two or three fortunes. The stake was large, and Harkness was a daring speculator. He was sitting close to the stranger. He leaned over while one or another of the other Symbols was entertaining the house with protests and appeals, and asked, in a whisper,

"What is your price for the sack?"

"Forty thousand dollars."

"I'll give you twenty."

"No."

"Twenty-five."

"No."

"Say thirty."

"The price is forty thousand dollars; not a penny less."

"All right, I'll give it. I will come to the hotel at ten in the morning. I don't want it known; will see you privately."

"Very good." Then the stranger got up and said to the house:

"I find it late. The speeches of these gentlemen are not without merit, not without interest, not without grace; yet if I may be excused I will take my leave. I thank you for the great favour which you have shown me in granting my petition. I ask the Chair to keep the sack for me until to-morrow, and to hand these three five-hundred-dollar notes to Mr. Richards." They were passed up to the Chair.

"At nine I will call for the sack, and at eleven will deliver the rest of the ten thousand to Mr. Richards in person at his home. Good-night."



Then he slipped out, and left the audience making a vast noise, which was composed of a mixture of cheers, the “Mikado” song, dog-disapproval, and the chant, “You are f-a-r from being a b-a-a-d man—a-a-a a-men!”

IV

At home the Richardses had to endure congratulations and compliments until midnight. Then they were left to themselves. They looked a little sad, and they sat silent and thinking. Finally Mary sighed and said:

“Do you think we are to blame, Edward—*much* to blame?” and her eyes wandered to the accusing triplet of big bank-notes lying on the table, where the congratulators had been gloating over them and reverently fingering them. Edward did not answer at once; then he brought out a sigh and said, hesitatingly:

“We—we couldn’t help it, Mary. It—well it was ordered. *All* things are.”

Page 31

Mary glanced up and looked at him steadily, but he didn't return the look. Presently she said:

"I thought congratulations and praises always tasted good. But—it seems to me, now—Edward?"

"Well?"

"Are you going to stay in the bank?"

"N—no."

"Resign?"

"In the morning—by note."

"It does seem best."

Richards bowed his head in his hands and muttered:

"Before I was not afraid to let oceans of people's money pour through my hands, but—Mary, I am so tired, so tired—"

"We will go to bed."

At nine in the morning the stranger called for the sack and took it to the hotel in a cab. At ten Harkness had a talk with him privately. The stranger asked for and got five cheques on a metropolitan bank—drawn to "Bearer,"—four for \$1,500 each, and one for \$34,000. He put one of the former in his pocket-book, and the remainder, representing \$38,500, he put in an envelope, and with these he added a note which he wrote after Harkness was gone. At eleven he called at the Richards' house and knocked. Mrs. Richards peeped through the shutters, then went and received the envelope, and the stranger disappeared without a word. She came back flushed and a little unsteady on her legs, and gasped out:

"I am sure I recognised him! Last night it seemed to me that maybe I had seen him somewhere before."

"He is the man that brought the sack here?"

"I am almost sure of it."

"Then he is the ostensible Stephenson too, and sold every important citizen in this town with his bogus secret. Now if he has sent cheques instead of money, we are sold too, after we thought we had escaped. I was beginning to feel fairly comfortable once more,

after my night's rest, but the look of that envelope makes me sick. It isn't fat enough; \$8,500 in even the largest bank-notes makes more bulk than that."

"Edward, why do you object to cheques?"

"Cheques signed by Stephenson! I am resigned to take the \$8,500 if it could come in bank-notes—for it does seem that it was so ordered, Mary—but I have never had much courage, and I have not the pluck to try to market a cheque signed with that disastrous name. It would be a trap. That man tried to catch me; we escaped somehow or other; and now he is trying a new way. If it is cheques—"

"Oh, Edward, it is *too* bad!" And she held up the cheques and began to cry.

"Put them in the fire! quick! we mustn't be tempted. It is a trick to make the world laugh at *us*, along with the rest, and—Give them to *me*, since you can't do it!" He snatched them and tried to hold his grip till he could get to the stove; but he was human, he was a cashier, and he stopped a moment to make sure of the signature. Then he came near to fainting.

"Fan me, Mary, fan me! They are the same as gold!"

Page 32

"Oh, how lovely, Edward! Why?"

"Signed by Harkness. What can the mystery of that be, Mary?"

"Edward, do you think—"

"Look here—look at this! Fifteen—fifteen—fifteen—thirty-four. Thirty-eight thousand five hundred! Mary, the sack isn't worth twelve dollars, and Harkness—apparently—has paid about par for it."

"And does it all come to us, do you think—instead of the ten thousand?"

"Why, it looks like it. And the cheques are made to 'Bearer,' too."

"Is that good, Edward? What is it for?"

"A hint to collect them at some distant bank, I reckon. Perhaps Harkness doesn't want the matter known. What is that—a note?"

"Yes. It was with the cheques."

It was in the "Stephenson" handwriting, but there was no signature. It said:

"I am a disappointed man. Your honesty is beyond the reach of temptation. I had a different idea about it, but I wronged you in that, and I beg pardon, and do it sincerely. I honour you—and that is sincere too. This town is not worthy to kiss the hem of your garment. Dear sir, I made a square bet with myself that there were nineteen debauchable men in your self-righteous community. I have lost. Take the whole pot, you are entitled to it."

Richards drew a deep sigh, and said:

"It seems written with fire—it burns so. Mary—I am miserable again."

"I, too. Ah, dear, I wish—"

"To think, Mary—he *believes* in me."

"Oh, don't, Edward—I can't bear it."

"If those beautiful words were deserved, Mary—and God knows I believed I deserved them once—I think I could give the forty thousand dollars for them. And I would put that paper away, as representing more than gold and jewels, and keep it always. But now—We could not live in the shadow of its accusing presence, Mary."

He put it in the fire.

A messenger arrived and delivered an envelope. Richards took from it a note and read it; it was from Burgess:

“You saved me, in a difficult time. I saved you last night. It was at cost of a lie, but I made the sacrifice freely, and out of a grateful heart. None in this village knows so well as I know how brave and good and noble you are. At bottom you cannot respect me, knowing as you do of that matter of which I am accused, and by the general voice condemned; but I beg that you will at least believe that I am a grateful man; it will help me to bear my burden. [Signed] ‘*Burgess*.’”

“Saved, once more. And on such terms!” He put the note in the lire. “I—I wish I were dead, Mary, I wish I were out of it all!”

“Oh, these are bitter, bitter days, Edward. The stabs, through their very generosity, are so deep—and they come so fast!”

Page 33

Three days before the election each of two thousand voters suddenly found himself in possession of a prized memento—one of the renowned bogus double-eagles. Around one of its faces was stamped these words: “*The remark I made to the poor stranger was—*” Around the other face was stamped these: “*Go, and reform. [Signed] Pinkerton.*” Thus the entire remaining refuse of the renowned joke was emptied upon a single head, and with calamitous effect. It revived the recent vast laugh and concentrated it upon Pinkerton; and Harkness’s election was a walk-over.

Within twenty-four hours after the Richardses had received their cheques their consciences were quieting down, discouraged; the old couple were learning to reconcile themselves to the sin which they had committed. But they were to learn, now, that a sin takes on new and real terrors when there seems a chance that it is going to be found out. This gives it a fresh and most substantial and important aspect. At church the morning sermon was of the usual pattern; it was the same old things said in the same old way; they had heard them a thousand times and found them innocuous, next to meaningless, and easy to sleep under; but now it was different: the sermon seemed to bristle with accusations; it seemed aimed straight and specially at people who were concealing deadly sins. After church they got away from the mob of congratulators as soon as they could, and hurried homeward, chilled to the bone at they did not know what—vague, shadowy, indefinite fears. And by chance they caught a glimpse of Mr. Burgess as he turned a corner. He paid no attention to their nod of recognition! He hadn’t seen it; but they did not know that. What could his conduct mean? It might mean—it might—mean—oh, a dozen dreadful things. Was it possible that he knew that Richards could have cleared him of guilt in that bygone time, and had been silently waiting for a chance to even up accounts? At home, in their distress they got to imagining that their servant might have been in the next room listening when Richards revealed the secret to his wife that he knew of Burgess’s innocence; next Richards began to imagine that he had heard the swish of a gown in there at that time; next, he was sure he *had* heard it. They would call Sarah in, on a pretext, and watch her face; if she had been betraying them to Mr. Burgess, it would show in her manner. They asked her some questions—questions which were so random and incoherent and seemingly purposeless that the girl felt sure that the old people’s minds had been affected by their sudden good fortune; the sharp and watchful gaze which they bent upon her frightened her, and that completed the business. She blushed, she became nervous and confused, and to the old people these were plain signs of guilt—guilt of some fearful sort or other—without doubt she was a spy and a traitor. When they were alone again they began to piece many unrelated things together and get horrible results out of the combination. When things had got about to the worst Richards was delivered of a sudden gasp and his wife asked:

Page 34

“Oh, what is it?—what is it?”

“The note—Burgess’s note! Its language was sarcastic, I see it now.” He quoted: “‘At bottom you cannot respect me, *knowing*, as you do, of *that matter of* which I am accused’—oh, it is perfectly plain, now, God help me! He knows that I know! You see the ingenuity of the phrasing. It was a trap—and like a fool, I walked into it. And Mary —!”

“Oh, it is dreadful—I know what you are going to say—he didn’t return your transcript of the pretended test-remark.”

“No—kept it to destroy us with. Mary, he has exposed us to some already. I know it—I know it well. I saw it in a dozen faces after church. Ah, he wouldn’t answer our nod of recognition—he knew what he had been doing!”

In the night the doctor was called. The news went around in the morning that the old couple were rather seriously ill—prostrated by the exhausting excitement growing out of their great windfall, the congratulations, and the late hours, the doctor said. The town was sincerely distressed; for these old people were about all it had left to be proud of, now.

Two days later the news was worse. The old couple were delirious, and were doing strange things. By witness of the nurses, Richards had exhibited cheques—for \$8,500? No—for an amazing sum—\$38,500! What could be the explanation of this gigantic piece of luck?

The following day the nurses had more news—and wonderful. They had concluded to hide the cheques, lest harm come to them; but when they searched they were gone from under the patient’s pillow—vanished away. The patient said:

“Let the pillow alone; what do you want?”

“We thought it best that the cheques—”

“You will never see them again—they are destroyed. They came from Satan. I saw the hell-brand on them, and I knew they were sent to betray me to sin.” Then he fell to gabbling strange and dreadful things which were not clearly understandable, and which the doctor admonished them to keep to themselves.

Richards was right; the cheques were never seen again.

A nurse must have talked in her sleep, for within two days the forbidden gabblings were the property of the town; and they were of a surprising sort. They seemed to indicate that Richards had been a claimant for the sack himself, and that Burgess had concealed that fact and then maliciously betrayed it.

Burgess was taxed with this and stoutly denied it. And he said it was not fair to attach weight to the chatter of a sick old man who was out of his mind. Still, suspicion was in the air, and there was much talk.

After a day or two it was reported that Mrs. Richards's delirious deliveries were getting to be duplicates of her husband's. Suspicion flamed up into conviction, now, and the town's pride in the purity of its one undiscredited important citizen began to dim down and flicker toward extinction.

Page 35

Six days passed, then came more news. The old couple were dying. Richards's mind cleared in his latest hour, and he sent for Burgess. Burgess said:

"Let the room be cleared. I think he wishes to say something in privacy."

"No!" said Richards; "I want witnesses. I want you all to hear my confession, so that I may die a man, and not a dog. I was clean —artificially—like the rest; and like the rest I fell when temptation came. I signed a lie, and claimed the miserable sack. Mr. Burgess remembered that I had done him a service, and in gratitude (and ignorance) he suppressed my claim and saved me. You know the thing that was charged against Burgess years ago. My testimony, and mine alone, could have cleared him, and I was a coward and left him to suffer disgrace—"

"No—no—Mr. Richards, you—"

"My servant betrayed my secret to him—"

"No one has betrayed anything to me—"

—"And then he did a natural and justifiable thing; he repented of the saving kindness which he had done me, and he *exposed* me—as I deserved—"

"Never!—I make oath—"

"Out of my heart I forgive him."

Burgess's impassioned protestations fell upon deaf ears; the dying man passed away without knowing that once more he had done poor Burgess a wrong. The old wife died that night.

The last of the sacred Nineteen had fallen a prey to the fiendish sack; the town was stripped of the last rag of its ancient glory. Its mourning was not showy, but it was deep.

By act of the Legislature—upon prayer and petition—Hadleyburg was allowed to change its name to (never mind what—I will not give it away), and leave one word out of the motto that for many generations had graced the town's official seal.

It is an honest town once more, and the man will have to rise early that catches it napping again.

MY FIRST LIE, AND HOW I GOT OUT OF IT

As I understand it, what you desire is information about 'my first lie, and how I got out of it.' I was born in 1835; I am well along, and my memory is not as good as it was. If you



had asked about my first truth it would have been easier for me and kinder of you, for I remember that fairly well. I remember it as if it were last week. The family think it was week before, but that is flattery and probably has a selfish project back of it. When a person has become seasoned by experience and has reached the age of sixty-four, which is the age of discretion, he likes a family compliment as well as ever, but he does not lose his head over it as in the old innocent days.

I do not remember my first lie, it is too far back; but I remember my second one very well. I was nine days old at the time, and had noticed that if a pin was sticking in me and I advertised it in the usual fashion, I was lovingly petted and coddled and pitied in a most agreeable way and got a ration between meals besides.

Page 36

It was human nature to want to get these riches, and I fell. I lied about the pin—advertising one when there wasn't any. You would have done it; George Washington did it, anybody would have done it. During the first half of my life I never knew a child that was able to rise about that temptation and keep from telling that lie. Up to 1867 all the civilised children that were ever born into the world were liars—including George. Then the safety-pin came in and blocked the game. But is that reform worth anything? No; for it is reform by force and has no virtue in it; it merely stops that form of lying, it doesn't impair the disposition to lie, by a shade. It is the cradle application of conversion by fire and sword, or of the temperance principle through prohibition.

To return to that early lie. They found no pin and they realised that another liar had been added to the world's supply. For by grace of a rare inspiration a quite commonplace but seldom noticed fact was borne in upon their understandings—that almost all lies are acts, and speech has no part in them. Then, if they examined a little further they recognised that all people are liars from the cradle onwards, without exception, and that they begin to lie as soon as they wake in the morning, and keep it up without rest or refreshment until they go to sleep at night. If they arrived at that truth it probably grieved them—did, if they had been heedlessly and ignorantly educated by their books and teachers; for why should a person grieve over a thing which by the eternal law of his make he cannot help? He didn't invent the law; it is merely his business to obey it and keep still; join the universal conspiracy and keep so still that he shall deceive his fellow-conspirators into imagining that he doesn't know that the law exists. It is what we all do—we that know. I am speaking of the lie of silent assertion; we can tell it without saying a word, and we all do it—we that know. In the magnitude of its territorial spread it is one of the most majestic lies that the civilisations make it their sacred and anxious care to guard and watch and propagate.

For instance. It would not be possible for a humane and intelligent person to invent a rational excuse for slavery; yet you will remember that in the early days of the emancipation agitation in the North the agitators got but small help or countenance from any one. Argue and plead and pray as they might, they could not break the universal stillness that reigned, from pulpit and press all the way down to the bottom of society—the clammy stillness created and maintained by the lie of silent assertion—the silent assertion that there wasn't anything going on in which humane and intelligent people were interested.

From the beginning of the Dreyfus case to the end of it all France, except a couple of dozen moral paladins, lay under the smother of the silent-assertion lie that no wrong was being done to a persecuted and unoffending man. The like smother was over England lately, a good half of the population silently letting on that they were not aware that Mr. Chamberlain was trying to manufacture a war in South Africa and was willing to pay fancy prices for the materials.

Page 37

Now there we have instances of three prominent ostensible civilisations working the silent-assertion lie. Could one find other instances in the three countries? I think so. Not so very many perhaps, but say a billion—just so as to keep within bounds. Are those countries working that kind of lie, day in and day out, in thousands and thousands of varieties, without ever resting? Yes, we know that to be true. The universal conspiracy of the silent-assertion lie is hard at work always and everywhere, and always in the interest of a stupidity or a sham, never in the interest of a thing fine or respectable. Is it the most timid and shabby of all lies? It seems to have the look of it. For ages and ages it has mutely laboured in the interest of despotisms and aristocracies and chattel slaveries, and military slaveries, and religious slaveries, and has kept them alive; keeps them alive yet, here and there and yonder, all about the globe; and will go on keeping them alive until the silent-assertion lie retires from business—the silent assertion that nothing is going on which fair and intelligent men are aware of and are engaged by their duty to try to stop.

What I am arriving at is this: When whole races and peoples conspire to propagate gigantic mute lies in the interest of tyrannies and shams, why should we care anything about the trifling lies told by individuals? Why should we try to make it appear that abstention from lying is a virtue? Why should we want to beguile ourselves in that way? Why should we without shame help the nation lie, and then be ashamed to do a little lying on our own account? Why shouldn't we be honest and honourable, and lie every time we get a chance? That is to say, why shouldn't we be consistent, and either lie all the time or not at all? Why should we help the nation lie the whole day long and then object to telling one little individual private lie in our own interest to go to bed on? Just for the refreshment of it, I mean, and to take the rancid taste out of our mouth.

Here in England they have the oddest ways. They won't tell a spoken lie —nothing can persuade them. Except in a large moral interest, like politics or religion, I mean. To tell a spoken lie to get even the poorest little personal advantage out of it is a thing which is impossible to them. They make me ashamed of myself sometimes, they are so bigoted. They will not even tell a lie for the fun of it; they will not tell it when it hasn't even a suggestion of damage or advantage in it for any one. This has a restraining influence upon me in spite of reason, and I am always getting out of practice.

Of course, they tell all sorts of little unspoken lies, just like anybody; but they don't notice it until their attention is called to it. They have got me so that sometimes I never tell a verbal lie now except in a modified form; and even in the modified form they don't approve of it. Still, that is as far as I can go in the interest of the growing friendly relations between the two countries; I must keep some of my self-respect—and my health. I can live on a pretty low diet, but I can't get along on no sustenance at all.

Page 38

Of course, there are times when these people have to come out with a spoken lie, for that is a thing which happens to everybody once in a while, and would happen to the angels if they came down here much. Particularly to the angels, in fact, for the lies I speak of are self-sacrificing ones told for a generous object, not a mean one; but even when these people tell a lie of that sort it seems to scare them and unsettle their minds. It is a wonderful thing to see, and shows that they are all insane. In fact, it is a country which is full of the most interesting superstitions.

I have an English friend of twenty-five years' standing, and yesterday when we were coming down-town on top of the 'bus I happened to tell him a lie—a modified one, of course; a half-breed, a mulatto; I can't seem to tell any other kind now, the market is so flat. I was explaining to him how I got out of an embarrassment in Austria last year. I do not know what might have become of me if I hadn't happened to remember to tell the police that I belonged to the same family as the Prince of Wales. That made everything pleasant and they let me go; and apologised, too, and were ever so kind and obliging and polite, and couldn't do too much for me, and explained how the mistake came to be made, and promised to hang the officer that did it, and hoped I would let bygones be bygones and not say anything about it; and I said they could depend on me. My friend said, austere-ly:

'You call it a modified lie? Where is the modification?'

I explained that it lay in the form of my statement to the police. 'I didn't say I belonged to the Royal Family; I only said I belonged to the same family as the Prince—meaning the human family, of course; and if those people had had any penetration they would have known it. I can't go around furnishing brains to the police; it is not to be expected.'

'How did you feel after that performance?'

'Well, of course I was distressed to find that the police had misunderstood me, but as long as I had not told any lie I knew there was no occasion to sit up nights and worry about it.'

My friend struggled with the case several minutes, turning it over and examining it in his mind, then he said that so far as he could see the modification was itself a lie, it being a misleading reservation of an explanatory fact, and so I had told two lies instead of only one.

'I wouldn't have done it,' said he; 'I have never told a lie, and I should be very sorry to do such a thing.'

Just then he lifted his hat and smiled a basketful of surprised and delighted smiles down at a gentleman who was passing in a hansom.



'Who was that, G——?'

'I don't know.'

'Then why did you do that?'

'Because I saw he thought he knew me and was expecting it of me. If I hadn't done it he would have been hurt. I didn't want to embarrass him before the whole street.'

Page 39

'Well, your heart was right, G——, and your act was right. What you did was kindly and courteous and beautiful; I would have done it myself; but it was a lie.'

'A lie? I didn't say a word. How do you make it out?'

'I know you didn't speak, still you said to him very plainly and enthusiastically in dumb show, "Hello! you in town? Awful glad to see you, old fellow; when did you get back?" Concealed in your actions was what you have called "a misleading reservation of an explanatory fact" —the act that you had never seen him before. You expressed joy in encountering him—a lie; and you made that reservation—another lie. It was my pair over again. But don't be troubled—we all do it.'

Two hours later, at dinner, when quite other matters were being discussed, he told how he happened along once just in the nick of time to do a great service for a family who were old friends of his. The head of it had suddenly died in circumstances and surroundings of a ruinously disgraceful character. If know the facts would break the hearts of the innocent family and put upon them a load of unendurable shame. There was no help but in a giant lie, and he girded up his loins and told it.

'The family never found out, G——?'

'Never. In all these years they have never suspected. They were proud of him and had always reason to be; they are proud of him yet, and to them his memory is sacred and stainless and beautiful.'

'They had a narrow escape, G——.'

'Indeed they had.'

'For the very next man that came along might have been one of these heartless and shameless truth-mongers. You have told the truth a million times in your life, G——, but that one golden lie atones for it all. Persevere.'

Some may think me not strict enough in my morals, but that position is hardly tenable. There are many kinds of lying which I do not approve. I do not like an injurious lie, except when it injures somebody else; and I do not like the lie of bravado, nor the lie of virtuous ecstasy; the latter was affected by Bryant, the former by Carlyle.

Mr. Bryant said, 'Truth crushed to earth will rise again.' I have taken medals at thirteen world's fairs, and may claim to be not without capacity, but I never told as big a one as that. Mr. Bryant was playing to the gallery; we all do it. Carlyle said, in substance, this—I do not remember the exact words: 'This gospel is eternal—that a lie shall not live.' I have a reverent affection for Carlyle's books, and have read his 'Revelation' eight times; and so I prefer to think he was not entirely at himself when he told that one. To me it is plain that he said it in a moment of excitement, when chasing Americans out of his

back-yard with brickbats. They used to go there and worship. At bottom he was probably fond of it, but he was always able to conceal it. He kept bricks for them, but he was not a good shot, and it is matter of history

Page 40

that when he fired they dodged, and carried off the brick; for as a nation we like relics, and so long as we get them we do not much care what the reliquary thinks about it. I am quite sure that when he told that large one about a lie not being able to live he had just missed an American and was over excited. He told it above thirty years ago, but it is alive yet; alive, and very healthy and hearty, and likely to outlive any fact in history. Carlyle was truthful when calm, but give him Americans enough and bricks enough and he could have taken medals himself.

As regards that time that George Washington told the truth, a word must be said, of course. It is the principal jewel in the crown of America, and it is but natural that we should work it for all it is worth, as Milton says in his 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' It was a timely and judicious truth, and I should have told it myself in the circumstances. But I should have stopped there. It was a stately truth, a lofty truth—a Tower; and I think it was a mistake to go on and distract attention from its sublimity by building another Tower alongside of it fourteen times as high. I refer to his remark that he 'could not lie.' I should have fed that to the marines; or left it to Carlyle; it is just in his style. It would have taken a medal at any European fair, and would have got an honourable mention even at Chicago if it had been saved up. But let it pass; the Father of his Country was excited. I have been in those circumstances, and I recollect.

With the truth he told I have no objection to offer, as already indicated. I think it was not premeditated but an inspiration. With his fine military mind, he had probably arranged to let his brother Edward in for the cherry tree results, but by an inspiration he saw his opportunity in time and took advantage of it. By telling the truth he could astonish his father; his father would tell the neighbours; the neighbours would spread it; it would travel to all firesides; in the end it would make him President, and not only that, but First President. He was a far-seeing boy and would be likely to think of these things. Therefore, to my mind, he stands justified for what he did. But not for the other Tower; it was a mistake. Still, I don't know about that; upon reflection I think perhaps it wasn't. For indeed it is that Tower that makes the other one live. If he hadn't said 'I cannot tell a lie' there would have been no convulsion. That was the earthquake that rocked the planet. That is the kind of statement that lives for ever, and a fact barnacled to it has a good chance to share its immortality.

To sum up, on the whole I am satisfied with things the way they are. There is a prejudice against the spoken lie, but none against any other, and by examination and mathematical computation I find that the proportion of the spoken lie to the other varieties is as 1 to 22,894. Therefore the spoken lie is of no consequence, and it is not worth while to go around fussing about it and trying to make believe that it is an important matter. The silent colossal National Lie that is the support and confederate of all the tyrannies and shams and inequalities and unfairnesses that afflict the peoples---

that is the one to throw bricks and sermons at. But let us be judicious and let somebody else begin.

Page 41

And then—But I have wandered from my text. How did I get out of my second lie? I think I got out with honour, but I cannot be sure, for it was a long time ago and some of the details have faded out of my memory. I recollect that I was reversed and stretched across some one's knee, and that something happened, but I cannot now remember what it was. I think there was music; but it is all dim now and blurred by the lapse of time, and this may be only a senile fancy.

THE ESQUIMAUX MAIDEN'S ROMANCE

'Yes, I will tell you anything about my life that you would like to know, Mr. Twain,' she said, in her soft voice, and letting her honest eyes rest placidly upon my face, 'for it is kind and good of you to like me and care to know about me.'

She had been absently scraping blubber-grease from her cheeks with a small bone-knife and transferring it to her fur sleeve, while she watched the Aurora Borealis swing its flaming streamers out of the sky and wash the lonely snow plain and the templed icebergs with the rich hues of the prism, a spectacle of almost intolerable splendour and beauty; but now she shook off her reverie and prepared to give me the humble little history I had asked for. She settled herself comfortably on the block of ice which we were using as a sofa, and I made ready to listen.

She was a beautiful creature. I speak from the Esquimaux point of view. Others would have thought her a trifle over-plump. She was just twenty years old, and was held to be by far the most bewitching girl in her tribe. Even now, in the open air, with her cumbersome and shapeless fur coat and trousers and boots and vast hood, the beauty of her face was at least apparent; but her figure had to be taken on trust. Among all the guests who came and went, I had seen no girl at her father's hospitable trough who could be called her equal. Yet she was not spoiled. She was sweet and natural and sincere, and if she was aware that she was a belle, there was nothing about her ways to show that she possessed that knowledge.

She had been my daily comrade for a week now, and the better I knew her the better I liked her. She had been tenderly and carefully brought up, in an atmosphere of singularly rare refinement for the polar regions, for her father was the most important man of his tribe and ranked at the top of Esquimaux civilisation. I made long dog-sledge trips across the mighty ice floes with Lasca—that was her name—and found her company always pleasant and her conversation agreeable. I went fishing with her, but not in her perilous boat: I merely followed along on the ice and watched her strike her game with her fatally accurate spear. We went sealing together; several times I stood by while she and the family dug blubber from a stranded whale, and once I went part of the way when she was hunting a bear, but turned back before the finish, because at bottom I am afraid of bears.

Page 42

However, she was ready to begin her story, now, and this is what she said:

'Our tribe had always been used to wander about from place to place over the frozen seas, like the other tribes, but my father got tired of that, two years ago, and built this great mansion of frozen snow-blocks—look at it; it is seven feet high and three or four times as long as any of the others—and here we have stayed ever since. He was very proud of his house, and that was reasonable, for if you have examined it with care you must have noticed how much finer and completer it is than houses usually are. But if you have not, you must, for you will find it has luxurious appointments that are quite beyond the common. For instance, in that end of it which you have called the "parlour," the raised platform for the accommodation of guests and the family at meals is the largest you have ever seen in any house—is it not so?'

'Yes, you are quite right, Lasca; it is the largest; we have nothing resembling it in even the finest houses in the United States.' This admission made her eyes sparkle with pride and pleasure. I noted that, and took my cue.

'I thought it must have surprised you,' she said. 'And another thing; it is bedded far deeper in furs than is usual; all kinds of furs—seal, sea-otter, silver-grey fox, bear, marten, sable—every kind of fur in profusion; and the same with the ice-block sleeping-benches along the walls which you call "beds." Are your platforms and sleeping-benches better provided at home?'

'Indeed, they are not, Lasca—they do not begin to be.' That pleased her again. All she was thinking of was the number of furs her aesthetic father took the trouble to keep on hand, not their value. I could have told her that those masses of rich furs constituted wealth—or would in my country—but she would not have understood that; those were not the kind of things that ranked as riches with her people. I could have told her that the clothes she had on, or the every-day clothes of the commonest person about her, were worth twelve or fifteen hundred dollars, and that I was not acquainted with anybody at home who wore twelve-hundred dollar toilets to go fishing in; but she would not have understood it, so I said nothing. She resumed:

'And then the slop-tubs. We have two in the parlour, and two in the rest of the house. It is very seldom that one has two in the parlour. Have you two in the parlour at home?'

The memory of those tubs made me gasp, but I recovered myself before she noticed, and said with effusion:

'Why, Lasca, it is a shame of me to expose my country, and you must not let it go further, for I am speaking to you in confidence; but I give you my word of honour that not even the richest man in the city of New York has two slop-tubs in his drawing-room.'

She clapped her fur-clad hands in innocent delight, and exclaimed:



Page 43

'Oh, but you cannot mean it, you cannot mean it!'

'Indeed, I am in earnest, dear. There is Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt is almost the richest man in the whole world. Now, if I were on my dying bed, I could say to you that not even he has two in his drawing-room. Why, he hasn't even one—I wish I may die in my tracks if it isn't true.'

Her lovely eyes stood wide with amazement, and she said, slowly, and with a sort of awe in her voice:

'How strange—how incredible—one is not able to realise it. Is he penurious?'

'No—it isn't that. It isn't the expense he minds, but—er—well, you know, it would look like showing off. Yes, that is it, that is the idea; he is a plain man in his way, and shrinks from display.'

'Why, that humility is right enough,' said Lasca, 'if one does not carry it too far—but what does the place look like?'

'Well, necessarily it looks pretty barren and unfinished, but—'

'I should think so! I never heard anything like it. Is it a fine house—that is, otherwise?'

'Pretty fine, yes. It is very well thought of.'

The girl was silent awhile, and sat dreamily gnawing a candle-end, apparently trying to think the thing out. At last she gave her head a little toss and spoke out her opinion with decision:

'Well, to my mind there's a breed of humility which is itself a species of showing off when you get down to the marrow of it; and when a man is able to afford two slop-tubs in his parlour, and doesn't do it, it may be that he is truly humble-minded, but it's a hundred times more likely that he is just trying to strike the public eye. In my judgment, your Mr. Vanderbilt knows what he is about.'

I tried to modify this verdict, feeling that a double slop-tub standard was not a fair one to try everybody by, although a sound enough one in its own habitat; but the girl's head was set, and she was not to be persuaded. Presently she said:

'Do the rich people, with you, have as good sleeping-benches as ours, and made out of as nice broad ice-blocks?'

'Well, they are pretty good—good enough—but they are not made of ice-blocks.'

'I want to know! Why aren't they made of ice-blocks?'

I explained the difficulties in the way, and the expensiveness of ice in a country where you have to keep a sharp eye on your ice-man or your ice-bill will weigh more than your ice. Then she cried out:

‘Dear me, do you buy your ice?’

‘We most surely do, dear.’

She burst into a gale of guileless laughter, and said:

‘Oh, I never heard of anything so silly! My! there’s plenty of it—it isn’t worth anything. Why, there is a hundred miles of it in sight, right now. I wouldn’t give a fish-bladder for the whole of it.’

‘Well, it’s because you don’t know how to value it, you little provincial muggings. If you had it in New York in midsummer, you could buy all the whales in the market with it.’

Page 44

She looked at me doubtfully, and said:

‘Are you speaking true?’

‘Absolutely. I take my oath to it.’

This made her thoughtful. Presently she said, with a little sigh:

‘I wish I could live there.’

I had merely meant to furnish her a standard of values which she could understand; but my purpose had miscarried. I had only given her the impression that whales were cheap and plenty in New York, and set her mouth to watering for them. It seemed best to try to mitigate the evil which I had done, so I said:

‘But you wouldn’t care for whale-meat if you lived there. Nobody does.’

‘What!’

‘Indeed they don’t.’

‘Why don’t they?’

‘Wel-l-l, I hardly know. It’s prejudice, I think. Yes, that is it—just prejudice. I reckon somebody that hadn’t anything better to do started a prejudice against it, some time or other, and once you get a caprice like that fairly going, you know it will last no end of time.’

‘That is true—perfectly true,’ said the girl, reflectively. ‘Like our prejudice against soap, here—our tribes had a prejudice against soap at first, you know.’

I glanced at her to see if she was in earnest. Evidently she was. I hesitated, then said, cautiously:

‘But pardon me. They had a prejudice against soap? Had?’—with falling inflection.

‘Yes—but that was only at first; nobody would eat it.’

‘Oh—I understand. I didn’t get your idea before.’

She resumed:

‘It was just a prejudice. The first time soap came here from the foreigners, nobody liked it; but as soon as it got to be fashionable, everybody liked it, and now everybody has it that can afford it. Are you fond of it?’



'Yes, indeed; I should die if I couldn't have it—especially here. Do you like it?'

'I just adore it! Do you like candles?'

'I regard them as an absolute necessity. Are you fond of them?'

Her eyes fairly danced, and she exclaimed:

'Oh! Don't mention it! Candles!—and soap!—'

'And fish-interiors!—'

'And train-oil—'

'And slush!—'

'And whale-blubber!—'

'And carrion! and sour-kROUT! and beeswax! and tar! and turpentine! and molasses! and —'

'Don't—oh, don't—I shall expire with ecstasy!—'

'And then serve it all up in a slush-bucket, and invite the neighbours and sail in!'

But this vision of an ideal feast was too much for her, and she swooned away, poor thing. I rubbed snow in her face and brought her to, and after a while got her excitement cooled down. By-and-by she drifted into her story again:

'So we began to live here in the fine house. But I was not happy. The reason was this: I was born for love: for me there could be no true happiness without it. I wanted to be loved for myself alone. I wanted an idol, and I wanted to be my idol's idol; nothing less than mutual idolatry would satisfy my fervent nature. I had suitors in plenty—in over-plenty, indeed—but in each and every case they had a fatal defect: sooner or later I discovered that defect—not one of them failed to betray it—it was not me they wanted, but my wealth.'

Page 45

'Your wealth?'

'Yes; for my father is much the richest man in this tribe—or in any tribe in these regions.'

I wondered what her father's wealth consisted of. It couldn't be the house—anybody could build its mate. It couldn't be the furs—they were not valued. It couldn't be the sledge, the dogs, the harpoons, the boat, the bone fish-hooks and needles, and such things—no, these were not wealth. Then what could it be that made this man so rich and brought this swarm of sordid suitors to his house? It seemed to me, finally, that the best way to find out would be to ask. So I did it. The girl was so manifestly gratified by the question that I saw she had been aching to have me ask it. She was suffering fully as much to tell as I was to know. She snuggled confidentially up to me and said:

'Guess how much he is worth—you never can!'

I pretended to consider the matter deeply, she watching my anxious and labouring countenance with a devouring and delighted interest; and when, at last, I gave it up and begged her to appease my longing by telling me herself how much this polar Vanderbilt was worth, she put her mouth close to my ear and whispered, impressively:

'Twenty-two fish-hooks—not bone, but foreign—made out of real iron!'

Then she sprang back dramatically, to observe the effect. I did my level best not to disappoint her. I turned pale and murmured:

'Great Scott!'

'It's as true as you live, Mr. Twain!'

'Lasca, you are deceiving me—you cannot mean it.'

She was frightened and troubled. She exclaimed:

'Mr. Twain, every word of it is true—every word. You believe me—you do believe me, now don't you? Say you believe me—do say you believe me!'

'I—well, yes, I do—I am trying to. But it was all so sudden. So sudden and prostrating. You shouldn't do such a thing in that sudden way. It—'

'Oh, I'm so sorry! If I had only thought—'

'Well, it's all right, and I don't blame you any more, for you are young and thoughtless, and of course you couldn't foresee what an effect—'

'But oh, dear, I ought certainly to have known better. Why—'



'You see, Lasca, if you had said five or six hooks, to start with, and then gradually—'

'Oh, I see, I see—then gradually added one, and then two, and then—ah, why couldn't I have thought of that!'

'Never mind, child, it's all right—I am better now—I shall be over it in a little while. But—to spring the whole twenty-two on a person unprepared and not very strong anyway —'

'Oh, it was a crime! But you forgive me—say you forgive me. Do!'

Page 46

After harvesting a good deal of very pleasant coaxing and petting and persuading, I forgave her and she was happy again, and by-and-by she got under way with her narrative once more. I presently discovered that the family treasury contained still another feature—a jewel of some sort, apparently—and that she was trying to get around speaking squarely about it, lest I get paralysed again. But I wanted to know about that thing, too, and urged her to tell me what it was. She was afraid. But I insisted, and said I would brace myself this time and be prepared, then the shock would not hurt me. She was full of misgivings, but the temptation to reveal that marvel to me and enjoy my astonishment and admiration was too strong for her, and she confessed that she had it on her person, and said that if I was sure I was prepared—and so on and so on—and with that she reached into her bosom and brought out a battered square of brass, watching my eye anxiously the while. I fell over against her in a quite well-acted faint, which delighted her heart and nearly frightened it out of her, too, at the same time. When I came to and got calm, she was eager to know what I thought of her jewel.

‘What do I think of it? I think it is the most exquisite thing I ever saw.’

‘Do you really? How nice of you to say that! But it is a love, now isn’t it?’

‘Well, I should say so! I’d rather own it than the equator.’

‘I thought you would admire it,’ she said. ‘I think it is so lovely. And there isn’t another one in all these latitudes. People have come all the way from the open Polar Sea to look at it. Did you ever see one before?’

I said no, this was the first one I had ever seen. It cost me a pang to tell that generous lie, for I had seen a million of them in my time, this humble jewel of hers being nothing but a battered old New York Central baggage check.

‘Land!’ said I, ‘you don’t go about with it on your person this way, alone and with no protection, not even a dog?’

‘Ssh! not so loud,’ she said. ‘Nobody knows I carry it with me. They think it is in papa’s treasury. That is where it generally is.’

‘Where is the treasury?’

It was a blunt question, and for a moment she looked startled and a little suspicious, but I said:

‘Oh, come, don’t you be afraid about me. At home we have seventy millions of people, and although I say it myself that shouldn’t, there is not one person among them all but would trust me with untold fish-hooks.’

This reassured her, and she told me where the hooks were hidden in the house. Then she wandered from her course to brag a little about the size of the sheets of transparent ice that formed the windows of the mansion, and asked me if I had ever seen their like at home, and I came right out frankly and confessed that I hadn't, which pleased her more than she could find words to dress her gratification in. It was so easy to please her, and such a pleasure to do it, that I went on and said—

Page 47

'Ah, Lasca, you are a fortune girl!—this beautiful house, this dainty jewel, that rich treasure, all this elegant snow, and sumptuous icebergs and limitless sterility, and public bears and walruses, and noble freedom and largeness and everybody's admiring eyes upon you, and everybody's homage and respect at your command without the asking; young, rich, beautiful, sought, courted, envied, not a requirement unsatisfied, not a desire ungratified, nothing to wish for that you cannot have—it is immeasurable good-fortune! I have seen myriads of girls, but none of whom these extraordinary things could be truthfully said but you alone. And you are worthy—worthy of it all, Lasca—I believe it in my heart.'

It made her infinitely proud and happy to hear me say this, and she thanked me over and over again for that closing remark, and her voice and eyes showed that she was touched. Presently she said:

'Still, it is not all sunshine—there is a cloudy side. The burden of wealth is a heavy one to bear. Sometimes I have doubted if it were not better to be poor—at least not inordinately rich. It pains me to see neighbouring tribesmen stare as they pass by, and overhear them say, reverently, one to another, "There—that is she—the millionaire's daughter!" And sometimes they say sorrowfully, "She is rolling in fish-hooks, and I—I have nothing." It breaks my heart. When I was a child and we were poor, we slept with the door open, if we chose, but now—now we have to have a night-watchman. In those days my father was gentle and courteous to all; but now he is austere and haughty and cannot abide familiarity. Once his family were his sole thought, but now he goes about thinking of his fish-hooks all the time. And his wealth makes everybody cringing and obsequious to him. Formerly nobody laughed at his jokes, they being always stale and far-fetched and poor, and destitute of the one element that can really justify a joke—the element of humour; but now everybody laughs and cackles at these dismal things, and if any fails to do it my father is deeply displeased, and shows it. Formerly his opinion was not sought upon any matter and was not valuable when he volunteered it; it has that infirmity yet, but, nevertheless, it is sought by all and applauded by all—and he helps do the applauding himself, having no true delicacy and a plentiful want of tact. He has lowered the tone of all our tribe. Once they were a frank and manly race, now they are measly hypocrites, and sodden with servility. In my heart of hearts I hate all the ways of millionaires! Our tribe was once plain, simple folk, and content with the bone fish-hooks of their fathers; now they are eaten up with avarice and would sacrifice every sentiment of honour and honesty to possess themselves of the debasing iron fish-hooks of the foreigner. However, I must not dwell on these sad things. As I have said, it was my dream to be loved for myself alone.'

Page 48

'At last, this dream seemed about to be fulfilled. A stranger came by, one day, who said his name was Kalula. I told him my name, and he said he loved me. My heart gave a great bound of gratitude and pleasure, for I had loved him at sight, and now I said so. He took me to his breast and said he would not wish to be happier than he was now. We went strolling together far over the ice-floes, telling all about each other, and planning, oh, the loveliest future! When we were tired at last we sat down and ate, for he had soap and candles and I had brought along some blubber. We were hungry and nothing was ever so good.

'He belonged to a tribe whose haunts were far to the north, and I found that he had never heard of my father, which rejoiced me exceedingly. I mean he had heard of the millionaire, but had never heard his name—so, you see, he could not know that I was the heiress. You may be sure that I did not tell him. I was loved for myself at last, and was satisfied. I was so happy—oh, happier than you can think!

'By-and-by it was towards supper time, and I led him home. As we approached our house he was amazed, and cried out:

""How splendid! Is that your father's?"

'It gave me a pang to hear that tone and see that admiring light in his eye, but the feeling quickly passed away, for I loved him so, and he looked so handsome and noble. All my family of aunts and uncles and cousins were pleased with him, and many guests were called in, and the house was shut up tight and the rag lamps lighted, and when everything was hot and comfortable and suffocating, we began a joyous feast in celebration of my betrothal.

'When the feast was over my father's vanity overcame him, and he could not resist the temptation to show off his riches and let Kalula see what grand good-fortune he had stumbled into—and mainly, of course, he wanted to enjoy the poor man's amazement. I could have cried—but it would have done no good to try to dissuade my father, so I said nothing, but merely sat there and suffered.

'My father went straight to the hiding-place in full sight of everybody, and got out the fish-hooks and brought them and flung them scatteringly over my head, so that they fell in glittering confusion on the platform at my lover's knee.

'Of course, the astounding spectacle took the poor lad's breath away. He could only stare in stupid astonishment, and wonder how a single individual could possess such incredible riches. Then presently he glanced brilliantly up and exclaimed:

""Ah, it is you who are the renowned millionaire!"



'My father and all the rest burst into shouts of happy laughter, and when my father gathered the treasure carelessly up as if it might be mere rubbish and of no consequence, and carried it back to its place, poor Kulala's surprise was a study. He said:

""Is it possible that you put such things away without counting them?"

Page 49

'My father delivered a vain-glorious horse-laugh, and said:

""Well, truly, a body may know you have never been rich, since a mere matter of a fish-hook or two is such a mighty matter in your eyes."

'Kalula was confused, and hung his head, but said:

""Ah, indeed, sir, I was never worth the value of the barb of one of those precious things, and I have never seen any man before who was so rich in them as to render the counting of his hoard worth while, since the wealthiest man I have ever known, till now, was possessed of but three."

'My foolish father roared again with jejune delight, and allowed the impression to remain that he was not accustomed to count his hooks and keep sharp watch over them. He was showing off, you see. Count them? Why, he counted them every day!

'I had met and got acquainted with my darling just at dawn; I had brought him home just at dark, three hours afterwards—for the days were shortening toward the six-months' night at that time. We kept up the festivities many hours; then, at last, the guests departed and the rest of us distributed ourselves along the walls on sleeping-benches, and soon all were steeped in dreams but me. I was too happy, too excited, to sleep. After I had lain quiet a long, long time, a dim form passed by me and was swallowed up in the gloom that pervaded the farther end of the house. I could not make out who it was, or whether it was man or woman. Presently that figure or another one passed me going the other way. I wondered what it all meant, but wondering did no good; and while I was still wondering I fell asleep.

'I do not know how long I slept, but at last I came suddenly broad awake and heard my father say in a terrible voice, "By the great Snow God, there's a fish-hook gone!" Something told me that that meant sorrow for me, and the blood in my veins turned cold. The presentiment was confirmed in the same instant: my father shouted, "Up, everybody, and seize the stranger!" Then there was an outburst of cries and curses from all sides, and a wild rush of dim forms through the obscurity. I flew to my beloved's help, but what could I do but wait and wring my hands?—he was already fenced away from me by a living wall, he was being bound hand and foot. Not until he was secured would they let me get to him. I flung myself upon his poor insulted form and cried my grief out upon his breast while my father and all my family scoffed at me and heaped threats and shameful epithets upon him. He bore his ill usage with a tranquil dignity which endeared him to me more than ever, and made me proud and happy to suffer with him and for him. I heard my father order that the elders of the tribe be called together to try my Kalula for his life.

""What!" I said, "before any search has been made for the lost hook?"

"Lost hook!" they all shouted, in derision; and my father added, mockingly, "Stand back, everybody, and be properly serious—she is going to hunt up that lost hook: oh, without doubt she will find it!"—whereat they all laughed again.

Page 50

'I was not disturbed—I had no fears, no doubts. I said:

""It is for you to laugh now; it is your turn. But ours is coming; wait and see."

'I got a rag lamp. I thought I should find that miserable thing in one little moment; and I set about that matter with such confidence that those people grew grace, beginning to suspect that perhaps they had been too hasty. But alas and alas!—oh, the bitterness of that search! There was deep silence while one might count his fingers ten or twelve times, then my heart began to sink, and around me the mockings began again, and grew steadily louder and more assured, until at last, when I gave up, they burst into volley after volley of cruel laughter.

'None will ever know what I suffered then. But my love was my support and my strength, and I took my rightful place at my Kalula's side, and put my arm about his neck, and whispered in his ear, saying:

""You are innocent, my own—that I know; but say it to me yourself, for my comfort, then I can bear whatever is in store for us."

'He answered:

""As surely as I stand upon the brink of death at this moment, I am innocent. Be comforted, then, O bruised heart; be at peace, O thou breath of my nostrils, life of my life!"

""Now, then, let the elders come!"—and as I said the words there was a gathering sound of crunching snow outside, and then a vision of stooping forms filing in at the door—the elders.

'My father formally accused the prisoner, and detailed the happenings of the night. He said that the watchman was outside the door, and that in the house were none but the family and the stranger. "Would the family steal their own property?" He paused. The elders sat silent many minutes; at last, one after another said to his neighbour, "This looks bad for the stranger"—sorrowful words for me to hear. Then my father sat down. O miserable, miserable me! At that very moment I could have proved my darling innocent, but I did not know it!

'The chief of the court asked:

""Is there any here to defend the prisoner?"

'I rose and said:

""Why should he steal that hook, or any or all of them? In another day he would have been heir to the whole!"



I stood waiting. There was a long silence, the steam from the many breaths rising about me like a fog. At last one elder after another nodded his head slowly several times, and muttered, "There is force in what the child has said." Oh, the heart-lift that was in those words! —so transient, but, oh, so precious! I sat down.

"If any would say further, let him speak now, or after hold his peace," said the chief of the court.

'My father rose and said:

"In the night a form passed by me in the gloom, going toward the treasury and presently returned. I think, now, it was the stranger."

'Oh, I was like to swoon! I had supposed that that was my secret; not the grip of the great Ice God himself could have dragged it out of my heart. The chief of the court said sternly to my poor Kalula:

Page 51

""Speak!"

'Kalula hesitated, then answered:

""It was I. I could not sleep for thinking of the beautiful hooks. I went there and kissed them and fondled them, to appease my spirit and drown it in a harmless joy, then I put them back. I may have dropped one, but I stole none."

'Oh, a fatal admission to make in such a place! There was an awful hush. I knew he had pronounced his own doom, and that all was over. On every face you could see the words hieroglyphed: "It is a confession!—and paltry, lame, and thin."

'I sat drawing in my breath in faint gasps—and waiting. Presently, I heard the solemn words I knew were coming; and each word, as it came, was a knife in my heart:

""It is the command of the court that the accused be subjected to the trial by water."

'Oh, curses be upon the head of him who brought "trial by water" to our land! It came, generations ago, from some far country that lies none knows where. Before that our fathers used augury and other unsure methods of trial, and doubtless some poor guilty creatures escaped with their lives sometimes; but it is not so with trial by water, which is an invention by wiser men than we poor ignorant savages are. By it the innocent are proved innocent, without doubt or question, for they drown; and the guilty are proven guilty with the same certainty, for they do not drown. My heart was breaking in my bosom, for I said, "He is innocent, and he will go down under the waves and I shall never see him more."

'I never left his side after that. I mourned in his arms all the precious hours, and he poured out the deep stream of his love upon me, and oh, I was so miserable and so happy! At last, they tore him from me, and I followed sobbing after them, and saw them fling him into the sea—then I covered my face with my hands. Agony? Oh, I know the deepest depths of that word!

'The next moment the people burst into a shout of malicious joy, and I took away my hands, startled. Oh, bitter sight—he was swimming! My heart turned instantly to stone, to ice. I said, "He was guilty, and he lied to me!" I turned my back in scorn and went my way homeward.

'They took him far out to sea and set him on an iceberg that was drifting southward in the great waters. Then my family came home, and my father said to me:

""Your thief sent his dying message to you, saying, 'Tell her I am innocent, and that all the days and all the hours and all the minutes while I starve and perish I shall love her and think of her and bless the day that gave me sight of her sweet face.'" Quite pretty, even poetical!

'I said, "He is dirt—let me never hear mention of him again." And oh, to think—he was innocent all the time!

Page 52

'Nine months—nine dull, sad months—went by, and at last came the day of the Great Annual Sacrifice, when all the maidens of the tribe wash their faces and comb their hair. With the first sweep of my comb out came the fatal fish-hook from where it had been all those months nestling, and I fell fainting into the arms of my remorseful father! Groaning, he said, "We murdered him, and I shall never smile again!" He has kept his word. Listen; from that day to this not a month goes by that I do not comb my hair. But oh, where is the good of it all now!'

So ended the poor maid's humble little tale—whereby we learn that since a hundred million dollars in New York and twenty-two fish-hooks on the border of the Arctic Circle represent the same financial supremacy, a man in straitened circumstances is a fool to stay in New York when he can buy ten cents' worth of fish-hooks and emigrate.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THE BOOK OF MRS. EDDY

'It is the first time since the dawn-days of Creation that a Voice has gone crashing through space with such placid and complacent confidence and command.'

I

This last summer, when I was on my way back to Vienna from the Appetite-Cure in the mountains, I fell over a cliff in the twilight and broke some arms and legs and one thing or another, and by good luck was found by some peasants who had lost an ass, and they carried me to the nearest habitation, which was one of those large, low, thatch-roofed farm-houses, with apartments in the garret for the family, and a cunning little porch under the deep gable decorated with boxes of bright-coloured flowers and cats; on the ground floor a large and light sitting-room, separated from the milch-cattle apartment by a partition; and in the front yard rose stately and fine the wealth and pride of the house, the manure-pile. That sentence is Germanic, and shows that I am acquiring that sort of mastery of the art and spirit of the language which enables a man to travel all day in one sentence without changing cars.

There was a village a mile away, and a horse-doctor lived there, but there was no surgeon. It seemed a bad outlook; mine was distinctly a surgery case. Then it was remembered that a lady from Boston was summering in that village, and she was a Christian Science doctor and could cure anything. So she was sent for. It was night by this time, and she could not conveniently come, but sent word that it was no matter, there was no hurry, she would give me 'absent treatment' now, and come in the morning; meantime she begged me to make myself tranquil and comfortable and remember that there was nothing the matter with me. I thought there must be some mistake.

‘Did you tell her I walked off a cliff seventy-five feet high?’

‘Yes.’

‘And struck a boulder at the bottom and bounced?’

Page 53

'Yes.'

'And struck another one and bounced again?'

'Yes.'

'And struck another one and bounced yet again?'

'Yes.'

'And broke the boulders?'

'Yes.'

'That accounts for it; she is thinking of the boulders. Why didn't you tell her I got hurt, too?'

'I did. I told her what you told me to tell her: that you were now but an incoherent series of compound fractures extending from your scalp-lock to your heels, and that the comminuted projections caused you to look like a hat-rack.'

'And it was after this that she wished me to remember that there was nothing the matter with me?'

'Those were her words.'

'I do not understand it. I believe she has not diagnosed the case with sufficient care. Did she look like a person who was theorising, or did she look like one who has fallen off precipices herself and brings to the aid of abstract science the confirmation of personal experience?'

'Bitte?'

It was too large a contract for the Stubenmadchen's vocabulary; she couldn't call the hand. I allowed the subject to rest there, and asked for something to eat and smoke, and something hot to drink, and a basket to pile my legs in, and another capable person to come and help me curse the time away; but I could not have any of these things.

'Why?'

'She said you would need nothing at all.'

'But I am hungry and thirsty, and in desperate pain.'

'She said you would have these delusions, but must pay no attention to them. She wants you to particularly remember that there are no such things as hunger and thirst and pain.'

'She does, does she?'

'It is what she said.'

'Does she seem to be in full and functional possession of her intellectual plant, such as it is?'

'Bitte?'

'Do they let her run at large, or do they tie her up?'

'Tie her up?'

'There, good-night, run along; you are a good girl, but your mental Geschirr is not arranged for light and airy conversation. Leave me to my delusions.'

II

It was a night of anguish, of course—at least I supposed it was, for it had all the symptoms of it—but it passed at last, and the Christian Scientist came, and I was glad. She was middle-aged, and large and bony and erect, and had an austere face and a resolute jaw and a Roman beak and was a widow in the third degree, and her name was Fuller. I was eager to get to business and find relief, but she was distressingly deliberate. She unpinned and unhooked and uncoupled her upholsteries one by one, abolished the wrinkles with a flirt of her hand and hung the articles up; peeled off her gloves and disposed of them, got a book out of her hand-bag, then drew a chair to the bedside, descended into it without hurry, and I hung out my tongue. She said, with pity but without passion:

Page 54

'Return it to its receptacle. We deal with the mind only, not with its dumb servants.'

I could not offer my pulse, because the connection was broken; but she detected the apology before I could word it, and indicated by a negative tilt of her head that the pulse was another dumb servant that she had no use for. Then I thought I would tell her my symptoms and how I felt, so that she would understand the case; but that was another inconsequence, she did not need to know those things; moreover, my remark about how I felt was an abuse of language, a misapplication of terms—

'One does not feel,' she explained; 'there is no such thing as feeling: therefore, to speak of a non-existent thing as existent as a contradiction. Matter has no existence; nothing exists but mind; the mind cannot feel pain, it can only imagine it.'

'But if it hurts, just the same—'

'It doesn't. A thing which is unreal cannot exercise the functions of reality. Pain is unreal; hence pain cannot hurt.'

In making a sweeping gesture to indicate the act of shooing the illusion of pain out of the mind, she raked her hand on a pin in her dress, said 'Ouch!' and went tranquilly on with her talk. 'You should never allow yourself to speak of how you feel, nor permit others to ask you how you are feeling: you should never concede that you are ill, nor permit others to talk about disease or pain or death or similar non-existences in your preserve. Such talk only encourages the mind to continue its empty imaginings.' Just at that point the Stubenmadchen trod on the cat's tail, and the cat let fly a frenzy of cat-profanity. I asked with caution:

'Is a cat's opinion about pain valuable?'

'A cat has no opinion; opinions proceed from the mind only; the lower animals, being eternally perishable, have not been granted mind; without mind opinion is impossible.'

'She merely imagined she felt a pain—the cat?'

'She cannot imagine a pain, for imagination is an effect of mind; without mind, there is no imagination. A cat has no imagination.'

'Then she had a real pain?'

'I have already told you there is no such thing as real pain.'

'It is strange and interesting. I do wonder what was the matter with the cat. Because, there being no such thing as real pain, and she not being able to imagine an imaginary thing, it would seem that God in his Pity has compensated the cat with some kind of a



mysterious emotion useable when her tail is trodden on which for the moment joins cat and Christian in one common brotherhood of—'

She broke in with an irritated—

'Peace! The cat feels nothing, the Christian feels nothing. Your empty and foolish imaginings are profanation and blasphemy, and can do you an injury. It is wiser and better and holier to recognise and confess that there is no such thing as disease or pain or death.'

Page 55

'I am full of imaginary tortures,' I said, 'but I do not think I could be any more uncomfortable if they were real ones. What must I do to get rid of them?'

'There is no occasion to get rid of them, since they do not exist. They are illusions propagated by matter, and matter has no existence; there is no such thing as matter.'

'It sounds right and clear, but yet it seems in a degree elusive; it seems to slip through, just when you think you are getting a grip on it.'

'Explain.'

'Well, for instance: if there is no such thing as matter, how can matter propagate things?'

In her compassion she almost smiled. She would have smiled if there were any such thing as a smile.

'It is quite simple,' she said; 'the fundamental propositions of Christian Science explain it, and they are summarised in the four following self-evident propositions: 1. God is All in all. 2. God is good. Good is Mind. 3. God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter. 4. Life, God, omnipotent Good, deny death, evil sin, disease. There —now you see.'

It seemed nebulous: it did not seem to say anything about the difficulty in hand—how non-existent matter can propagate illusions. I said, with some hesitancy:

'Does—does it explain?'

'Doesn't it? Even if read backward it will do it.'

With a budding hope, I asked her to do it backward.

'Very well. Disease sin evil death deny Good omnipotent God life matter is nothing all being Spirit God Mind is Good good is God all in All is God. There—do you understand now?'

'It—it—well, it is plainer than it was before; still—'

'Well?'

'Could you try it some more ways?'

'As many as you like: it always means the same. Interchanged in any way you please it cannot be made to mean anything different from what it means when put in any other way. Because it is perfect. You can jumble it all up, and it makes no difference: it always comes out the way it was before. It was a marvellous mind that produced it. As

a mental tour de force it is without a mate, it defies alike the simple, the concrete, and the occult.'

'It seems to be a corker.'

I blushed for the word, but it was out before I could stop it.

'A what?'

'A—wonderful structure—combination, so to speak, or profound thoughts —unthinkable ones—un—'

'It is true. Read backwards, or forwards, or perpendicularly, or at any given angle, these four propositions will always be found to agree in statement and proof.'

'Ah—proof. Now we are coming at it. The statements agree; they agree with—with— anyway, they agree; I noticed that; but what is it they prove—I mean, in particular?'

'Why, nothing could be clearer. They prove: 1. *God*—Principle, Life, Truth, Love, Soul, Spirit, Mind. Do you get that?'

Page 56

'I—well, I seem to. Go on, please.

'2. *Man*—God's universal idea, individual, perfect, eternal. Is it clear?'

'It—I think so. Continue.'

'3. *Idea*—An image in Mind; the immediate object of understanding. There it is—the whole sublime Arcana of Christian Science in a nutshell. Do you find a weak place in it anywhere?'

'Well—no; it seems strong.'

'Very well. There is more. Those three constitute the Scientific Definition of Immortal Mind. Next, we have the Scientific Definition of Mortal Mind. Thus. *First degree*: Depravity. 1. Physical—Passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, revenge, sin, disease, death.'

'Phantasms, madam—unrealities, as I understand it.'

'Every one. *Second degree*: Evil Disappearing. 1. Moral—Honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance. Is it clear?'

'Crystal.'

'*Third degree*: Spiritual Salvation. 1. Spiritual—Faith, wisdom, power, purity, understanding, health, love. You see how searchingly and co-ordinately interdependent and anthropomorphous it all is. In this Third Degree, as we know by the revelations of Christian Science, mortal mind disappears.'

'Not earlier?'

'No, not until the teaching and preparation for the Third Degree are completed.'

'It is not until then that one is enabled to take hold of Christian Science effectively, and with the right sense of sympathy and kinship, as I understand you. That is to say, it could not succeed during the process of the Second Degree, because there would still be remains of mind left; and therefore—but I interrupted you. You were about to further explain the good results proceeding from the erosions and disintegrations effected by the Third Degree. It is very interesting: go on, please.'

'Yes, as I was saying, in this Third Degree mortal mind disappears. Science so reverses the evidence before the corporeal human senses as to make this scriptural testimony true in our hearts, "the last shall be first and the first shall be last," that God and His idea may be to us—what divinity really is, and must of necessity be—all-inclusive.'

'It is beautiful. And with that exhaustive exactness your choice and arrangement of words confirms and establishes what you have claimed for the powers and functions of the Third Degree. The Second could probably produce only temporary absence of mind, it is reserved to the Third to make it permanent. A sentence framed under the auspices of the Second could have a kind of meaning—a sort of deceptive semblance of it—whereas it is only under the magic of the Third that that defect would disappear. Also, without doubt, it is the Third Degree that contributes another remarkable specialty to Christian Science: viz., ease and flow and lavishness of words, and rhythm and swing and smoothness. There must be a special reason for this?'

Page 57

'Yes—God-all, all-God, good Good, non-Matter, Matteration, Spirit, Bones, Truth.'

'That explains it.'

'There is nothing in Christian Science that is not explicable; for God is one, Time is one, Individuality is one, and may be one of a series, one of many, as an individual man, individual horse; whereas God is one, not one of a series, but one alone and without an equal.'

'These are noble thoughts. They make one burn to know more. How does Christian Science explain the spiritual relation of systematic duality to incidental reflection?'

'Christian Science reverses the seeming relation of Soul and body—as astronomy reverses the human perception of the movement of the solar system—and makes body tributary to Mind. As it is the earth which is in motion, while the sun is at rest, though in viewing the sun rise one finds it impossible to believe the sun not to be really rising, so the body is but the humble servant of the restful Mind, though it seems otherwise to finite sense; but we shall never understand this while we admit that soul is in body, or mind in matter, and that man is included in non-intelligence. Soul is God, unchangeable and eternal; and man coexists with and reflects Soul, for the All-in-all is the Altogether, and the Altogether embraces the All-one, Soul-Mind, Mind-Soul, Love, Spirit, Bones, Liver, one of a series, alone and without an equal.'

(It is very curious, the effect which Christian Science has upon the verbal bowels. Particularly the Third Degree; it makes one think of a dictionary with the cholera. But I only thought this; I did not say it.)

'What is the origin of Christian Science? Is it a gift of God, or did it just happen?'

'In a sense, it is a gift of God. That is to say, its powers are from Him, but the credit of the discovery of the powers and what they are for is due to an American lady.'

'Indeed? When did this occur?'

'In 1866. That is the immortal date when pain and disease and death disappeared from the earth to return no more for ever. That is, the fancies for which those terms stand, disappeared. The things themselves had never existed; therefore as soon as it was perceived that there were no such things, they were easily banished. The history and nature of the great discovery are set down in the book here, and—'

'Did the lady write the book?'

'Yes, she wrote it all, herself. The title is "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures"—for she explains the Scriptures; they were not understood before. Not even by the twelve Disciples. She begins thus—I will read it to you.'

But she had forgotten to bring her glasses.

'Well, it is no matter,' she said, 'I remember the words—indeed, all Christian Scientists know the book by heart; it is necessary in our practice. We should otherwise make mistakes and do harm. She begins thus: "In the year 1866 I discovered the Science of Metaphysical Healing, and named it Christian Science." And she says—quite beautifully, I think—"Through Christian Science, religion and medicine are inspired with a diviner nature and essence, fresh pinions are given to faith and understanding, and thoughts acquaint themselves intelligently with God." Her very words.'

Page 58

'It is elegant. And it is a fine thought, too—marrying religion to medicine, instead of medicine to the undertaker in the old way; for religion and medicine properly belong together, they being the basis of all spiritual and physical health. What kind of medicine do you give for the ordinary diseases, such as—'

'We never give medicine in any circumstances whatever! We—'

'But, madam, it says—'

'I don't care what it says, and I don't wish to talk about it.'

'I am sorry if I have offended, but you see the mention seemed in some way inconsistent, and—'

'There are no inconsistencies in Christian Science. The thing is impossible, for the Science is absolute. It cannot be otherwise, since it proceeds directly from the All-in-all and the Everything-in-Which, also Soul, Bones, Truth, one of a series, alone and without equal. It is Mathematics purified from material dross and made spiritual.'

'I can see that, but—'

'It rests upon the immovable basis of an Apodictical Principle.'

The word flattened itself against my mind trying to get in, and disordered me a little, and before I could inquire into its pertinency, she was already throwing the needed light:

'This Apodictical Principle is the absolute Principle of Scientific Mind-healing, the sovereign Omnipotence which delivers the children of men from pain, disease, decay, and every ill that flesh is heir to.'

'Surely not every ill, every decay?'

'Every one; there are no exceptions; there is no such thing as decay—it is an unreality, it has no existence.'

'But without your glasses your failing eyesight does not permit you to—'

'My eyesight cannot fail; nothing can fail; the Mind is master, and the Mind permits no retrogression.'

She was under the inspiration of the Third Degree, therefore there could be no profit in continuing this part of the subject. I shifted to other ground and inquired further concerning the Discoverer of the Science.

'Did the discovery come suddenly, like Klondike, or after long study and calculation, like America?'

'The comparisons are not respectful, since they refer to trivialities—but let it pass. I will answer in the Discoverer's own words: "God had been graciously fitting me, during many years, for the reception of a final revelation of the absolute Principle of Scientific Mind-healing."'

'Many years? How many?'

'Eighteen centuries!'

'All God, God-good, good-God, Truth, Bones, Liver, one of a series alone and without equal—it is amazing!'

'You may well say it, sir. Yet it is but the truth. This American lady, our revered and sacred founder, is distinctly referred to and her coming prophesied, in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse; she could not have been more plainly indicated by St. John without actually mentioning her name.'

Page 59

'How strange, how wonderful!'

'I will quote her own words, for her "Key to the Scriptures:" "The twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse has a special suggestiveness in connection with this nineteenth century." There—do you note that? Think—note it well.'

'But—what does it mean?'

'Listen, and you will know. I quote her inspired words again: "In the opening of the Sixth Seal, typical of six thousand years since Adam, there is one distinctive feature which has special reference to the present age. Thus:

"Revelation xii. 1. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven—a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

'That is our Head, our Chief, our Discoverer of Christian Science —nothing can be plainer, nothing surer. And note this:

"Revelation xii. 6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God."

'That is Boston.'

'I recognise it, madam. These are sublime things and impressive; I never understood these passages before; please go on with the—with the —proofs.'

'Very well. Listen:

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book."

'A little book, merely a little book—could words be modester? Yet how stupendous its importance! Do you know what book that was?'

'Was it—'

'I hold it in my hand—"Christian Science"'

'Love, Livers, Lights, Bones, Truth, Kidneys, one of a series, alone and without equal—it is beyond imagination and wonder!'

'Hear our Founder's eloquent words: "Then will a voice from harmony cry, 'Go and take the little book; take it and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter; but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.' Mortal, obey the heavenly evangel. Take up Divine Science.

Read it from beginning to end. Study it, ponder it. It will be indeed sweet at its first taste, when it heals you; but murmur not over Truth, if you find its digestion bitter.” You now know the history of our dear and holy Science, sir, and that its origin is not of this earth, but only its discovery. I will leave the book with you and will go, now, but give yourself no uneasiness—I will give you absent treatment from now till I go to bed.’

III

Under the powerful influence of the near treatment and the absent treatment together, my bones were gradually retreating inward and disappearing from view. The good word took a brisk start, now, and went on quite swiftly. My body was diligently straining and stretching, this way and that, to accommodate the processes of restoration, and every minute or two I heard a dull click inside and knew that the two

Page 60

ends of a fracture had been successfully joined. This muffled clicking and gritting and grinding and rasping continued during the next three hours, and then stopped—the connections had all been made. All except dislocations; there were only seven of these: hips, shoulders, knees, neck; so that was soon over; one after another they slipped into their sockets with a sound like pulling a distant cork, and I jumped up as good as new, as to framework, and sent for the horse-doctor.

I was obliged to do this because I had a stomach-ache and a cold in the head, and I was not willing to trust these things any longer in the hands of a woman whom I did not know, and in whose ability to successfully treat mere disease I had lost all confidence. My position was justified by the fact that the cold and the ache had been in her charge from the first, along with the fractures, but had experienced not a shade of relief; and indeed the ache was even growing worse and worse, and more and more bitter, now, probably on account of the protracted abstention from food and drink.

The horse-doctor came, a pleasant man and full of hope and professional interest in the case. In the matter of smell he was pretty aromatic, in fact quite horsey, and I tried to arrange with him for absent treatment, but it was not in his line, so out of delicacy I did not press it. He looked at my teeth and examined my hock, and said my age and general condition were favourable to energetic measures; therefore he would give me something to turn the stomach-ache into the botts and the cold in the head into the blind staggers; then he should be on his own beat and would know what to do. He made up a bucket of bran-mash, and said a dipperful of it every two hours, alternated with a drench with turpentine and axle-grease in it, would either knock my ailments out of me in twenty-four hours or so interest me in other ways as to make me forget they were on the premises. He administered my first dose himself, then took his leave, saying I was free to eat and drink anything I pleased and in any quantity I liked. But I was not hungry any more, and did not care for food.

I took up the 'Christian Scientist' book and read half of it, then took a dipperful of drench and read the other half. The resulting experiences were full of interest and adventure. All through the rumblings and grindings and quakings and effervescings accompanying the evolution of the ache into the botts and the cold into the blind staggers I could note the generous struggle for mastery going on between the mash and the drench and the literature; and often I could tell which was ahead, and could easily distinguish the literature from the others when the others were separate, though not when they were mixed; for when a bran-mash and an eclectic drench are mixed together they look just like the Apodictical Principle out on a lark, and no one can tell it from that. The finish was reached at last, the evolutions were

Page 61

complete and a fine success; but I think that this result could have been achieved with fewer materials. I believe the mash was necessary to the conversion of the stomach-ache into the boots, but I think one could develop the blind staggers out of the literature by itself; also, that blind staggers produced in this way would be of a better quality and more lasting than any produced by the artificial processes of a horse-doctor.

For of all the strange, and frantic, and incomprehensible, and uninterpretable books which the imagination of man has created, surely this one is the prize sample. It is written with a limitless confidence and complacency, and with a dash and stir and earnestness which often compel the effects of eloquence, even when the words do not seem to have any traceable meaning. There are plenty of people who imagine they understand the book; I know this, for I have talked with them; but in all cases they were people who also imagined that there were no such things as pain, sickness, and death, and no realities in the world; nothing actually existent but Mind. It seems to me to modify the value of their testimony. When these people talk about Christian Science they do as Mrs. Fuller did; they do not use their own language, but the book's; they pour out the book's showy incoherences, and leave you to find out later that they were not originating, but merely quoting; they seem to know the volume by heart, and to revere it as they would a Bible—another Bible, perhaps I ought to say. Plainly the book was written under the mental desolations of the Third Degree, and I feel sure that none but the membership of that Degree can discover meanings in it. When you read it you seem to be listening to a lively and aggressive and oracular speech delivered in an unknown tongue, a speech whose spirit you get but not the particulars; or, to change the figure, you seem to be listening to a vigorous instrument which is making a noise it thinks is a tune, but which to persons not members of the band is only the martial tooting of a trombone, and merely stirs the soul through the noise but does not convey a meaning.

The book's serenities of self-satisfaction do almost seem to smack of a heavenly origin—they have no blood-kin in the earth. It is more than human to be so placidly certain about things, and so finely superior, and so airily content with one's performance. Without ever presenting anything which may rightfully be called by the strong name of Evidence, and sometimes without even mentioning a reason for a deduction at all, it thunders out the startling words, 'I have Proved' so and so! It takes the Pope and all the great guns of his church in battery assembled to authoritatively settle and establish the meaning of a sole and single unclarified passage of Scripture, and this at vast cost of time and study and reflection, but the author of this work is superior to all that: she finds the whole Bible in an unclarified condition, and at

Page 62

small expense of time and no expense of mental effort she clarifies it from lid to lid, reorganises and improves the meanings, then authoritatively settles and establishes them with formulae which you cannot tell from 'Let there be light!' and 'Here you have it!' It is the first time since the dawn-days of Creation that a Voice has gone crashing through space with such placid and complacent confidence and command.

IV

A word upon a question of authorship. Not that quite; but, rather, a question of emendation and revision. We know that the Bible-Annex was not written by Mrs. Eddy, but was handed down to her eighteen hundred years ago by the Angel of the Apocalypse; but did she translate it alone, or did she have help? There seems to be evidence that she had help. For there are four several copyrights on it—1875, 1885, 1890, 1894. It did not come down in English, for in that language it could not have acquired copyright—there were no copyright laws eighteen centuries ago, and in my opinion no English language—at least up there. This makes it substantially certain that the Annex is a translation. Then, was not the first translation complete? If it was, on what grounds were the later copyrights granted?

I surmise that the first translation was poor; and that a friend or friends of Mrs. Eddy mended its English three times, and finally got it into its present shape, where the grammar is plenty good enough, and the sentences are smooth and plausible though they do not mean anything. I think I am right in this surmise, for Mrs. Eddy cannot write English to-day, and this is argument that she never could. I am not able to guess who did the mending, but I think it was not done by any member of the Eddy Trust, nor by the editors of the 'Christian Science Journal,' for their English is not much better than Mrs. Eddy's.

However, as to the main point: it is certain that Mrs. Eddy did not doctor the Annex's English herself. Her original, spontaneous, undoctored English furnishes ample proof of this. Here are samples from recent articles from her unappeasable pen; double columned with them are a couple of passages from the Annex. It will be seen that they throw light. The italics are mine:

1. 'What plague spot, 'Therefore the efficient or bacilli were (sic) gnawing remedy is to destroy the (sic) at the heart of this patient's unfortunate belief, metropolis... and bringing by both silently and audibly it on bended knee? arguing the opposite facts in Why, it was an institute that regard to harmonious being had entered its vitals (sic) representing man as that, among other things, healthful instead of diseased, taught games,' *et cetera*. (P. and showing that it is 670, 'C.S.Journal,' article impossible for

matter to suffer, entitled 'A Narrative—by to feel pain or heat, to be Mary Baker G. Eddy.') thirsty

Page 63

or sick.' (P. 375, Annex.) 2. 'Parks sprang up (sic)... electric street cars run 'Man is never sick; for (sic) merrily through several Mind is not sick, and matter streets, concrete sidewalks cannot be. A false belief and macadamised roads dotted is both the tempter and the (sic) the place,' *et cetera*. tempted, the sin and the (Ibid.) sinner, the disease and its 3. 'Shorn (sic) of its cause. It is well to be calm suburbs it had indeed little in sickness; to be hopeful is left to admire, save to (sic) still better; but to such as fancy a skeleton understand that sickness is not above ground breathing (sic) real, and that Truth can slowly through a barren (sic) destroy it, is best of all, for breast.' (Ibid.) it is the universal and perfect

remedy.' (Chapter xii.,
Annex.)

You notice the contrast between the smooth, plausible, elegant, addled English of the doctored Annex and the lumbering, ragged, ignorant output of the translator's natural, spontaneous, and unmedicated penwork. The English of the Annex has been slicked up by a very industrious and painstaking hand—but it was not Mrs. Eddy's.

If Mrs. Eddy really wrote or translated the Annex, her original draft was exactly in harmony with the English of her plague-spot or bacilli which were gnawing at the insides of the metropolis and bringing its heart on bended knee, thus exposing to the eye the rest of the skeleton breathing slowly through a barren breast. And it bore little or no resemblance to the book as we have it now—now that the salaried polisher has holystoned all of the genuine Eddyities out of it.

Will the plague-spot article go into a volume just as it stands? I think not. I think the polisher will take off his coat and vest and cravat and 'demonstrate over' it a couple of weeks and sweat it into a shape something like the following—and then Mrs. Eddy will publish it and leave people to believe that she did the polishing herself:

1. What injurious influence was it that was affecting the city's morals? It was a social club which propagated an interest in idle amusements, disseminated a knowledge of games, *et cetera*.
2. By the magic of the new and nobler influences the sterile spaces were transformed into wooded parks, the merry electric car replaced the melancholy 'bus, smooth concrete the tempestuous plank sidewalk, the macadamised road the primitive corduroy, *et cetera*.
3. Its pleasant suburbs gone, there was little left to admire save the wrecked graveyard with its uncanny exposures.

The Annex contains one sole and solitary humorous remark. There is a most elaborate and voluminous Index, and it is preceded by this note:

'This Index will enable the student to find any thought or idea contained in the book.'

Page 64

V

No one doubts—certainly not I—that the mind exercises a powerful influence over the body. From the beginning of time, the sorcerer, the interpreter of dreams, the fortune-teller, the charlatan, the quack, the wild medicine-man, the educated physician, the mesmerist, and the hypnotist have made use of the client's imagination to help them in their work. They have all recognised the potency and availability of that force.

Physicians cure many patients with a bread pill; they know that where the disease is only a fancy, the patient's confidence in the doctor will make the bread pill effective.

Faith in the doctor. Perhaps that is the entire thing. It seems to look like it. In old times the King cured the king's evil by the touch of the royal hand. He frequently made extraordinary cures. Could his footman have done it? No—not in his own clothes. Disguised as the King, could he have done it? I think we may not doubt it. I think we may feel sure that it was not the King's touch that made the cure in any instance, but the patient's faith in the efficacy of a King's touch. Genuine and remarkable cures have been achieved through contact with the relics of a saint. Is it not likely that any other bones would have done as well if the substitution had been concealed from the patient? When I was a boy, a farmer's wife who lived five miles from our village, had great fame as a faith-doctor—that was what she called herself. Sufferers came to her from all around, and she laid her hand upon them and said, 'Have faith—it is all that is necessary,' and they went away well of their ailments. She was not a religious woman, and pretended to no occult powers. She said that the patient's faith in her did the work. Several times I saw her make immediate cures of severe toothaches. My mother was the patient. In Austria there is a peasant who drives a great trade in this sort of industry and has both the high and the low for patients. He gets into prison every now and then for practising without a diploma, but his business is as brisk as ever when he gets out, for his work is unquestionably successful and keeps his reputation high. In Bavaria there is a man who performed so many great cures that he had to retire from his profession of stage-carpentering in order to meet the demand of his constantly increasing body of customers. He goes on from year to year doing his miracles, and has become very rich. He pretends to no religious helps, no supernatural aids, but thinks there is something in his make-up which inspires the confidence of his patients, and that it is this confidence which does the work and not some mysterious power issuing from himself.

Within the last quarter of a century, in America, several sects of curers have appeared under various names and have done notable things in the way of healing ailments without the use of medicines. There are the Mind Cure, the Faith Cure, the Prayer Cure, the Mental-Science Cure, and the Christian-Science Cure; and apparently they all do their miracles with the same old powerful instrument—the patient's imagination. Differing names, but no difference in the process. But they do not give that instrument the credit; each sect claims that its way differs from the ways of the others.

Page 65

They all achieve some cures, there is no question about it; and the Faith Cure and the Prayer Cure probably do no harm when they do no good, since they do not forbid the patient to help out the cure with medicines if he wants to; but the others bar medicines, and claim ability to cure every conceivable human ailment through the application of their mental forces alone. They claim ability to cure malignant cancer, and other affections which have never been cured in the history of the race. There would seem to be an element of danger here. It has the look of claiming too much, I think. Public confidence would probably be increased if less were claimed.

I believe it might be shown that all the 'mind' sects except Christian Science have lucid intervals; intervals in which they betray some diffidence, and in effect confess that they are not the equals of the Deity; but if the Christian Scientist even stops with being merely the equal of the Deity, it is not clearly provable by his Christian-Science Amended Bible. In the usual Bible the Deity recognises pain, disease, and death as facts, but the Christian Scientist knows better. Knows better, and is not diffident about saying so.

The Christian Scientist was not able to cure my stomach-ache and my cold; but the horse-doctor did it. This convinces me that Christian Science claims too much. In my opinion it ought to let diseases alone and confine itself to surgery. There it would have everything its own way.

The horse-doctor charged me thirty kreutzers, and I paid him; in fact I doubled it and gave him a shilling. Mrs. Fuller brought in an itemised bill for a crate of broken bones mended in two hundred and thirty-four places—one dollar per fracture.

'Nothing exists but Mind?'

'Nothing,' she answered. 'All else is substanceless, all else is imaginary.'

I gave her an imaginary cheque, and now she is suing me for substantial dollars. It looks inconsistent.

VI

Let us consider that we are all partially insane. It will explain us to each other, it will unriddle many riddles, it will make clear and simple many things which are involved in haunting and harassing difficulties and obscurities now.

Those of us who are not in the asylum, and not demonstrably due there, are nevertheless no doubt insane in one or two particulars—I think we must admit this; but I think that we are otherwise healthy-minded. I think that when we all see one thing alike, it is evidence that as regards that one thing, our minds are perfectly sound. Now there are really several things which we do all see alike; things which we all accept, and about

which we do not dispute. For instance, we who are outside of the asylum all agree that water seeks its level; that the sun gives light and heat; that fire consumes; that fog is damp; that 6 times 6 are thirty-six; that 2 from 10 leave eight; that 8 and 7 are fifteen. These are perhaps the only things we are agreed about; but although they are so few, they are of inestimable value, because they make an infallible standard of sanity. Whosoever accepts them we know to be substantially sane; sufficiently sane; in the working essentials, sane. Whoever disputes a single one of them we know to be wholly insane, and qualified for the asylum.

Page 66

Very well, the man who disputes none of them we concede to be entitled to go at large—but that is concession enough; we cannot go any further than that; for we know that in all matters of mere opinion that same man is insane—just as insane as we are; just as insane as Shakespeare was, just as insane as the Pope is. We know exactly where to put our finger upon his insanity; it is where his opinion differs from ours.

That is a simple rule, and easy to remember. When I, a thoughtful and unbiased Presbyterian, examine the Koran, I know that beyond any question every Mohammedan is insane; not in all things, but in religious matters. When a thoughtful and unbiased Mohammedan examines the Westminster Catechism, he knows that beyond any question I am spiritually insane. I cannot prove to him that he is insane, because you never can prove anything to a lunatic—for that is a part of his insanity and the evidence of it. He cannot prove to me that I am insane, for my mind has the same defect that afflicts his. All democrats are insane, but not one of them knows it; none but the republicans and mugwumps know it. All the republicans are insane, but only the democrats and mugwumps can perceive it. The rule is perfect; in all matters of opinion our adversaries are insane. When I look around me I am often troubled to see how many people are mad. To mention only a few:

The Atheist, The Shakers,
The Infidel, The Millerites,
The Agnostic, The Mormons,
The Baptist, The Laurence Oliphant
The Methodist, Harrisites,
The Catholic, and the other The Grand Lama's people,
115 Christian sects, the The Monarchists,
Presbyterian excepted, The Imperialists,
The 72 Mohammedan sects, The Democrats,
The Buddhist, The Republicans (but not
The Blavatsky-Buddhist, the Mugwumps),
The Nationalist, The Mind-Curists,
The Confucian, The Faith-Curists,
The Spiritualist, The Mental Scientists,
The 2,000 East Indian The Allopaths,
sects, The Homeopaths,
The Peculiar People, The Electropaths,
The Swedenborgians,

The—but there's no end to the list; there are millions of them! And all insane; each in his own way; insane as to his pet fad or opinion, but otherwise sane and rational.

This should move us to be charitable toward one another's lunacies. I recognise that in his special belief the Christian Scientist is insane, because he does not believe as I do; but I hail him as my mate and fellow because I am as insane as he—insane from his

point of view, and his point of view is as authoritative as mine and worth as much. That is to say, worth a brass farthing. Upon a great religious or political question the opinion of the

Page 67

dullest head in the world is worth the same as the opinion of the brightest head in the world—a brass farthing. How do we arrive at this? It is simple: The affirmative opinion of a stupid man is neutralised by the negative opinion of his stupid neighbour—no decision is reached; the affirmative opinion of the intellectual giant Gladstone is neutralised by the negative opinion of the intellectual giant Cardinal Newman—no decision is reached. Opinions that prove nothing are, of course, without value—any but a dead person knows that much. This obliges us to admit the truth of the unpalatable proposition just mentioned above—that in disputed matters political and religious one man's opinion is worth no more than his peer's, and hence it follows that no man's opinion possesses any real value. It is a humbling thought, but there is no way to get around it: all opinions upon these great subjects are brass-farthing opinions.

It is a mere plain simple fact—as clear and as certain as that 8 and 7 make fifteen. And by it we recognise that we are all insane, as concerns those matters. If we were sane we should all see a political or religious doctrine alike, there would be no dispute: it would be a case of 8 and 7—just as it is in heaven, where all are sane and none insane. There there is but one religion, one belief, the harmony is perfect, there is never a discordant note.

Under protection of these preliminaries I suppose I may now repeat without offence that the Christian Scientist is insane. I mean him no discourtesy, and I am not charging—nor even imagining—that he is insaner than the rest of the human race. I think he is more picturesquely insane than some of us. At the same time, I am quite sure that in one important and splendid particular he is saner than is the vast bulk of the race.

Why is he insane? I told you before: it is because his opinions are not ours. I know of no other reason, and I do not need any other; it is the only way we have of discovering insanity when it is not violent. It is merely the picturesqueness of his insanity that makes it more interesting than my kind or yours. For instance, consider his 'little book'—the one described in the previous article; the 'little book' exposed in the sky eighteen centuries ago by the flaming angel of the Apocalypse and handed down in our day to Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy of New Hampshire and translated by her, word for word, into English (with help of a polisher), and now published and distributed in hundreds of editions by her at a clear profit per volume, above cost, of 700 per cent.!—a profit which distinctly belongs to the angel of the Apocalypse, and let him collect it if he can; a 'little book' which the C.S. very frequently calls by just that name, and always inclosed in quotation-marks to keep its high origin exultantly in mind; a 'little book' which 'explains' and reconstructs and new-paints and decorates the Bible and puts a mansard roof on it and a lightning-rod and all the other modern improvements; a little book which for the present affects to travel in yoke with the Bible and be friendly to it, and within half a century will hitch it in the rear, and thenceforth travel tandem, itself in the lead, in the

coming great march of Christian Scientism through the Protestant dominions of the planet.

Page 68

Perhaps I am putting the tandem arrangement too far away; perhaps five years might be nearer the mark than fifty; for a Viennese lady told me last night that in the Christian Science Mosque in Boston she noticed some things which seem to me to promise a shortening of the interval; on one side there was a display of texts from the New Testament, signed with the Saviour's initials, 'J.C.:' and on the opposite side a display of texts from the 'little book' signed—with the author's mere initials? No—signed with Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy's name in full. Perhaps the Angel of the Apocalypse likes this kind of piracy. I made this remark lightly to a Christian Scientist this morning, but he did not receive it lightly, but said it was jesting upon holy things; he said there was no piracy, for the angel did not compose the book, he only brought it—'God composed it.' I could have retorted that it was a case of piracy just the same; that the displayed texts should be signed with the Author's initials, and that to sign them with the translator's train of names was another case of 'jesting upon holy things.' However, I did not say these things, for this Scientist was a large person, and although by his own doctrine we have no substance, but are fictions and unrealities, I knew he could hit me an imaginary blow which would furnish me an imaginary pain which could last me a week. The lady said that in that Mosque there were two pulpits; in one of them was a man with the Former Bible, in the other a woman with Mrs. Eddy's apocalyptic Annex; and from these books the man and the woman were reading verse and verse about:

'Hungry ones throng to hear the Bible read in connection with the text-book of Christian Science, "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," by Mary Baker G. Eddy. These are our only preachers. They are the word of God.'—Christian Science Journal, October 1898.

Are these things picturesque? The Viennese lady told me that in a chapel of the Mosque there was a picture or image of Mrs. Eddy, and that before it burns a never-extinguished light. Is that picturesque? How long do you think it will be before the Christian Scientist will be worshipping that image and praying to it? How long do you think it will be before it is claimed that Mrs. Eddy is a Redeemer, a Christ, or Christ's equal? Already her army of disciples speak of her reverently as 'Our Mother.' How long will it be before they place her on the steps of the Throne beside the Virgin—and later a step higher? First, Mary the Virgin and Mary the Matron; later, with a change of Precedence, Mary the Matron and Mary the Virgin. Let the artist get ready with his canvas and his brushes; the new Renaissance is on its way, and there will be money in altar-canvases—a thousand times as much as the Popes and their Church ever spent on the Old Masters; for their riches were as poverty as compared with what is going to pour into the treasure-chest

Page 69

of the Christian-Scientist Papacy by-and-by, let us not doubt it. We will examine the financial outlook presently and see what it promises. A favourite subject of the new Old Master will be the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Revelation—a verse which Mrs. Eddy says (in her Annex to the Scriptures) has 'one distinctive feature which has special reference to the present age'—and to her, as is rather pointedly indicated:

'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven—a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet,' *etc.*

The woman clothed with the sun will be a portrait of Mrs. Eddy.

Is it insanity to believe that Christian Scientism is destined to make the most formidable show that any new religion has made in the world since the birth and spread of Mohammedanism, and that within a century from now it may stand second to Rome only, in numbers and power in Christendom?

If this is a wild dream it will not be easy to prove it is so just yet, I think. There seems argument that it may come true. The Christian-Science 'boom' is not yet five years old; yet already it has 500 churches and 1,000,000 members in America.

It has its start, you see, and it is a phenomenally good one. Moreover, it is latterly spreading with a constantly accelerating swiftness. It has a better chance to grow and prosper and achieve permanency than any other existing 'ism;' for it has more to offer than any other. The past teaches us that, in order to succeed, a movement like this must not be a mere philosophy, it must be a religion; also, that it must not claim entire originality, but content itself with passing for an improvement on an existing religion, and show its hand later, when strong and prosperous—like Mohammedanism.

Next, there must be money—and plenty of it.

Next, the power and authority and capital must be concentrated in the grip of a small and irresponsible clique, with nobody outside privileged to ask questions or find fault.

Next, as before remarked, it must bait its hook with some new and attractive advantages over the baits offered by the other religions.

A new movement equipped with some of these endowments—like spiritualism, for instance—may count upon a considerable success; a new movement equipped with the bulk of them—like Mohammedanism, for instance—may count upon a widely extended conquest. Mormonism had all the requisites but one—it had nothing new and nothing valuable to bait with; and, besides, it appealed to the stupid and the ignorant only. Spiritualism lacked the important detail of concentration of money and authority in the hands of an irresponsible clique.

Page 70

The above equipment is excellent, admirable, powerful, but not perfect. There is yet another detail which is worth the whole of it put together—and more; a detail which has never been joined (in the beginning of a religious movement) to a supremely good working equipment since the world began, until now: a new personage to worship. Christianity had the Saviour, but at first and for generations it lacked money and concentrated power. In Mrs. Eddy, Christian Science possesses the new personage for worship, and in addition—here in the very beginning—a working equipment that has not a flaw in it. In the beginning, Mohammedanism had no money; and it has never had anything to offer its client but heaven—nothing here below that was valuable. In addition to heaven hereafter, Christian Science has present health and a cheerful spirit to offer—for cash—and in comparison with this bribe all other this-world bribes are poor and cheap. You recognise that this estimate is admissible, do you not?

To whom does Bellamy's 'Nationalism' appeal? Necessarily to the few: people who read and dream, and are compassionate, and troubled for the poor and the hard-driven. To whom does Spiritualism appeal? Necessarily to the few; its 'boom' has lasted for half a century and I believe it claims short of four millions of adherents in America. Who are attracted by Swedenborgianism and some of the other fine and delicate 'isms?' The few again: Educated people, sensitively organised, with superior mental endowments, who seek lofty planes of thought and find their contentment there. And who are attracted by Christian Science? There is no limit; its field is horizonless; its appeal is as universal as is the appeal of Christianity itself. It appeals to the rich, the poor, the high, the low, the cultured, the ignorant, the gifted, the stupid, the modest, the vain, the wise, the silly, the soldier, the civilian, the hero, the coward, the idler, the worker, the godly, the godless, the freeman, the slave, the adult, the child; they who are ailing, they who have friends that are ailing. To mass it in a phrase, its clientele is the Human Race? Will it march? I think so.

VII

Remember its principal great offer: to rid the Race of pain and disease. Can it do it? In large measure, yes. How much of the pain and disease in the world is created by the imaginations of the sufferers, and then kept alive by those same imaginations? Four-fifths? Not anything short of that I should think. Can Christian Science banish that four-fifths? I think so. Can any other (organised) force do it? None that I know of. Would this be a new world when that was accomplished? And a pleasanter one—for us well people, as well as for those fussy and fretting sick ones? Would it seem as if there was not as much gloomy weather as there used to be? I think so.

In the meantime would the Scientist kill off a good many patients? I think so. More than get killed off now by the legalised methods? I will take up that question presently.

Page 71

At present I wish to ask you to examine some of the Scientist's performances, as registered in his magazine, 'The Christian Science Journal'—October number, 1898. First, a Baptist clergyman gives us this true picture of 'the average orthodox Christian'—and he could have added that it is a true picture of the average (civilised) human being:

'He is a worried and fretted and fearful man; afraid of himself and his propensities, afraid of colds and fevers, afraid of treading on serpents or drinking deadly things.'

Then he gives us this contrast:

'The average Christian Scientist has put all anxiety and fretting under his feet. He does have a victory over fear and care that is not achieved by the average orthodox Christian.'

He has put all anxiety and fretting under his feet. What proportion of your earnings or income would you be willing to pay for that frame of mind, year in year out? It really outvalues any price that can be put upon it. Where can you purchase it, at any outlay of any sort, in any Church or out of it, except the Scientist's?

Well, it is the anxiety and fretting about colds, and fevers, and draughts, and getting our feet wet, and about forbidden food eaten in terror of indigestion, that brings on the cold and the fever and the indigestion and the most of our other ailments; and so, if the Science can banish that anxiety from the world I think it can reduce the world's disease and pain about four-fifths.

In this October number many of the redeemed testify and give thanks; and not coldly but with passionate gratitude. As a rule they seem drunk with health, and with the surprise of it, the wonder of it, the unspeakable glory and splendour of it, after a long sober spell spent in inventing imaginary diseases and concreting them with doctor-stuff. The first witness testifies that when 'this most beautiful Truth first dawned on him' he had 'nearly all the ills that flesh is heir to;' that those he did not have he thought he had—and thus made the tale about complete. What was the natural result? Why, he was a dump-pit 'for all the doctors, druggists, and patent medicines of the country.' Christian Science came to his help, and 'the old sick conditions passed away,' and along with them the 'dismal forebodings' which he had been accustomed to employ in conjuring up ailments. And so he was a healthy and cheerful man, now, and astonished.

But I am not astonished, for from other sources I know what must have been his method of applying Christian Science. If I am in the right, he watchfully and diligently diverted his mind from unhealthy channels and compelled it to travel in healthy ones. Nothing contrivable by human invention could be more formidably effective than that, in banishing imaginary ailments and in closing the entrances against subsequent applicants of their breed. I think his method was to keep saying, 'I am well! I am sound!



—sound and well! well and sound! Perfectly sound, perfectly well! I have no pain;
there's no such thing as pain! I have no disease; there's no such thing as disease!
Nothing is real but Mind; all is Mind, All-Good, Good-Good, Life, Soul, Liver, Bones, one
of a series, ante and pass the buck!

Page 72

I do not mean that that was exactly the formula used, but that it doubtless contains the spirit of it. The Scientist would attach value to the exact formula, no doubt, and to the religious spirit in which it was used. I should think that any formula that would divert the mind from unwholesome channels and force it into healthy ones would answer every purpose with some people, though not with all. I think it most likely that a very religious man would find the addition of the religious spirit a powerful reinforcement in his case.

The second witness testifies that the Science banished 'an old organic trouble' which the doctor and the surgeon had been nursing with drugs and the knife for seven years.

He calls it his 'claim.' A surface-miner would think it was not his claim at all, but the property of the doctor and his pal the surgeon—for he would be misled by that word, which is Christian-Science slang for 'ailment.' The Christian Scientist has no ailment; to him there is no such thing, and he will not use the lying word. All that happens to him is, that upon his attention an imaginary disturbance sometimes obtrudes itself which claims to be an ailment, but isn't.

This witness offers testimony for a clergyman seventy years old who had preached forty years in a Christian church, and has not gone over to the new sect. He was 'almost blind and deaf.' He was treated by the C.S. method, and 'when he heard the voice of Truth he saw spiritually.' Saw spiritually. It is a little indefinite; they had better treat him again. Indefinite testimonies might properly be waste-basketed, since there is evidently no lack of definite ones procurable, but this C.S. magazine is poorly edited, and so mistakes of this kind must be expected.

The next witness is a soldier of the Civil War. When Christian Science found him, he had in stock the following claims:

Indigestion,
Rheumatism,
Catarrh,
Chalky deposits in
Shoulder joints,
Arm joints,
Hand joints,
Atrophy of the muscles of
Arms,
Shoulders,
Stiffness of all those joints,
Insomnia,
Excruciating pains most of the time.

These claims have a very substantial sound. They came of exposure in the campaigns. The doctors did all they could, but it was little. Prayers were tried, but 'I

never realised any physical relief from that source.' After thirty years of torture he went to a Christian Scientist and took an hour's treatment and went home painless. Two days later he 'began to eat like a well man.' Then 'the claims vanished—some at once, others more gradually;' finally, 'they have almost entirely disappeared.' And —a thing which is of still greater value—he is now 'contented and happy.' That is a detail which, as earlier remarked, is a Scientist-Church specialty. With thirty-one years' effort the Methodist Church had not succeeded in furnishing it to this harassed soldier.

Page 73

And so the tale goes on. Witness after witness bulletins his claims, declares their prompt abolishment, and gives Mrs. Eddy's Discovery the praise. Milk-leg is cured; nervous prostration is cured; consumption is cured; and St. Vitus's dance made a pastime. And now and then an interesting new addition to the Science slang appears on the page. We have 'demonstrations over' chilblains and such things. It seems to be a curtailed way of saying 'demonstrations of the power of Christian-Science Truth over the fiction which masquerades under the name of Chilblains.' The children as well as the adults, share in the blessings of the Science. 'Through the study of the "little book" they are learning how to be healthful, peaceful, and wise.' Sometimes they are cured of their little claims by the professional healer, and sometimes more advanced children say over the formula and cure themselves.

A little Far-Western girl of nine, equipped with an adult vocabulary, states her age and says, 'I thought I would write a demonstration to you.' She had a claim derived from getting flung over a pony's head and landed on a rock-pile. She saved herself from disaster by remember to say 'God is All' while she was in the air. I couldn't have done it. I shouldn't have even thought of it. I should have been too excited. Nothing but Christian Science could have enabled that child to do that calm and thoughtful and judicious thing in those circumstances. She came down on her head, and by all the rules she should have broken it; but the intervention of the formula prevented that, so the only claim resulting was a blackened eye. Monday morning it was still swollen and shut. At school 'it hurt pretty bad—that is, it seemed to.' So 'I was excused, and went down in the basement and said, "Now I am depending on mamma instead of God, and I will depend on God instead of mamma.'" No doubt this would have answered; but, to make sure, she added Mrs. Eddy to the team and recited 'the Scientific Statement of Being,' which is one of the principal incantations, I judge. Then 'I felt my eye opening.' Why, it would have opened an oyster. I think it is one of the touchingest things in child-history, that pious little rat down cellar pumping away at the Scientific Statement of Being.

There is a page about another good child—little Gordon. Little Gordon 'came into the world without the assistance of surgery or anaesthetics.' He was a 'demonstration.' A painless one; therefore his coming evoked 'joy and thankfulness to God and the Discoverer of Christian Science.' It is a noticeable feature of this literature—the so frequent linking together of the Two Beings in an equal bond; also of Their Two Bibles. When little Gordon was two years old, 'he was playing horse on the bed, where I had left my "little book." I noticed him stop in his play, take the book carefully in his little hands, kiss it softly, then look about for the highest place of

Page 74

safety his arms could reach, and put it there.' This pious act filled the mother 'with such a train of thought as I had never experienced before. I thought of the sweet mother of long ago who kept things in her heart,' *etc.* It is a bold comparison; however, unconscious profanations are about as common in the mouths of the lay membership of the new Church as are frank and open ones in the mouths of its consecrated chiefs.

Some days later, the family library—Christian Science books—was lying in a deep-seated window. It was another chance for the holy child to show off. He left his play and went there and pushed all the books to one side except the Annex. 'It he took in both hands, slowly raised it to his lips, then removed it carefully, and seated himself in the window.' It had seemed to the mother too wonderful to be true, that first time; but now she was convinced that 'neither imagination nor accident had anything to do with it.' Later, little Gordon let the author of his being see him do it. After that he did it frequently; probably every time anybody was looking. I would rather have that child than a chromo. If this tale has any object, it is to intimate that the inspired book was supernaturally able to convey a sense of its sacred and awful character to this innocent little creature without the intervention of outside aids. The magazine is not edited with high-priced discretion. The editor has a claim, and he ought to get it treated.

Among other witnesses, there is one who had a 'jumping toothache,' which several times tempted her to 'believe that there was sensation in matter, but each time it was overcome by the power of Truth.' She would not allow the dentist to use cocaine, but sat there and let him punch and drill and split and crush the tool, and tear and slash its ulcerations, and pull out the nerve, and dig out fragments of bone; and she wouldn't once confess that it hurt. And to this day she thinks it didn't, and I have not a doubt that she is nine-tenths right, and that her Christian Science faith did her better service than she could have gotten out of cocaine.

There is an account of a boy who got broken all up into small bits by an accident, but said over the Scientific Statement of Being, or some of the other incantations, and got well and sound without having suffered any real pain and without the intrusion of a surgeon. I can believe this, because my own case was somewhat similar, as per my former article.

Also there is an account of the restoration to perfect health, in a single night, of a fatally injured horse, by the application of Christian Science. I can stand a good deal, but I recognise that the ice is getting thin here. That horse had as many as fifty claims: how could he demonstrate over them? Could he do the All-Good, Good-Good, Good-Gracious, Liver, Bones, Truth, All down but Nine, Set them up on the Other Alley? Could he intone the Scientific Statement of Being? Now, could he? Wouldn't it give him a relapse? Let us draw the line at horses. Horses and furniture.

Page 75

There is a plenty of other testimonies in the magazine, but these quoted samples will answer. They show the kind of trade the Science is driving. Now we come back to the question; Does it kill a patient here and there and now and then? We must concede it. Does it compensate for this? I am persuaded that it can make a plausible showing in that direction. For instance: when it lays its hands upon a soldier who has suffered thirty years of helpless torture and makes him whole in body and mind, what is the actual sum of that achievement? This, I think: that it has restored to life a subject who had essentially died ten deaths a year for thirty years, and each of them a long and painful one. But for its interference that man would have essentially died thirty times more, in the three years which have since elapsed. There are thousand of young people in the land who are now ready to enter upon a life-long death similar to that man's. Every time the Science captures one of these and secures to him life-long immunity from imagination-manufactured disease, it may plausibly claim that in his person it has saved 300 lives. Meantime it will kill a man every now and then; but no matter, it will still be ahead on the credit side.

VIII

'We consciously declare that "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," was foretold as well as its author, Mary Baker Eddy, in Revelation x. She is the "mighty angel," or God's highest thought to this age (verse 1), giving us the spiritual interpretation of the Bible in the "little book open" (verse 2). Thus we prove that Christian Science is the second coming of Christ—Truth—Spirit.' —Lecture by Dr. George Tomkins, D.D., C.S.

There you have it in plain speech. She is the mighty angel; she is the divinely and officially sent bearer of God's highest thought. For the present, she brings the Second Advent. We must expect that before she has been in her grave fifty years she will be regarded by her following as having been herself the Second Advent. She is already worshipped, and we must expect this feeling to spread territorially, and also to deepen in intensity [1].

Particularly after her death; for then, as anyone can foresee, Eddy-worship will be taught in the Sunday-schools and pulpits of the cult. Already whatever she puts her trade-mark on, thought it be only a memorial spoon, is holy and is eagerly and passionately and gratefully bought by the disciple, and becomes a fetish in his house. I say bought, for the Boston Christian-Science Trust gives nothing away; everything it has for sale. And the terms are cash; and not cash only but cash in advance. Its god is Mrs. Eddy first, then the Dollar. Not a spiritual Dollar, but a real one. From end to end of the Christian-Science literature not a single (material) thing in the world is conceded to be real, except the Dollar. But

Page 76

all through and through its advertisements that reality is eagerly and persistently recognised. The hunger of the Trust for the Dollar, its adoration of the Dollar, its lust after the Dollar, its ecstasy in the mere thought of the Dollar—there has been nothing like it in the world in any age or country, nothing so coarse, nothing so lubricous, nothing so bestial, except a French novel's attitude towards adultery.

The Dollar is hunted down in all sorts of ways; the Christian-Science Mother-Church and Bargain-Counter in Boston peddles all kinds of spiritual wares to the faithful, always at extravagant prices, and always on the one condition—cash, cash in advance. The Angel of the Apocalypse could not go there and get a copy of his own pirated book on credit. Many, many precious Christian-Science things are to be had there—for cash: Bible Lessons; Church Manual; C.S. Hymnal; History of the building of the Mother-Church; lot of Sermons; Communion Hymn, 'Saw Ye My Saviour,' by Mrs. Eddy, half a dollar a copy, 'words used by special permission of Mrs. Eddy.' Also we have Mrs. Eddy's and the Angel's little Bible-Annex in eight styles of binding at eight kinds of war-prices: among these a sweet thing in 'levant, divinity circuit, leather lined to edge, round corners, gold edge, silk sewed, each, prepaid, \$6,' and if you take a million you get them a shilling cheaper—that is to say, 'prepaid, \$5.75.' Also we have Mrs. Eddy's 'Miscellaneous Writings,' at noble big prices, the divinity-circuit style heading the extortions, shilling discount where you take an edition. Next comes 'Christ and Christmas,' by the fertile Mrs. Eddy—a poem—I would God I could see it—price \$3, cash in advance. Then follow five more books by Mrs. Eddy at highwaymen's rates, as usual, some of them in 'leatherette covers,' some of them in 'pebbled cloth,' with divinity circuit, compensation balance, twin screw, and the other modern improvements: and at the same bargain counter can be had the 'Christian Science Journal.' I wish it were in refined taste to apply a rudely and ruggedly descriptive epithet to that literary slush-bucket, so as to give one an accurate idea of what it is like. I am moved to do it, but I must not: it is better to be refined than accurate when one is talking about a production like that.

Christian-Science literary oleomargarine is a monopoly of the Mother Church Headquarters Factory in Boston; none genuine without the trade-mark of the Trust. You must apply there, and not elsewhere; and you pay your money before you get your soap-fat.

The Trust has still other sources of income. Mrs. Eddy is president (and perhaps proprietor?) of the Trust's Metaphysical College in Boston, where the student who has practised C.S. healing during three years the best he knew how perfects himself in the game by a two weeks' course, and pays one hundred dollars for it! And I have a case among my statistics where the student had a three weeks' course and paid three hundred for it.

Page 77

The Trust does love the Dollar when it isn't a spiritual one.

In order to force the sale of Mrs. Eddy's Bible-Annex, no healer, Metaphysical College-bred or other, is allowed to practise the game unless he possess a copy of that holy nightmare. That means a large and constantly augmenting income for the Trust. No C.S. family would consider itself loyal or pious or pain-proof without an Annex or two in the house. That means an income for the Trust—in the near future—of millions: not thousands—millions a year.

No member, young or old, of a Christian-Scientist church can retain that membership unless he pay 'capitation tax' to the Boston Trust every year. That means an income for the Trust—in the near future—of millions more per year.

It is a reasonably safe guess that in America in 1910 there will be 10,000,000 Christian Scientists, and 3,000,000 in Great Britain; that these figures will be trebled by 1920; that in America in 1910 the Christian Scientists will be a political force, in 1920 politically formidable—to remain that, permanently. And I think it a reasonable guess that the Trust (which is already in our day pretty brusque in its ways) will then be the most insolent and unscrupulous and tyrannical politico-religious master that has dominated a people since the palmy days of the Inquisition. And a stronger master than the strongest of bygone times, because this one will have a financial strength not dreamed of by any predecessor; as effective a concentration of irresponsible power as any predecessor had; in the railway, the telegraph, and the subsidised newspaper, better facilities for watching and managing his empire than any predecessor has had; and after a generation or two he will probably divide Christendom with the Catholic Church.

The Roman Church has a perfect organisation, and it has an effective centralisation of power—but not of its cash. Its multitude of Bishops are rich, but their riches remain in large measure in their own hands. They collect from 200,000,000 of people, but they keep the bulk of the result at home. The Boston Pope of by-and-by will draw his dollar-a-head capitation-tax from 300,000,000 of the human race, and the Annex and the rest of his book-shop will fetch in double as much more; and his Metaphysical Colleges, the annual pilgrimage to Mrs. Eddy's tomb, from all over the world—admission, the Christian-Science Dollar (payable in advance)—purchases of consecrated glass beads, candles, memorial spoons, aureoled chromo-portraits and bogus autographs of Mrs. Eddy, cash offerings at her shrine—no crutches of cured cripples received, and no imitations of miraculously restored broken legs and necks allowed to be hung up except when made out of the Holy Metal and proved by fire-assay; cash for miracles worked at the tomb: these money-sources, with a thousand to be yet invented and ambushed upon the devotee, will bring the annual increment well up above a billion. And nobody

Page 78

but the Trust will have the handling of it. No Bishops appointed unless they agree to hand in 90 per cent. of the catch. In that day the Trust will monopolise the manufacture and sale of the Old and New Testaments as well as the Annex, and raise their price to Annex rates, and compel the devotee to buy (for even to-day a healer has to have the Annex and the Scriptures or he is not allowed to work the game), and that will bring several hundred million dollars more. In those days the Trust will have an income approaching \$5,000,000 a day, and no expenses to be taken out of it; no taxes to pay, and no charities to support. That last detail should not be lightly passed over by the read; it is well entitled to attention.

No charities to support. No, nor even to contribute to. One searches in vain the Trust's advertisements and the utterances of its pulpit for any suggestion that it spends a penny on orphans, widows, discharged prisoners, hospitals, ragged schools, night missions, city missions, foreign missions, libraries, old people's homes, or any other object that appeals to a human being's purse through his heart.[2]

I have hunted, hunted, and hunted, by correspondence and otherwise, and have not yet got upon the track of a farthing that the Trust has spent upon any worthy object. Nothing makes a Scientist so uncomfortable as to ask him if he knows of a case where Christian Science has spent money on a benevolence, either among its own adherents or elsewhere. He is obliged to say no. And then one discovers that the person questioned has been asked the question many times before, and that it is getting to be a sore subject with him. Why a sore subject? Because he has written his chiefs and asked with high confidence for an answer that will confound these questioners—and the chiefs did not reply. He has written again—and then again—not with confidence, but humbly, now, and has begged for defensive ammunition in the voice of supplication. A reply does at last come—to this effect: 'We must have faith in Our Mother, and rest content in the conviction that whatever She[3] does with the money it is in accordance with orders from Heaven, for She does no act of any kind without first "demonstrating over" it.'

That settles it—as far as the disciple is concerned. His Mind is entirely satisfied with that answer; he gets down his Annex and does an incantation or two, and that mesmerises his spirit and puts that to sleep—brings it peace. Peace and comfort and joy, until some inquirer punctures the old sore again.

Through friends in America I asked some questions, and in some cases got definite and informing answers; in other cases the answers were not definite and not valuable. From the definite answers I gather that the 'capitation-tax' is compulsory, and that the sum is one dollar. To the question, 'Does any of the money go to charities?' the answer from an authoritative source was:

Page 79

'No, *not in the sense usually conveyed by this word.*' (The italics are mine.) That answer is cautious. But definite, I think—utterly and unassailably definite—although quite Christian-scientifically foggy in its phrasing. Christian Science is generally foggy, generally diffuse, generally garrulous. The writer was aware that the first word in his phrase answered the question which I was asking, but he could not help adding nine dark words. Meaningless ones, unless explained by him. It is quite likely—as intimated by him—that Christian Science has invented a new class of objects to apply the word charity to, but without an explanation we cannot know what they are. We quite easily and naturally and confidently guess that they are in all cases objects which will return five hundred per cent. on the Trust's investment in them, but guessing is not knowledge; it is merely, in this case, a sort of nine-tenths certainty deducible from what we think we know of the Trust's trade principles and its sly and furtive and shifty ways.

Sly? Deep? Judicious? The Trust understands business. The Trust does not give itself away. It defeats all the attempts of us impertinents to get at its trade secrets. To this day, after all our diligence, we have not been able to get it to confess what it does with the money. It does not even let its own disciples find out. All it says is, that the matter has been 'demonstrated over.' Now and then a lay Scientist says, with a grateful exultation, that Mrs. Eddy is enormously rich, but he stops there; as to whether any of the money goes to other charities or not, he is obliged to admit that he does not know. However, the Trust is composed of human beings; and this justifies the conjecture that if it had a charity on its list which it did not need to blush for, we should soon hear of it.

'Without money and without price.' Those used to be the terms. Mrs. Eddy's Annex cancels them. The motto of Christian Science is 'The labourer is worthy of his hire.' And now that it has been 'demonstrated over,' we find its spiritual meaning to be, 'Do anything and everything your hand may find to do; and charge cash for it, and collect the money in advance.' The Scientist has on his tongue's end a cut-and-dried, Boston-supplied set of rather lean arguments whose function is to show that it is a Heaven-commanded duty to do this, and that the croupiers of the game have no choice but to obey.

The Trust seems to be a reincarnation. Exodus xxxii.4.

I have no reverence for Mrs. Eddy and the rest of the Trust—if there is a rest—but I am not lacking in reverence for the sincerities of the lay membership of the new Church. There is every evidence that the lay members are entirely sincere in their faith, and I think sincerity is always entitled to honour and respect, let the inspiration of the sincerity be what it may. Zeal and sincerity can carry a new religion further than any other missionary

Page 80

except fire and sword, and I believe that the new religion will conquer the half of Christendom in a hundred years. I am not intending this as a compliment to the human race, I am merely stating an opinion. And yet I think that perhaps it is a compliment to the race. I keep in mind that saying of an orthodox preacher—quoted further back. He conceded that this new Christianity frees its possessor's life from frets, fears, vexations, bitterness, and all sorts of imagination-propagated maladies and pains, and fills his world with sunshine and his heart with gladness. If Christian Science, with this stupendous equipment—and final salvation added—cannot win half the Christian globe, I must be badly mistaken in the make-up of the human race.

I think the Trust will be handed down like the other papacy, and will always know how to handle its limitless cash. It will press the button; the zeal, the energy, the sincerity, the enthusiasm of its countless vassals will do the rest.

IX

The power which a man's imagination has over his body to heal it or make it sick is a force which none of us is born without. The first man had it, the last one will possess it. If left to himself a man is most likely to use only the mischievous half of the force—the half which invents imaginary ailments for him and cultivates them: and if he is one of these very wise people he is quite likely to scoff at the beneficent half of the force and deny its existence. And so, to heal or help that man, two imaginations are required: his own and some outsider's. The outsider, B, must imagine that his incantations are the healing power that is curing A, and A must imagine that this is so. It is not so, at all; but no matter, the cure is effected, and that is the main thing. The outsider's work is unquestionably valuable; so valuable that it may fairly be likened to the essential work performed by the engineer when he handles the throttle and turns on the steam: the actual power is lodged exclusively in the engine, but if the engine were left alone it would never start of itself. Whether the engineer be named Jim, or Bob, or Tom, it is all one—his services are necessary, and he is entitled to such wage as he can get you to pay. Whether he be named Christian Scientist, or Mental Scientist, or Mind Curist, or Lourdes Miracle-Worker, or King's-Evil Expert, it is all one,—he is merely the Engineer, he simply turns on the same old steam and the engine does the whole work.

In the case of the cure-engine it is a distinct advantage to clothe the engineer in religious overalls and give him a pious name. It greatly enlarges the business, and does no one any harm.

The Christian-Scientist engineer drives exactly the same trade as the other engineers, yet he out-prospers the whole of them put together. Is it because he has captured the

takingest name? I think that that is only a small part of it. I think that the secret of his high prosperity lies elsewhere:

Page 81

The Christian Scientist has organised the business. Now that was certainly a gigantic idea. There is more intellect in it than would be needed in the invention of a couple of millions of Eddy Science-and-Health Bible Annexes. Electricity, in limitless volume, has existed in the air and the rocks and the earth and everywhere since time began—and was going to waste all the while. In our time we have organised that scattered and wandering force and set it to work, and backed the business with capital, and concentrated it in few and competent hands, and the results are as we see.

The Christian Scientist has taken a force which has been lying idle in every member of the human race since time began, and has organised it, and backed the business with capital, and concentrated it at Boston headquarters in the hands of a small and very competent Trust, and there are results.

Therein lies the promise that this monopoly is going to extend its commerce wide in the earth. I think that if the business were conducted in the loose and disconnected fashion customary with such things, it would achieve but little more than the modest prosperity usually secured by unorganised great moral and commercial ventures; but I believe that so long as this one remains compactly organised and closely concentrated in a Trust, the spread of its dominion will continue.

Vienna: May 1, 1899.

[1] After raising a dead child to life, the disciple who did it writes an account of her performance, to Mrs. Eddy, and closes it thus: 'My prayer daily is to be more spiritual, that I may do more as you would have me do... and may we all love you more and so live it that the world may know that the Christ is come.'—Printed in the Concord, N.H., Independent Statesman, March 9, 1899. If this is no worship, it is a good imitation of it.

[2] In the past two years the membership of the Established Church of England have given voluntary contributions amounting to \$73,000,000 to the Church's benevolent enterprises. Churches that give have nothing to hide.

[3] I may be introducing the capital S a little early—still it is on its way.

IS HE LIVING OR IS HE DEAD?

I was spending the month of March 1892 at Mentone, in the Riviera. At this retired spot one has all the advantages, privately, which are to be had publicly at Monte Carlo and Nice, a few miles farther along. That is to say, one has the flooding sunshine, the balmy air and the brilliant blue sea, without the marring additions of human pow-wow and fuss and feathers and display. Mentone is quiet, simple, restful, unpretentious; the rich and the gaudy do not come there. As a rule, I mean, the rich do not come there. Now and then a rich man comes, and I presently got acquainted with one of these. Partially to

disguise him I will call him Smith. One day, in the Hotel des Anglais, at the second breakfast, he exclaimed:

Page 82

'Quick! Cast your eye on the man going out at the door. Take in every detail of him.'

'Why?'

'Do you know who he is?'

'Yes. He spent several days here before you came. He is an old, retired, and very rich silk manufacturer from Lyons, they say, and I guess he is alone in the world, for he always looks sad and dreamy, and doesn't talk with anybody. His name is Theophile Magnan.'

I supposed that Smith would now proceed to justify the large interest which he had shown in Monsieur Magnan, but, instead, he dropped into a brown study, and was apparently lost to me and to the rest of the world during some minutes. Now and then he passed his fingers through his flossy white hair, to assist his thinking, and meantime he allowed his breakfast to go on cooling. At last he said:

'No, it's gone; I can't call it back.'

'Can't call what back?'

'It's one of Hans Andersen's beautiful little stories. But it's gone from me. Part of it is like this: A child has a caged bird, which it loves but thoughtlessly neglects. The bird pours out its song unheard and unheeded; but, in time, hunger and thirst assail the creature, and its song grows plaintive and feeble and finally ceases—the bird dies. The child comes, and is smitten to the heart with remorse: then, with bitter tears and lamentations, it calls its mates, and they bury the bird with elaborate pomp and the tenderest grief, without knowing, poor things, that it isn't children only who starve poets to death and then spend enough on their funerals and monuments to have kept them alive and made them easy and comfortable. Now—'

But here we were interrupted. About ten that evening I ran across Smith, and he asked me up to his parlour to help him smoke and drink hot Scotch. It was a cosy place, with its comfortable chairs, its cheerful lamps, and its friendly open fire of seasoned olive-wood. To make everything perfect, there was a muffled booming of the surf outside. After the second Scotch and much lazy and contented chat, Smith said:

'Now we are properly primed—I to tell a curious history and you to listen to it. It has been a secret for many years—a secret between me and three others; but I am going to break the seal now. Are you comfortable?'

'Perfectly. Go on.'

Here follows what he told me:



'A long time ago I was a young artist—a very young artist, in fact—and I wandered about the country parts of France, sketching here and sketching there, and was presently joined by a couple of darling young Frenchmen who were at the same kind of thing that I was doing. We were as happy as we were poor, or as poor as we were happy—phrase it to suit yourself. Claude Frere and Carl Boulanger—these are the names of those boys; dear, dear fellows, and the sunniest spirits that ever laughed at poverty and had a noble good time in all weathers.

Page 83

'At last we ran hard aground in a Breton village, and an artist as poor as ourselves took us in and literally saved us from starving—Francois Millet—'

'What! the great Francois Millet?'

'Great? He wasn't any greater than we were, then. He hadn't any fame, even in his own village; and he was so poor that he hadn't anything to feed us on but turnips, and even the turnips failed us sometimes. We four became fast friends, doting friends, inseparables. We painted away together with all our might, piling up stock, piling up stock, but very seldom getting rid of any of it. We had lovely times together; but, O my soul! how we were pinched now and then!

'For a little over two years this went on. At last, one day, Claude said:

""Boys, we've come to the end. Do you understand that?—absolutely to the end. Everybody has struck—there's a league formed against us. I've been all around the village and it's just as I tell you. They refuse to credit us for another centime until all the odds and ends are paid up."

'This struck us as cold. Every face was blank with dismay. We realised that our circumstances were desperate, now. There was a long silence. Finally, Millet said with a sigh:

""Nothing occurs to me—nothing. Suggest something, lads."

'There was no response, unless a mournful silence may be called a response. Carl got up, and walked nervously up and down a while, then said:

""It's a shame! Look at these canvases: stacks and stacks of as good pictures as anybody in Europe paints—I don't care who he is. Yes, and plenty of lounging strangers have said the same—or nearly that, anyway."

""But didn't buy," Millet said.

""No matter, they said it; and it's true, too. Look at your 'Angelus' there! Will anybody tell me—"

""Pah, Carl—My 'Angelus!' I was offered five francs for it."

""When?"

""Who offered it?"

""Where is he?"



""Why didn't you take it?"

""Come—don't all speak at once. I thought he would give more—I was sure of it—he looked it—so I asked him eight."

""Well—and then?"

""He said he would call again."

""Thunder and lightning! Why, Francois—"

""Oh, I know—I know! It was a mistake, and I was a fool. Boys, I meant for the best; you'll grant me that, and I—"

""Why, certainly, we know that, bless your dear heart; but don't you be a fool again."

""I? I wish somebody would come along and offer us a cabbage for it —you'd see!"

""A cabbage! Oh, don't name it—it makes my mouth water. Talk of things less trying."

""Boys," said Carl, "do these pictures lack merit? Answer me that."

""No!"

""Aren't they of very great and high merit? Answer me that."

""Yes."

""Of such great and high merit that, if an illustrious name were attached to them they would sell at splendid prices. Isn't it so?"

Page 84

"Certainly it is. Nobody doubts that."

"But—I'm not joking—isn't it so?"

"Why, of course it's so—and we are not joking. But what of it. What of it? How does that concern us?"

"In this way, comrades—we'll attach an illustrious name to them!"

The lively conversation stopped. The faces were turned inquiringly upon Carl. What sort of riddle might this be? Where was an illustrious name to be borrowed? And who was to borrow it?

Carl sat down, and said:

"Now, I have a perfectly serious thing to propose. I think it is the only way to keep us out of the almshouse, and I believe it to be a perfectly sure way. I base this opinion upon certain multitudinous and long-established facts in human history. I believe my project will make us all rich."

"Rich! You've lost your mind."

"No, I haven't."

"Yes, you have—you've lost your mind. What do you call rich?"

"A hundred thousand francs apiece."

"He has lost his mind. I knew it."

"Yes, he has. Carl, privation has been too much for you, and—"

"Carl, you want to take a pill and get right to bed."

"Bandage him first—bandage his head, and then—"

"No, bandage his heels; his brains have been settling for weeks—I've noticed it."

"Shut up!" said Millet, with ostensible severity, "and let the boy have his say. Now, then—come out with your project, Carl. What is it?"

"Well, then, by way of preamble I will ask you to note this fact in human history: that the merit of many a great artist has never been acknowledged until after he was starved and dead. This has happened so often that I make bold to found a law upon it. This law: that the merit of every great unknown and neglected artist must and will be

recognised and his pictures climb to high prices after his death. My project is this: we must cast lots—one of us must die.”

‘The remark fell so calmly and so unexpectedly that we almost forgot to jump. Then there was a wild chorus of advice again—medical advice—for the help of Carl’s brain; but he waited patiently for the hilarity to calm down, and then went on again with his project:

”“Yes, one of us must die, to save the others—and himself. We will cast lots. The one chosen shall be illustrious, all of us shall be rich. Hold still, now—hold still; don’t interrupt—I tell you I know what I am talking about. Here is the idea. During the next three months the one who is to die shall paint with all his might, enlarge his stock all he can—not pictures, no! skeleton sketches, studies, parts of studies, fragments of studies, a dozen dabs of the brush on each—meaningless, of course, but his, with his cipher on them; turn out fifty a day, each to contain some peculiarity or mannerism easily detectable as his—they’re the things

Page 85

that sell, you know, and are collected at fabulous prices for the world's museums, after the great man is gone; we'll have a ton of them ready—a ton! And all that time the rest of us will be busy supporting the moribund, and working Paris and the dealers—preparations for the coming event, you know; and when everything is hot and just right, we'll spring the death on them and have the notorious funeral. You get the idea?"

"N-o; at least, not qu—"

"Not quite? Don't you see? The man doesn't really die; he changes his name and vanishes; we bury a dummy, and cry over it, with all the world to help. And I—"

'But he wasn't allowed to finish. Everybody broke out into a rousing hurrah of applause; and all jumped up and capered about the room and fell on each other's necks in transports of gratitude and joy. For hours we talked over the great plan, without ever feeling hungry; and at last, when all the details had been arranged satisfactorily, we cast lots and Millet was elected—elected to die, as we called it. Then we scraped together those things which one never parts with until he is betting them against future wealth—keepsake trinkets and suchlike—and these we pawned for enough to furnish us a frugal farewell supper and breakfast, and leave us a few francs over for travel, and a stake of turnips and such for Millet to live on for a few days.

'Next morning, early, the three of us cleared out, straightway after breakfast—on foot, of course. Each of us carried a dozen of Millet's small pictures, purposing to market them. Carl struck for Paris, where he would start the work of building up Millet's name against the coming great day. Claude and I were to separate, and scatter abroad over France.

'Now, it will surprise you to know what an easy and comfortable thing we had. I walked two days before I began business. Then I began to sketch a villa in the outskirts of a big town—because I saw the proprietor standing on an upper veranda. He came down to look on—I thought he would. I worked swiftly, intending to keep him interested. Occasionally he fired off a little ejaculation of approbation, and by-and-by he spoke up with enthusiasm, and said I was a master!

'I put down my brush, reached into my satchel, fetched out a Millet, and pointed to the cipher in the corner. I said, proudly:

"I suppose you recognise that? Well, he taught me! I should think I ought to know my trade!"

'The man looked guiltily embarrassed, and was silent. I said sorrowfully:

"You don't mean to intimate that you don't know the cipher of Francois Millet!"

'Of course he didn't know that cipher; but he was the gratefullest man you ever saw, just the same, for being let out of an uncomfortable place on such easy terms. He said:

""No! Why, it is Millet's, sure enough! I don't know what I could have been thinking of. Of course I recognise it now."

Page 86

'Next, he wanted to buy it; but I said that although I wasn't rich I wasn't that poor. However, at last, I let him have it for eight hundred francs.'

'Eight hundred!'

'Yes. Millet would have sold it for a pork chop. Yes, I got eight hundred francs for that little thing. I wish I could get it back for eighty thousand. But that time's gone by. I made a very nice picture of that man's house and I wanted to offer it to him for ten francs, but that wouldn't answer, seeing I was the pupil of such a master, so I sold it to him for a hundred. I sent the eight hundred francs straight to Millet from that town and struck out again next day.

'But I didn't walk—no. I rode. I have ridden ever since. I sold one picture every day, and never tried to sell two. I always said to my customer:

""I am a fool to sell a picture of Francois Millet's at all, for that man is not going to live three months, and when he dies his pictures can't be had for love or money."

'I took care to spread that little fact as far as I could, and prepare the world for the event.

'I take credit to myself for our plan of selling the pictures—it was mine. I suggested it that last evening when we were laying out our campaign, and all three of us agreed to give it a good fair trial before giving it up for some other. It succeeded with all of us. I walked only two days, Claude walked two—both of afraid to make Millet celebrated too close to home—but Carl walked only half a day, the bright, conscienceless rascal, and after that he travelled like a duke.

'Every now and then we got in with a country editor and started an item around through the press; not an item announcing that a new painter had been discovered, but an item which let on that everybody knew Francois Millet; not an item praising him in any way, but merely a word concerning the present condition of the "master"—sometimes hopeful, sometimes despondent, but always tinged with fears for the worst. We always marked these paragraphs, and sent the papers to all the people who had bought pictures of us.

'Carl was soon in Paris and he worked things with a high hand. He made friends with the correspondents, and got Millet's condition reported to England and all over the continent, and America, and everywhere.

'At the end of six weeks from the start, we three met in Paris and called a halt, and stopped sending back to Millet for additional pictures. The boom was so high, and everything so ripe, that we saw that it would be a mistake not to strike now, right away, without waiting any longer. So we wrote Millet to go to bed and begin to waste away pretty fast, for we should like him to die in ten days if he could get ready.



'Then we figured up and found that among us we had sold eighty-five small pictures and studies, and had sixty-nine thousand francs to show for it. Carl had made the last sale and the most brilliant one of all. He sold the "Angelus" for twenty-two hundred francs. How we did glorify him! —not foreseeing that a day was coming by-and-by when France would struggle to own it and a stranger would capture it for five hundred and fifty thousand, cash.

Page 87

'We had a wind-up champagne supper that night, and next day Claude and I packed up and went off to nurse Millet through his last days and keep busybodies out of the house and send daily bulletins to Carl in Paris for publication in the papers of several continents for the information of a waiting world. The sad end came at last, and Carl was there in time to help in the final mournful rites.

'You remember that great funeral, and what a stir it made all over the globe, and how the illustrious of two worlds came to attend it and testify their sorrow. We four—still inseparable—carried the coffin, and would allow none to help. And we were right about that, because it hadn't anything in it but a wax figure, and any other coffin-bearers would have found fault with the weight. Yes, we same old four, who had lovingly shared privation together in the old hard times now gone for ever, carried the cof—'

'Which four?'

'We four—for Millet helped to carry his own coffin. In disguise, you know. Disguised as a relative—distant relative.'

'Astonishing!'

'But true just the same. Well, you remember how the pictures went up. Money? We didn't know what to do with it. There's a man in Paris to-day who owns seventy Millet pictures. He paid us two million francs for them. And as for the bushels of sketches and studies which Millet shovelled out during the six weeks that we were on the road, well, it would astonish you to know the figure we sell them at nowadays—that is, when we consent to let one go!'

'It is a wonderful history, perfectly wonderful!'

'Yes—it amounts to that.'

'Whatever became of Millet?'

'Can you keep a secret?'

'I can.'

'Do you remember the man I called your attention to in the dining room to-day? That was Francois Millet.'

'Great—'

'Scott! Yes. For once they didn't starve a genius to death and then put into other pockets the rewards he should have had himself. This song-bird was not allowed to

pipe out its heart unheard and then be paid with the cold pomp of a big funeral. We looked out for that.'

MY DEBUT AS A LITERARY PERSON

In those early days I had already published one little thing ('The Jumping Frog') in an Eastern paper, but I did not consider that that counted. In my view, a person who published things in a mere newspaper could not properly claim recognition as a Literary Person: he must rise away above that; he must appear in a magazine. He would then be a Literary Person; also, he would be famous—right away. These two ambitions were strong upon me. This was in 1866. I prepared my contribution, and then looked around for the best magazine to go up to glory in. I selected the most important one in New York. The contribution was accepted. I signed it '*mark Twain*;' for that name had some currency on the Pacific coast, and it was my idea to spread it all over the world, now, at this one jump. The article appeared in the December number, and I sat up a month waiting for the January number; for that one would contain the year's list of contributors, my name would be in it, and I should be famous and could give the banquet I was meditating.

Page 88

I did not give the banquet. I had not written the '*mark Twain*' distinctly; it was a fresh name to Eastern printers, and they put it 'Mike Swain' or 'MacSwain,' I do not remember which. At any rate, I was not celebrated and I did not give the banquet. I was a Literary Person, but that was all—a buried one; buried alive.

My article was about the burning of the clipper-ship 'Hornet' on the line, May 3, 1866. There were thirty-one men on board at the time, and I was in Honolulu when the fifteen lean and ghostly survivors arrived there after a voyage of forty-three days in an open boat, through the blazing tropics, on ten days' rations of food. A very remarkable trip; but it was conducted by a captain who was a remarkable man, otherwise there would have been no survivors. He was a New Englander of the best sea-going stock of the old capable times—Captain Josiah Mitchell.

I was in the islands to write letters for the weekly edition of the Sacramento 'Union,' a rich and influential daily journal which hadn't any use for them, but could afford to spend twenty dollars a week for nothing. The proprietors were lovable and well-beloved men: long ago dead, no doubt, but in me there is at least one person who still holds them in grateful remembrance; for I dearly wanted to see the islands, and they listened to me and gave me the opportunity when there was but slender likelihood that it could profit them in any way.

I had been in the islands several months when the survivors arrived. I was laid up in my room at the time, and unable to walk. Here was a great occasion to serve my journal, and I not able to take advantage of it. Necessarily I was in deep trouble. But by good luck his Excellency Anson Burlingame was there at the time, on his way to take up his post in China, where he did such good work for the United States. He came and put me on a stretcher and had me carried to the hospital where the shipwrecked men were, and I never needed to ask a question. He attended to all of that himself, and I had nothing to do but make the notes. It was like him to take that trouble. He was a great man and a great American, and it was in his fine nature to come down from his high office and do a friendly turn whenever he could.

We got through with this work at six in the evening. I took no dinner, for there was no time to spare if I would beat the other correspondents. I spent four hours arranging the notes in their proper order, then wrote all night and beyond it; with this result: that I had a very long and detailed account of the 'Hornet' episode ready at nine in the morning, while the other correspondents of the San Francisco journals had nothing but a brief outline report—for they didn't sit up. The now-and-then schooner was to sail for San Francisco about nine; when I reached the dock she was free forward and was just casting off her stern-line. My fat envelope was thrown by a strong hand, and fell on board all right, and my victory was a safe thing. All in due time the ship reached San Francisco, but it was my complete report which made the stir and was telegraphed to the New York papers, by Mr. Cash; he was in charge of the Pacific bureau of the 'New York Herald' at the time.

Page 89

When I returned to California by-and-by, I went up to Sacramento and presented a bill for general correspondence at twenty dollars a week. It was paid. Then I presented a bill for 'special' service on the 'Hornet' matter of three columns of solid nonpareil at a hundred dollars a column. The cashier didn't faint, but he came rather near it. He sent for the proprietors, and they came and never uttered a protest. They only laughed in their jolly fashion, and said it was robbery, but no matter; it was a grand 'scoop' (the bill or my 'Hornet' report, I didn't know which): 'Pay it. It's all right.' The best men that ever owned a newspaper.

The 'Hornet' survivors reached the Sandwich Islands the 15th of June. They were mere skinny skeletons; their clothes hung limp about them and fitted them no better than a flag fits the flag-staff in a calm. But they were well nursed in the hospital; the people of Honolulu kept them supplied with all the dainties they could need; they gathered strength fast, and were presently nearly as good as new. Within a fortnight the most of them took ship for San Francisco; that is, if my dates have not gone astray in my memory. I went in the same ship, a sailing-vessel. Captain Mitchell of the 'Hornet' was along; also the only passengers the 'Hornet' had carried. These were two young men from Stamford, Connecticut—brothers: Samuel and Henry Ferguson. The 'Hornet' was a clipper of the first class and a fast sailer; the young men's quarters were roomy and comfortable, and were well stocked with books, and also with canned meats and fruits to help out the ship-fare with; and when the ship cleared from New York harbour in the first week of January there was promise that she would make quick and pleasant work of the fourteen or fifteen thousand miles in front of her. As soon as the cold latitudes were left behind and the vessel entered summer weather, the voyage became a holiday picnic. The ship flew southward under a cloud of sail which needed no attention, no modifying or change of any kind, for days together. The young men read, strolled the ample deck, rested and drowsed in the shade of the canvas, took their meals with the captain; and when the day was done they played dummy whist with him till bed-time. After the snow and ice and tempests of the Horn, the ship bowled northward into summer weather again, and the trip was a picnic once more.

Until the early morning of the 3rd of May. Computed position of the ship 112 degrees 10 minutes longitude, latitude 2 degrees above the equator; no wind, no sea—dead calm; temperature of the atmosphere, tropical, blistering, unimaginable by one who has not been roasted in it. There was a cry of fire. An unfaithful sailor had disobeyed the rules and gone into the booby-hatch with an open light to draw some varnish from a cask. The proper result followed, and the vessel's hours were numbered.

Page 90

There was not much time to spare, but the captain made the most of it. The three boats were launched—long-boat and two quarter-boats. That the time was very short and the hurry and excitement considerable is indicated by the fact that in launching the boats a hole was stove in the side of one of them by some sort of collision, and an oar driven through the side of another. The captain's first care was to have four sick sailors brought up and placed on deck out of harm's way—among them a 'Portyghee.' This man had not done a day's work on the voyage, but had lain in his hammock four months nursing an abscess. When we were taking notes in the Honolulu hospital and a sailor told this to Mr. Burlingame, the third mate, who was lying near, raised his head with an effort, and in a weak voice made this correction—with solemnity and feeling:

'Raising abscesses! He had a family of them. He done it to keep from standing his watch.'

Any provisions that lay handy were gathered up by the men and two passengers and brought and dumped on the deck where the 'Portyghee' lay; then they ran for more. The sailor who was telling this to Mr. Burlingame added:

'We pulled together thirty-two days' rations for the thirty-one men that way.'

The third mate lifted his head again and made another correction—with bitterness:

'The "Portyghee" et twenty-two of them while he was soldiering there and nobody noticing. A damned hound.'

The fire spread with great rapidity. The smoke and flame drove the men back, and they had to stop their incomplete work of fetching provisions, and take to the boats with only ten days' rations secured.

Each boat had a compass, a quadrant, a copy of Bowditch's 'Navigator,' and a Nautical Almanac, and the captain's and chief mate's boats had chronometers. There were thirty-one men all told. The captain took an account of stock, with the following result: four hams, nearly thirty pounds of salt pork, half-box of raisins, one hundred pounds of bread, twelve two-pound cans of oysters, clams, and assorted meats, a keg containing four pounds of butter, twelve gallons of water in a forty-gallon 'scuttle-butt', four one-gallon demijohns full of water, three bottles of brandy (the property of passengers), some pipes, matches, and a hundred pounds of tobacco. No medicines. Of course the whole party had to go on short rations at once.

The captain and the two passengers kept diaries. On our voyage to San Francisco we ran into a calm in the middle of the Pacific, and did not move a rod during fourteen days; this gave me a chance to copy the diaries. Samuel Ferguson's is the fullest; I will draw upon it now. When the following paragraph was written the doomed ship was about one

hundred and twenty days out from port, and all hands were putting in the lazy time about as usual, as no one was forecasting disaster.

Page 91

[Diary entry] May 2. Latitude 1 degree 28 minutes N., longitude 111 degrees 38 minutes W. Another hot and sluggish day; at one time, however, the clouds promised wind, and there came a slight breeze —just enough to keep us going. The only thing to chronicle to-day is the quantities of fish about; nine bonitos were caught this forenoon, and some large albacores seen. After dinner the first mate hooked a fellow which he could not hold, so he let the line go to the captain, who was on the bow. He, holding on, brought the fish to with a jerk, and snap went the line, hook and all. We also saw astern, swimming lazily after us, an enormous shark, which must have been nine or ten feet long. We tried him with all sorts of lines and a piece of pork, but he declined to take hold. I suppose he had appeased his appetite on the heads and other remains of the bonitos we had thrown overboard.

Next day's entry records the disaster. The three boats got away, retired to a short distance, and stopped. The two injured ones were leaking badly; some of the men were kept busy baling, others patched the holes as well as they could. The captain, the two passengers, and eleven men were in the long-boat, with a share of the provisions and water, and with no room to spare, for the boat was only twenty-one feet long, six wide, and three deep. The chief mate and eight men were in one of the small boats, the second mate and seven men in the other. The passengers had saved no clothing but what they had on, excepting their overcoats. The ship, clothed in flame and sending up a vast column of black smoke into the sky, made a grand picture in the solitudes of the sea, and hour after hour the outcasts sat and watched it. Meantime the captain ciphered on the immensity of the distance that stretched between him and the nearest available land, and then scaled the rations down to meet the emergency; half a biscuit for dinner; one biscuit and some canned meat for dinner; half a biscuit for tea; a few swallows of water for each meal. And so hunger began to gnaw while the ship was still burning.

[Diary entry] May 4. The ship burned all night very brightly, and hopes are that some ship has seen the light and is bearing down upon us. None seen, however, this forenoon, so we have determined to go together north and a little west to some islands in 18 degrees or 19 degrees north latitude and 114 degrees to 115 degrees west longitude, hoping in the meantime to be picked up by some ship. The ship sank suddenly at about 5 A.M. We find the sun very hot and scorching, but all try to keep out of it as much as we can.

They did a quite natural thing now: waited several hours for that possible ship that might have seen the light to work her slow way to them through the nearly dead calm. Then they gave it up and set about their plans. If you will look at the map you will say that their course could be easily decided.

Page 92

Albemarle Island (Galapagos group) lies straight eastward nearly a thousand miles; the islands referred to in the diary as 'some islands' (Revillagigedo Islands) lie, as they think, in some widely uncertain region northward about one thousand miles and westward one hundred or one hundred and fifty miles. Acapulco, on the Mexican coast, lies about north-east something short of one thousand miles. You will say random rocks in the ocean are not what is wanted; let them strike for Acapulco and the solid continent. That does look like the rational course, but one presently guesses from the diaries that the thing would have been wholly irrational—indeed, suicidal. If the boats struck for Albemarle they would be in the doldrums all the way; and that means a watery perdition, with winds which are wholly crazy, and blow from all points of the compass at once and also perpendicularly. If the boats tried for Acapulco they would get out of the doldrums when half-way there—in case they ever got half-way—and then they would be in lamentable case, for there they would meet the north-east trades coming down in their teeth, and these boats were so rigged that they could not sail within eight points of the wind. So they wisely started northward, with a slight slant to the west. They had but ten days' short allowance of food; the long-boat was towing the others; they could not depend on making any sort of definite progress in the doldrums, and they had four or five hundred miles of doldrums in front of them yet. They are the real equator, a tossing, roaring, rainy belt, ten or twelve hundred miles broad, which girdles the globe.

It rained hard the first night and all got drenched, but they filled up their water-butt. The brothers were in the stern with the captain, who steered. The quarters were cramped; no one got much sleep. 'Kept on our course till squalls headed us off.'

Stormy and squally the next morning, with drenching rains. A heavy and dangerous 'cobbling' sea. One marvels how such boats could live in it. Is it called a feat of desperate daring when one man and a dog cross the Atlantic in a boat the size of a long-boat, and indeed it is; but this long-boat was overloaded with men and other plunder, and was only three feet deep. 'We naturally thought often of all at home, and were glad to remember that it was Sacrament Sunday, and that prayers would go up from our friends for us, although they know not our peril.'

The captain got not even a cat-nap during the first three days and nights, but he got a few winks of sleep the fourth night. 'The worst sea yet.' About ten at night the captain changed his course and headed east-north-east, hoping to make Clipperton Rock. If he failed, no matter; he would be in a better position to make those other islands. I will mention here that he did not find that rock.

On May 8 no wind all day; sun blistering hot; they take to the oars. Plenty of dolphins, but they couldn't catch any. 'I think we are all beginning to realise more and more the awful situation we are in.' 'It often takes a ship a week to get through the doldrums; how

much longer, then, such a craft as ours?' 'We are so crowded that we cannot stretch ourselves out for a good sleep, but have to take it any way we can get it.'

Page 93

Of course this feature will grow more and more trying, but it will be human nature to cease to set it down; there will be five weeks of it yet—we must try to remember that for the diarist; it will make our beds the softer.

May 9 the sun gives him a warning: 'Looking with both eyes, the horizon crossed thus +.' 'Henry keeps well, but broods over our troubles more than I wish he did.' They caught two dolphins; they tasted well. 'The captain believed the compass out of the way, but the long-invisible north star came out—a welcome sight—and endorsed the compass.'

May 10, 'latitude 7 degrees 0 minutes 3 seconds N., longitude 111 degrees 32 minutes W.' So they have made about three hundred miles of northing in the six days since they left the region of the lost ship. 'Drifting in calms all day.' And baking hot, of course; I have been down there, and I remember that detail. 'Even as the captain says, all romance has long since vanished, and I think the most of us are beginning to look the fact of our awful situation full in the face.' 'We are making but little headway on our course.' Bad news from the rearmost boat: the men are improvident; 'they have eaten up all of the canned meats brought from the ship, and are now growing discontented.' Not so with the chief mate's people—they are evidently under the eye of a man.

Under date of May 11: 'Standing still! or worse; we lost more last night than we made yesterday.' In fact, they have lost three miles of the three hundred of northing they had so laboriously made. 'The cock that was rescued and pitched into the boat while the ship was on fire still lives, and crows with the breaking of dawn, cheering us a good deal.' What has he been living on for a week? Did the starving men feed him from their dire poverty? 'The second mate's boat out of water again, showing that they over-drink their allowance. The captain spoke pretty sharply to them.' It is true: I have the remark in my old note-book; I got it of the third mate in the hospital at Honolulu. But there is not room for it here, and it is too combustible, anyway. Besides, the third mate admired it, and what he admired he was likely to enhance.

They were still watching hopefully for ships. The captain was a thoughtful man, and probably did not disclose on them that that was substantially a waste of time. 'In this latitude the horizon is filled with little upright clouds that look very much like ships.' Mr. Ferguson saved three bottles of brandy from his private stores when he left the ship, and the liquor came good in these days. 'The captain serves out two tablespoonfuls of brandy and water—half and half—to our crew.' He means the watch that is on duty; they stood regular watches—four hours on and four off. The chief mate was an excellent officer—a self-possessed, resolute, fine, all-round man. The diarist makes the following note—there is character in it: 'I offered one bottle of brandy to the chief mate, but he declined, saying he could keep the after-boat quiet, and we had not enough for all.'

Page 94

HENRY FERGUSON'S DIARY TO DATE, GIVEN IN FULL:

May 4, 5, 6, doldrums. May 7, 8, 9, doldrums. May 10, 11, 12, doldrums. Tells it all. Never saw, never felt, never heard, never experienced such heat, such darkness, such lightning and thunder, and wind and rain, in my life before.

That boy's diary is of the economical sort that a person might properly be expected to keep in such circumstances—and be forgiven for the economy, too. His brother, perishing of consumption, hunger, thirst, blazing heat, drowning rains, loss of sleep, lack of exercise, was persistently faithful and circumstantial with his diary from the first day to the last—an instance of noteworthy fidelity and resolution. In spite of the tossing and plunging boat he wrote it close and fine, in a hand as easy to read as print. They can't seem to get north of 7 degrees N.; they are still there the next day:

[Diary entry] May 12. A good rain last night, and we caught a good deal, though not enough to fill up our tank, pails, &c. Our object is to get out of these doldrums, but it seems as if we cannot do it. To-day we have had it very variable, and hope we are on the northern edge, thought we are not much above 7 degrees. This morning we all thought we had made out a sail; but it was one of those deceiving clouds. Rained a good deal to-day, making all hands wet and uncomfortable; we filled up pretty nearly all our water-pots, however. I hope we may have a fine night, for the captain certainly wants rest, and while there is any danger of squalls, or danger of any kind, he is always on hand. I never would have believed that open boats such as ours, with their loads, could live in some of the seas we have had.

During the night, 12th-13th, 'the cry of *A ship!* brought us to our feet.' It seemed to be the glimmer of a vessel's signal-lantern rising out of the curve of the sea. There was a season of breathless hope while they stood watching, with their hands shading their eyes, and their hearts in their throats; then the promise failed: the light was a rising star. It is a long time ago—thirty-two years—and it doesn't matter now, yet one is sorry for their disappointment. 'Thought often of those at home to-day, and of the disappointment they will feel next Sunday at not hearing from us by telegraph from San Francisco.' It will be many weeks yet before the telegram is received, and it will come as a thunderclap of joy then, and with the seeming of a miracle, for it will raise from the grave men mourned as dead. 'To-day our rations were reduced to a quarter of a biscuit a meal, with about half a pint of water.' This is on May 13, with more than a month of voyaging in front of them yet! However, as they do not know that, 'we are all feeling pretty cheerful.'

In the afternoon of the 14th there was a thunderstorm, 'which toward night seemed to close in around us on every side, making it very dark and squally.' 'Our situation is becoming more and more desperate,' for they were making very little northing 'and

every day diminishes our small stock of provisions.' They realise that the boats must soon separate, and each fight for its own life. Towing the quarter-boats is a hindering business.

Page 95

That night and next day, light and baffling winds and but little progress. Hard to bear, that persistent standing still, and the food wasting away. 'Everything in a perfect sop; and all so cramped, and no change of clothes.' Soon the sun comes out and roasts them. 'Joe caught another dolphin to-day; in his maw we found a flying-fish and two skipjacks.' There is an event, now, which rouses an enthusiasm of hope: a land-bird arrives! It rests on the yard for awhile, and they can look at it all they like, and envy it, and thank it for its message. As a subject of talk it is beyond price—a fresh new topic for tongues tired to death of talking upon a single theme: Shall we ever see the land again; and when? Is the bird from Clipperton Rock? They hope so; and they take heart of grace to believe so. As it turned out the bird had no message; it merely came to mock.

May 16, 'the cock still lives, and daily carols forth his praise.' It will be a rainy night, 'but I do not care if we can fill up our water-butts.'

On the 17th one of those majestic spectres of the deep, a water-spout, stalked by them, and they trembled for their lives. Young Henry set it down in his scanty journal with the judicious comment that 'it might have been a fine sight from a ship.'

From Captain Mitchell's log for this day: 'Only half a bushel of bread-crumbs left.' (And a month to wander the seas yet.)

It rained all night and all day; everybody uncomfortable. Now came a sword-fish chasing a bonito; and the poor thing, seeking help and friends, took refuge under the rudder. The big sword-fish kept hovering around, scaring everybody badly. The men's mouths watered for him, for he would have made a whole banquet; but no one dared to touch him, of course, for he would sink a boat promptly if molested. Providence protected the poor bonito from the cruel sword-fish. This was just and right. Providence next befriended the shipwrecked sailors: they got the bonito. This was also just and right. But in the distribution of mercies the sword-fish himself got overlooked. He now went away; to muse over these subtleties, probably. The men in all the boats seem pretty well; the feeblest of the sick ones (not able for a long time to stand his watch on board the ship) 'is wonderfully recovered.' This is the third mate's detected 'Portyghee' that raised the family of abscesses.

Passed a most awful night. Rained hard nearly all the time, and blew in squalls, accompanied by terrific thunder and lightning from all points of the compass.—Henry's Log.

Most awful night I ever witnessed.—Captain's Log.

Latitude, May 18, 11 degrees 11 minutes. So they have averaged but forty miles of northing a day during the fortnight. Further talk of separating. 'Too bad, but it must be done for the safety of the whole.' 'At first I never dreamed, but now hardly shut my eyes

for a cat-nap without conjuring up something or other—to be accounted for by weakness, I suppose.’ But for their disaster they think they would be arriving in San Francisco about this time. ‘I should have liked to send B—the telegram for her birthday.’ This was a young sister.

Page 96

On the 19th the captain called up the quarter-boats and said one would have to go off on its own hook. The long-boat could no longer tow both of them. The second mate refused to go, but the chief mate was ready; in fact, he was always ready when there was a man's work to the fore. He took the second mate's boat; six of its crew elected to remain, and two of his own crew came with him (nine in the boat, now, including himself). He sailed away, and toward sunset passed out of sight. The diarist was sorry to see him go. It was natural; one could have better spared the 'Portyghee.' After thirty-two years I find my prejudice against this 'Portyghee' reviving. His very looks have long passed out of my memory; but no matter, I am coming to hate him as religiously as ever. 'Water will now be a scarce article, for as we get out of the doldrums we shall get showers only now and then in the trades. This life is telling severely on my strength. Henry holds out first-rate.' Henry did not start well, but under hardships he improved straight along.

Latitude, Sunday, May 20, 12 degrees 0 minutes 9 seconds. They ought to be well out of the doldrums now, but they are not. No breeze—the longed-for trades still missing. They are still anxiously watching for a sail, but they have only 'visions of ships that come to naught—the shadow without the substance.' The second mate catches a booby this afternoon, a bird which consists mainly of feathers; 'but as they have no other meat, it will go well.'

May 21, they strike the trades at last! The second mate catches three more boobies, and gives the long-boat one. Dinner 'half a can of mincemeat divided up and served around, which strengthened us somewhat.' They have to keep a man bailing all the time; the hole knocked in the boat when she was launched from the burning ship was never efficiently mended. 'Heading about north-west now.' They hope they have easting enough to make some of these indefinite isles. Failing that, they think they will be in a better position to be picked up. It was an infinitely slender chance, but the captain probably refrained from mentioning that.

The next day is to be an eventful one.

[Diary entry] May 22. Last night wind headed us off, so that part of the time we had to steer east-south-east and then west-north-west, and so on. This morning we were all startled by a cry of '*sail Ho!*' Sure enough, we could see it! And for a time we cut adrift from the second mate's boat, and steered so as to attract its attention. This was about half-past five A.M. After sailing in a state of high excitement for almost twenty minutes we made it out to be the chief mate's boat. Of course we were glad to see them and have them report all well; but still it was a bitter disappointment to us all. Now that we are in the trades it seems impossible to make northing enough to strike the isles. We have determined to do the best

Page 97

we can, and get in the route of vessels. Such being the determination, it became necessary to cast off the other boat, which, after a good deal of unpleasantness, was done, we again dividing water and stores, and taking Cox into our boat. This makes our number fifteen. The second mate's crew wanted to all get in with us, and cast the other boat adrift. It was a very painful separation.

So these isles that they have struggled for so long and so hopefully have to be given up. What with lying birds that come to mock, and isles that are but a dream, and 'visions of ships that come to naught,' it is a pathetic time they are having, with much heartbreak in it. It was odd that the vanished boat, three days lost to sight in that vast solitude, should appear again. But it brought Cox—we can't be certain why. But if it hadn't, the diarist would never have seen the land again.

[Diary entry] Our chances as we go west increase in regard to being picked up, but each day our scanty fare is so much reduced. Without the fish, turtle, and birds sent us, I do not know how we should have got along. The other day I offered to read prayers morning and evening for the captain, and last night commenced. The men, although of various nationalities and religions, are very attentive, and always uncovered. May God grant my weak endeavour its issue! Latitude, May 24, 14 degrees 18 minutes N. Five oysters apiece for dinner and three spoonfuls of juice, a gill of water, and a piece of biscuit the size of a silver dollar. 'We are plainly getting weaker—God have mercy upon us all!' That night heavy seas break over the weather side and make everybody wet and uncomfortable besides requiring constant baling.

Next day 'nothing particular happened.' Perhaps some of us would have regarded it differently. 'Passed a spar, but not near enough to see what it was.' They saw some whales blow; there were flying-fish skimming the seas, but none came aboard. Misty weather, with fine rain, very penetrating.

Latitude, May 26, 15 degrees 50 minutes. They caught a flying-fish and a booby, but had to eat them raw. 'The men grow weaker, and, I think, despondent; they say very little, though.' And so, to all the other imaginable and unimaginable horrors, silence is added—the muteness and brooding of coming despair. 'It seems our best chance to get in the track of ships with the hope that some one will run near enough to our speck to see it.' He hopes the other boards stood west and have been picked up. (They will never be heard of again in this world.)

Page 98

[Diary entry] Sunday, May 27, Latitude 16 degrees 0 minutes 5 seconds; longitude, by chronometer, 117 degrees 22 minutes. Our fourth Sunday! When we left the ship we reckoned on having about ten days' supplies, and now we hope to be able, by rigid economy, to make them last another week if possible.[1] Last night the sea was comparatively quiet, but the wind headed us off to about west-north-west, which has been about our course all day to-day. Another flying-fish came aboard last night, and one more to-day—both small ones. No birds. A booby is a great catch, and a good large one makes a small dinner for the fifteen of us—that is, of course, as dinners go in the 'Hornet's' long-boat. Tried this morning to read the full service to myself, with the Communion, but found it too much; am too weak, and get sleepy, and cannot give strict attention; so I put off half till this afternoon. I trust God will hear the prayers gone up for us at home to-day, and graciously answer them by sending us succour and help in this our season of deep distress.

The next day was 'a good day for seeing a ship.' But none was seen. The diarist 'still feels pretty well,' though very weak; his brother Henry 'bears up and keeps his strength the best of any on board.' 'I do not feel despondent at all, for I fully trust that the Almighty will hear our and the home prayers, and He who suffers not a sparrow to fall sees and cares for us, His creatures.'

Considering the situation and circumstances, the record for next day, May 29, is one which has a surprise in it for those dull people who think that nothing but medicines and doctors can cure the sick. A little starvation can really do more for the average sick man than can the best medicines and the best doctors. I do not mean a restricted diet; I mean total abstention from food for one or two days. I speak from experience; starvation has been my cold and fever doctor for fifteen years, and has accomplished a cure in all instances. The third mate told me in Honolulu that the 'Portyghee' had lain in his hammock for months, raising his family of abscesses and feeding like a cannibal. We have seen that in spite of dreadful weather, deprivation of sleep, scorching, drenching, and all manner of miseries, thirteen days of starvation 'wonderfully recovered' him. There were four sailors down sick when the ship was burned. Twenty-five days of pitiless starvation have followed, and now we have this curious record: 'All the men are hearty and strong; even the ones that were down sick are well, except poor Peter.' When I wrote an article some months ago urging temporary abstention from food as a remedy for an inactive appetite and for disease, I was accused of jesting, but I was in earnest. 'We are all wonderfully well and strong, comparatively speaking.' On this day the starvation regime drew its belt a couple of buckle-holes tighter: the bread ration was reduced from the usual piece of cracker the size of a silver dollar to the half of that, and one meal was abolished from the daily three. This will weaken the men physically, but if there are any diseases of an ordinary sort left in them they will disappear.

Page 99

Two quarts bread-crumbs left, one-third of a ham, three small cans of oysters, and twenty gallons of water.—Captain's Log.

The hopeful tone of the diaries is persistent. It is remarkable. Look at the map and see where the boat is: latitude 16 degrees 44 minutes, longitude 119 degrees 20 minutes. It is more than two hundred miles west of the Revillagigedo Islands, so they are quite out of the question against the trades, rigged as this boat is. The nearest land available for such a boat is the American group, six hundred and fifty miles away, westward; still, there is no note of surrender, none even of discouragement! Yet, May 30, 'we have now left: one can of oysters; three pounds of raisins; one can of soup; one-third of a ham; three pints of biscuit-crumbs.'

And fifteen starved men to live on it while they creep and crawl six hundred and fifty miles. 'Somehow I feel much encouraged by this change of course (west by north) which we have made to-day.' Six hundred and fifty miles on a hatful of provisions. Let us be thankful, even after thirty-two years, that they are mercifully ignorant of the fact that it isn't six hundred and fifty that they must creep on the hatful, but twenty-two hundred!

Isn't the situation romantic enough just as it stands? No. Providence added a startling detail: pulling an oar in that boat, for common seaman's wages, was a banished duke—Danish. We hear no more of him; just that mention, that is all, with the simple remark added that 'he is one of our best men'—a high enough compliment for a duke or any other man in those manhood-testing circumstances. With that little glimpse of him at his oar, and that fine word of praise, he vanishes out of our knowledge for all time. For all time, unless he should chance upon this note and reveal himself.

The last day of May is come. And now there is a disaster to report: think of it, reflect upon it, and try to understand how much it means, when you sit down with your family and pass your eye over your breakfast-table. Yesterday there were three pints of bread-crumbs; this morning the little bag is found open and some of the crumbs are missing. 'We dislike to suspect any one of such a rascally act, but there is no question that this grave crime has been committed. Two days will certainly finish the remaining morsels. God grant us strength to reach the American group!' The third mate told me in Honolulu that in these days the men remembered with bitterness that the 'Portyghee' had devoured twenty-two days' rations while he lay waiting to be transferred from the burning ship, and that now they cursed him and swore an oath that if it came to cannibalism he should be the first to suffer for the rest.

[Diary entry] The captain has lost his glasses, and therefore he cannot read our pocket prayer-books as much as I think he would like, though he is not familiar with them.



Page 100

Further of the captain: 'He is a good man, and has been most kind to us —almost fatherly. He says that if he had been offered the command of the ship sooner he should have brought his two daughters with him.' It makes one shudder yet to think how narrow an escape it was.

The two meals (rations) a day are as follows: fourteen raisins and a piece of cracker the size of a penny for tea; a gill of water, and a piece of ham and a piece of bread, each the size of a penny, for breakfast.—Captain's Log.

He means a penny in thickness as well as in circumference. Samuel Ferguson's diary says the ham was shaved 'about as thin as it could be cut.'

[Diary entry] June 1. Last night and to-day sea very high and cobbling, breaking over and making us all wet and cold. Weather squally, and there is no doubt that only careful management—with God's protecting care—preserved us through both the night and the day; and really it is most marvellous how every morsel that passes our lips is blessed to us. It makes me think daily of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Henry keeps up wonderfully, which is a great consolation to me. I somehow have great confidence, and hope that our afflictions will soon be ended, though we are running rapidly across the track of both outward and inward bound vessels, and away from them; our chief hope is a whaler, man-of-war, or some Australian ship. The isles we are steering for are put down in Bowditch, but on my map are said to be doubtful. God grant they may be there!

Hardest day yet.—Captain's Log.

Doubtful! It was worse than that. A week later they sailed straight over them.

[Diary entry] June 2. Latitude 18 degrees 9 minutes. Squally, cloudy, a heavy sea.... I cannot help thinking of the cheerful and comfortable time we had aboard the 'Hornet.'

Two days' scanty supplies left—ten rations of water apiece and a little morsel of bread. *But the sun shines and god is merciful.*
—Captain's Log.

[Diary entry] Sunday, June 3. Latitude 17 degrees 54 minutes. Heavy sea all night, and from 4 A.M. very wet, the sea breaking over us in frequent sluices, and soaking everything aft, particularly. All day the sea has been very high, and it is a wonder that we are not swamped. Heaven grant that it may go down this evening! Our suspense and condition are getting terrible. I managed this morning to crawl, more than step, to the forward end of the boat, and was surprised to find that I was so weak, especially in the legs and knees. The sun has been out again, and I have dried some things, and hope for a better night. June 4. Latitude 17 degrees 6 minutes, longitude 131 degrees 30 minutes. Shipped hardly any seas last night, and to-day the

Page 101

sea has gone down somewhat, although it is still too high for comfort, as we have an occasional reminder that water is wet. The sun has been out all day, and so we have had a good drying. I have been trying for the last ten or twelve days to get a pair of drawers dry enough to put on, and to-day at last succeeded. I mention this to show the state in which we have lived. If our chronometer is anywhere near right, we ought to see the American Isles to-morrow or next day. If there are not there, we have only the chance, for a few days, of a stray ship, for we cannot eke out the provisions more than five or six days longer, and our strength is failing very fast. I was much surprised to-day to note how my legs have wasted away above my knees: they are hardly thicker than my upper arm used to be. Still, I trust in God's infinite mercy, and feel sure he will do what is best for us. To survive, as we have done, thirty-two days in an open boat, with only about ten days' fair provisions for thirty-one men in the first place, and these divided twice subsequently, is more than mere unassisted *human* art and strength could have accomplished and endured.

Bread and raisins all gone.—Captain's Log.

Men growing dreadfully discontented, and awful grumbling and unpleasant talk is arising. God save us from all strife of men; and if we must die now, take us himself, and not embitter our bitter death still more.—Henry's Log.[Diary entry] June 5. Quiet night and pretty comfortable day, though our sail and block show signs of failing, and need taking down—which latter is something of a job, as it requires the climbing of the mast. We also had news from forward, there being discontent and some threatening complaints of unfair allowances, *etc.*, all as unreasonable as foolish; still, these things bid us be on our guard. I am getting miserably weak, but try to keep up the best I can. If we cannot find those isles we can only try to make north-west and get in the track of Sandwich Island-bound vessels, living as best we can in the meantime. To-day we changed to one meal, and that at about noon, with a small ration of water at 8 or 9 A.M., another at 12 A.M., and a third at 5 or 6 P.M.

Nothing left but a little piece of ham and a gill of water, all around.—Captain's Log.

They are down to one meal a day now—such as it is—and fifteen hundred miles to crawl yet! And now the horrors deepen, and, though they escaped actual mutiny, the attitude of the men became alarming. Now we seem to see why that curious incident happened, so long ago; I mean Cox's return, after he had been far away and out of sight several days in the chief mate's boat. If he had not come back the captain and the two young passengers might have been slain, now, by these sailors, who were becoming crazed through their sufferings.

Note secretly passed by Henry to his brother:

Page 102

Cox told me last night that there is getting to be a good deal of ugly talk among the men against the captain and us aft. They say that the captain is the cause of all; that he did not try to save the ship at all, nor to get provisions, and that even would not let the men put in some they had; and that partiality is shown us in apportioning our rations aft.... asked Cox the other day if he would starve first or eat human flesh. Cox answered he would starve.... then told him he would only be killing himself. If we do not find those islands we would do well to prepare for anything. is the loudest of all.

Reply:

We can depend on ..., I think, and ..., and Cox, can we not?

Second note:

I guess so, and very likely on ...; but there is no telling and Cox are certain. There is nothing definite said or hinted as yet, as I understand Cox; but starving men are the same as maniacs. It would be well to keep a watch on your pistol, so as to have it and the cartridges safe from theft.

Henry's Log, June 5. Dreadful forebodings. God spare us from all such horrors! Some of the men getting to talk a good deal. Nothing to write down. Heart very sad.

Henry's Log, June 6. Passed some sea-weed and something that looked like the trunk of an old tree, but no birds; beginning to be afraid islands not there. To-day it was said to the captain, in the hearing of all, that some of the men would not shrink, when a man was dead, from using the flesh, though they would not kill. Horrible! God give us all full use of our reason, and spare us from such things! 'From plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death, good Lord, deliver us!'[Diary entry] June 6. Latitude 16 degrees 30 minutes, longitude (chron.) 134 degrees. Dry night and wind steady enough to require no change in sail; but this A.M. an attempt to lower it proved abortive. First the third mate tried and got up to the block, and fastened a temporary arrangement to reeve the halyards through, but had to come down, weak and almost fainting, before finishing; then Joe tried, and after twice ascending, fixed it and brought down the block; but it was very exhausting work, and afterward he was good for nothing all day. The clue-iron which we are trying to make serve for the broken block works, however, very indifferently, and will, I am afraid, soon cut the rope. It is very necessary to get everything connected with the sail in good easy running order before we get too weak to do anything with it.

Only three meals left.—Captain's Log.

Page 103

[Diary entry] June 7. Latitude 16 degrees 35 minutes N., longitude 136 degrees 30 minutes W. Night wet and uncomfortable. To-day shows us pretty conclusively that the American Isles are not there, though we have had some signs that looked like them. At noon we decided to abandon looking any farther for them, and to-night haul a little more northerly, so as to get in the way of Sandwich Island vessels, which fortunately come down pretty well this way—say to latitude 19 degrees to 20 degrees to get the benefit of the trade-winds. Of course all the westing we have made is gain, and I hope the chronometer is wrong in our favour, for I do not see how any such delicate instrument can keep good time with the constant jarring and thumping we get from the sea. With the strong trade we have, I hope that a week from Sunday will put us in sight of the Sandwich Islands, if we are not safe by that time by being picked up.

It is twelve hundred miles to the Sandwich Islands; the provisions are virtually exhausted, but not the perishing diarist's pluck.

[Diary entry] My cough troubled me a good deal last night, and therefore I got hardly any sleep at all. Still, I make out pretty well, and should not complain. Yesterday the third mate mended the block, and this P.M. the sail, after some difficulty, was got down, and Harry got to the top of the mast and rove the halyards through after some hardship, so that it now works easy and well. This getting up the mast is no easy matter at any time with the sea we have, and is very exhausting in our present state. We could only reward Harry by an extra ration of water. We have made good time and course to-day. Heading her up, however, makes the boat ship seas and keeps us all wet; however, it cannot be helped. Writing is a rather precarious thing these times. Our meal to-day for the fifteen consists of half a can of 'soup and boullie'; the other half is reserved for to-morrow. Henry still keeps up grandly, and is a great favourite. God grant he may be spared.

A better feeling prevails among the men.—Captain's Log.

[Diary entry] June 9. Latitude 17 degrees 53 minutes. Finished to-day, I may say, our whole stack of provisions.[2] We have only left a lower end of a ham-bone, with some of the outer rind and skin on. In regard to the water, however, I think we have got ten days' supply at our present rate of allowance. This, with what nourishment we can get from boot-legs and such chewable matter, we hope will enable us to weather it out till we get to the Sandwich Islands, or, sailing in the meantime in the track of vessels thither bound, be picked up. My hope is in the latter, for in all human probability I cannot stand the other. Still, we have been marvellously protected, and God, I hope, will preserve us all in His own good time and way. The men are getting weaker, but are still quiet

Page 104

and orderly.[Diary entry] Sunday, June 10. Latitude 18 degrees 40 minutes, longitude 142 degrees 34 minutes. A pretty good night last night, with some wettings, and again another beautiful Sunday. I cannot but think how we should all enjoy it at home, and what a contrast is here! How terrible their suspense must begin to be! God grant that it may be relieved before very long, and He certainly seems to be with us in everything we do, and has preserved this boat miraculously; for since we left the ship we have sailed considerably over three thousand miles, which, taking into consideration our meagre stock of provisions, is almost unprecedented. As yet I do not feel the stint of food so much as I do that of water. Even Henry, who is naturally a good water-drinker, can save half of his allowance from time to time, when I cannot. My diseased throat may have something to do with that, however.

Nothing is now left which by any flattery can be called food. But they must manage somehow for five days more, for at noon they have still eight hundred miles to go. It is a race for life now.

This is no time for comments or other interruptions from me—every moment is valuable. I will take up the boy brother's diary at this point, and clear the seas before it and let it fly.

Henry Ferguson's log:

Sunday, June 10. Our ham-bone has given us a taste of food to-day, and we have got left a little meat and the remainder of the bone for tomorrow. Certainly, never was there such a sweet knuckle-one, or one that was so thoroughly appreciated I do not know that I feel any worse than I did last Sunday, notwithstanding the reduction of diet; and I trust that we may all have strength given us to sustain the sufferings and hardships of the coming week. We estimate that we are within seven hundred miles of the Sandwich Islands, and that our average, daily, is somewhat over a hundred miles, so that our hopes have some foundation in reason. Heaven send we may all live to see land! June 11. Ate the meat and rind of our ham-bone, and have the bone and the greasy cloth from around the ham left to eat to-morrow. God send us birds or fish, and let us not perish of hunger, or be brought to the dreadful alternative of feeding on human flesh! As I feel now, I do not think anything could persuade me; but you cannot tell what you will do when you are reduced by hunger and your mind wandering. I hope and pray we can make out to reach the islands before we get to this strait; but we have one or two desperate men aboard, though they are quiet enough now. *It is my firm trust and belief that we are going to be saved.*

All food gone.—Captain's Log.[3]

[Ferguson's log continues]

Page 105

June 12. Stiff breeze, and we are fairly flying—dead ahead of it—and toward the islands. Good hope, but the prospects of hunger are awful. Ate ham-bone to-day. It is the captain's birthday; he is fifty-four years old. June 13. The ham-rags are not quite all gone yet, and the boot-legs, we find, are very palatable after we get the salt out of them. A little smoke, I think, does some little good; but I don't know. June 14. Hunger does not pain us much, but we are dreadfully weak. Our water is getting frightfully low. God grant we may see land soon! *Nothing to eat*, but feel better than I did yesterday. Toward evening saw a magnificent rainbow—the *first we had seen*. Captain said, 'Cheer up, boys; it's a prophecy—it's the *bow of promise*!' June 15. God be for ever praised for His infinite mercy! *Land in sight!* rapidly neared it and soon were *sure* of it Two noble Kanakas swam out and took the boat ashore. We were joyfully received by two white men—Mr. Jones and his steward Charley—and a crowd of native men, women, and children. They treated us splendidly—aided us, and carried us up the bank, and brought us water, poi, bananas, and green coconuts; but the white men took care of us and prevented those who would have eaten too much from doing so. Everybody overjoyed to see us, and all sympathy expressed in faces, deeds, and words. We were then helped up to the house; and help we needed. Mr. Jones and Charley are the only white men here. Treated us splendidly. Gave us first about a teaspoonful of spirits in water, and then to each a cup of warm tea, with a little bread. Takes *every* care of us. Gave us later another cup of tea, and bread the same, and then let us go to rest. *It is the happiest day of my life....* God in His mercy has heard our prayer.... Everybody is so kind. Words cannot tell. June 16. Mr. Jones gave us a delightful bed, and we surely had a good night's rest; but not sleep—we were too happy to sleep; would keep the reality and not let it turn to a delusion—dreaded that we might wake up and find ourselves in the boat again.

It is an amazing adventure. There is nothing of its sort in history that surpasses it in impossibilities made possible. In one extraordinary detail—the survival of every person in the boat—it probably stands alone in the history of adventures of its kinds. Usually merely a part of a boat's company survive—officers, mainly, and other educated and tenderly-reared men, unused to hardship and heavy labour; the untrained, roughly-reared hard workers succumb. But in this case even the rudest and roughest stood the privations and miseries of the

Page 106

voyage almost as well as did the college-bred young brothers and the captain. I mean, physically. The minds of most of the sailors broke down in the fourth week and went to temporary ruin, but physically the endurance exhibited was astonishing. Those men did not survive by any merit of their own, of course, but by merit of the character and intelligence of the captain; they lived by the mastery of his spirit. Without him they would have been children without a nurse; they would have exhausted their provisions in a week, and their pluck would not have lasted even as long as the provisions.

The boat came near to being wrecked at the last. As it approached the shore the sail was let go, and came down with a run; then the captain saw that he was drifting swiftly toward an ugly reef, and an effort was made to hoist the sail again; but it could not be done; the men's strength was wholly exhausted; they could not even pull an oar. They were helpless, and death imminent. It was then that they were discovered by the two Kanakas who achieved the rescue. They swam out and manned the boat, and piloted her through a narrow and hardly noticeable break in the reef—the only break in it in a stretch of thirty-five miles! The spot where the landing was made was the only one in that stretch where footing could have been found on the shore; everywhere else precipices came sheer down into forty fathoms of water. Also, in all that stretch this was the only spot where anybody lived.

Within ten days after the landing all the men but one were up and creeping about. Properly, they ought to have killed themselves with the 'food' of the last few days—some of them, at any rate—men who had freighted their stomachs with strips of leather from old boots and with chips from the butter cask; a freitage which they did not get rid of by digestion, but by other means. The captain and the two passengers did not eat strips and chips, as the sailors did, but scraped the boot-leather and the wood, and made a pulp of the scrapings by moistening them with water. The third mate told me that the boots were old and full of holes; then added thoughtfully, 'but the holes digested the best.' Speaking of digestion, here is a remarkable thing, and worth nothing: during this strange voyage, and for a while afterward on shore, the bowels of some of the men virtually ceased from their functions; in some cases there was no action for twenty and thirty days, and in one case for forty-four! Sleeping also came to be rare. Yet the men did very well without it. During many days the captain did not sleep at all—twenty-one, I think, on one stretch.

Page 107

When the landing was made, all the men were successfully protected from over-eating except the 'Portyghee;' he escaped the watch and ate an incredible number of bananas: a hundred and fifty-two, the third mate said, but this was undoubtedly an exaggeration; I think it was a hundred and fifty-one. He was already nearly half full of leather; it was hanging out of his ears. (I do not state this on the third mate's authority, for we have seen what sort of a person he was; I state it on my own.) The 'Portyghee' ought to have died, of course, and even now it seems a pity that he didn't; but he got well, and as early as any of them; and all full of leather, too, the way he was, and butter-timber and handkerchiefs and bananas. Some of the men did eat handkerchiefs in those last days, also socks; and he was one of them.

It is to the credit of the men that they did not kill the rooster that crowed so gallantly mornings. He lived eighteen days, and then stood up and stretched his neck and made a brave, weak effort to do his duty once more, and died in the act. It is a picturesque detail; and so is that rainbow, too—the only one seen in the forty-three days,—raising its triumphal arch in the skies for the sturdy fighters to sail under to victory and rescue.

With ten days' provisions Captain Josiah Mitchell performed this memorable voyage of forty-three days and eight hours in an open boat, sailing four thousand miles in reality and thirty-three hundred and sixty by direct courses, and brought every man safe to land. A bright, simple-hearted, unassuming, plucky, and most companionable man. I walked the deck with him twenty-eight days—when I was not copying diaries,—and I remember him with reverent honour. If he is alive he is eighty-six years old now.

If I remember rightly, Samuel Ferguson died soon after we reached San Francisco. I do not think he lived to see his home again; his disease had been seriously aggravated by his hardships.

For a time it was hoped that the two quarter-boats would presently be heard of, but this hope suffered disappointment. They went down with all on board, no doubt, not even sparing that knightly chief mate.

The authors of the diaries allowed me to copy them exactly as they were written, and the extracts that I have given are without any smoothing over or revision. These diaries are finely modest and unaffected, and with unconscious and unintentional art they rise toward the climax with graduated and gathering force and swing and dramatic intensity; they sweep you along with a cumulative rush, and when the cry rings out at last, 'Land in sight!' your heart is in your mouth, and for a moment you think it is you that have been saved. The last two paragraphs are not improvable by anybody's art; they are literary gold; and their very pauses and uncompleted sentences have in them an eloquence not reachable by any words.

Page 108

The interest of this story is unquenchable; it is of the sort that time cannot decay. I have not looked at the diaries for thirty-two years, but I find that they have lost nothing in that time. Lost? They have gained; for by some subtle law all tragic human experiences gain in pathos by the perspective of time. We realize this when in Naples we stand musing over the poor Pompeian mother, lost in the historic storm of volcanic ashes eighteen centuries ago, who lies with her child gripped close to her breast, trying to save it, and whose despair and grief have been preserved for us by the fiery envelope which took her life but eternalized her form and features. She moves us, she haunts us, she stays in our thoughts for many days, we do not know why, for she is nothing to us, she has been nothing to anyone for eighteen centuries; whereas of the like case to-day we should say, 'Poor thing! it is pitiful,' and forget it in an hour.

[1] There are nineteen days of voyaging ahead yet.—M.T.

[2] Six days to sail yet, nevertheless.—M.T.

[3] It was at this time discovered that the crazed sailors had gotten the delusion that the captain had a million dollars in gold concealed aft, and they were conspiring to kill him and the two passengers and seize it. —M.T.

AT THE APPETITE-CURE

This establishment's name is Hochberghaus. It is in Bohemia, a short day's journey from Vienna, and being in the Austrian Empire is of course a health resort. The empire is made up of health resorts; it distributes health to the whole world. Its waters are all medicinal. They are bottled and sent throughout the earth; the natives themselves drink beer. This is self-sacrifice apparently—but outlanders who have drunk Vienna beer have another idea about it. Particularly the Pilsner which one gets in a small cellar up an obscure back lane in the First Bezirk—the name has escaped me, but the place is easily found: You inquire for the Greek church; and when you get to it, go right along by—the next house is that little beer-mill. It is remote from all traffic and all noise; it is always Sunday there. There are two small rooms, with low ceilings supported by massive arches; the arches and ceilings are whitewashed, otherwise the rooms would pass for cells in the dungeons of a bastille. The furniture is plain and cheap, there is no ornamentation anywhere; yet it is a heaven for the self-sacrificers, for the beer there is incomparable; there is nothing like it elsewhere in the world. In the first room you will find twelve or fifteen ladies and gentlemen of civilian quality; in the other one a dozen generals and ambassadors. One may live in Vienna many months and not hear of this place; but having once heard of it and sampled it, the sampler will afterward infest it.

Page 109

However, this is all incidental—a mere passing note of gratitude for blessings received—it has nothing to do with my subject. My subject is health resorts. All unhealthy people ought to domicile themselves in Vienna, and use that as a base, making flights from time to time to the outlying resorts, according to need. A flight to Marienbad to get rid of fat; a flight to Carlsbad to get rid of rheumatism; a flight to Kalteneutgeben to take the water cure and get rid of the rest of the diseases. It is all so handy. You can stand in Vienna and toss a biscuit into Kaltenleutgeben, with a twelve-inch gun. You can run out thither at any time of the day; you go by phenomenally slow trains, and yet inside of an hour you have exchanged the glare and swelter of the city for wooded hills, and shady forest paths, and soft cool airs, and the music of birds, and the repose and the peace of paradise.

And there are plenty of other health resorts at your service and convenient to get at from Vienna; charming places, all of them; Vienna sits in the centre of a beautiful world of mountains with now and then a lake and forests; in fact, no other city is so fortunately situated.

There is an abundance of health resorts, as I have said. Among them this place—Hochberghaus. It stands solitary on the top of a densely wooded mountain, and is a building of great size. It is called the Appetite Anstalt, and people who have lost their appetites come here to get them restored. When I arrived I was taken by Professor Haimberger to his consulting-room and questioned:

‘It is six o’clock. When did you eat last?’

‘At noon.’

‘What did you eat?’

‘Next to nothing.’

‘What was on the table?’

‘The usual things.’

‘Chops, chickens, vegetables, and so on?’

‘Yes; but don’t mention them—I can’t bear it.’

‘Are you tired of them?’

‘Oh, utterly. I wish I might never hear of them again.’

‘The mere sight of food offends you, does it?’

'More, it revolts me.'

The doctor considered awhile, then got out a long menu and ran his eye slowly down it.

'I think,' said he, 'that what you need to eat is—but here, choose for yourself.'

I glanced at the list, and my stomach threw a hand-spring. Of all the barbarous lay-outs that were ever contrived, this was the most atrocious. At the top stood 'tough, underdone, overdue tripe, garnished with garlic;' half-way down the bill stood 'young cat; old cat; scrambled cat;' at the bottom stood 'sailor-boots, softened with tallow—served raw.' The wide intervals of the bill were packed with dishes calculated to gag a cannibal. I said:

'Doctor, it is not fair to joke over so serious a case as mine. I came here to get an appetite, not to throw away the remnant that's left.'

He said gravely: 'I am not joking; why should I joke?'

Page 110

'But I can't eat these horrors.'

'Why not?'

He said it with a naivete that was admirable, whether it was real or assumed.

'Why not? Because—why, doctor, for months I have seldom been able to endure anything more substantial than omelettes and custards. These unspeakable dishes of yours—'

'Oh, you will come to like them. They are very good. And you must eat them. It is a rule of the place, and is strict. I cannot permit any departure from it.'

I said smiling: 'Well, then, doctor, you will have to permit the departure of the patient. I am going.'

He looked hurt, and said in a way which changed the aspect of things:

'I am sure you would not do me that injustice. I accepted you in good faith—you will not shame that confidence. This appetite-cure is my whole living. If you should go forth from it with the sort of appetite which you now have, it could become known, and you can see, yourself, that people would say my cure failed in your case and hence can fail in other cases. You will not go; you will not do me this hurt.'

I apologised and said I would stay.

'That is right. I was sure you would not go; it would take the food from my family's mouths.'

'Would they mind that? Do they eat these fiendish things?'

'They? My family?' His eyes were full of gentle wonder. 'Of course not.'

'Oh, they don't! Do you?'

'Certainly not.'

'I see. It's another case of a physician who doesn't take his own medicine.'

'I don't need it. It is six hours since you lunched. Will you have supper now—or later?'

'I am not hungry, but now is as good a time as any, and I would like to be done with it and have it off my mind. It is about my usual time, and regularity is commanded by all the authorities. Yes, I will try to nibble a little now—I wish a light horsewhipping would answer instead.'

The professor handed me that odious menu.

'Choose—or will you have it later?'

'Oh, dear me, show me to my room; I forgot your hard rule.'

'Wait just a moment before you finally decide. There is another rule. If you choose now, the order will be filled at once; but if you wait, you will have to await my pleasure. You cannot get a dish from that entire bill until I consent.'

'All right. Show me to my room, and send the cook to bed; there is not going to be any hurry.'

The professor took me up one flight of stairs and showed me into a most inviting and comfortable apartment consisting of parlour, bedchamber, and bathroom.

The front windows looked out over a far-reaching spread of green glades and valleys, and tumbled hills clothed with forests—a noble solitude unvexed by the fussy world. In the parlour were many shelves filled with books. The professor said he would now leave me to myself; and added:

Page 111

'Smoke and read as much as you please, drink all the water you like. When you get hungry, ring and give your order, and I will decide whether it shall be filled or not. Yours is a stubborn, bad case, and I think the first fourteen dishes in the bill are each and all too delicate for its needs. I ask you as a favour to restrain yourself and not call for them.'

'Restrain myself, is it? Give yourself no uneasiness. You are going to save money by me. The idea of coaxing a sick man's appetite back with this buzzard-fare is clear insanity.'

I said it with bitterness, for I felt outraged by this calm, cold talk over these heartless new engines of assassination. The doctor looked grieved, but not offended. He laid the bill of fare of the commode at my bed's head, 'so that it would be handy,' and said:

'Yours is not the worst case I have encountered, by any means; still it is a bad one and requires robust treatment; therefore I shall be gratified if you will restrain yourself and skip down to No. 15 and begin with that.'

Then he left me and I began to undress, for I was dog-tired and very sleepy. I slept fifteen hours and woke up finely refreshed at ten the next morning. Vienna coffee! It was the first thing I thought of—that unapproachable luxury—that sumptuous coffee-house coffee, compared with which all other European coffee and all American hotel coffee is mere fluid poverty. I rang, and ordered it; also Vienna bread, that delicious invention. The servant spoke through the wicket in the door and said—but you know what he said. He referred me to the bill of fare. I allowed him to go—I had no further use for him.

After the bath I dressed and started for a walk, and got as far as the door. It was locked on the outside. I rang, and the servant came and explained that it was another rule. The seclusion of the patient was required until after the first meal. I had not been particularly anxious to get out before; but it was different now. Being locked in makes a person wishful to get out. I soon began to find it difficult to put in the time. At two o'clock I had been twenty-six hours without food. I had been growing hungry for some time; I recognised that I was not only hungry now, but hungry with a strong adjective in front of it. Yet I was not hungry enough to face the bill of fare.

I must put in the time somehow. I would read and smoke. I did it; hour by hour. The books were all of one breed—shipwrecks; people lost in deserts; people shut up in caved-in mines; people starving in besieged cities. I read about all the revolting dishes that ever famishing men had stayed their hunger with. During the first hours these things nauseated me: hours followed in which they did not so affect me; still other hours followed in which I found myself smacking my lips over some tolerably infernal messes. When I had been without food forty-five hours I ran eagerly to the bell and ordered the

second dish in the bill, which was a sort of dumplings containing a compost made of caviar and tar.

Page 112

It was refused me. During the next fifteen hours I visited the bell every now and then and ordered a dish that was further down the list. Always a refusal. But I was conquering prejudice after prejudice, right along; I was making sure progress; I was creeping up on No. 15 with deadly certainty, and my heart beat faster and faster, my hopes rose higher and higher.

At last when food had not passed my lips for sixty hours, victory was mine, and I ordered No. 15:

'Soft-boiled spring chicken—in the egg; six dozen, hot and fragrant!'

In fifteen minutes it was there; and the doctor along with it, rubbing his hands with joy. He said with great excitement:

'It's a cure, it's a cure! I knew I could do it. Dear sir, my grand system never failed—never. You've got your appetite back—you know you have; say it and make me happy.'

'Bring on your carrion—I can eat anything in the bill!'

'Oh, this is noble, this is splendid—but I knew I could do it, the system never fails. How are the birds?'

'Never was anything so delicious in the world; and yet as a rule I don't care for game. But don't interrupt me, don't—I can't spare my mouth, I really can't.'

Then the doctor said:

'The cure is perfect. There is no more doubt nor danger. Let the poultry alone; I can trust you with a beefsteak, now.'

The beefsteak came—as much as a basketful of it—with potatoes, and Vienna bread and coffee; and I ate a meal then that was worth all the costly preparation I had made for it. And dripped tears of gratitude into the gravy all the time—gratitude to the doctor for putting a little plain common-sense into me when I had been empty of it so many, many years.

II

Thirty years ago Haimberger went off on a long voyage in a sailing-ship. There were fifteen passengers on board. The table-fare was of the regulation pattern of the day: At 7 in the morning, a cup of bad coffee in bed; at 9, breakfast: bad coffee, with condensed milk; soggy rolls, crackers, salt fish; at 1 P.M., luncheon: cold tongue, cold ham, cold corned beef, soggy cold rolls, crackers; 5 P.M., dinner: thick pea soup, salt fish, hot corned beef and sour kraut, boiled pork and beans, pudding; 9 till 11 P.M.,

supper: tea, with condensed milk, cold tongue, cold ham, pickles, sea-biscuit, pickled oysters, pickled pigs' feet, grilled bones, golden buck.

At the end of the first week eating had ceased, nibbling had taken its place. The passengers came to the table, but it was partly to put in the time, and partly because the wisdom of the ages commanded them to be regular in their meals. They were tired of the coarse and monotonous fare, and took no interest in it, had no appetite for it. All day and every day they roamed the ship half hungry, plagued by their gnawing stomachs, moody, untalkative, miserable. Among them were three confirmed dyspeptics. These became shadows in the course of three weeks. There was also a bed-ridden invalid; he lived on boiled rice; he could not look at the regular dishes.

Page 113

Now came shipwrecks and life in open boats, with the usual paucity of food. Provisions ran lower and lower. The appetites improved, then. When nothing was left but raw ham and the ration of that was down to two ounces a day per person, the appetites were perfect. At the end of fifteen days the dyspeptics, the invalid, and the most delicate ladies in the party were chewing sailor-boots in ecstasy, and only complaining because the supply of them was limited. Yet these were the same people who couldn't endure the ship's tedious corned beef and sour kraut and other crudities. They were rescued by an English vessel. Within ten days the whole fifteen were in as good condition as they had been when the shipwreck occurred.

'They had suffered no damage by their adventure,' said the professor.

'Do you note that?'

'Yes.'

'Do you note it well?'

'Yes—I think I do.'

'But you don't. You hesitate. You don't rise to the importance of it. I will say it again—with emphasis—not one of them suffered any damage.'

'Now I begin to see. Yes, it was indeed remarkable.'

'Nothing of the kind. It was perfectly natural. There was no reason why they should suffer damage. They were undergoing Nature's Appetite-Cure, the best and wisest in the world.'

'Is that where you got your idea?'

'That is where I got it.'

'It taught those people a valuable lesson.'

'What makes you think that?'

'Why shouldn't I? You seem to think it taught you one.'

'That is nothing to the point. I am not a fool.'

'I see. Were they fools?'

'They were human beings.'

'Is it the same thing?'

'Why do you ask? You know it yourself. As regards his health—and the rest of the things—the average man is what his environment and his superstitions have made him; and their function is to make him an ass. He can't add up three or four new circumstances together and perceive what they mean; it is beyond him. He is not capable of observing for himself; he has to get everything at second-hand. If what are miscalled the lower animals were as silly as man is, they would all perish from the earth in a year.'

'Those passengers learned no lesson, then?'

'Not a sign of it. They went to their regular meals in the English ship, and pretty soon they were nibbling again—nibbling, appetiteless, disgusted with the food, moody, miserable, half hungry, their outraged stomachs cursing and swearing and whining and supplicating all day long. And in vain, for they were the stomachs of fools.'

'Then, as I understand it, your scheme is—'

'Quite simple. Don't eat until you are hungry. If the food fails to taste good, fails to satisfy you, rejoice you, comfort you, don't eat again until you are very hungry. Then it will rejoice you—and do you good, too.'

Page 114

‘And I am to observe no regularity, as to hours?’

‘When you are conquering a bad appetite—no. After it is conquered, regularity is no harm, so long as the appetite remains good. As soon as the appetite wavers, apply the corrective again—which is starvation, long or short according to the needs of the case.’

‘The best diet, I suppose—I mean the wholesomest—’

‘All diets are wholesome. Some are wholesomer than others, but all the ordinary diets are wholesome enough for the people who use them. Whether the food be fine or coarse it will taste good and it will nourish if a watch be kept upon the appetite and a little starvation introduced every time it weakens. Nansen was used to fine fare, but when his meals were restricted to bear-meat months at a time he suffered no damage and no discomfort, because his appetite was kept at par through the difficulty of getting his bear-meat regularly.’

‘But doctors arrange carefully considered and delicate diets for invalids.’

‘They can’t help it. The invalid is full of inherited superstitions and won’t starve himself. He believes it would certainly kill him.’

‘It would weaken him, wouldn’t it?’

‘Nothing to hurt. Look at the invalids in our shipwreck. They lived fifteen days on pinches of raw ham, a suck at sailor-boots, and general starvation. It weakened them, but it didn’t hurt them. It put them in fine shape to eat heartily of hearty food and build themselves up to a condition of robust health. But they did not know enough to profit by that; they lost their opportunity; they remained invalids; it served them right. Do you know the trick that the health-resort doctors play?’

‘What is it?’

‘My system disguised—covert starvation. Grape-cure, bath-cure, mud-cure—it is all the same. The grape and the bath and the mud make a show and do a trifle of the work—the real work is done by the surreptitious starvation. The patient accustomed to four meals and late hours—at both ends of the day—now consider what he has to do at a health resort. He gets up at 6 in the morning. Eats one egg. Tramps up and down a promenade two hours with the other fools. Eats a butterfly. Slowly drinks a glass of filtered sewage that smells like a buzzard’s breath. Promenades another two hours, but alone; if you speak to him he says anxiously, “My water!—I am walking off my water!—please don’t interrupt,” and goes stumping along again. Eats a candied roseleaf. Lies at rest in the silence and solitude of his room for hours; mustn’t read, mustn’t smoke. The doctor comes and feels of his heart, now, and his pulse, and thumps his breast and his back and his stomach, and listens for results through a penny flageolet; then orders



the man's bath—half a degree, Reaumur, cooler than yesterday. After the bath another egg. A glass of sewage at three or four in the afternoon, and promenade solemnly with the other freaks. Dinner at 6—half a doughnut and a cup of tea. Walk again. Half-past 8, supper—more butterfly; at 9, to bed. Six weeks of this regime—think of it. It starves a man out and puts him in splendid condition. It would have the same effect in London, New York, Jericho—anywhere.'

Page 115

'How long does it take to put a person in condition here?'

'It ought to take but a day or two; but in fact it takes from one to six weeks, according to the character and mentality of the patient.'

'How is that?'

'Do you see that crowd of women playing football, and boxing, and jumping fences yonder? They have been here six or seven weeks. They were spectral poor weaklings when they came. They were accustomed to nibbling at dainties and delicacies at set hours four times a day, and they had no appetite for anything. I questioned them, and then locked them into their rooms—the frailest ones to starve nine or ten hours, the others twelve or fifteen. Before long they began to beg; and indeed they suffered a good deal. They complained of nausea, headache, and so on. It was good to see them eat when the time was up. They could not remember when the devouring of a meal had afforded them such rapture—that was their word. Now, then, that ought to have ended their cure, but it didn't. They were free to go to any meals in the house, and they chose their accustomed four. Within a day or two I had to interfere. Their appetites were weakening. I made them knock out a meal. That set them up again. Then they resumed the four. I begged them to learn to knock out a meal themselves, without waiting for me. Up to a fortnight ago they couldn't; they really hadn't manhood enough; but they were gaining it, and now I think they are safe. They drop out a meal every now and then of their own accord. They are in fine condition now, and they might safely go home, I think, but their confidence is not quite perfect yet, so they are waiting awhile.'

'Other cases are different?'

'Oh yes. Sometimes a man learns the whole trick in a week. Learns to regulate his appetite and keep it in perfect order. Learns to drop out a meal with frequency and not mind it.'

'But why drop the entire meal out? Why not a part of it?'

'It's a poor device, and inadequate. If the stomach doesn't call vigorously—with a shout, as you may say—it is better not to pester it but just give it a real rest. Some people can eat more meals than others, and still thrive. There are all sorts of people, and all sorts of appetites. I will show you a man presently who was accustomed to nibble at eight meals a day. It was beyond the proper gait of his appetite by two. I have got him down to six a day, now, and he is all right, and enjoys life. How many meals to you affect per day?'

'Formerly—for twenty-two years—a meal and a half; during the past two years, two and a half: coffee and a roll at 9, luncheon at 1, dinner at 7.30 or 8.'



'Formerly a meal and a half—that is, coffee and a roll at 9, dinner in the evening, nothing between—is that it?

'Yes.'

'Why did you add a meal?'

'It was the family's idea. They were uneasy. They thought I was killing myself.'

Page 116

'You found a meal and a half per day enough, all through the twenty-two years?'

'Plenty.'

'Your present poor condition is due to the extra meal. Drop it out. You are trying to eat oftener than your stomach demands. You don't gain, you lose. You eat less food now, in a day, on two and a half meals, than you formerly ate on one and a half.'

'True—a good deal less; for in those olds days my dinner was a very sizeable thing.'

'Put yourself on a single meal a day, now—dinner—for a few days, till you secure a good, sound, regular, trustworthy appetite, then take to your one and a half permanently, and don't listen to the family any more. When you have any ordinary ailment, particularly of a feverish sort, eat nothing at all during twenty-four hours. That will cure it. It will cure the stubbornest cold in the head, too. No cold in the head can survive twenty-four hours' unmodified starvation.'

I know it. I have proved it many a time.

CONCERNING THE JEWS

Some months ago I published a magazine article^[1] descriptive of a remarkable scene in the Imperial Parliament in Vienna. Since then I have received from Jews in America several letters of inquiry. They were difficult letters to answer, for they were not very definite. But at last I have received a definite one. It is from a lawyer, and he really asks the questions which the other writers probably believed they were asking. By help of this text I will do the best I can to publicly answer this correspondent, and also the others—at the same time apologising for having failed to reply privately. The lawyer's letter reads as follows:

'I have read "Stirring Times in Austria." One point in particular is of vital import to not a few thousand people, including myself, being a point about which I have often wanted to address a question to some disinterested person. The show of military force in the Austrian Parliament, which precipitated the riots, was not introduced by any Jew. No Jew was a member of that body. No Jewish question was involved in the Ausgleich or in the language proposition. No Jew was insulting anybody. In short, no Jew was doing any mischief toward anybody whatsoever. In fact, the Jews were the only ones of the nineteen different races in Austria which did not have a party—they are absolute non-participants. Yet in your article you say that in the rioting which followed, all classes of people were unanimous only on one thing, viz., in being against the Jews. Now, will you kindly tell me why, in your judgment, the Jews have thus ever been, and are even now, in these days of supposed intelligence, the butt of baseless, vicious animosities? I dare

say that for centuries there has been no more quiet, undisturbing, and well-behaving citizen, as a class, than that same Jew. It seems to

Page 117

me that ignorance and fanaticism cannot alone account for these horrible and unjust persecutions. 'Tell me, therefore, from your vantage point of cold view, what in your mind is the cause. Can American Jews do anything to correct it either in America or abroad? Will it ever come to an end? Will a Jew be permitted to live honestly, decently, and peaceably like the rest of mankind? What has become of the Golden Rule?'

I will begin by saying that if I thought myself prejudiced against the Jew, I should hold it fairest to leave this subject to a person not crippled in that way. But I think I have no such prejudice. A few years ago a Jew observed to me that there was no uncourteous reference to his people in my books, and asked how it happened. It happened because the disposition was lacking. I am quite sure that (bar one) I have no race prejudices, and I think I have no colour prejudices nor caste prejudices nor creed prejudices. Indeed, I know it. I can stand any society. All that I care to know is that a man is a human being—that is enough for me; he can't be any worse. I have no special regard for Satan; but I can at least claim that I have no prejudice against him. It may even be that I lean a little his way, on account of his not having a fair show. All religions issue Bibles against him, and say the most injurious things about him, but we never hear his side. We have none but the evidence for the prosecution, and yet we have rendered the verdict. To my mind, this is irregular. It is un-English; it is un-American; it is French. Without this precedent Dreyfus could not have been condemned. Of course Satan has some kind of a case, it goes without saying. It may be a poor one, but that is nothing; that can be said about any of us. As soon as I can get at the facts I will undertake his rehabilitation myself, if I can find an unpolitic publisher. It is a thing which we ought to be willing to do for any one who is under a cloud. We may not pay Satan reverence, for that would be indiscreet, but we can at least respect his talents. A person who has during all time maintained the imposing position of spiritual head of four-fifths of the human race, and political head of the whole of it, must be granted the possession of executive abilities of the loftiest order. In his large presence the other popes and politicians shrink to midges for the microscope. I would like to see him. I would rather see him and shake him by the tail than any other member of the European Concert. In the present paper I shall allow myself to use the word Jew as if it stood for both religion and race. It is handy; and, besides, that is what the term means to the general world.

In the above letter one notes these points:

1. The Jew is a well-behaved citizen.
2. Can ignorance and fanaticism alone account for his unjust treatment?
3. Can Jews do anything to improve the situation?

Page 118

4. The Jews have no party; they are non-participants.
5. Will the persecution ever come to an end?
6. What has become of the Golden Rule?

Point No. 1.—We must grant proposition No. 1, for several sufficient reasons. The Jew is not a disturber of the peace of any country. Even his enemies will concede that. He is not a loafer, he is not a sot, he is not noisy, he is not a brawler nor a rioter, he is not quarrelsome. In the statistics of crime his presence is conspicuously rare—in all countries. With murder and other crimes of violence he has but little to do: he is a stranger to the hangman. In the police court's daily long roll of 'assaults' and 'drunk and disorderlies' his name seldom appears. That the Jewish home is a home in the truest sense is a fact which no one will dispute. The family is knitted together by the strongest affections; its members show each other every due respect; and reverence for the elders is an inviolate law of the house. The Jew is not a burden on the charities of the state nor of the city; these could cease from their functions without affecting him. When he is well enough, he works; when he is incapacitated, his own people take care of him. And not in a poor and stingy way, but with a fine and large benevolence. His race is entitled to be called the most benevolent of all the races of men. A Jewish beggar is not impossible, perhaps; such a thing may exist, but there are few men that can say they have seen that spectacle. The Jew has been staged in many uncomplimentary forms, but, so far as I know, no dramatist has done him the injustice to stage him as a beggar. Whenever a Jew has real need to beg, his people save him from the necessity of doing it. The charitable institutions of the Jews are supported by Jewish money, and amply. The Jews make no noise about it; it is done quietly; they do not nag and pester and harass us for contributions; they give us peace, and set us an example—an example which we have not found ourselves able to follow; for by nature we are not free givers, and have to be patiently and persistently hunted down in the interest of the unfortunate.

These facts are all on the credit side of the proposition that the Jew is a good and orderly citizen. Summed up, they certify that he is quiet, peaceable, industrious, unaddicted to high crimes and brutal dispositions; that his family life is commendable; that he is not a burden upon public charities; that he is not a beggar; that in benevolence he is above the reach of competition. These are the very quintessentials of good citizenship. If you can add that he is as honest as the average of his neighbours—But I think that question is affirmatively answered by the fact that he is a successful business man. The basis of successful business is honesty; a business cannot thrive where the parties to it cannot trust each other. In the matter of numbers the Jew counts for little in the overwhelming population of New York; but that his honest counts for much is guaranteed by the fact that the immense wholesale business of Broadway, from the Battery to Union Square, is substantially in his hands.

Page 119

I suppose that the most picturesque example in history of a trader's trust in his fellow-trader was one where it was not Christian trusting Christian, but Christian trusting Jew. That Hessian Duke who used to sell his subjects to George III. to fight George Washington with got rich at it; and by-and-by, when the wars engendered by the French Revolution made his throne too warm for him, he was obliged to fly the country. He was in a hurry, and had to leave his earnings behind—\$9,000,000. He had to risk the money with some one without security. He did not select a Christian, but a Jew—a Jew of only modest means, but of high character; a character so high that it left him lonesome—Rothschild of Frankfort. Thirty years later, when Europe had become quiet and safe again, the Duke came back from overseas, and the Jew returned the loan, with interest added.[2]

The Jew has his other side. He has some discreditable ways, though he has not a monopoly of them, because he cannot get entirely rid of vexatious Christian competition. We have seen that he seldom transgresses the laws against crimes of violence. Indeed, his dealings with courts are almost restricted to matters connected with commerce. He has a reputation for various small forms of cheating, and for practising oppressive usury, and for burning himself out to get the insurance, and for arranging cunning contracts which leave him an exit but lock the other man in, and for smart evasions which find him safe and comfortable just within the strict letter of the law, when court and jury know very well that he has violated the spirit of it. He is a frequent and faithful and capable officer in the civil service, but he is charged with an unpatriotic disinclination to stand by the flag as a soldier—like the Christian Quaker.

Now if you offset these discreditable features by the creditable ones summarised in a preceding paragraph beginning with the words, 'These facts are all on the credit side,' and strike a balance, what must the verdict be? This, I think: that, the merits and demerits being fairly weighed and measured on both sides, the Christian can claim no superiority over the Jew in the matter of good citizenship.

Yet in all countries, from the dawn of history, the Jew has been persistently and implacably hated, and with frequency persecuted.

Point No. 2.—'Can fanaticism alone account for this?'

Years ago I used to think that it was responsible for nearly all of it, but latterly I have come to think that this was an error. Indeed, it is now my conviction that it is responsible for hardly any of it.

In this connection I call to mind Genesis, chapter xlvii.

Page 120

We have all thoughtfully—or unthoughtfully—read the pathetic story of the years of plenty and the years of famine in Egypt, and how Joseph, with that opportunity, made a corner in broken hearts, and the crusts of the poor, and human liberty—a corner whereby he took a nation's money all away, to the last penny; took a nation's live stock all away, to the last hoof; took a nation's land away, to the last acre; then took the nation itself, buying it for bread, man by man, woman by woman, child by child, till all were slaves; a corner which took everything, left nothing; a corner so stupendous that, by comparison with it, the most gigantic corners in subsequent history are but baby things, for it dealt in hundreds of millions of bushels, and its profits were reckonable by hundreds of millions of dollars, and it was a disaster so crushing that its effects have not wholly disappeared from Egypt to-day, more than three thousand years after the event.

Is it presumably that the eye of Egypt was upon Joseph the foreign Jew all this time? I think it likely. Was it friendly? We must doubt it. Was Joseph establishing a character for his race which would survive long in Egypt? and in time would his name come to be familiarly used to express that character—like Shylock's? It is hardly to be doubted. Let us remember that this was centuries before the Crucifixion?

I wish to come down eighteen hundred years later and refer to a remark made by one of the Latin historians. I read it in a translation many years ago, and it comes back to me now with force. It was alluding to a time when people were still living who could have seen the Saviour in the flesh. Christianity was so new that the people of Rome had hardly heard of it, and had but confused notions of what it was. The substance of the remark was this: Some Christians were persecuted in Rome through error, they being 'mistaken for Jews.'

The meaning seems plain. These pagans had nothing against Christians, but they were quite ready to persecute Jews. For some reason or other they hated a Jew before they even knew what a Christian was. May I not assume, then, that the persecution of Jews is a thing which antedates Christianity and was not born of Christianity? I think so. What was the origin of the feeling?

When I was a boy, in the back settlements of the Mississippi Valley, where a gracious and beautiful Sunday school simplicity and practicality prevailed, the 'Yankee' (citizen of the New England States) was hated with a splendid energy. But religion had nothing to do with it. In a trade, the Yankee was held to be about five times the match of the Westerner. His shrewdness, his insight, his judgment, his knowledge, his enterprise, and his formidable cleverness in applying these forces were frankly confessed, and most competently cursed.

In the cotton States, after the war, the simple and ignorant Negroes made the crops for the white planter on shares. The Jew came down in force, set up shop on the plantation, supplied all the negro's wants on credit, and at the end of the season was

proprietor of the negro's share of the present crop and of part of his share of the next one. Before long, the whites detested the Jew, and it is doubtful if the negro loved him.

Page 121

The Jew is begin legislated out of Russia. The reason is not concealed. The movement was instituted because the Christian peasant and villager stood no chance against his commercial abilities. He was always ready to lend money on a crop, and sell vodka and other necessities of life on credit while the crop was growing. When settlement day came he owned the crop; and next year or year after he owned the farm, like Joseph.

In the dull and ignorant English of John's time everybody got into debt to the Jew. He gathered all lucrative enterprises into his hands; he was the king of commerce; he was ready to be helpful in all profitable ways; he even financed crusades for the rescue of the Sepulchre. To wipe out his account with the nation and restore business to its natural and incompetent channels he had to be banished the realm.

For the like reasons Spain had to banish him four hundred years ago, and Austria about a couple of centuries later.

In all the ages Christian Europe has been oblige to curtail his activities. If he entered upon a mechanical trade, the Christian had to retire from it. If he set up as a doctor, he was the best one, and he took the business. If he exploited agriculture, the other farmers had to get at something else. Since there was no way to successfully compete with him in any vocation, the law had to step in and save the Christian from the poor-house. Trade after trade was taken away from the Jew by statute till practically none was left. He was forbidden to engage in agriculture; he was forbidden to practise law; he was forbidden to practise medicine, except among Jews; he was forbidden the handicrafts. Even the seats of learning and the schools of science had to be closed against this tremendous antagonist. Still, almost bereft of employments, he found ways to make money, even ways to get rich. Also ways to invest his takings well, for usury was not denied him. In the hard conditions suggested, the Jew without brains could not survive, and the Jew with brains had to keep them in good training and well sharpened up, or starve. Ages of restriction to the one tool which the law was not able to take from him—his brain—have made that tool singularly competent; ages of compulsory disuse of his hands have atrophied them, and he never uses them now. This history has a very, very commercial look, a most sordid and practical commercial look, the business aspect of a Chinese cheap-labour crusade. Religious prejudices may account for one part of it, but not for the other nine.

Protestants have persecuted Catholics, but they did not take their livelihoods away from them. The Catholics have persecuted the Protestants with bloody and awful bitterness, but they never closed agriculture and the handicrafts against them. Why was that? That has the candid look of genuine religious persecution, not a trade-union boycott in a religious dispute.

Page 122

The Jews are harried and obstructed in Austria and Germany, and lately in France; but England and America give them an open field and yet survive. Scotland offers them an unembarrassed field too, but there are not many takers. There are a few Jews in Glasgow, and one in Aberdeen; but that is because they can't earn enough to get away. The Scotch pay themselves that compliment, but it is authentic.

I feel convinced that the Crucifixion has not much to do with the world's attitude toward the Jew; that the reasons for it are older than that event, as suggested by Egypt's experience and by Rome's regret for having persecuted an unknown quantity called a Christian, under the mistaken impression that she was merely persecuting a Jew. Merely a Jew—a skinned eel who was used to it, presumably. I am persuaded that in Russia, Austria, and Germany nine-tenths of the hostility to the Jew comes from the average Christian's inability to compete successfully with the average Jew in business—in either straight business or the questionable sort.

In Berlin, a few years ago, I read a speech which frankly urged the expulsion of the Jews from Germany; and the agitator's reason was as frank as his proposition. It was this: that eighty-five percent of the successful lawyers of Berlin were Jews, and that about the same percentage of the great and lucrative businesses of all sorts in Germany were in the hands of the Jewish race! Isn't it an amazing confession? It was but another way of saying that in a population of 48,000,000, of whom only 500,000 were registered as Jews, eighty-five per cent of the brains and honesty of the whole was lodged in the Jews. I must insist upon the honesty—it is an essential of successful business, taken by and large. Of course it does not rule out rascals entirely, even among Christians, but it is a good working rule, nevertheless. The speaker's figures may have been inexact, but the motive of persecution stands out as clear as day.

The man claimed that in Berlin the banks, the newspapers, the theatres, the great mercantile, shipping, mining, and manufacturing interests, the big army and city contracts, the tramways, and pretty much all other properties of high value, and also the small businesses, were in the hands of the Jews. He said the Jew was pushing the Christian to the wall all along the line; that it was all a Christian could do to scrape together a living; and that the Jew must be banished, and soon—there was no other way of saving the Christian. Here in Vienna, last autumn, an agitator said that all these disastrous details were true of Austria-Hungary also; and in fierce language he demanded the expulsion of the Jews. When politicians come out without a blush and read the baby act in this frank way, unrebuked, it is a very good indication that they have a market back of them, and know where to fish for votes.

You note the crucial point of the mentioned agitation; the argument is that the Christian cannot compete with the Jew, and that hence his very bread is in peril. To human beings this is a much more hate-inspiring thing than is any detail connected with religion. With most people, of a necessity, bread and meat take first rank, religion

second. I am convinced that the persecution of the Jew is not due in any large degree to religious prejudice.

Page 123

No, the Jew is a money-getter; and in getting his money he is a very serious obstruction to less capable neighbours who are on the same quest. I think that that is the trouble. In estimating worldly values the Jew is not shallow, but deep. With precocious wisdom he found out in the morning of time that some men worship rank, some worship heroes, some worship power, some worship God, and that over these ideals they dispute and cannot unite—but that they all worship money; so he made it the end and aim of his life to get it. He was at it in Egypt thirty-six centuries ago; he was at it in Rome when that Christian got persecuted by mistake for him; he has been at it ever since. The cost to him has been heavy; his success has made the whole human race his enemy—but it has paid, for it has brought him envy, and that is the only thing which men will sell both soul and body to get. He long ago observed that a millionaire commands respect, a two-millionaire homage, a multi-millionaire the deepest depths of adoration. We all know that feeling; we have seen it express itself. We have noticed that when the average man mentions the name of a multi-millionaire he does it with that mixture in his voice of awe and reverence and lust which burns in a Frenchman's eye when it falls on another man's centime.

Point No. 4—'The Jews have no party; they are non-participants.'

Perhaps you have let the secret out and given yourself away. It seems hardly a credit to the race that it is able to say that; or to you, sir, that you can say it without remorse; more, that you should offer it as a plea against maltreatment, injustice, and oppression. Who gives the Jew the right, who gives any race the right, to sit still in a free country, and let somebody else look after its safety? The oppressed Jew was entitled to all pity in the former times under brutal autocracies, for he was weak and friendless, and had no way to help his case. But he has ways now, and he has had them for a century, but I do not see that he has tried to make serious use of them. When the Revolution set him free in France it was an act of grace—the grace of other people; he does not appear in it as a helper. I do not know that he helped when England set him free. Among the Twelve Sane Men of France who have stepped forward with great Zola at their head to fight (and win, I hope and believe[3]) the battle for the most infamously misused Jew of modern times, do you find a great or rich or illustrious Jew helping? In the United States he was created free in the beginning—he did not need to help, of course. In Austria and Germany and France he has a vote, but of what considerable use is it to him? He doesn't seem to know how to apply it to the best effect. With all his splendid capacities and all his fat wealth he is to-day not politically important in any country. In America, as early as 1854, the ignorant Irish hod-carrier, who had a spirit of his own and a way of exposing it to the weather, made it apparent to all that he must be politically reckoned with; yet fifteen years before that we hardly knew what an Irishman looked like. As an intelligent force and numerically, he has always been away down, but he has governed the country just the same. It was because he was organised. It made his vote valuable—in fact, essential.

Page 124

You will say the Jew is everywhere numerically feeble. That is nothing to the point—with the Irishman's history for an object-lesson. But I am coming to your numerical feebleness presently. In all parliamentary countries you could no doubt elect Jews to the legislatures—and even one member in such a body is sometimes a force which counts. How deeply have you concerned yourselves about this in Austria, France, and Germany? Or even in America, for that matter? You remark that the Jews were not to blame for the riots in this Reichsrath here, and you add with satisfaction that there wasn't one in that body. That is not strictly correct; if it were, would it not be in order for you to explain it and apologise for it, not try to make a merit of it? But I think that the Jew was by no means in as large force there as he ought to have been, with his chances. Austria opens the suffrage to him on fairly liberal terms, and it must surely be his own fault that he is so much in the background politically.

As to your numerical weakness. I mentioned some figures awhile ago —500,00—as the Jewish population of Germany. I will add some more —6,000,000 in Russia, 5,000,000 in Austria, 250,000 in the United States. I take them from memory; I read them in the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' ten or twelve years ago. Still, I am entirely sure of them. If those statistics are correct, my argument is not as strong as it ought to be as concerns America, but it still has strength. It is plenty strong enough as concerns Austria, for ten years ago 5,000,000 was nine per cent of the empire's population. The Irish would govern the Kingdom of Heaven if they had a strength there like that.

I have some suspicions; I got them at second-hand, but they have remained with me these ten or twelve years. When I read in the 'E.B.' that the Jewish population of the United States was 250,000 I wrote the editor, and explained to him that I was personally acquainted with more Jews than that in my country, and that his figures were without a doubt a misprint for 25,000,000. I also added that I was personally acquainted with that many there; but that was only to raise his confidence in me, for it was not true. His answer miscarried, and I never got it; but I went around talking about the matter, and people told me they had reason to suspect that for business reasons many Jews whose dealings were mainly with the Christians did not report themselves as Jews in the census. It looked plausible; it looks plausible yet. Look at the city of New York; and look at Boston, and Philadelphia, and New Orleans, and Chicago, and Cincinnati, and San Francisco—how your race swarms in those places!—and everywhere else in America, down to the least little village. Read the signs on the marts of commerce and on the shops; Goldstein (gold stone), Edelstein (precious stone), Blumenthal (flower-vale), Rosenthal (rose-vale), Veilchenduft (violent odour), Singvogel (song-bird),

Page 125

Rosenzweig (rose branch), and all the amazing list of beautiful and enviable names which Prussia and Austria glorified you with so long ago. It is another instance of Europe's coarse and cruel persecution of your race; not that it was coarse and cruel to outfit it with pretty and poetical names like those, but it was coarse and cruel to make it pay for them or else take such hideous and often indecent names that to-day their owners never use them; or, if they do, only on official papers. And it was the many, not the few, who got the odious names, they being too poor to bribe the officials to grant them better ones.

Now why was the race renamed? I have been told that in Prussia it was given to using fictitious names, and often changing them, so as to beat the tax-gatherer, escape military service, and so on; and that finally the idea was hit upon of furnishing all the inmates of a house with one and the same surname, and then holding the house responsible right along for those inmates, and accountable for any disappearances that might occur; it made the Jews keep track of each other, for self-interest's sake, and saved the Government the trouble[4].

If that explanation of how the Jews of Prussia came to be renamed is correct, if it is true that they fictitiously registered themselves to gain certain advantages, it may possible be true that in America they refrain from registered themselves as Jews to fend off the damaging prejudices of the Christian customer. I have no way of knowing whether this notion is well founded or not. There may be other and better ways of explaining why only that poor little 250,000 of our Jews got into the 'Encyclopaedia'. I may, of course, be mistaken, but I am strongly of the opinion that we have an immense Jewish population in America.

Point No. 3—'Can Jews do anything to improve the situation?'

I think so. If I may make a suggestion without seeming to be trying to teach my grandmother to suck eggs, I will offer it. In our days we have learned the value of combination. We apply it everywhere—in railway systems, in trusts, in trade unions, in Salvation Armies, in minor politics, in major politics, in European Concerts. Whatever our strength may be, big or little, we organise it. We have found out that that is the only way to get the most out of it that is in it. We know the weakness of individual sticks, and the strength of the concentrated faggot. Suppose you try a scheme like this, for instance. In England and America put every Jew on the census-book as a Jew (in case you have not been doing that). Get up volunteer regiments composed of Jews solely, and when the drum beats, fall in and go to the front, so as to remove the reproach that you have few Massenas among you, and that you feed on a country but don't like to fight for it. Next, in politics, organise your strength, band together, and deliver the casting-vote where you can, and, where you can't, compel as good terms as possible. You huddle to yourselves already in all countries, but you huddle to no sufficient

purpose, politically speaking. You do not seem to be organised, except for your charities. There you are omnipotent; there you compel your due of recognition—you do not have to beg for it. It shows what you can do when you band together for a definite purpose.

Page 126

And then from America and England you can encourage your race in Austria, France, and Germany, and materially help it. It was a pathetic tale that was told by a poor Jew a fortnight ago during the riots, after he had been raided by the Christian peasantry and despoiled of everything he had. He said his vote was of no value to him, and he wished he could be excused from casting it, for indeed, casting it was a sure damage to him, since, no matter which party he voted for, the other party would come straight and take its revenge out of him. Nine per cent of the population, these Jews, and apparently they cannot put a plank into any candidate's platform! If you will send our Irish lads over here I think they will organise your race and change the aspect of the Reichsrath.

You seem to think that the Jews take no hand in politics here, that they are 'absolutely non-participants.' I am assured by men competent to speak that this is a very large error, that the Jews are exceedingly active in politics all over the empire, but that they scatter their work and their votes among the numerous parties, and thus lose the advantages to be had by concentration. I think that in America they scatter too, but you know more about that than I do.

Speaking of concentration, Dr. Herzl has a clear insight into the value of that. Have you heard of his plan? He wishes to gather the Jews of the world together in Palestine, with a government of their own—under the suzerainty of the Sultan, I suppose. At the Convention of Berne, last year, there were delegates from everywhere, and the proposal was received with decided favour. I am not the Sultan, and I am not objecting; but if that concentration of the cunningest brains in the world were going to be made in a free country (bar Scotland), I think it would be politic to stop it. It will not be well to let that race find out its strength. If the horses knew theirs, we should not ride any more.

Point No. 5.—'Will the persecution of the Jews ever come to an end?'

On the score of religion, I think it has already come to an end. On the score of race prejudice and trade, I have the idea that it will continue. That is, here and there in spots about the world, where a barbarous ignorance and a sort of mere animal civilisation prevail; but I do not think that elsewhere the Jew need now stand in any fear of being robbed and raided. Among the high civilisations he seems to be very comfortably situated indeed, and to have more than his proportionate share of the prosperities going. It has that look in Vienna. I suppose the race prejudice cannot be removed; but he can stand that; it is no particular matter. By his make and ways he is substantially a foreigner wherever he may be, and even the angels dislike a foreigner. I am using this world foreigner in the German sense—stranger. Nearly all of us have an antipathy to a stranger, even of our own nationality. We pile grip-sacks

Page 127

in a vacant seat to keep him from getting it; and a dog goes further, and does as a savage would—challenges him on the spot. The German dictionary seems to make no distinction between a stranger and a foreigner; in its view a stranger is a foreigner—a sound position, I think. You will always be by ways and habits and predilections substantially strangers—foreigners—wherever you are, and that will probably keep the race prejudice against you alive.

But you were the favourites of Heaven originally, and your manifold and unfair prosperities convince me that you have crowded back into that snug place again. Here is an incident that is significant. Last week in Vienna a hailstorm struck the prodigious Central Cemetery and made wasteful destruction there. In the Christian part of it, according to the official figures, 621 window-panes were broken; more than 900 singing-birds were killed; five great trees and many small ones were torn to shreds and the shreds scattered far and wide by the wind; the ornamental plants and other decorations of the graves were ruined, and more than a hundred tomb-lanterns shattered; and it took the cemetery's whole force of 300 labourers more than three days to clear away the storm's wreckage. In the report occurs this remark—and in its italics you can hear it grit its Christian teeth: *'...lediglich die israelitische Abtheilung des Friedhofes vom Hagelwetter ganzlich verschont worden war.'* Not a hailstone hit the Jewish reservation! Such nepotism makes me tired.

Point No. 6.—'What has become of the Golden Rule?'

It exists, it continues to sparkle, and is well taken care of. It is Exhibit A in the Church's assets, and we pull it out every Sunday and give it an airing. But you are not permitted to try to smuggle it into this discussion, where it is irrelevant and would not feel at home. It is strictly religious furniture, like an acolyte, or a contribution-plate, or any of those things. It has never intruded into business; and Jewish persecution is not a religious passion, it is a business passion.

To conclude.—If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one per cent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star-dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvellous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream-stuff

Page 128

and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal to the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?

Postscript—THE JEW AS SOLDIER

When I published the above article in 'Harper's Monthly,' I was ignorant —like the rest of the Christian world—of the fact that the Jew had a record as a soldier. I have since seen the official statistics, and I find that he furnished soldiers and high officers to the Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Mexican War. In the Civil War he was represented in the armies and navies of both the North and the South by 10 per cent of his numerical strength—the same percentage that was furnished by the Christian populations of the two sections. This large fact means more than it seems to mean; for it means that the Jew's patriotism was not merely level with the Christian's, but overpassed it. When the Christian volunteer arrived in camp he got a welcome and applause, but as a rule the Jew got a snub. His company was not desired, and he was made to feel it. That he nevertheless conquered his wounded pride and sacrificed both that and his blood for his flag raises the average and quality of his patriotism above the Christian's. His record for capacity, for fidelity, and for gallant soldiership in the field is as good as any one's. This is true of the Jewish private soldiers and of the Jewish generals alike. Major-General O. O. Howard speaks of one of his Jewish staff officers as being 'of the bravest and best;' of another—killed at Chancellorsville —as being 'a true friend and a brave officer;' he highly praises two of his Jewish brigadier-generals; finally, he uses these strong words: 'Intrinsically there are no more patriotic men to be found in the country than those who claim to be of Hebrew descent, and who served with me in parallel commands or more directly under my instructions.'

Fourteen Jewish Confederate and Union families contributed, between them, fifty-one soldiers to the war. Among these, a father and three sons; and another, a father and four sons.

In the above article I was neither able to endorse nor repel the common approach that the Jew is willing to feed upon a country but not to fight for it, because I did not know whether it was true or false. I supposed it to be true, but it is not allowable to endorse wandering maxims upon supposition—except when one is trying to make out a case. That slur upon the Jew cannot hold up its head in presence of the figures of the War

Department. It has done its work, and done it long and faithfully, and with high approval: it ought to be pensioned off now, and retired from active service.

Page 129

[1] See 'Stirring Times in Austria,' in this volume.

[2] Here is another piece of picturesque history; and it reminds us that shabbiness and dishonesty are not the monopoly of any race or creed, but are merely human:

'Congress has passed a bill to pay \$379.56 to Moses Pendergrass, of Libertyville, Missouri. The story of the reason of this liberality is pathetically interesting, and shows the sort of pickle that an honest man may get into who undertakes to do an honest job of work for Uncle Sam. In 1886 Moses Pendergrass put in a bid for the contract to carry the mail on the route from Knob Lick to Libertyville and Coffman, thirty miles a day, from July 1, 1887, for one year. He got the postmaster at Knob Lick to write the letter for him, and while Moses intended that his bid should be \$400, his scribe carelessly made it \$4. Moses got the contract, and did not find out about the mistake until the end of the first quarter, when he got his first pay. When he found at what rate he was working he was sorely cast down, and opened communication with the Post Office Department. The department informed him that he must either carry out his contract or throw it up, and that if he threw it up his bondsman would have to pay the Government \$1,459.85 damages. So Moses carried out his contract, walked thirty miles every week-day for a year, and carried the mail, and received for his labour \$4, or, to be accurate, \$6.84; for, the route being extended after his bid was accepted, his pay was proportionately increased. Now, after ten years, a bill was finally passed to pay to Moses the difference between what he earned in that unlucky year and what he received.'

The 'Sun,' which tells the above story, says that bills were introduced in three or four Congresses for Moses' relief, and that committees repeatedly investigated his claim.

It took six Congresses, containing in their persons the compressed virtues of 70,000,000 of people, and cautiously and carefully giving expression to those virtues in the fear of God and the next election, eleven years to find out some way to cheat a fellow Christian out of about \$13 on his honestly executed contract, and out of nearly \$300 due him on its enlarged terms. And they succeeded. During the same time they paid out \$1,000,000,000 in pensions—a third of it unearned and undeserved. This indicates a splendid all-round competency in theft, for it starts with farthings, and works its industries all the way up to ship-loads. It may be possible that the Jews can beat this, but the man that bets on it is taking chances.

[3] The article was written in the summer of 1898.

[4] In Austria the renaming was merely done because the Jews in some newly-acquired regions had no surnames, but were mostly named Abraham and Moses, and therefore the tax-gatherer could tell t'other from which, and was likely to lose his reason over the matter. The renaming was put into the hands of the War Department, and a charming mess the graceless young lieutenants made of it. To them a Jew was of no sort of consequence, and they labelled the race in a way to make the angels weep. As an

example, take these two: Abraham Bellyache and Schmul Godbedamned—Culled from 'Namens Studien,' by Karl Emil Fransos.

Page 130

FROM THE 'LONDON TIMES' OF 1904

Correspondence of the 'London Times'
Chicago, April 1, 1904

I resume by cable-telephone where I left off yesterday. For many hours now, this vast city—along with the rest of the globe, of course—has talked of nothing but the extraordinary episode mentioned in my last report. In accordance with your instructions, I will now trace the romance from its beginnings down to the culmination of yesterday—or today; call it which you like. By an odd chance, I was a personal actor in a part of this drama myself. The opening scene plays in Vienna. Date, one o'clock in the morning, March 31, 1898. I had spent the evening at a social entertainment. About midnight I went away, in company with the military attaches of the British, Italian, and American embassies, to finish with a late smoke. This function had been appointed to take place in the house of Lieutenant Hillyer, the third attache mentioned in the above list. When we arrived there we found several visitors in the room; young Szczepanik;^[1] Mr. K., his financial backer; Mr. W., the latter's secretary; and Lieutenant Clayton, of the United States Army. War was at that time threatening between Spain and our country, and Lieutenant Clayton had been sent to Europe on military business. I was well acquainted with young Szczepanik and his two friends, and I knew Mr. Clayton slightly. I had met him at West Point years before, when he was a cadet. It was when General Merritt was superintendent. He had the reputation of being an able officer, and also of being quick-tempered and plain-spoken.

This smoking-party had been gathered together partly for business. This business was to consider the availability of the teleelectroscope for military service. It sounds oddly enough now, but it is nevertheless true that at that time the invention was not taken seriously by any one except its inventor. Even his financial support regarded it merely as a curious and interesting toy. Indeed, he was so convinced of this that he had actually postponed its use by the general world to the end of the dying century by granting a two years' exclusive lease of it to a syndicate, whose intent was to exploit it at the Paris World's Fair. When we entered the smoking-room we found Lieutenant Clayton and Szczepanik engaged in a warm talk over the teleelectroscope in the German tongue. Clayton was saying:

'Well, you know my opinion of it, anyway!' and he brought his fist down with emphasis upon the table.

'And I do not value it,' retorted the young inventor, with provoking calmness of tone and manner.

Clayton turned to Mr. K., and said:

'I cannot see why you are wasting money on this toy. In my opinion, the day will never come when it will do a farthing's worth of real service for any human being.'

'That may be; yes, that may be; still, I have put the money in it, and am content. I think, myself, that it is only a toy; but Szczepanik claims more for it, and I know him well enough to believe that he can see farther than I can—either with his teleelectroscope or without it.'

Page 131

The soft answer did not cool Clayton down; it seemed only to irritate him the more; and he repeated and emphasised his conviction that the invention would never do any man a farthing's worth of real service. He even made it a 'brass' farthing, this time. Then he laid an English farthing on the table, and added:

'Take that, Mr. K., and put it away; and if ever the teleelectroscope does any man an actual service—mind, a real service—please mail it to me as a reminder, and I will take back what I have been saying. Will you?'

'I will,' and Mr. K. put the coin in his pocket.

Mr. Clayton now turned toward Szczepanik, and began with a taunt—a taunt which did not reach a finish; Szczepanik interrupted it with a hardy retort, and followed this with a blow. There was a brisk fight for a moment or two; then the attaches separated the men.

The scene now changes to Chicago. Time, the autumn of 1901. As soon as the Paris contract released the teleelectroscope, it was delivered to public use, and was soon connected with the telephonic systems of the whole world. The improved 'limitless-distance' telephone was presently introduced, and the daily doings of the globe made visible to everybody, and audibly discussible, too, by witnesses separated by any number of leagues.

By-and-by Szczepanik arrived in Chicago. Clayton (now captain) was serving in that military department at the time. The two men resumed the Viennese quarrel of 1898. On three different occasions they quarrelled, and were separated by witnesses. Then came an interval of two months, during which time Szczepanik was not seen by any of his friends, and it was at first supposed that he had gone off on a sight seeing tour and would soon be heard from. But no; no word came from him. Then it was supposed that he had returned to Europe. Still, time drifted on, and he was not heard from. Nobody was troubled, for he was like most inventors and other kinds of poets, and went and came in a capricious way, and often without notice.

Now comes the tragedy. On December 29, in a dark and unused compartment of the cellar under Captain Clayton's house, a corpse was discovered by one of Clayton's maid-servants. Friends of deceased identified it as Szczepanik's. The man had died by violence. Clayton was arrested, indicted, and brought to trial, charged with this murder. The evidence against him was perfect in every detail, and absolutely unassailable. Clayton admitted this himself. He said that a reasonable man could not examine this testimony with a dispassionate mind and not be convinced by it; yet the man would be in error, nevertheless. Clayton swore that he did not commit the murder, and that he had had nothing to do with it.



As your readers will remember, he was condemned to death. He had numerous and powerful friends, and they worked hard to save him, for none of them doubted the truth of his assertion. I did what little I could to help, for I had long since become a close friend of his, and thought I knew that it was not in his character to inveigle an enemy into a corner and assassinate him. During 1902 and 1903 he was several times reprieved by the governor; he was reprieved once more in the beginning of the present year, and the execution day postponed to March 31.

Page 132

The governor's situation has been embarrassing, from the day of the condemnation, because of the fact that Clayton's wife is the governor's niece. The marriage took place in 1899, when Clayton was thirty-four and the girl twenty-three, and has been a happy one. There is one child, a little girl three years old. Pity for the poor mother and child kept the mouths of grumblers closed at first; but this could not last for ever—for in America politics has a hand in everything—and by-and-by the governor's political opponents began to call attention to his delay in allowing the law to take its course. These hints have grown more and more frequent of late, and more and more pronounced. As a natural result, his own part grew nervous. Its leaders began to visit Springfield and hold long private conferences with him. He was now between two fires. On the one hand, his niece was imploring him to pardon her husband; on the other were the leaders, insisting that he stand to his plain duty as chief magistrate of the State, and place no further bar to Clayton's execution. Duty won in the struggle, and the Governor gave his word that he would not again respite the condemned man. This was two weeks ago. Mrs. Clayton now said:

'Now that you have given your word, my last hope is gone, for I know you will never go back from it. But you have done the best you could for John, and I have no reproaches for you. You love him, and you love me, and we know that if you could honourable save him, you would do it. I will go to him now, and be what help I can to him, and get what comfort I may out of the few days that are left to us before the night comes which will have no end for me in life. You will be with me that day? You will not let me bear it alone?'

'I will take you to him myself, poor child, and I will be near you to the last.'

By the governor's command, Clayton was now allowed every indulgence he might ask for which could interest his mind and soften the hardships of his imprisonment. His wife and child spent the days with him; I was his companion by night. He was removed from the narrow cell which he had occupied during such a dreary stretch of time, and given the chief warden's roomy and comfortable quarters. His mind was always busy with the catastrophe of his life, and with the slaughtered inventor, and he now took the fancy that he would like to have the teleelectroscope and divert his mind with it. He had his wish. The connection was made with the international telephone-station, and day by day, and night by night, he called up one corner of the globe after another, and looked upon its life, and studied its strange sights, and spoke with its people, and realised that by grace of this marvellous instrument he was almost as free as the birds of the air, although a prisoner under locks and bars. He seldom spoke, and I never interrupted him when he was absorbed in this amusement. I sat in his parlour and read, and smoked, and the

Page 133

nights were very quiet and reposefully sociable, and I found them pleasant. Now and then I would hear him say 'Give me Yedo;' next, 'Give me Hong-Kong;' next, 'Give me Melbourne.' And I smoked on, and read in comfort, while he wandered about the remote underworld, where the sun was shining in the sky, and the people were at their daily work. Sometimes the talk that came from those far regions through the microphone attachment interested me, and I listened.

Yesterday—I keep calling it yesterday, which is quite natural, for certain reasons—the instrument remained unused, and that also was natural, for it was the eve of the execution day. It was spent in tears and lamentations and farewells. The governor and the wife and child remained until a quarter-past eleven at night, and the scenes I witnessed were pitiful to see. The execution was to take place at four in the morning. A little after eleven a sound of hammering broke out upon the still night, and there was a glare of light, and the child cried out, 'What is that, papa?' and ran to the window before she could be stopped and clapped her small hands and said, 'Oh, come and see, mamma—such a pretty thing they are making!' The mother knew—and fainted. It was the gallows!

She was carried away to her lodging, poor woman, and Clayton and I were alone—alone, and thinking, brooding, dreaming. We might have been statues, we sat so motionless and still. It was a wild night, for winter was come again for a moment, after the habit of this region in the early spring. The sky was starless and black, and a strong wind was blowing from the lake. The silence in the room was so deep that all outside sounds seemed exaggerated by contrast with it. These sounds were fitting ones: they harmonised with the situation and the conditions: the boom and thunder of sudden storm-gusts among the roofs and chimneys, then the dying down into moanings and wailings about the eaves and angles; now and then a gnashing and lashing rush of sleet along the window-panes; and always the muffled and uncanny hammering of the gallows-builders in the court-yard. After an age of this, another sound—far off, and coming smothered and faint through the riot of the tempest—a bell tolling twelve! Another age, and it was tolled again. By-and-by, again. A dreary long interval after this, then the spectral sound floated to us once more—one, two three; and this time we caught our breath; sixty minutes of life left!

Clayton rose, and stood by the window, and looked up into the black sky, and listened to the thrashing sleet and the piping wind; then he said: 'That a dying man's last of earth should be—this!' After a little he said: 'I must see the sun again—the sun!' and the next moment he was feverishly calling: 'China! Give me China—Peking!'

I was strangely stirred, and said to myself: 'To think that it is a mere human being who does this unimaginable miracle—turns winter into summer, night into day, storm into

calm, gives the freedom of the great globe to a prisoner in his cell, and the sun in his naked splendour to a man dying in Egyptian darkness.'

Page 134

I was listening.

'What light! what brilliancy! what radiance!... This is Peking?'

'Yes.'

'The time?'

'Mid-afternoon.'

'What is the great crowd for, and in such gorgeous costumes? What masses and masses of rich colour and barbaric magnificence! And how they flash and glow and burn in the flooding sunlight! What is the occasion of it all?'

'The coronation of our new emperor—the Czar.'

'But I thought that that was to take place yesterday.'

'This is yesterday—to you.'

'Certainly it is. But my mind is confused, these days: there are reasons for it.... Is this the beginning of the procession?'

'Oh, no; it began to move an hour ago.'

'Is there much more of it still to come?'

'Two hours of it. Why do you sigh?'

'Because I should like to see it all.'

'And why can't you?'

'I have to go—presently.'

'You have an engagement?'

After a pause, softly: 'Yes.' After another pause: 'Who are these in the splendid pavilion?'

'The imperial family, and visiting royalties from here and there and yonder in the earth.'

'And who are those in the adjoining pavilions to the right and left?'

'Ambassadors and their families and suites to the right; unofficial foreigners to the left.'

‘If you will be so good, I—’

Boom! That distant bell again, tolling the half-hour faintly through the tempest of wind and sleet. The door opened, and the governor and the mother and child entered—the woman in widow’s weeds! She fell upon her husband’s breast in a passion of sobs, and I—I could not stay; I could not bear it. I went into the bedchamber, and closed the door. I sat there waiting—waiting—waiting, and listening to the rattling sashes and the blustering of the storm. After what seemed a long, long time, I heard a rustle and movement in the parlour, and knew that the clergyman and the sheriff and the guard were come. There was some low-voiced talking; then a hush; then a prayer, with a sound of sobbing; presently, footfalls—the departure for the gallows; then the child’s happy voice: ‘Don’t cry now, mamma, when we’ve got papa again, and taking him home.’

The door closed; they were gone. I was ashamed: I was the only friend of the dying man that had no spirit, no courage. I stepped into the room, and said I would be a man and would follow. But we are made as we are made, and we cannot help it. I did not go.

I fidgeted about the room nervously, and presently went to the window and softly raised it—drawn by that dread fascination which the terrible and the awful exert—and looked down upon the court-yard. By the garish light of the electric lamps I saw the little group of privileged witnesses, the wife crying on her uncle’s breast, the condemned man standing on the scaffold with the halter around his neck, his arms strapped to his body, the black cap on his head, the sheriff at his side with his hand on the drop, the clergyman in front of him with bare head and his book in his hand.

Page 135

'I am the resurrection and the life—'

I turned away. I could not listen; I could not look. I did not know whither to go or what to do. Mechanically and without knowing it, I put my eye to that strange instrument, and there was Peking and the Czar's procession! The next moment I was leaning out of the window, gasping, suffocating, trying to speak, but dumb from the very imminence of the necessity of speaking. The preacher could speak, but I, who had such need of words —'And may God have mercy upon your soul. Amen.'

The sheriff drew down the black cap, and laid his hand upon the lever. I got my voice.

'Stop, for God's sake! The man is innocent. Come here and see Szczepanik face to face!'

Hardly three minutes later the governor had my place at the window, and was saying:

'Strike off his bonds and set him free!'

Three minutes later all were in the parlour again. The reader will imagine the scene; I have no need to describe it. It was a sort of mad orgy of joy.

A messenger carried word to Szczepanik in the pavilion, and one could see the distressed amazement in his face as he listened to the tale. Then he came to his end of the line, and talked with Clayton and the governor and the others; and the wife poured out her gratitude upon him for saving her husband's life, and in her deep thankfulness she kissed him at twelve thousand miles' range.

The teleelectroscopes of the world were put to service now, and for many hours the kinds and queens of many realms (with here and there a reporter) talked with Szczepanik, and praised him; and the few scientific societies which had not already made him an honorary member conferred that grace upon him.

How had he come to disappear from among us? It was easily explained. *He* had not grown used to being a world-famous person, and had been forced to break away from the lionising that was robbing him of all privacy and repose. So he grew a beard, put on coloured glasses, disguised himself a little in other ways, then took a fictitious name, and went off to wander about the earth in peace.

Such is the tale of the drama which began with an inconsequential quarrel in Vienna in the spring of 1898, and came near ending as a tragedy in the spring of 1904.

II

Correspondence of the 'London Times'
Chicago, April 5, 1904

To-day, by a clipper of the Electric Line, and the latter's Electric Railway connections, arrived an envelope from Vienna, for Captain Clayton, containing an English farthing. The receiver of it was a good deal moved. He called up Vienna, and stood face to face with Mr. K., and said:

'I do not need to say anything: you can see it all in my face. My wife has the farthing. Do not be afraid—she will not throw it away.'

III

Page 136

Correspondence of the 'London Times'
Chicago, April 23, 1904

Now that the after developments of the Clayton case have run their course and reached a finish, I will sum them up. Clayton's romantic escape from a shameful death stepped all this region in an enchantment of wonder and joy—during the proverbial nine days. Then the sobering process followed, and men began to take thought, and to say: 'But a man was killed, and Clayton killed him.' Others replied: 'That is true: we have been overlooking that important detail; we have been led away by excitement.'

The telling soon became general that Clayton ought to be tried again. Measures were taken accordingly, and the proper representations conveyed to Washington; for in America under the new paragraph added to the Constitution in 1889, second trials are not State affairs, but national, and must be tried by the most august body in the land—the Supreme Court of the United States. The justices were therefore summoned to sit in Chicago. The session was held day before yesterday, and was opened with the usual impressive formalities, the nine judges appearing in their black robes, and the new chief justice (Lemaitre) presiding. In opening the case the chief justice said:

'It is my opinion that this matter is quite simple. The prisoner at the bar was charged with murdering the man Szczepanik; he was tried for murdering the man Szczepanik; he was fairly tried and justly condemned and sentenced to death for murdering the man Szczepanik. It turns out that the man Szczepanik was not murdered at all. By the decision of the French courts in the Dreyfus matter, it is established beyond cavil or question that the decisions of courts are permanent and cannot be revised. We are obliged to respect and adopt this precedent. It is upon precedents that the enduring edifice of jurisprudence is reared. The prisoner at the bar has been fairly and righteously condemned to death for the murder of the man Szczepanik, and, in my opinion, there is but one course to pursue in the matter: he must be hanged.'

Mr. Justice Crawford said:

'But, your Excellency, he was pardoned on the scaffold for that.'

'The pardon is not valid, and cannot stand, because he was pardoned for killing Szczepanik, a man whom he had not killed. A man cannot be pardoned for a crime which he has not committed; it would be an absurdity.'

'But, your Excellency, he did kill a man.'

'That is an extraneous detail; we have nothing to do with it. The court cannot take up this crime until the prisoner has expiated the other one.'

Mr. Justice Halleck said:

'If we order his execution, your Excellency, we shall bring about a miscarriage of justice, for the governor will pardon him again.'

'He will not have the power. He cannot pardon a man for a crime which he has not committed. As I observed before, it would be an absurdity.'

Page 137

After a consultation, Mr. Justice Wadsworth said:

'Several of us have arrived at the conclusion, your Excellency, that it would be an error to hang the prisoner for killing Szczepanik, instead of for killing the other man, since it is proven that he did not kill Szczepanik.'

'On the contrary, it is proven that he did kill Szczepanik. By the French precedent, it is plain that we must abide by the finding of the court.'

'But Szczepanik is still alive.'

'So is Dreyfus.'

In the end it was found impossible to ignore or get around the French precedent. There could be but one result: Clayton was delivered over for the execution. It made an immense excitement; the State rose as one man and clamored for Clayton's pardon and retrial. The governor issued the pardon, but the Supreme Court was in duty bound to annul it, and did so, and poor Clayton was hanged yesterday. The city is draped in black, and, indeed, the like may be said of the State. All America is vocal with scorn of 'French justice,' and of the malignant little soldiers who invented it and inflicted it upon the other Christian lands.

[1] Pronounced (approximately) Shepannik.

ABOUT PLAY-ACTING

I

I have a project to suggest. But first I will write a chapter of introduction.

I have just been witnessing a remarkable play, here at the Burg Theatre in Vienna. I do not know of any play that much resembles it. In fact, it is such a departure from the common laws of the drama that the name 'play' doesn't seem to fit it quite snugly. However, whatever else it may be, it is in any case a great and stately metaphysical poem, and deeply fascinating. 'Deeply fascinating' is the right term: for the audience sat four hours and five minutes without thrice breaking into applause, except at the close of each act; sat rapt and silent—fascinated. This piece is 'The Master of Palmyra.' It is twenty years old; yet I doubt if you have ever heard of it. It is by Wilbrandt, and is his masterpiece and the work which is to make his name permanent in German literature. It has never been played anywhere except in Berlin and in the great Burg Theatre in Vienna. Yet whenever it is put on the stage it packs the house, and the free list is suspended. I know people who have seen it ten times; they know the most

of it by heart; they do not tire of it; and they say they shall still be quite willing to go and sit under its spell whenever they get the opportunity.

There is a dash of metempsychosis in it—and it is the strength of the piece. The play gave me the sense of the passage of a dimly connected procession of dream-pictures. The scene of it is Palmyra in Roman times. It covers a wide stretch of time—I don't know how many years—and in the course of it the chief actress is reincarnated several times: four times she is a more or less young woman, and once she is a lad. In the first act she is Zoe—a Christian girl who has wandered across the desert from Damascus to try to Christianise the Zeus-worshipping pagans of Palmyra. In this character she is wholly spiritual, a religious enthusiast, a devotee who covets martyrdom—and gets it.

Page 138

After many years she appears in the second act as Phoebe, a graceful and beautiful young light-o'-love from Rome, whose soul is all for the shows and luxuries and delights of this life—a dainty and capricious feather-head, a creature of shower and sunshine, a spoiled child, but a charming one. In the third act, after an interval of many years, she reappears as Persida, mother of a daughter who is in the fresh bloom of youth. She is now a sort of combination of her two earlier selves: in religious loyalty and subjection she is Zoe: in triviality of character and shallowness of judgement—together with a touch of vanity in dress —she is Phoebe.

After a lapse of years she appears in the fourth act as Nymphas, a beautiful boy, in whose character the previous incarnations are engagingly mixed.

And after another stretch of years all these heredities are joined in the Zenobia of the fifth act—a person of gravity, dignity, sweetness, with a heart filled with compassion for all who suffer, and a hand prompt to put into practical form the heart's benignant impulses.

There are a number of curious and interesting features in this piece. For instance, its hero, Appelles, young, handsome, vigorous, in the first act, remains so all through the long flight of years covered by the five acts. Other men, young in the first act, are touched with gray in the second, are old and racked with infirmities in the third; in the fourth, all but one are gone to their long home, and this one is a blind and helpless hulk of ninety or a hundred years. It indicates that the stretch of time covered by the piece is seventy years or more. The scenery undergoes decay, too—the decay of age assisted and perfected by a conflagration. The fine new temples and palaces of the second act are by-and-by a wreck of crumbled walls and prostrate columns, mouldy, grass-grown, and desolate; but their former selves are still recognisable in their ruins. The ageing men and the ageing scenery together convey a profound illusion of that long lapse of time: they make you live it yourself! You leave the theatre with the weight of a century upon you.

Another strong effect: Death, in person, walks about the stage in every act. So far as I could make out, he was supposably not visible to any excepting two persons—the one he came for and Appelles. He used various costumes: but there was always more black about them than any other tint; and so they were always sombre. Also they were always deeply impressive and, indeed, awe-inspiring. The face was not subjected to changes, but remained the same first and last—a ghastly white. To me he was always welcome, he seemed so real—the actual Death, not a play-acting artificiality. He was of a solemn and stately carriage; and he had a deep voice, and used it with a noble dignity. Wherever there was a turmoil of merry-making or fighting or feasting or chaffing or quarreling, or a gilded pageant, or other manifestation of our trivial and fleeting life, into it drifted that black figure with the corpse-face, and looked its fateful look and passed on; leaving its victim shuddering and smitten. And always its coming made the

fussy human pack seem infinitely pitiful and shabby, and hardly worth the attention of either saving or damning.

Page 139

In the beginning of the first act the young girl Zoe appears by some great rocks in the desert, and sits down exhausted, to rest. Presently arrive a pauper couple stricken with age and infirmities; and they begin to mumble and pray to the Spirit of Life, who is said to inhabit that spot. The Spirit of Life appears; also Death—uninvited. They are (supposably) invisible. Death, tall, black-robed, corpse-faced, stands motionless and waits. The aged couple pray to the Spirit of Life for a means to prop up their existence and continue it. Their prayer fails. The Spirit of Life prophesies Zoe's martyrdom; it will take place before night. Soon Appelles arrives, young and vigorous and full of enthusiasm: he has led a host against the Persians and won the battle; he is the pet of fortune, rich, honoured, believed, 'Master of Palmyra'. He has heard that whoever stretches himself out on one of those rocks there and asks for a deathless life can have his wish. He laughs at the tradition, but wants to make the trial anyway. The invisible Spirit of Life warns him! 'Life without end can be regret without end.' But he persists: let him keep his youth, his strength, and his mental faculties unimpaired, and he will take all the risks. He has his desire.

From this time forth, act after act, the troubles and sorrows and misfortunes and humiliations of life beat upon him without pity or respite; but he will not give up, he will not confess his mistake. Whenever he meets Death he still furiously defies him—but Death patiently waits. He, the healer of sorrows, is man's best friend: the recognition of this will come. As the years drag on, and on, and on, the friends of the Master's youth grow old; and one by one they totter to the grave: he goes on with his proud fight, and will not yield. At length he is wholly alone in the world; all his friends are dead; last of all, his darling of darlings, his son, the lad Nymphas, who dies in his arms. His pride is broken now; and he would welcome Death, if Death would come, if Death would hear his prayers and give him peace. The closing act is fine and pathetic. Appelles meets Zenobia, the helper of all who suffer, and tells her his story, which moves her pity. By common report she is endowed with more than earthly powers; and since he cannot have the boon of death, he appeals to her to drown his memory in forgetfulness of his griefs—forgetfulness 'which is death's equivalent'. She says (roughly translated), in an exaltation of compassion:

'Come to me!

Kneel; and may the power be granted me
To cool the fires of this poor tortured brain,
And bring it peace and healing.'

He kneels. From her hand, which she lays upon his head, a mysterious influence steals through him; and he sinks into a dreamy tranquility.

'Oh, if I could but so drift
Through this soft twilight into the night of peace,
Never to wake again!

Page 140

(Raising his hand, as if in benediction.)

O mother earth, farewell!
Gracious thou were to me. Farewell!
Appelles goes to rest.'

Death appears behind him and encloses the uplifted hand in his. Appelles shudders, wearily and slowly turns, and recognises his life-long adversary. He smiles and puts all his gratitude into one simple and touching sentence, 'Ich danke dir,' and dies.

Nothing, I think, could be more moving, more beautiful, than this close. This piece is just one long, soulful, sardonic laugh at human life. Its title might properly be 'Is Life a Failure?' and leave the five acts to play with the answer. I am not at all sure that the author meant to laugh at life. I only notice that he has done it. Without putting into words any ungracious or discourteous things about life, the episodes in the piece seem to be saying all the time, inarticulately: 'Note what a silly poor thing human life is; how childish its ambitions, how ridiculous its pomps, how trivial its dignities, how cheap its heroisms, how capricious its course, how brief its flight, how stingy in happinesses, how opulent in miseries, how few its prides, how multitudinous its humiliations, how comic its tragedies, how tragic its comedies, how wearisome and monotonous its repetition of its stupid history through the ages, with never the introduction of a new detail; how hard it has tried, from the Creation down, to play itself upon its possessor as a boon and has never proved its case in a single instance!'

Take note of some of the details of the piece. Each of the five acts contains an independent tragedy of its own. In each act someone's edifice of hope, or of ambition, or of happiness, goes down in ruins. Even Appelles' perennial youth is only a long tragedy, and his life a failure. There are two martyrdoms in the piece; and they are curiously and sarcastically contrasted. In the first act the pagans persecute Zoe, the Christian girl, and a pagan mob slaughters her. In the fourth act those same pagans—now very old and zealous—are become Christians, and they persecute the pagans; a mob of them slaughters the pagan youth, Nymphas, who is standing up for the old gods of his fathers. No remark is made about this picturesque failure of civilisation; but there it stands, as an unworded suggestion that civilisation, even when Christianised, was not able wholly to subdue the natural man in that old day—just as in our day the spectacle of a shipwrecked French crew clubbing women and children who tried to climb into the lifeboats suggests that civilisation has not succeeded in entirely obliterating the natural man even yet. Common sailors a year ago, in Paris, at a fire, the aristocracy of the same nation clubbed girls and women out of the way to save themselves. Civilisation tested at top and bottom both, you see. And in still another panic of fright we have this same tough civilisation saving its honour by condemning an innocent man to multiform death, and hugging and whitewashing the guilty one.

Page 141

In the second act a grand Roman official is not above trying to blast Appelles' reputation by falsely charging him with misappropriating public moneys. Appelles, who is too proud to endure even the suspicion of irregularity, strips himself to naked poverty to square the unfair account, and his troubles begin: the blight which is to continue and spread strikes his life; for the frivolous, pretty creature whom he brought from Rome has no taste for poverty and agrees to elope with a more competent candidate. Her presence in the house has previously brought down the pride and broken the heart of Appelles' poor old mother; and her life is a failure. Death comes for her, but is willing to trade her for the Roman girl; so the bargain is struck with Appelles, and the mother is spared for the present.

No one's life escapes the blight. Timoleus, the gay satirist of the first two acts, who scoffed at the pious hypocrisies and money-grubbing ways of the great Roman lords, is grown old and fat and blear-eyed and racked with disease in the third, has lost his stately purities, and watered the acid of his wit. His life has suffered defeat. Unthinkingly he swears by Zeus—from ancient habit—and then quakes with fright; for a fellow-communicant is passing by. Reproached by a pagan friend of his youth for his apostasy, he confesses that principle, when unsupported by an assenting stomach, has to climb down. One must have bread; and 'the bread is Christian now.' Then the poor old wreck, once so proud of his iron rectitude, hobbles away, coughing and barking.

In that same act Appelles give his sweet young Christian daughter and her fine young pagan lover his consent and blessing, and makes them utterly happy—for five minutes. Then the priest and the mob come, to tear them apart and put the girl in a nunnery; for marriage between the sects is forbidden. Appelles' wife could dissolve the rule; and she wants to do it; but under priestly pressure she wavers; then, fearing that in providing happiness for her child she would be committing a sin dangerous to her own, she goes over to the opposition, and throws the casting vote for the nunnery. The blight has fallen upon the young couple, and their life is a failure.

In the fourth act, Longinus, who made such a prosperous and enviable start in the first act, is left alone in the desert, sick, blind, helpless, incredibly old, to die: not a friend left in the world—another ruined life. And in that act, also, Appelles' worshipped boy, Nymphas, done to death by the mob, breathes out his last sigh in his father's arms—one more failure. In the fifth act, Appelles himself dies, and is glad to do it; he who so ignorantly rejoiced, only four acts before, over the splendid present of an earthly immortality—the very worst failure of the lot!

II

Now I approach my project. Here is the theatre list for Saturday, May 7, 1898, cut from the advertising columns of a New York paper:

Page 142

[graphic here]

Now I arrive at my project, and make my suggestion. From the look of this lightsome feast, I conclude that what you need is a tonic. Send for 'The Master of Palmyra.' You are trying to make yourself believe that life is a comedy, that its sole business is fun, that there is nothing serious in it. You are ignoring the skeleton in your closet. Send for 'The Master of Palmyra.' You are neglecting a valuable side of your life; presently it will be atrophied. You are eating too much mental sugar; you will bring on Bright's disease of the intellect. You need a tonic; you need it very much. Send for 'The Master of Palmyra.' You will not need to translate it; its story is as plain as a procession of pictures.

I have made my suggestion. Now I wish to put an annex to it. And that is this: It is right and wholesome to have those light comedies and entertaining shows; and I shouldn't wish to see them diminished. But none of us is always in the comedy spirit; we have our graver moods; they come to us all; the lightest of us cannot escape them. These moods have their appetites—healthy and legitimate appetites—and there ought to be some way of satisfying them. It seems to me that New York ought to have one theatre devoted to tragedy. With her three millions of population, and seventy outside millions to draw upon, she can afford it, she can support it. America devotes more time, labour, money and attention to distributing literary and musical culture among the general public than does any other nation, perhaps; yet here you find her neglecting what is possibly the most effective of all the breeders and nurses and disseminators of high literary taste and lofty emotion—the tragic stage. To leave that powerful agency out is to haul the culture-wagon with a crippled team. Nowadays, when a mood comes which only Shakespeare can set to music, what must we do? Read Shakespeare ourselves! Isn't it pitiful? It is playing an organ solo on a jew's-harp. We can't read. None but the Booths can do it.

Thirty years ago Edwin Booth played 'Hamlet' a hundred nights in New York. With three times the population, how often is 'Hamlet' played now in a year? If Booth were back now in his prime, how often could he play it in New York? Some will say twenty-five nights. I will say three hundred, and say it with confidence. The tragedians are dead; but I think that the taste and intelligence which made their market are not.

What has come over us English-speaking people? During the first half of this century tragedies and great tragedians were as common with us as farce and comedy; and it was the same in England. Now we have not a tragedian, I believe, and London, with her fifty shows and theatres, has but three, I think. It is an astonishing thing, when you come to consider it. Vienna remains upon the ancient basis: there has been no change. She sticks to the

Page 143

former proportions: a number of rollicking comedies, admirably played, every night; and also every night at the Burg Theatre—that wonder of the world for grace and beauty and richness and splendour and costliness—a majestic drama of depth and seriousness, or a standard old tragedy. It is only within the last dozen years that men have learned to do miracles on the stage in the way of grand and enchanting scenic effects; and it is at such a time as this that we have reduced our scenery mainly to different breeds of parlours and varying aspects of furniture and rugs. I think we must have a Burg in New York, and Burg scenery, and a great company like the Burg company. Then, with a tragedy-tonic once or twice a month, we shall enjoy the comedies all the better. Comedy keeps the heart sweet; but we all know that there is wholesome refreshment for both mind and heart in an occasional climb among the solemn poms of the intellectual snow-summits built by Shakespeare and those others. Do I seem to be preaching? It is out of my life: I only do it because the rest of the clergy seem to be on vacation.

TRAVELLING WITH A REFORMER

Last spring I went out to Chicago to see the Fair, and although I did not see it my trip was not wholly lost—there were compensations. In New York I was introduced to a Major in the regular army who said he was going to the Fair, and we agreed to go together. I had to go to Boston first, but that did not interfere; he said he would go along and put in the time. He was a handsome man and built like a gladiator. But his ways were gentle, and his speech was soft and persuasive. He was companionable, but exceedingly reposeful. Yes, and wholly destitute of the sense of humour. He was full of interest in everything that went on around him, but his serenity was indestructible; nothing disturbed him, nothing excited him.

But before the day was done I found that deep down in him somewhere he had a passion, quiet as he was—a passion for reforming petty public abuses. He stood for citizenship—it was his hobby. His idea was that every citizen of the republic ought to consider himself an unofficial policeman, and keep unsalaried watch and ward over the laws and their execution. He thought that the only effective way of preserving and protecting public rights was for each citizen to do his share in preventing or punishing such infringements of them as came under his personal notice.

It was a good scheme, but I thought it would keep a body in trouble all the time; it seemed to me that one would be always trying to get offending little officials discharged, and perhaps getting laughed at for all reward. But he said no, I had the wrong idea: that there was no occasion to get anybody discharged; that in fact you mustn't get anybody discharged; that that would itself be a failure; no, one must reform the man—reform him and make him useful where he was.

Page 144

'Must one report the offender and then beg his superior not to discharge him, but reprimand him and keep him?'

'No, that is not the idea; you don't report him at all, for then you risk his bread and butter. You can act as if you are going to report him —when nothing else will answer. But that's an extreme case. That is a sort of force, and force is bad. Diplomacy is the effective thing. Now if a man has tact—if a man will exercise diplomacy—'

For two minutes we had been standing at a telegraph wicket, and during all this time the Major had been trying to get the attention of one of the young operators, but they were all busy skylarking. The Major spoke now, and asked one of them to take his telegram. He got for reply:

'I reckon you can wait a minute, can't you?' And the skylarking went on.

The Major said yes, he was not in a hurry. Then he wrote another telegram:

'President Western Union Tel. Co.:

'Come and dine with me this evening. I can tell you how business is conducted in one of your branches.'

Presently the young fellow who had spoken so pertly a little before reached out and took the telegram, and when he read it he lost colour and began to apologise and explain. He said he would lose his place if this deadly telegram was sent, and he might never get another. If he could be let off this time he would give no cause of complaint again. The compromise was accepted.

As we walked away, the Major said:

'Now, you see, that was diplomacy—and you see how it worked. It wouldn't do any good to bluster, the way people are always doing. That boy can always give you as good as you send, and you'll come out defeated and ashamed of yourself pretty nearly always. But you see he stands no chance against diplomacy. Gentle words and diplomacy—those are the tools to work with.'

'Yes, I see: but everybody wouldn't have had your opportunity. It isn't everybody that is on those familiar terms with the President of the Western Union.'

'Oh, you misunderstand. I don't know the President—I only use him diplomatically. It is for his good and for the public good. There's no harm in it.'

I said with hesitation and diffidence:

'But is it ever right or noble to tell a lie?'

He took no note of the delicate self-righteousness of the question, but answered with undisturbed gravity and simplicity:

'Yes, sometimes. Lies told to injure a person and lies told to profit yourself are not justifiable, but lies told to help another person, and lies told in the public interest—oh, well, that is quite another matter. Anybody knows that. But never mind about the methods: you see the result. That youth is going to be useful now, and well-behaved. He had a good face. He was worth saving. Why, he was worth saving on his mother's account if not his own.

Page 145

Of course, he has a mother—sisters, too. Damn these people who are always forgetting that! Do you know, I've never fought a duel in my life—never once—and yet have been challenged, like other people. I could always see the other man's unoffending women folks or his little children standing between him and me. They hadn't done anything—I couldn't break their hearts, you know.'

He corrected a good many little abuses in the course of the day, and always without friction—always with a fine and dainty 'diplomacy' which left no sting behind; and he got such happiness and such contentment out of these performances that I was obliged to envy him his trade—and perhaps would have adopted it if I could have managed the necessary deflections from fact as confidently with my mouth as I believe I could with a pen, behind the shelter of print, after a little practice.

Away late that night we were coming up-town in a horse-car when three boisterous roughs got aboard, and began to fling hilarious obscenities and profanities right and left among the timid passengers, some of whom were women and children. Nobody resisted or retorted; the conductor tried soothing words and moral suasion, but the toughs only called him names and laughed at him. Very soon I saw that the Major realised that this was a matter which was in his line; evidently he was turning over his stock of diplomacy in his mind and getting ready. I felt that the first diplomatic remark he made in this place would bring down a landslide of ridicule upon him, and maybe something worse; but before I could whisper to him and check him he had begun, and it was too late. He said, in a level and dispassionate tone:

'Conductor, you must put these swine out. I will help you.'

I was not looking for that. In a flash the three roughs plunged at him. But none of them arrived. He delivered three such blows as one could not expect to encounter outside the prize-ring, and neither of the men had life enough left in him to get up from where he fell. The Major dragged them out and threw them off the car, and we got under way again.

I was astonished: astonished to see a lamb act so; astonished at the strength displayed, and the clean and comprehensive result; astonished at the brisk and business-like style of the whole thing. The situation had a humorous side to it, considering how much I had been hearing about mild persuasion and gentle diplomacy all day from this pile-driver, and I would have liked to call his attention to that feature and do some sarcasms about it; but when I looked at him I saw that it would be of no use—his placid and contented face had no ray of humour in it; he would not have understood. When we left the car, I said:

'That was a good stroke of diplomacy—three good strokes of diplomacy, in fact.'

'That? That wasn't diplomacy. You are quite in the wrong. Diplomacy is a wholly different thing. One cannot apply it to that sort; they would not understand it. No, that was not diplomacy; it was force.'

Page 146

'Now that you mention it, I—yes, I think perhaps you are right.'

'Right? Of course I am right. It was just force.'

'I think, myself, it had the outside aspect of it. Do you often have to reform people in that way?'

'Far from it. It hardly ever happens. Not oftener than once in half a year, at the outside.'

'Those men will get well?'

'Get well? Why, certainly they will. They are not in any danger. I know how to hit and where to hit. You noticed that I did not hit them under the jaw. That would have killed them.'

I believed that. I remarked—rather wittily, as I thought—that he had been a lamb all day, but now had all of a sudden developed into a ram —battering-ram; but with dulcet frankness and simplicity he said no, a battering-ram was quite a different thing, and not in use now. This was maddening, and I came near bursting out and saying he had no more appreciation of wit than a jackass—in fact, I had it right on my tongue, but did not say it, knowing there was no hurry and I could say it just as well some other time over the telephone.

We started to Boston the next afternoon. The smoking compartment in the parlour-car was full, and he went into the regular smoker. Across the aisle in the front seat sat a meek, farmer-looking old man with a sickly pallor in his face, and he was holding the door open with his foot to get the air. Presently a big brakeman came rushing through, and when he got to the door he stopped, gave the farmer an ugly scowl, then wrenched the door to with such energy as to almost snatch the old man's boot off. Then on he plunged about his business. Several passengers laughed, and the old gentleman looked pathetically shamed and grieved.

After a little the conductor passed along, and the Major stopped him and asked him a question in his habitually courteous way:

'Conductor, where does one report the misconduct of a brakeman? Does one report to you?'

'You can report him at New Haven if you want to. What has he been doing?'

The Major told the story. The conductor seemed amused. He said, with just a touch of sarcasm in his bland tones:

'As I understand you, the brakeman didn't say anything?'



'No, he didn't say anything.'

'But he scowled, you say?'

'Yes.'

'And snatched the door loose in a rough way?'

'Yes.'

'That's the whole business, is it?'

'Yes, that is the whole of it.'

The conductor smiled pleasantly, and said:

'Well, if you want to report him, all right, but I don't quite make out what it's going to amount to. You'll say—as I understand you—that the brakeman insulted this old gentleman. They'll ask you what he said. You'll say he didn't say anything at all. I reckon they'll say, How are you going to make out an insult when you acknowledge yourself that he didn't say a word?'

Page 147

There was a murmur of applause at the conductor's compact reasoning, and it gave him pleasure—you could see it in his face. But the Major was not disturbed. He said:

'There—now you have touched upon a crying defect in the complaint system. The railway officials—as the public think and as you also seem to think—are not aware that there are any insults except spoken ones. So nobody goes to headquarters and reports insults of manner, insults of gesture, look, and so forth; and yet these are sometimes harder to bear than any words. They are bitter hard to bear because there is nothing tangible to take hold of; and the insulter can always say, if called before the railway officials, that he never dreamed of intending any offence. It seems to me that the officials ought to specially and urgently request the public to report unworded affronts and incivilities.'

The conductor laughed, and said:

'Well, that would be trimming it pretty fine, sure!'

'But not too fine, I think. I will report this matter at New Haven, and I have an idea that I'll be thanked for it.'

The conductor's face lost something of its complacency; in fact, it settled to a quite sober cast as the owner of it moved away. I said:

'You are not really going to bother with that trifle, are you?'

'It isn't a trifle. Such things ought always to be reported. It is a public duty and no citizen has a right to shirk it. But I sha'n't have to report this case.'

'Why?'

'It won't be necessary. Diplomacy will do the business. You'll see.'

Presently the conductor came on his rounds again, and when he reached the Major he leaned over and said:

'That's all right. You needn't report him. He's responsible to me, and if he does it again I'll give him a talking to.'

The Major's response was cordial:

'Now that is what I like! You mustn't think that I was moved by any vengeful spirit, for that wasn't the case. It was duty—just a sense of duty, that was all. My brother-in-law is one of the directors of the road, and when he learns that you are going to reason with your brakeman the very next time he brutally insults an unoffending old man it will please him, you may be sure of that.'

The conductor did not look as joyous as one might have thought he would, but on the contrary looked sickly and uncomfortable. He stood around a little; then said:

'I think something ought to be done to him now. I'll discharge him.'

'Discharge him! What good would that do? Don't you think it would be better wisdom to teach him better ways and keep him?'

'Well, there's something in that. What would you suggest?'

'He insulted the old gentleman in presence of all these people. How would it do to have him come and apologise in their presence?'

'I'll have him here right off. And I want to say this: If people would do as you've done, and report such things to me instead of keeping mum and going off and blackguarding the road, you'd see a different state of things pretty soon. I'm much obliged to you.'

Page 148

The brakeman came and apologised. After he was gone the Major said:

'Now you see how simple and easy that was. The ordinary citizen would have accomplished nothing—the brother-in-law of a directory can accomplish anything he wants to.'

'But are you really the brother-in-law of a director?'

'Always. Always when the public interests require it. I have a brother-in-law on all the boards—everywhere. It saves me a world of trouble.'

'It is a good wide relationship.'

'Yes. I have over three hundred of them.'

'Is the relationship never doubted by a conductor?'

'I have never met with a case. It is the honest truth—I never have.'

'Why didn't you let him go ahead and discharge the brakeman, in spite of your favourite policy. You know he deserved it.'

The Major answered with something which really had a sort of distant resemblance to impatience:

'If you would stop and think a moment you wouldn't ask such a question as that. Is a brakeman a dog, that nothing but dogs' methods will do for him? He is a man and has a man's fight for life. And he always has a sister, or a mother, or wife and children to support. Always—there are no exceptions. When you take his living away from him you take theirs away too—and what have they done to you? Nothing. And where is the profit in discharging an uncourteous brakeman and hiring another just like him? It's un wisdom. Don't you see that the rational thing to do is to reform the brakeman and keep him? Of course it is.'

Then he quoted with admiration the conduct of a certain division superintendent of the Consolidated road, in a case where a switchman of two years' experience was negligent once and threw a train off the track and killed several people. Citizens came in a passion to urge the man's dismissal, but the superintendent said:

'No, you are wrong. He has learned his lesson, he will throw no more trains off the track. He is twice as valuable as he was before. I shall keep him.'

We had only one more adventure on the train. Between Hartford and Springfield the train-boy came shouting with an armful of literature, and dropped a sample into a slumbering gentleman's lap, and the man woke up with a start. He was very angry, and



he and a couple of friends discussed the outrage with much heat. They sent for the parlour-car conductor and described the matter, and were determined to have the boy expelled from his situation. The three complainants were wealthy Holyoke merchants, and it was evident that the conductor stood in some awe of them. He tried to pacify them, and explained that the boy was not under his authority, but under that of one of the news companies; but he accomplished nothing.

Then the Major volunteered some testimony for the defence. He said:

'I saw it all. You gentlemen have not meant to exaggerate the circumstances, but still that is what you have done. The boy has done nothing more than all train-boys do. If you want to get his ways softened down and his manners reformed, I am with you and ready to help, but it isn't fair to get him discharged without giving him a chance.'

Page 149

But they were angry, and would hear of no compromise. They were well acquainted with the President of the Boston and Albany, they said, and would put everything aside next day and go up to Boston and fix that boy.

The Major said he would be on hand too, and would do what he could to save the boy. One of the gentlemen looked him over and said:

'Apparently it is going to be a matter of who can wield the most influence with the President. Do you know Mr. Bliss personally?'

The Major said, with composure:

'Yes; he is my uncle.'

The effect was satisfactory. There was an awkward silence for a minute or more; then the hedging and the half-confessions of over-haste and exaggerated resentment began, and soon everything was smooth and friendly and sociable, and it was resolved to drop the matter and leave the boy's bread and butter unmolested.

It turned out as I had expected: the President of the road was not the Major's uncle at all—except by adoption, and for this day and train only.

We got into no episodes on the return journey. Probably it was because we took a night train and slept all the way.

We left New York Saturday night by the Pennsylvania road. After breakfast the next morning we went into the parlour-car, but found it a dull place and dreary. There were but few people in it and nothing going on. Then we went into the little smoking compartment of the same car and found three gentlemen in there. Two of them were grumbling over one of the rules of the road—a rule which forbade card-playing on the trains on Sunday. They had started an innocent game of high-low-jack and had been stopped. The Major was interested. He said to the third gentleman:

'Did you object to the game?'

'Not at all. I am a Yale professor and a religious man, but my prejudices are not extensive.'

Then the Major said to the others:

'You are at perfect liberty to resume your game, gentlemen; no one here objects.'

One of them declined the risk, but the other one said he would like to begin again if the Major would join him. So they spread an overcoat over their knees and the game proceeded. Pretty soon the parlour-car conductor arrived, and said, brusquely:

'There, there, gentlemen, that won't do. Put up the cards—it's not allowed.'

The Major was shuffling. He continued to shuffle, and said:

'By whose order is it forbidden?'

'It's my order. I forbid it.'

The dealing began. The Major asked:

'Did you invent the idea?'

'What idea?'

'The idea of forbidding card-playing on Sunday.'

'No—of course not.'

'Who did?'

'The company.'

'Then it isn't your order, after all, but the company's. Is that it?'

'Yes. But you don't stop playing! I have to require you to stop playing immediately.'

Page 150

'Nothing is gained by hurry, and often much is lost. Who authorised the company to issue such an order?'

'My dear sir, that is a matter of no consequence to me, and—'

'But you forget that you are not the only person concerned. It may be a matter of consequence to me. It is, indeed, a matter of very great importance to me. I cannot violate a legal requirement of my country without dishonouring myself; I cannot allow any man or corporation to hamper my liberties with illegal rules—a thing which railway companies are always trying to do—without dishonouring my citizenship. So I come back to that question: By whose authority has the company issued this order?'

'I don't know. That's their affair.'

'Mine, too. I doubt if the company has any right to issue such a rule. This road runs through several States. Do you know what State we are in now, and what its laws are in matters of this kind?'

'Its laws do not concern me, but the company's orders do. It is my duty to stop this game, gentlemen, and it must be stopped.'

'Possibly; but still there is no hurry. In hotels they post certain rules in the rooms, but they always quote passages from the State law as authority for these requirements. I see nothing posted here of this sort. Please produce your authority and let us arrive at a decision, for you see yourself that you are marring the game.'

'I have nothing of the kind, but I have my orders, and that is sufficient. They must be obeyed.'

'Let us not jump to conclusions. It will be better all around to examine into the matter without heat or haste, and see just where we stand before either of us makes a mistake—for the curtailing of the liberties of a citizen of the United States is a much more serious matter than you and the railroads seem to think, and it cannot be done in my person until the curtailer proves his right to do so. Now—'

'My dear sir, will you put down those cards?'

'All in good time, perhaps. It depends. You say this order must be obeyed. Must. It is a strong word. You see yourself how strong it is. A wise company would not arm you with so drastic an order as this, of course, without appointing a penalty for its infringement. Otherwise it runs the risk of being a dead letter and a thing to laugh at. What is the appointed penalty for an infringement of this law?'

'Penalty? I never heard of any.'



'Unquestionably you must be mistaken. Your company orders you to come here and rudely break up an innocent amusement, and furnishes you no way to enforce the order! Don't you see that that is nonsense? What do you do when people refuse to obey this order? Do you take the cards away from them?'

'No.'

'Do you put the offender off at the next station?'

'Well, no—of course we couldn't if he had a ticket.'

Page 151

'Do you have him up before a court?'

The conductor was silent and apparently troubled. The Major started a new deal, and said:

'You see that you are helpless, and that the company has placed you in a foolish position. You are furnished with an arrogant order, and you deliver it in a blustering way, and when you come to look into the matter you find you haven't any way of enforcing obedience.'

The conductor said, with chill dignity:

'Gentlemen, you have heard the order, and my duty is ended. As to obeying it or not, you will do as you think fit.' And he turned to leave.

'But wait. The matter is not yet finished. I think you are mistaken about your duty being ended; but if it really is, I myself have a duty to perform yet.'

'How do you mean?'

'Are you going to report my disobedience at headquarters in Pittsburg?'

'No. What good would that do?'

'You must report me, or I will report you.'

'Report me for what?'

'For disobeying the company's orders in not stopping this game. As a citizen it is my duty to help the railway companies keep their servants to their work.'

'Are you in earnest?'

'Yes, I am in earnest. I have nothing against you as a man, but I have this against you as an officer—that you have not carried out that order, and if you do not report me I must report you. And I will.'

The conductor looked puzzled, and was thoughtful a moment; then he burst out with:

'I seem to be getting myself into a scrape! It's all a muddle; I can't make head or tail of it; it never happened before; they always knocked under and never said a word, and so I never saw how ridiculous that stupid order with no penalty is. I don't want to report anybody, and I don't want to be reported—why, it might do me no end of harm! No do go on with the game—play the whole day if you want to—and don't let's have any more trouble about it!'

'No, I only sat down here to establish this gentleman's rights—he can have his place now. But before won't you tell me what you think the company made this rule for? Can you imagine an excuse for it? I mean a rational one—an excuse that is not on its face silly, and the invention of an idiot?'

'Why, surely I can. The reason it was made is plain enough. It is to save the feelings of the other passengers—the religious ones among them, I mean. They would not like it to have the Sabbath desecrated by card-playing on the train.'

'I just thought as much. They are willing to desecrate it themselves by travelling on Sunday, but they are not willing that other people—'

'By gracious, you've hit it! I never thought of that before. The fact is, it is a silly rule when you come to look into it.'

At this point the train conductor arrived, and was going to shut down the game in a very high-handed fashion, but the parlour-car conductor stopped him, and took him aside to explain. Nothing more was heard of the matter.

Page 152

I was ill in bed eleven days in Chicago and got no glimpse of the Fair, for I was obliged to return East as soon as I was able to travel. The Major secured and paid for a state-room in a sleeper the day before we left, so that I could have plenty of room and be comfortable; but when we arrived at the station a mistake had been made and our car had not been put on. The conductor had reserved a section for us—it was the best he could do, he said. But Major said we were not in a hurry, and would wait for the car to be put on. The conductor responded, with pleasant irony:

'It may be that you are not in a hurry, just as you say, but we are. Come, get aboard, gentlemen, get aboard—don't keep us waiting.'

But the Major would not get aboard himself nor allow me to do it. He wanted his car, and said he must have it. This made the hurried and perspiring conductor impatient, and he said:

'It's the best we can do—we can't do impossibilities. You will take the section or go without. A mistake has been made and can't be rectified at this late hour. It's a thing that happens now and then, and there is nothing for it but to put up with it and make the best of it. Other people do.'

'Ah, that is just it, you see. If they had stuck to their rights and enforced them you wouldn't be trying to trample mine underfoot in this bland way now. I haven't any disposition to give you unnecessary trouble, but it is my duty to protect the next man from this kind of imposition. So I must have my car. Otherwise I will wait in Chicago and sue the company for violating its contract.'

'Sue the company?—for a thing like that!'

'Certainly.'

'Do you really mean that?'

'Indeed, I do.'

The conductor looked the Major over wonderingly, and then said:

'It beats me—it's bran-new—I've never struck the mate to it before. But I swear I think you'd do it. Look here, I'll send for the station-master.'

When the station-master came he was a good deal annoyed—at the Major, not at the person who had made the mistake. He was rather brusque, and took the same position which the conductor had taken in the beginning; but he failed to move the soft-spoken artilleryman, who still insisted that he must have his car. However, it was plain that there was only one strong side in this case, and that that side was the Major's. The station-master banished his annoyed manner, and became pleasant and even half-

apologetic. This made a good opening for a compromise, and the Major made a concession. He said he would give up the engaged state-room, but he must have a state-room. After a deal of ransacking, one was found whose owner was persuadable; he exchanged it for our section, and we got away at last. The conductor called on us in the evening, and was kind and courteous and obliging, and we had a long talk and got to be good friends. He said he wished the public would make trouble oftener—it would have a good effect. He said that the railroads could not be expected to do their whole duty by the traveller unless the traveller would take some interest in the matter himself.

Page 153

I hoped that we were done reforming for the trip now, but it was not so. In the hotel car, in the morning, the Major called for broiled chicken. The waiter said:

'It's not in the bill of fare, sir; we do not serve anything but what is in the bill.'

'That gentleman yonder is eating a broiled chicken.'

'Yes, but that is different. He is one of the superintendents of the road.'

'Then all the more must I have broiled chicken. I do not like these discriminations. Please hurry—bring me a broiled chicken.'

The waiter brought the steward, who explained in a low and polite voice that the thing was impossible—it was against the rule, and the rule was rigid.

'Very well, then, you must either apply it impartially or break it impartially. You must take that gentleman's chicken away from him or bring me one.'

The steward was puzzled, and did not quite know what to do. He began an incoherent argument, but the conductor came along just then, and asked what the difficulty was. The steward explained that here was a gentleman who was insisting on having a chicken when it was dead against the rule and not in the bill. The conductor said:

'Stick by your rules—you haven't any option. Wait a moment—is this the gentleman?' Then he laughed and said: 'Never mind your rules—it's my advice, and sound: give him anything he wants—don't get him started on his rights. Give him whatever he asks for; and if you haven't got it, stop the train and get it.'

The Major ate the chicken, but said he did it from a sense of duty and to establish a principle, for he did not like chicken.

I missed the Fair it is true, but I picked up some diplomatic tricks which I and the reader may find handy and useful as we go along.

DIPLOMATIC PAY AND CLOTHES

Vienna, January 5—I find in this morning's papers the statement that the Government of the United States has paid to the two members of the Peace Commission entitled to receive money for their services 100,000 dollars each for their six weeks' work in Paris.

I hope that this is true. I will allow myself the satisfaction of considering that it is true, and of treating it as a thing finished and settled.

It is a precedent; and ought to be a welcome one to our country. A precedent always has a chance to be valuable (as well as the other way); and its best chance to be valuable (or the other way) is when it takes such a striking form as to fix a whole nation's attention upon it. If it come justified out of the discussion which will follow, it will find a career ready and waiting for it.

Page 154

We realise that the edifice of public justice is built of precedents, from the ground upward; but we do not always realise that all the other details of our civilisation are likewise built of precedents. The changes also which they undergo are due to the intrusion of new precedents, which hold their ground against opposition, and keep their place. A precedent may die at birth, or it may live—it is mainly a matter of luck. If it be imitated once, it has a chance; if twice a better chance; if three times it is reaching a point where account must be taken of it; if four, five, or six times, it has probably come to stay—for a whole century, possibly. If a town start a new bow, or a new dance, or a new temperance project, or a new kind of hat, and can get the precedent adopted in the next town, the career of that precedent is begun; and it will be unsafe to bet as to where the end of its journey is going to be. It may not get this start at all, and may have no career; but, if a crown prince introduce the precedent, it will attract vast attention, and its chances for a career are so great as to amount almost to a certainty.

For a long time we have been reaping damage from a couple of disastrous precedents. One is the precedent of shabby pay to public servants standing for the power and dignity of the Republic in foreign lands; the other is a precedent condemning them to exhibit themselves officially in clothes which are not only without grace or dignity, but are a pretty loud and pious rebuke to the vain and frivolous costumes worn by the other officials. To our day an American ambassador's official costume remains under the reproach of these defects. At a public function in a European court all foreign representatives except ours wear clothes which in some way distinguish them from the unofficial throng, and mark them as standing for their countries. But our representative appears in a plain black swallow-tail, which stands for neither country, nor people. It has no nationality. It is found in all countries; it is as international as a night-shirt. It has no particular meaning; but our Government tries to give it one; it tries to make it stand for Republican Simplicity, modesty and unpretentiousness. Tries, and without doubt fails, for it is not conceivable that this loud ostentation of simplicity deceives any one. The statue that advertises its modesty with a fig-leaf really brings its modesty under suspicion. Worn officially, our nonconforming swallow-tail is a declaration of ungracious independence in the matter of manners, and is uncourteous. It says to all around: 'In Rome we do not choose to do as Rome does; we refuse to respect your tastes and your traditions; we make no sacrifices to anyone's customs and prejudices; we yield no jot to the courtesies of life; we prefer our manners, and intrude them here.'

That is not the true American spirit, and those clothes misrepresent us. When a foreigner comes among us and trespasses against our customs and our code of manners, we are offended, and justly so; but our Government commands our ambassadors to wear abroad an official dress which is an offence against foreign manners and customers; and the discredit of it falls upon the nation.

Page 155

We did not dress our public functionaries in undistinguished raiment before Franklin's time; and the change would not have come if he had been an obscurity. But he was such a colossal figure in the world that whatever he did of an unusual nature attracted the world's attention, and became a precedent. In the case of clothes, the next representative after him, and the next, had to imitate it. After that, the thing was custom; and custom is a petrification: nothing but dynamite can dislodge it for a century. We imagine that our queer official costumery was deliberately devised to symbolise our Republican Simplicity—a quality which we have never possessed, and are too old to acquire now, if we had any use for it or any leaning toward it. But it is not so; there was nothing deliberate about it; it grew naturally and heedlessly out of the precedent set by Franklin.

If it had been an intentional thing, and based upon a principle, it would not have stopped where it did: we should have applied it further. Instead of clothing our admirals and generals, for courts-martial and other public functions, in superb dress uniforms blazing with colour and gold, the Government would put them in swallow-tails and white cravats, and make them look like ambassadors and lackeys. If I am wrong in making Franklin the father of our curious official clothes, it is no matter—he will be able to stand it.

It is my opinion—and I make no charge for the suggestion—that, whenever we appoint an ambassador or a minister, we ought to confer upon him the temporary rank of admiral or general, and allow him to wear the corresponding uniform at public functions in foreign countries. I would recommend this for the reason that it is not consonant with the dignity of the United States of America that her representative should appear upon occasions of state in a dress which makes him glaringly conspicuous; and that is what his present undertaker-outfit does when it appears, with its dismal smudge, in the midst of the butterfly splendours of a Continental court. It is a most trying position for a shy man, a modest man, a man accustomed to being like other people. He is the most striking figure present; there is no hiding from the multitudinous eyes. It would be funny, if it were not such a cruel spectacle, to see the hunted creature in his solemn sables scuffling around in that sea of vivid colour, like a mislaid Presbyterian in perdition. We are all aware that our representative's dress should not compel too much attention; for anybody but an Indian chief knows that that is a vulgarity. I am saying these things in the interest of our national pride and dignity. Our representative is the flag. He is the Republic. He is the United States of America. And when these embodiments pass by, we do not want them scoffed at; we desire that people shall be obliged to concede that they are worthily clothed, and politely.

Page 156

Our Government is oddly inconsistent in this matter of official dress. When its representative is a civilian who has not been a soldier, it restricts him to the black swallow-tail and white tie; but if he is a civilian who has been a soldier, it allows him to wear the uniform of his former rank as an official dress. When General Sickles was minister to Spain, he always wore, when on official duty, the dress uniform of a major-general. When General Grant visited foreign courts, he went handsomely and properly ablaze in the uniform of a full general, and was introduced by diplomatic survivors of his own Presidential Administration. The latter, by official necessity, went in the meek and lowly swallow-tail—a deliciously sarcastic contrast: the one dress representing the honest and honourable dignity of the nation; the other, the cheap hypocrisy of the Republican Simplicity tradition. In Paris our present representative can perform his official functions reputably clothed; for he was an officer in the Civil War. In London our late ambassador was similarly situated; for he, also, was an officer in the Civil War. But Mr. Choate must represent the Great Republic—even at official breakfasts at seven in the morning—in that same old funny swallow-tail.

Our Government's notions about proprieties of costume are indeed very, very odd—as suggested by that last fact. The swallow-tail is recognised the world over as not wearable in the daytime; it is a night-dress, and a night-dress only—a night-shirt is not more so. Yet, when our representative makes an official visit in the morning, he is obliged by his Government to go in that night-dress. It makes the very cab-horses laugh.

The truth is, that for awhile during the present century, and up to something short of forty years ago, we had a lucid interval, and dropped the Republican Simplicity sham, and dressed our foreign representatives in a handsome and becoming official costume. This was discarded by-and-by, and the swallow-tail substituted. I believe it is not now known which statesman brought about this change; but we all know that, stupid as he was as to diplomatic proprieties in dress, he would not have sent his daughter to a state ball in a corn-shucking costume, nor to a corn-shucking in a state-ball costume, to be harshly criticised as an ill-mannered offender against the proprieties of custom in both places. And we know another thing, viz. that he himself would not have wounded the tastes and feelings of a family of mourners by attending a funeral in their house in a costume which was an offence against the dignities and decorum prescribed by tradition and sanctified by custom. Yet that man was so heedless as not to reflect that all the social customs of civilised peoples are entitled to respectful observance, and that no man with a right spirit of courtesy in him ever has any disposition to transgress these customs.

Page 157

There is still another argument for a rational diplomatic dress—a business argument. We are a trading nation; and our representative is a business agent. If he is respected, esteemed, and liked where he is stationed, he can exercise an influence which can extend our trade and forward our prosperity. A considerable number of his business activities have their field in his social relations; and clothes which do not offend against local manners and customs and prejudices are a valuable part of his equipment in this matter—would be, if Franklin had died earlier.

I have not done with gratis suggestions yet. We made a great deal of valuable advance when we instituted the office of ambassador. That lofty rank endows its possessor with several times as much influence, consideration, and effectiveness as the rank of minister bestows. For the sake of the country's dignity and for the sake of her advantage commercially, we should have ambassadors, not ministers, at the great courts of the world.

But not at present salaries! No; if we are to maintain present salaries, let us make no more ambassadors; and let us unmake those we have already made. The great position, without the means of respectably maintaining it—there could be no wisdom in that. A foreign representative, to be valuable to his country, must be on good terms with the officials of the capital and with the rest of the influential folk. He must mingle with this society; he cannot sit at home—it is not business, it butters no commercial parsnips. He must attend the dinners, banquets, suppers, balls, receptions, and must return these hospitalities. He should return as good as he gets, too, for the sake of the dignity of his country, and for the sake of Business. Have we ever had a minister or an ambassador who could do this on his salary? No—not once, from Franklin's time to ours. Other countries understand the commercial value of properly lining the pockets of their representatives; but apparently our Government has not learned it. England is the most successful trader of the several trading nations; and she takes good care of the watchmen who keep guard in her commercial towers. It has been a long time, now, since we needed to blush for our representatives abroad. It has become custom to send our fittest. We send men of distinction, cultivation, character—our ablest, our choicest, our best. Then we cripple their efficiency through the meagreness of their pay. Here is a list of salaries for English and American ministers and ambassadors:

City Salaries

American English

Paris	\$17,500	\$45,000
Berlin	17,500	40,000
Vienna	12,000	40,000
Constantinople	10,000	40,000
St. Petersburg	17,500	39,000

Rome 12,000 35,000
Washington — 32,500

Page 158

Sir Julian Pauncefote, the English ambassador at Washington, has a very fine house besides—at no damage to his salary.

English ambassadors pay no house rent; they live in palaces owned by England. Our representatives pay house-rent out of their salaries. You can judge by the above figures what kind of houses the United States of America has been used to living in abroad, and what sort of return-entertaining she has done. There is not a salary in our list which would properly house the representative receiving it, and, in addition, pay \$3,000 toward his family's bacon and doughnuts—the strange but economical and customary fare of the American ambassador's household, except on Sundays, when petrified Boston crackers are added.

The ambassadors and ministers of foreign nations not only have generous salaries, but their Governments provide them with money wherewith to pay a considerable part of their hospitality bills. I believe our Government pays no hospitality bills except those incurred by the navy. Through this concession to the navy, that arm is able to do us credit in foreign parts; and certainly that is well and politic. But why the Government does not think it well and politic that our diplomats should be able to do us like credit abroad is one of those mysterious inconsistencies which have been puzzling me ever since I stopped trying to understand baseball and took up statesmanship as a pastime.

To return to the matter of house-rent. Good houses, properly furnished, in European capitals, are not to be had at small figures. Consequently, our foreign representatives have been accustomed to live in garrets —sometimes on the roof. Being poor men, it has been the best they could do on the salary which the Government has paid them. How could they adequately return the hospitalities shown them? It was impossible. It would have exhausted the salary in three months. Still, it was their official duty to entertain their influentials after some sort of fashion; and they did the best they could with their limited purse. In return for champagne they furnished lemonade; in return for game they furnished ham; in return for whale they furnished sardines; in return for liquors they furnished condensed milk; in return for the battalion of liveried and powdered flunkies they furnished the hired girl; in return for the fairy wilderness of sumptuous decorations they draped the stove with the American flag; in return for the orchestra they furnished zither and ballads by the family; in return for the ball—but they didn't return the ball, except in cases where the United States lived on the roof and had room.

Is this an exaggeration? It can hardly be called that. I saw nearly the equivalent of it, a good many years ago. A minister was trying to create influential friends for a project which might be worth ten millions a year to the agriculturists of the Republic; and our Government had furnished him ham and lemonade to persuade the opposition with. The minister did not succeed. He might not have succeeded if his salary had been what it ought to have been—\$50,000 or \$60,00 a year—but his chances would have been

very greatly improved. And in any case, he and his dinners and his country would not have been joked about by the hard-hearted and pitied by the compassionate.

Page 159

Any experienced 'drummer' will testify that, when you want to do business, there is no economy in ham and lemonade. The drummer takes his country customer to the theatre, the opera, the circus; dines him, wines him, entertains him all the day and all the night in luxurious style; and plays upon his human nature in all seductive ways. For he knows, by old experience, that this is the best way to get a profitable order out of him. He has this reward. All Governments except our own play the same policy, with the same end in view; and they, also, have their reward. But ours refuses to do business by business ways, and sticks to ham and lemonade. This is the most expensive diet known to the diplomatic service of the world.

Ours is the only country of first importance that pays its foreign representatives trifling salaries. If we were poor, we could not find great fault with these economies, perhaps—at least one could find a sort of plausible excuse for them. But we are not poor; and the excuse fails. As shown above, some of our important diplomatic representatives receive \$12,000; others, \$17,500. These salaries are all ham and lemonade, and unworthy of the flag. When we have a rich ambassador in London or Paris, he lives as the ambassador of a country like ours ought to live, and it costs him \$100,000 a year to do it. But why should we allow him to pay that out of his private pocket? There is nothing fair about it; and the Republic is no proper subject for any one's charity. In several cases our salaries of \$12,000 should be \$50,000; and all of the salaries of \$17,500 ought to be \$75,000 or \$100,000, since we pay no representative's house-rent. Our State Department realises the mistake which we are making, and would like to rectify it, but it has not the power.

When a young girl reaches eighteen she is recognised as being a woman. She adds six inches to her skirt, she unplaits her dangling braids and balls her hair on top of her head, she stops sleeping with her little sister and has a room to herself, and becomes in many ways a thundering expense. But she is in society now; and papa has to stand it. There is no avoiding it. Very well. The Great Republic lengthened her skirts last year, balled up her hair, and entered the world's society. This means that, if she would prosper and stand fair with society, she must put aside some of her dearest and darlingest young ways and superstitions, and do as society does. Of course, she can decline if she wants to; but this would be unwise. She ought to realise, now that she has 'come out,' that this is a right and proper time to change a part of her style. She is in Rome; and it has long been granted that when one is in Rome it is good policy to do as Rome does. To advantage Rome? No—to advantage herself.

If our Government has really paid representatives of ours on the Paris Commission \$100,000 apiece for six weeks' work, I feel sure that it is the best cash investment the nation has made in many years. For it seems quite impossible that, with that precedent on the books, the Government will be able to find excuses for continuing its diplomatic salaries at the present mean figure.

Page 160

P.S.—*Vienna*, January 10.—I see, by this morning's telegraphic news, that I am not to be the new ambassador here, after all. This—well, I hardly know what to say. I—well, of course, I do not care anything about it; but it is at least a surprise. I have for many months been using my influence at Washington to get this diplomatic see expanded into an ambassadorship, with the idea, of course th—But never mind. Let it go. It is of no consequence. I say it calmly; for I am calm. But at the same time—However, the subject has no interest for me, and never had. I never really intended to take the place, anyway—I made up my mind to it months and months ago, nearly a year. But now, while I am calm, I would like to say this—that so long as I shall continue to possess an American's proper pride in the honour and dignity of his country, I will not take any ambassadorship in the gift of the flag at a salary short of \$75,000 a year. If I shall be charged with wanting to live beyond my country's means, I cannot help it. A country which cannot afford ambassador's wages should be ashamed to have ambassadors.

Think of a Seventeen-thousand-five-hundred-dollar ambassador! Particularly for America. Why it is the most ludicrous spectacle, the most inconsistent and incongruous spectacle, contrivable by even the most diseased imagination. It is a billionaire in a paper collar, a king in a breechclout, an archangel in a tin halo. And, for pure sham and hypocrisy, the salary is just the match of the ambassador's official clothes—that boastful advertisement of a Republican Simplicity which manifests itself at home in Fifty-thousand-dollar salaries to insurance presidents and railway lawyers, and in domestic palaces whose fittings and furnishings often transcend in costly display and splendour and richness the fittings and furnishings of the palaces of the sceptred masters of Europe; and which has invented and exported to the Old World the palace-car, the sleeping-car, the tram-car, the electric trolley, the best bicycles, the best motor-cars, the steam-heater, the best and smartest systems of electric calls and telephonic aids to laziness and comfort, the elevator, the private bath-room (hot and cold water on tap), the palace-hotel, with its multifarious conveniences, comforts, shows, and luxuries, the—oh, the list is interminable! In a word, Republican Simplicity found Europe with one shirt on her back, so to speak, as far as real luxuries, conveniences, and the comforts of life go, and has clothed her to the chin with the latter. We are the lavishest and showiest and most luxury-loving people on the earth; and at our masthead we fly one true and honest symbol, the gaudiest flag the world has ever seen. Oh, Republican Simplicity, there are many, many humbugs in the world, but none to which you need take off your hat!

LUCK

[*Note*.—This is not a fancy sketch. I got it from a clergyman who was an instructor at Woolwich forty years ago, and who vouched for its truth. —M.T.]



Page 161

It was at a banquet in London in honour of one of the two or three conspicuously illustrious English military names of this generation. For reasons which will presently appear, I will withhold his real name and titles, and call him Lieutenant-General Lord Arthur Scoresby, V.C., K.C.B., *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.* What a fascination there is in a renowned name! There say the man, in actual flesh, whom I had heard of so many thousands of times since that day, thirty years before, when his name shot suddenly to the zenith from a Crimean battle-field, to remain for ever celebrated. It was food and drink to me to look, and look, and look at that demigod; scanning, searching, noting: the quietness, the reserve, the noble gravity of his countenance; the simple honesty that expressed itself all over him; the sweet unconsciousness of his greatness—unconsciousness of the hundreds of admiring eyes fastened upon him, unconsciousness of the deep, loving, sincere worship welling out of the breasts of those people and flowing toward him.

The clergyman at my left was an old acquaintance of mine—clergyman now, but had spent the first half of his life in the camp and field, and as an instructor in the military school at Woolwich. Just at the moment I have been talking about, a veiled and singular light glimmered in his eyes, and he leaned down and muttered confidentially to me—indicating the hero of the banquet with a gesture,—‘Privately—his glory is an accident—just a product of incredible luck.’

This verdict was a great surprise to me. If its subject had been Napoleon, or Socrates, or Solomon, my astonishment could not have been greater.

Some days later came the explanation of this strange remark, and this is what the Reverend told me.

About forty years ago I was an instructor in the military academy at Woolwich. I was present in one of the sections when young Scoresby underwent his preliminary examination. I was touched to the quick with pity; for the rest of the class answered up brightly and handsomely, while he—why, dear me, he didn’t know anything, so to speak. He was evidently good, and sweet, and lovable, and guileless; and so it was exceedingly painful to see him stand there, as serene as a graven image, and deliver himself of answers which were veritably miraculous for stupidity and ignorance. All the compassion in me was aroused in his behalf. I said to myself, when he comes to be examined again, he will be flung over, of course; so it will be simple a harmless act of charity to ease his fall as much as I can.

I took him aside, and found that he knew a little of Caesar’s history; and as he didn’t know anything else, I went to work and drilled him like a galley-slave on a certain line of stock questions concerning Caesar which I knew would be used. If you’ll believe me, he went through with flying colours on examination day! He went through on that purely superficial ‘cram’, and got compliments, too, while others, who knew a thousand times more than he, got plucked. By some strangely lucky accident—an accident not likely to

happen twice in a century—he was asked no question outside of the narrow limits of his drill.

Page 162

It was stupefying. Well, although through his course I stood by him, with something of the sentiment which a mother feels for a crippled child; and he always saved himself—just by miracle, apparently.

Now of course the thing that would expose him and kill him at last was mathematics. I resolved to make his death as easy as I could; so I drilled him and crammed him, and crammed him and drilled him, just on the line of questions which the examiner would be most likely to use, and then launched him on his fate. Well, sir, try to conceive of the result: to my consternation, he took the first prize! And with it he got a perfect ovation in the way of compliments.

Sleep! There was no more sleep for me for a week. My conscience tortured me day and night. What I had done I had done purely through charity, and only to ease the poor youth's fall—I never had dreamed of any such preposterous result as the thing that had happened. I felt as guilty and miserable as the creator of Frankenstein. Here was a wooden-head whom I had put in the way of glittering promotions and prodigious responsibilities, and but one thing could happen: he and his responsibilities would all go to ruin together at the first opportunity.

The Crimean war had just broken out. Of course there had to be a war, I said to myself: we couldn't have peace and give this donkey a chance to die before he is found out. I waited for the earthquake. It came. And it made me reel when it did come. He was actually gazetted to a captaincy in a marching regiment! Better men grow old and gray in the service before they climb to a sublimity like that. And who could ever have foreseen that they would go and put such a load of responsibility on such green and inadequate shoulders? I could just barely have stood it if they had made him a cornet; but a captain—think of it! I thought my hair would turn white.

Consider what I did—I who so loved repose and inaction. I said to myself, I am responsible to the country for this, and I must go along with him and protect the country against him as far as I can. So I took my poor little capital that I had saved up through years of work and grinding economy, and went with a sigh and bought a cornetcy in his regiment, and away we went to the field.

And there—oh dear, it was awful. Blunders? why, he never did anything but blunder. But, you see, nobody was in the fellow's secret—everybody had him focused wrong, and necessarily misinterpreted his performance every time—consequently they took his idiotic blunders for inspirations of genius; they did honestly! His mildest blunders were enough to make a man in his right mind cry; and they did make me cry—and rage and rave too, privately. And the thing that kept me always in a sweat of apprehension was the fact that every fresh blunder he made increased the lustre of his reputation! I kept saying to myself, he'll get so high that when discovery does finally come it will be like the sun falling out of the sky.

Page 163

He went right along up, from grade to grade, over the dead bodies of his superiors, until at last, in the hottest moment of the battle of ... down went our colonel, and my heart jumped into my mouth, for Scoresby was next in rank! Now for it, said I; we'll all land in Sheol in ten minutes, sure.

The battle was awfully hot; the allies were steadily giving way all over the field. Our regiment occupied a position that was vital; a blunder now must be destruction. At this critical moment, what does this immortal fool do but detach the regiment from its place and order a charge over a neighbouring hill where there wasn't a suggestion of an enemy! 'There you go!' I said to myself; 'this is the end at last.'

And away we did go, and were over the shoulder of the hill before the insane movement could be discovered and stopped. And what did we find? An entire and unsuspected Russian army in reserve! And what happened? We were eaten up? That is necessarily what would have happened in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. But no; those Russians argued that no single regiment would come browsing around there at such a time. It must be the entire English army, and that the sly Russian game was detected and blocked; so they turned tail, and away they went, pell-mell, over the hill and down into the field, in wild confusion, and we after them; they themselves broke the solid Russia centre in the field, and tore through, and in no time there was the most tremendous rout you ever saw, and the defeat of the allies was turned into a sweeping and splendid victory! Marshal Canrobert looked on, dizzy with astonishment, admiration, and delight; and sent right off for Scoresby, and hugged him, and decorated him on the field in presence of all the armies!

And what was Scoresby's blunder that time? Merely the mistaking his right hand for his left—that was all. An order had come to him to fall back and support our right; and instead he fell forward and went over the hill to the left. But the name he won that day as a marvellous military genius filled the world with his glory, and that glory will never fade while history books last.

He is just as good and sweet and lovable and unpretending as a man can be, but he doesn't know enough to come in when it rains. He has been pursued, day by day and year by year, by a most phenomenal and astonishing luckiness. He has been a shining soldier in all our wars for half a generation; he has littered his military life with blunders, and yet has never committed one that didn't make him a knight or a baronet or a lord or something. Look at his breast; why, he is just clothed in domestic and foreign decorations. Well, sir, every one of them is a record of some shouting stupidity or other; and, taken together, they are proof that the very best thing in all this world that can befall a man is to be born lucky.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY

Page 164

There was a good deal of pleasant gossip about old Captain 'Hurricane' Jones, of the Pacific Ocean—peace to his ashes! Two or three of us present had known him; I, particularly well, for I had made four sea-voyages with him. He was a very remarkable man. He was born on a ship; he picked up what little education he had among his ship-mates; he began life in the fore-castle, and climbed grade by grade to the captaincy. More than fifty years of his sixty-five were spent at sea. He had sailed all oceans, seen all lands, and borrowed a tint from all climates. When a man has been fifty years at sea, he necessarily knows nothing of men, nothing of the world but its surface, nothing of the world's thought, nothing of the world's learning but it's a B C, and that blurred and distorted by the unfocussed lenses of an untrained mind. Such a man is only a gray and bearded child. That is what old Hurricane Jones was—simply an innocent, lovable old infant. When his spirit was in repose he was as sweet and gentle as a girl; when his wrath was up he was a hurricane that made his nickname seem tamely descriptive. He was formidable in a fight, for he was of powerful build and dauntless courage. He was frescoed from head to heel with pictures and mottoes tattooed in red and blue India ink. I was with him one voyage when he got his last vacant space tattooed; this vacant space was around his left ankle. During three days he stumped about the ship with his ankle bare and swollen, and this legend gleaming red and angry out from a clouding of India ink: 'Virtue is its own R'd.' (There was a lack of room.) He was deeply and sincerely pious, and swore like a fish-woman. He considered swearing blameless, because sailors would not understand an order unilluminated by it. He was a profound Biblical scholar—that is, he thought he was. He believed everything in the Bible, but he had his own methods of arriving at his beliefs. He was of the 'advanced' school of thinkers, and applied natural laws to the interpretation of all miracles, somewhat on the plan of the people who make the six days of creation six geological epochs, and so forth. Without being aware of it, he was a rather severe satirist on modern scientific religionists. Such a man as I have been describing is rabidly fond of disquisition and argument; one knows that without being told it.

One trip the captain had a clergyman on board, but did not know he was a clergyman, since the passenger list did not betray the fact. He took a great liking to this Rev. Mr. Peters, and talked with him a great deal: told him yarns, gave him toothsome scraps of personal history, and wove a glittering streak of profanity through his garrulous fabric that was refreshing to a spirit weary of the dull neutralities of undecorated speech. One day the captain said, 'Peters, do you ever read the Bible?'

'Well—yes.'

'I judge it ain't often, by the way you say it. Now, you tackle it in dead earnest once, and you'll find it'll pay. Don't you get discouraged, but hang right on. First you won't understand it; but by-and-by things will begin to clear up, and then you wouldn't lay it down to —ear.'

Page 165

'Yes, I have heard that said.'

'And it's so too. There ain't a book that begins with it. It lays over 'em all, Peters. There's some pretty tough things in it—there ain't any getting around that—but you stick to them and think them out, and when once you get on the inside everything's plain as day.'

'The miracles, too, captain?'

'Yes, sir! the miracles, too. Every one of them. Now, there's that business with the prophets of Baal; like enough that stumped you?'

'Well, I don't know but—'

'Own up, now; it stumped you. Well, I don't wonder. You hadn't any experience in ravelling such things out, and naturally it was too many for you. Would you like to have me explain that thing to you, and show you how to get at the meat of these matters?'

'Indeed, I would, captain, if you don't mind.'

Then the captain proceeded as follows: 'I'll do it with pleasure. First, you see, I read and read, and thought and thought, till I got to understand what sort of people they were in the old Bible times, and then after that it was clear and easy. Now, this was the way I put it up, concerning Isaac^[1] and the prophets of Baal. There was some mighty sharp men amongst the public characters of that old ancient day, and Isaac was one of them. Isaac had his failings—plenty of them, too; it ain't for me to apologise for Isaac; he played a cold deck on the prophets of Baal, and like enough he was justifiable, considering the odds that was against him. No, all I say it, 't' wa'n't any miracle, and that I'll show you so's 't you can see it yourself.

'Well, times had been getting rougher and rougher for prophets—that is, prophets of Isaac's denomination. There were four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal in the community, and only one Presbyterian; that is, if Isaac was a Presbyterian, which I reckon he was, but it don't say. Naturally, the prophets of Baal took all the trade. Isaac was pretty low spirited, I reckon, but he was a good deal of a man, and no doubt he went a-prophesying around, letting on to be doing a land-office business, but 't' wa'n't any use; he couldn't run any opposition to amount to anything. By-and-by things got desperate with him; he sets his head to work and thinks it all out, and then what does he do? Why he begins to throw out hints that the other parties are this and that and t'other, —nothing very definite, may be, but just kind of undermining their reputation in a quiet way. This made talk, of course, and finally got to the King. The King asked Isaac what he meant by his talk. Says Isaac, "Oh, nothing particular; only, can they pray down fire from heaven on an altar? It ain't much, maybe, your majesty, only can they do it? That's the idea." So the King was a good deal disturbed, and he went to the prophets of

Baal, and they said, pretty airy, that if he had an altar ready, they were ready; and they intimated he better get it insured, too.

Page 166

'So next morning all the Children of Israel and their parents and the other people gathered themselves together. Well, here was that great crowd of prophets of Baal packed together on one side, and Isaac walking up and down all alone on the other, putting up his job. When time was called, Isaac let on to be comfortable and indifferent; told the other team to take the first innings. So they went at it, the whole four hundred and fifty, praying around the altar, very hopefully, and doing their level best. They prayed an hour—two hours—three hours—and so on, plumb till noon. It wa'n't any use; they hadn't took a trick. Of course they felt kind of ashamed before all those people, and well they might. Now, what would a magnanimous man do? Keep still, wouldn't he? Of course. What did Isaac do? He graveled the prophets of Baal every way he could think of. Says he, "You don't speak up loud enough; your god's asleep, like enough, or may be he's taking a walk; you want to holler, you know," or words to that effect; I don't recollect the exact language. Mind I don't apologise for Isaac; he had his faults.

'Well, the prophets of Baal prayed along the best they knew how all the afternoon, and never raised a spark. At last, about sundown, they were all tuckered out, and they owned up and quit.

'What does Isaac do, now? He steps up and says to some friends of his, there, "Pour four barrels of water on the altar!" Everybody was astonished; for the other side had prayed at it dry, you know, and got whitewashed. They poured it on. Says he, "Heave on four more barrels." Then he says, "Heave on four more." Twelve barrels, you see, altogether. The water ran all over the altar, and all down the sides, and filled up a trench around it that would hold a couple of hogsheads—"measures," it says: I reckon it means about a hogshead. Some of the people were going to put on their things and go, for they allowed he was crazy. They didn't know Isaac. Isaac knelt down and began to pray: he strung along, and strung along, about the heathen in distant lands, and about the sister churches, and about the state and the country at large, and about those that's in authority in the government, and all the usual programme, you know, till everybody had got tired and gone to thinking about something else, and then, all of a sudden, when nobody was noticing, he outs with a match and rakes it on the under side of his leg, and pff! up the whole thing blazes like a house afire! Twelve barrels of water? Petroleum, sir, *Petroleum*! that's what it was!'

'Petroleum, captain?'

'Yes, sir; the country was full of it. Isaac knew all about that. You read the Bible. Don't you worry about the tough places. They ain't tough when you come to think them out and throw light on them. There ain't a thing in the Bible but what is true; all you want is to go prayerfully to work and cipher out how 'twas done.'

Page 167

[1] This is the captain's own mistake.

STIRRING TIMES IN AUSTRIA

I. THE GOVERNMENT IN THE FRYING-PAN.

Here in Vienna in these closing days of 1897 one's blood gets no chance to stagnate. The atmosphere is brimful of political electricity. All conversation is political; every man is a battery, with brushes overworn, and gives out blue sparks when you set him going on the common topic. Everybody has an opinion, and lets you have it frank and hot, and out of this multitude of counsel you get merely confusion and despair. For no one really understands this political situation, or can tell you what is going to be the outcome of it.

Things have happened here recently which would set any country but Austria on fire from end to end, and upset the Government to a certainty; but no one feels confident that such results will follow here. Here, apparently, one must wait and see what will happen, then he will know, and not before; guessing is idle; guessing cannot help the matter. This is what the wise tell you; they all say it; they say it every day, and it is the sole detail upon which they all agree.

There is some approach to agreement upon another point: that there will be no revolution. Men say: 'Look at our history, revolutions have not been in our line; and look at our political map, its construction is unfavourable to an organised uprising, and without unity what could a revolt accomplish? It is disunion which has held our empire together for centuries, and what it has done in the past it may continue to do now and in the future.'

The most intelligible sketch I have encountered of this unintelligible arrangement of things was contributed to the 'Traveller's Record' by Mr. Forrest Morgan, of Hartford, three years ago. He says:

'The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is the patchwork-quilt, the Midway Plaisance, the national chain-gang of Europe; a state that is not a nation, but a collection of nations, some with national memories and aspirations and others without, some occupying distinct provinces almost purely their own, and others mixed with alien races, but each with a different language, and each mostly holding the others foreigners as much as if the link of a common government did not exist. Only one of its races even now comprises so much as one-fourth of the whole, and not another so much as one-sixth; and each has remained for ages as unchanged in isolation, however mingled together in locality, as globules of oil in water. There is nothing else in the modern world that is nearly like it, though there have been plenty in past ages; it seems unreal and impossible even though we know it is true; it violates all our feeling as to what a country

should be in order to have a right to exist; and it seems as though it was too ramshackle to go on holding together any length of time. Yet it has survived, much in its present

Page 168

shape, two centuries of storms that have swept perfectly unified countries from existence and others that have brought it to the verge of ruin, has survived formidable European coalitions to dismember it, and has steadily gained force after each; forever changing in its exact make-up, losing in the West but gaining in the East, the changes leave the structure as firm as ever, like the dropping off and adding on of logs in a raft, its mechanical union of pieces showing all the vitality of genuine national life.'

That seems to confirm and justify the prevalent Austrian faith that in this confusion of unrelated and irreconcilable elements, this condition of incurable disunion, there is strength—for the Government. Nearly every day some one explains to me that a revolution would not succeed here. 'It couldn't, you know. Broadly speaking, all the nations in the empire hate the Government—but they all hate each other too, and with devoted and enthusiastic bitterness; no two of them can combine; the nation that rises must rise alone; then the others would joyfully join the Government against her, and she would have just a fly's chance against a combination of spiders. This Government is entirely independent. It can go its own road, and do as it pleases; it has nothing to fear. In countries like England and America, where there is one tongue and the public interests are common, the Government must take account of public opinion; but in Austria-Hungary there are nineteen public opinions—one for each state. No—two or three for each state, since there are two or three nationalities in each. A Government cannot satisfy all these public opinions; it can only go through the motions of trying. This Government does that. It goes through the motions, and they do not succeed; but that does not worry the Government much.'

The next man will give you some further information. 'The Government has a policy—a wise one—and sticks to it. This policy is—tranquillity: keep this hive of excitable nations as quiet as possible; encourage them to amuse themselves with things less inflammatory than politics. To this end it furnishes them an abundance of Catholic priests to teach them to be docile and obedient, and to be diligent in acquiring ignorance about things here below, and knowledge about the kingdom of heaven, to whose historic delights they are going to add the charm of their society by-and-by; and further—to this same end—it cools off the newspapers every morning at five o'clock, whenever warm events are happening.' There is a censor of the press, and apparently he is always on duty and hard at work. A copy of each morning paper is brought to him at five o'clock. His official wagons wait at the doors of the newspaper offices and scud to him with the first copies that come from the press. His company of assistants read every line in these papers, and mark everything which seems to have a dangerous look; then he passes final judgment

Page 169

upon these markings. Two things conspire to give to the results a capricious and unbalanced look: his assistants have diversified notions as to what is dangerous and what isn't; he can't get time to examine their criticisms in much detail; and so sometimes the very same matter which is suppressed in one paper fails to be damned in another one, and gets published in full feather and unmodified. Then the paper in which it was suppressed blandly copies the forbidden matter into its evening edition—provokingly giving credit and detailing all the circumstances in courteous and inoffensive language—and of course the censor cannot say a word.

Sometimes the censor sucks all the blood out of a newspaper and leaves it colourless and inane; sometimes he leaves it undisturbed, and lets it talk out its opinions with a frankness and vigour hardly to be surpassed, I think, in the journals of any country. Apparently the censor sometimes revises his verdicts upon second thought, for several times lately he has suppressed journals after their issue and partial distribution. The distributed copies are then sent for by the censor and destroyed. I have two of these, but at the time they were sent for I could not remember what I had done with them.

If the censor did his work before the morning edition was printed, he would be less of an inconvenience than he is; but, of course, the papers cannot wait many minutes after five o'clock to get his verdict; they might as well go out of business as do that; so they print and take their chances. Then, if they get caught by a suppression, they must strike out the condemned matter and print the edition over again. That delays the issue several hours, and is expensive besides. The Government gets the suppressed edition for nothing. If it bought it, that would be joyful, and would give great satisfaction. Also, the edition would be larger. Some of the papers do not replace the condemned paragraphs with other matter; they merely snatch them out and leave blanks behind—mourning blanks, marked 'Confiscated'.

The Government discourages the dissemination of newspaper information in other ways. For instance, it does not allow newspapers to be sold on the streets: therefore the newsboy is unknown in Vienna. And there is a stamp duty of nearly a cent upon each copy of a newspaper's issue. Every American paper that reaches me has a stamp upon it, which has been pasted there in the post-office or downstairs in the hotel office; but no matter who put it there, I have to pay for it, and that is the main thing. Sometimes friends send me so many papers that it takes all I can earn that week to keep this Government going.

Page 170

I must take passing notice of another point in the Government's measures for maintaining tranquillity. Everybody says it does not like to see any individual attain to commanding influence in the country, since such a man can become a disturber and an inconvenience. 'We have as much talent as the other nations,' says the citizen, resignedly, and without bitterness, 'but for the sake of the general good of the country, we are discouraged from making it over-conspicuous; and not only discouraged, but tactfully and skillfully prevented from doing it, if we show too much persistence. Consequently we have no renowned men; in centuries we have seldom produced one—that is, seldom allowed one to produce himself. We can say to-day what no other nation of first importance in the family of Christian civilisations can say—that there exists no Austrian who has made an enduring name for himself which is familiar all around the globe.

Another helper toward tranquillity is the army. It is as pervasive as the atmosphere. It is everywhere. All the mentioned creators, promoters, and preservers of the public tranquillity do their several shares in the quieting work. They make a restful and comfortable serenity and reposefulness. This is disturbed sometimes for a little while: a mob assembles to protest against something; it gets noisy—noisier—still noisier—finally too noisy; then the persuasive soldiery comes charging down upon it, and in a few minutes all is quiet again, and there is no mob.

There is a Constitution and there is a Parliament. The House draws its membership of 425 deputies from the nineteen or twenty states heretofore mentioned. These men represent peoples who speak eleven different languages. That means eleven distinct varieties of jealousies, hostilities, and warring interests. This could be expected to furnish forth a parliament of a pretty inharmonious sort, and make legislation difficult at times—and it does that. The Parliament is split up into many parties—the Clericals, the Progressists, the German Nationalists, the Young Czechs, the Social Democrats, the Christian Socialists, and some others—and it is difficult to get up working combinations among them. They prefer to fight apart sometimes.

The recent troubles have grown out of Count Badeni's necessities. He could not carry on his Government without a majority vote in the House at his back, and in order to secure it he had to make a trade of some sort. He made it with the Czechs—the Bohemians. The terms were not easy for him: he must issue an ordinance making the Czech tongue the official language in Bohemia in place of the German. This created a storm. All the Germans in Austria were incensed. In numbers they form but a fourth part of the empire's population, but they urge that the country's public business should be conducted in one common tongue, and that tongue a world language—which German is.

Page 171

However, Badeni secured his majority. The German element in Parliament was apparently become helpless. The Czech deputies were exultant.

Then the music began. Badeni's voyage, instead of being smooth, was disappointingly rough from the start. The Government must get the Ausgleich through. It must not fail. Badeni's majority was ready to carry it through; but the minority was determined to obstruct it and delay it until the obnoxious Czech-language measure should be shelved.

The Ausgleich is an Adjustment, Arrangement, Settlement, which holds Austria and Hungary together. It dates from 1867, and has to be renewed every ten years. It establishes the share which Hungary must pay toward the expenses of the imperial Government. Hungary is a kingdom (the Emperor of Austria is its King), and has its own Parliament and governmental machinery. But it has no foreign office, and it has no army—at least its army is a part of the imperial army, is paid out of the imperial treasury, and is under the control of the imperial war office.

The ten-year arrangement was due a year ago, but failed to connect. At least completely. A year's compromise was arranged. A new arrangement must be effected before the last day of this year. Otherwise the two countries become separate entities. The Emperor would still be King of Hungary—that is, King of an independent foreign country. There would be Hungarian custom-houses on the Austrian border, and there would be a Hungarian army and a Hungarian foreign office. Both countries would be weakened by this, both would suffer damage.

The Opposition in the House, although in the minority, had a good weapon to fight with in the pending Ausgleich. If it could delay the Ausgleich a few weeks, the Government would doubtless have to withdraw the hated language ordinance or lose Hungary.

The Opposition began its fight. Its arms were the Rules of the House. It was soon manifest that by applying these Rules ingeniously it could make the majority helpless, and keep it so as long as it pleased. It could shut off business every now and then with a motion to adjourn. It could require the ayes and noes on the motion, and use up thirty minutes on that detail. It could call for the reading and verification of the minutes of the preceding meeting, and use up half a day in that way. It could require that several of its members be entered upon the list of permitted speakers previously to the opening of a sitting; and as there is no time-limit, further delays could thus be accomplished.

These were all lawful weapons, and the men of the Opposition (technically called the Left) were within their rights in using them. They used them to such dire purpose that all parliamentary business was paralysed. The Right (the Government side) could accomplish nothing. Then it had a saving idea. This idea was a curious one. It was to have the President and the Vice-Presidents of the Parliament trample the Rules under foot upon occasion!

Page 172

This, for a profoundly embittered minority constructed out of fire and gun-cotton! It was time for idle strangers to go and ask leave to look down out of a gallery and see what would be the result of it.

II. A MEMORABLE SITTING.

And now took place that memorable sitting of the House which broke two records. It lasted the best part of two days and a night, surpassing by half an hour the longest sitting known to the world's previous parliamentary history, and breaking the long-speech record with Dr. Lecher's twelve-hour effort, the longest flow of unbroken talk that ever came out of one mouth since the world began.

At 8.45 on the evening of the 28th of October, when the House had been sitting a few minutes short of ten hours, Dr. Lecher was granted the floor. It was a good place for theatrical effects. I think that no other Senate House is so shapely as this one, or so richly and showily decorated. Its plan is that of an opera-house. Up toward the straight side of it—the stage side—rise a couple of terraces of desks for the ministry, and the official clerks or secretaries—terraces thirty feet long, and each supporting about half a dozen desks with spaces between them. Above these is the President's terrace, against the wall. Along it are distributed the proper accommodations for the presiding officer and his assistants. The wall is of richly coloured marble highly polished, its paneled sweep relieved by fluted columns and pilasters of distinguished grace and dignity, which glow softly and frostily in the electric light. Around the spacious half-circle of the floor bends the great two-storied curve of the boxes, its frontage elaborately ornamented and sumptuously gilded. On the floor of the House the 425 desks radiate fanwise from the President's tribune.

The galleries are crowded on this particular evening, for word has gone about that the Ausgleich is before the House; that the President, Ritter von Abrahamowicz, has been throttling the Rules; that the Opposition are in an inflammable state in consequence, and that the night session is likely to be of an exciting sort.

The gallery guests are fashionably dressed, and the finery of the women makes a bright and pretty show under the strong electric light. But down on the floor there is no costumery.

The deputies are dressed in day clothes; some of the clothes neat and trim, others not; there may be three members in evening dress, but not more. There are several Catholic priests in their long black gowns, and with crucifixes hanging from their necks. No member wears his hat. One may see by these details that the aspects are not those of an evening sitting of an English House of Commons, but rather those of a sitting of our House of Representatives.

Page 173

In his high place sits the President, Abrahamowicz, object of the Opposition's limitless hatred. He is sunk back in the depths of his arm-chair, and has his chin down. He brings the ends of his spread fingers together, in front of his breast, and reflectively taps them together, with the air of one who would like to begin business, but must wait, and be as patient as he can. It makes you think of Richelieu. Now and then he swings his head up to the left or to the right and answers something which some one has bent down to say to him. Then he taps his fingers again. He looks tired, and maybe a trifle harassed. He is a gray-haired, long, slender man, with a colourless long face, which, in repose, suggests a death-mask; but when not in repose is tossed and rippled by a turbulent smile which washes this way and that, and is not easy to keep up with—a pious smile, a holy smile, a saintly smile, a deprecating smile, a beseeching and supplicating smile; and when it is at work the large mouth opens, and the flexible lips crumple, and unfold, and crumple again, and move around in a genial and persuasive and angelic way, and expose large glimpses of the teeth; and that interrupts the sacredness of the smile and gives it momentarily a mixed worldly and political and satanic cast. It is a most interesting face to watch. And then the long hands and the body—they furnish great and frequent help to the face in the business of adding to the force of the statesman's words.

To change the tense. At the time of which I have just been speaking the crowds in the galleries were gazing at the stage and the pit with rapt interest and expectancy. One half of the great fan of desks was in effect empty, vacant; in the other half several hundred members were bunched and jammed together as solidly as the bristles in a brush; and they also were waiting and expecting. Presently the Chair delivered this utterance:

'Dr. Lecher has the floor.'

Then burst out such another wild and frantic and deafening clamour as has not been heard on this planet since the last time the Comanches surprised a white settlement at night. Yells from the Left, counter-yells from the Right, explosions of yells from all sides at once, and all the air sawed and pawed and clawed and cloven by a writhing confusion of gesturing arms and hands. Out of the midst of this thunder and turmoil and tempest rose Dr. Lecher, serene and collected, and the providential length of his enabled his head to show out of it. He began his twelve-hour speech. At any rate, his lips could be seen to move, and that was evidence. On high sat the President, imploring order, with his long hands put together as in prayer, and his lips visibly but not hearably speaking. At intervals he grasped his bell and swung it up and down with vigour, adding its keen clamour to the storm weltering there below.

Page 174

Dr. Lecher went on with his pantomime speech, contented, untroubled. Here and there and now and then powerful voices burst above the din, and delivered an ejaculation that was heard. Then the din ceased for a moment or two, and gave opportunity to hear what the Chair might answer; then the noise broke out again. Apparently the President was being charged with all sorts of illegal exercises of power in the interest of the Right (the Government side): among these, with arbitrarily closing an Order of Business before it was finished; with an unfair distribution of the right to the floor; with refusal of the floor, upon quibble and protest, to members entitled to it; with stopping a speaker's speech upon quibble and protest; and with other transgressions of the Rules of the House. One of the interrupters who made himself heard was a young fellow of slight build and neat dress, who stood a little apart from the solid crowd and leaned negligently, with folded arms and feet crossed, against a desk. Trim and handsome; strong face and thin features; black hair roughed up; parsimonious moustache; resonant great voice, of good tone and pitch. It is Wolf, capable and hospitable with sword and pistol; fighter of the recent duel with Count Badeni, the head of the Government. He shot Badeni through the arm and then walked over in the politest way and inspected his game, shook hands, expressed regret, and all that. Out of him came early this thundering peal, audible above the storm:

'I demand the floor. I wish to offer a motion.'

In the sudden lull which followed, the President answered, 'Dr. Lecher has the floor.'

Wolf. 'I move the close of the sitting!'

P. 'Representative Lecher has the floor.' [Stormy outburst from the Left—that is, the Opposition.]

Wolf. 'I demand the floor for the introduction of a formal notion. [Pause]. Mr. President, are you going to grant it, or not? [Crash of approval from the Left.] I will keep on demanding the floor till I get it.'

P. 'I call Representative Wolf to order. Dr. Lecher has the floor.'

Wolf. 'Mr. President, are you going to observe the Rules of this House?' [Tempest of applause and confused ejaculations from the Left—a boom and roar which long endured, and stopped all business for the time being.]

Dr. von Pessler. 'By the Rules motions are in order, and the Chair must put them to vote.'

For answer the President (who is a Pole—I make this remark in passing) began to jangle his bell with energy at the moment that that wild pandemonium of voices broke out again.

Wolf (hearable above the storm). 'Mr. President, I demand the floor. We intend to find out, here and now, which is the hardest, a Pole's skull or a German's!'

This brought out a perfect cyclone of satisfaction from the Left. In the midst of it someone again moved an Adjournment. The President blandly answered that Dr. Lecher had the floor. Which was true; and he was speaking, too, calmly, earnestly, and argumentatively; and the official stenographers had left their places and were at his elbows taking down his words, he leaning and orating into their ears—a most curious and interesting scene.

Page 175

Dr. von Pessler (to the Chair). 'Do not drive us to extremities!'

The tempest burst out again: yells of approval from the Left, catcalls and ironical laughter from the Right. At this point a new and most effective noise-maker was pressed into service. Each desk has an extension, consisting of a removable board eighteen inches long, six wide, and a half-inch thick. A member pulled one of these out and began to belabour the top of his desk with it. Instantly other members followed suit, and perhaps you can imagine the result. Of all conceivable rackets it is the most ear-splitting, intolerable, and altogether fiendish.

The persecuted President leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes, clasped his hands in his lap, and a look of pathetic resignation crept over his long face. It is the way a country schoolmaster used to look in days long past when he had refused his school a holiday and it had risen against him in ill-mannered riot and violence and insurrection. Twice a motion to adjourn had been offered—a motion always in order in other Houses, and doubtless so in this one also. The President had refused to put these motions. By consequence, he was not in a pleasant place now, and was having a right hard time. Votes upon motions, whether carried or defeated, could make endless delay, and postpone the Ausgleich to next century.

In the midst of these sorrowful circumstances and this hurricane of yells and screams and satanic clatter of desk-boards, Representative Dr. Kronawetter unfeelingly reminds the Chair that a motion has been offered, and adds: 'Say yes, or no! What do you sit there for, and give no answer?'

P. 'After I have given a speaker the floor, I cannot give it to another. After Dr. Lecher is through, I will put your motion.' [Storm of indignation from the Left.]

Wolf (to the Chair). 'Thunder and lightning! look at the Rule governing the case!'

Kronawetter. 'I move the close of the sitting! And I demand the ayes and noes!'

Dr. Lecher. 'Mr. President, have I the floor?'

P. 'You have the floor.'

Wolf (to the Chair, in a stentorian voice which cleaves its way through the storm). 'It is by such brutalities as these that you drive us to extremities! Are you waiting till someone shall throw into your face the word that shall describe what you are bringing about?[1] [Tempest of insulted fury from the Right.] Is that what you are waiting for, old Grayhead?' [Long-continued clatter of desk-boards from the Left, with shouts of 'The vote! the vote!'] An ironical shout from the Right, 'Wolf is boss!']

Wolf keeps on demanding the floor for his motion. At length—



P. 'I call Representative Wolf to order! Your conduct is unheard of, sir! You forget that you are in a parliament; you must remember where you are, sir.' [Applause from the Right. Dr. Lecher is still peacefully speaking, the stenographers listening at his lips.]

Page 176

Wolf (banging on his desk with his desk-board). 'I demand the floor for my motion! I won't stand this trampling of the Rules under foot—no, not if I die for it! I will never yield. You have got to stop me by force. Have I the floor?'

P. 'Representative Wolf, what kind of behaviour is this? I call you to order again. You should have some regard for your dignity.'

Dr. Lecher speaks on. Wolf turns upon him with an offensive innuendo.

Dr. Lecher. 'Mr. Wolf, I beg you to refrain from that sort of suggestions.' [Storm of hand-clapping from the Right.]

This was applause from the enemy, for Lecher himself, like Wolf, was an Obstructionist.

Wolf growls to Lecher, 'You can scribble that applause in your album!'

P. 'Once more I call Representative Wolf to order! Do not forget that you are a Representative, sir!'

Wolf (slam-banging with his desk-board). 'I will force this matter! Are you going to grant me the floor, or not?'

And still the sergeant-at-arms did not appear. It was because there wasn't any. It is a curious thing, but the Chair has no effectual means of compelling order.

After some more interruptions:

Wolf (banging with his board). 'I demand the floor. I will not yield!'

P. 'I have no recourse against Representative Wolf. In the presence of behaviour like this it is to be regretted that such is the case.' [A shout from the Right, 'Throw him out!']

It is true he had no effective recourse. He had an official called an 'Ordner,' whose help he could invoke in desperate cases, but apparently the Ordner is only a persuader, not a compeller. Apparently he is a sergeant-at-arms who is not loaded; a good enough gun to look at, but not valuable for business.

For another twenty or thirty minutes Wolf went on banging with his board and demanding his rights; then at last the weary President threatened to summon the dread order-maker. But both his manner and his words were reluctant. Evidently it grieved him to have to resort to this dire extremity. He said to Wolf, 'If this goes on, I shall feel obliged to summon the Ordner, and beg him to restore order in the House.'

Wolf. 'I'd like to see you do it! Suppose you fetch in a few policemen too! [Great tumult.] Are you going to put my motion to adjourn, or not?'

Dr. Lecher continues his speech. Wolf accompanies him with his board-clatter.

The President despatches the Ordner, Dr. Lang (himself a deputy), on his order-restoring mission. Wolf, with his board uplifted for defence, confronts the Ordner with a remark which Boss Tweed might have translated into 'Now let's see what you are going to do about it!' [Noise and tumult all over the House.]

Wolf stands upon his rights, and says he will maintain them until he is killed in his tracks. Then he resumes his banging, the President jangles his bell and begs for order, and the rest of the House augments the racket the best it can.

Page 177

Wolf. 'I require an adjournment, because I find myself personally threatened. [Laughter from the Right.] Not that I fear for myself; I am only anxious about what will happen to the man who touches me.'

The Ordner. 'I am not going to fight with you.'

Nothing came of the efforts of the angel of peace, and he presently melted out of the scene and disappeared. Wolf went on with his noise and with his demands that he be granted the floor, resting his board at intervals to discharge criticisms and epithets at the Chair. Once he reminded the Chairman of his violated promise to grant him (Wolf) the floor, and said, 'Whence I came, we call promise-breakers rascals!' And he advised the Chairman to take his conscience to bed with him and use it as a pillow. Another time he said that the Chair was making itself ridiculous before all Europe. In fact, some of Wolf's language was almost unparliamentary. By-and-by he struck the idea of beating out a tune with his board. Later he decided to stop asking for the floor, and to confer it upon himself. And so he and Dr. Lecher now spoke at the same time, and mingled their speeches with the other noises, and nobody heard either of them. Wolf rested himself now and then from speech-making by reading, in his clarion voice, from a pamphlet.

I will explain that Dr. Lecher was not making a twelve-hour speech for pastime, but for an important purpose. It was the Government's intention to push the Ausgleich through its preliminary stages in this one sitting (for which it was the Order of the Day), and then by vote refer it to a select committee. It was the Majority's scheme—as charged by the Opposition—to drown debate upon the bill by pure noise—drown it out and stop it. The debate being thus ended, the vote upon the reference would follow—with victory for the Government. But into the Government's calculations had not entered the possibility of a single-barrelled speech which should occupy the entire time-limit of the setting, and also get itself delivered in spite of all the noise. Goliath was not expecting David. But David was there; and during twelve hours he tranquilly pulled statistical, historical, and argumentative pebbles out of his scrip and slung them at the giant; and when he was done he was victor, and the day was saved.

In the English House an obstructionist has held the floor with Bible-readings and other outside matters; but Dr. Lecher could not have that restful and recuperative privilege—he must confine himself strictly to the subject before the House. More than once, when the President could not hear him because of the general tumult, he sent persons to listen and report as to whether the orator was speaking to the subject or not.

Page 178

The subject was a peculiarly difficult one, and it would have troubled any other deputy to stick to it three hours without exhausting his ammunition, because it required a vast and intimate knowledge—detailed and particularised knowledge—of the commercial, railroading, financial, and international banking relations existing between two great sovereignties, Hungary and the Empire. But Dr. Lecher is President of the Board of Trade of his city of Brunn, and was master of the situation. His speech was not formally prepared. He had a few notes jotted down for his guidance; he had his facts in his head; his heart was in his work; and for twelve hours he stood there, undisturbed by the clamour around him, and with grace and ease and confidence poured out the riches of his mind, in closely reasoned arguments, clothed in eloquent and faultless phrasing.

He is a young man of thirty-seven. He is tall and well-proportioned, and has cultivated and fortified his muscle by mountain-climbing. If he were a little handsomer he would sufficiently reproduce for me the Chauncey Depew of the great New England dinner nights of some years ago; he has Depew's charm of manner and graces of language and delivery.

There was but one way for Dr. Lecher to hold the floor—he must stay on his legs. If he should sit down to rest a moment, the floor would be taken from him by the enemy in the Chair. When he had been talking three or four hours he himself proposed an adjournment, in order that he might get some rest from his wearing labours; but he limited his motion with the condition that if it was lost he should be allowed to continue his speech, and if it was carried he should have the floor at the next sitting. Wolf was now appeased, and withdrew his own thousand-times-offered motion, and Dr. Lecher's was voted upon—and lost. So he went on speaking.

By one o'clock in the morning, excitement and noise-making had tired out nearly everybody but the orator. Gradually the seats of the Right underwent depopulation; the occupants had slipped out to the refreshment-rooms to eat and drink, or to the corridors to chat. Some one remarked that there was no longer a quorum present, and moved a call of the House. The Chair (Vice-President Dr. Kramarz) refused to put it to vote. There was a small dispute over the legality of this ruling, but the Chair held its ground.

The Left remained on the battle-field to support their champion. He went steadily on with his speech; and always it was strong, virile, felicitous, and to the point. He was earning applause, and this enabled his party to turn that fact to account. Now and then they applauded him a couple of minutes on a stretch, and during that time he could stop speaking and rest his voice without having the floor taken from him.

At a quarter to two a member of the Left demanded that Dr. Lecher be allowed a recess for rest, and said that the Chairman was 'heartless.' Dr. Lecher himself asked for ten minutes. The Chair allowed him five. Before the time had run out Dr. Lecher was on his feet again.

Page 179

Wolf burst out again with a motion to adjourn. Refused by the Chair. Wolf said the whole Parliament wasn't worth a pinch of powder. The Chair retorted that that was true in a case where a single member was able to make all parliamentary business impossible. Dr. Lecher continued his speech.

The members of the Majority went out by detachments from time to time and took naps upon sofas in the reception-rooms; and also refreshed themselves with food and drink—in quantities nearly unbelievable—but the Minority stayed loyally by their champion. Some distinguished deputies of the Majority stayed by him too, compelled thereto by admiration of his great performance. When a man has been speaking eight hours, is it conceivable that he can still be interesting, still fascinating? When Dr. Lecher had been speaking eight hours he was still compactly surrounded by friends who would not leave him, and by foes (of all parties) who could not; and all hung enchanted and wondering upon his words, and all testified their admiration with constant and cordial outbursts of applause. Surely this was a triumph without precedent in history.

During the twelve-hour effort friends brought to the orator three glasses of wine, four cups of coffee, and one glass of beer—a most stingy re-enforcement of his wasting tissues, but the hostile Chair would permit no addition to it. But, no matter, the Chair could not beat that man. He was a garrison holding a fort, and was not to be starved out.

When he had been speaking eight hours his pulse was 72; when he had spoken twelve, it was 100.

He finished his long speech in these terms, as nearly as a permissibly free translation can convey them:

'I will now hasten to close my examination of the subject. I conceive that we of the Left have made it clear to the honourable gentlemen of the other side of the House that we are stirred by no intemperate enthusiasm for this measure in its present shape....

'What we require, and shall fight for with all lawful weapons, is a formal, comprehensive, and definitive solution and settlement of these vexed matters. We desire the restoration of the earlier condition of things; the cancellation of all this incapable Government's pernicious trades with Hungary; and then—release from the sorry burden of the Badeni ministry!

'I voice the hope—I know not if it will be fulfilled—I voice the deep and sincere and patriotic hope that the committee into whose hands this bill will eventually be committed will take its stand upon high ground, and will return the Ausgleich-Provisorium to this House in a form which shall make it the protector and promoter alike of the great interests involved and of the honour of our fatherland.' After a pause, turning towards the Government benches: 'But in any case, gentlemen of the Majority, make sure of

this: henceforth, as before, you find us at our post. The Germans of Austria will neither surrender nor die!

Page 180

Then burst a storm of applause which rose and fell, rose and fell, burst out again and again and again, explosion after explosion, hurricane after hurricane, with no apparent promise of ever coming to an end; and meantime the whole Left was surging and weltering about the champion, all bent upon wringing his hand and congratulating him and glorifying him.

Finally he got away, and went home and ate five loaves and twelve baskets of fish, read the morning papers, slept three hours, took a short drive, then returned to the House, and sat out the rest of the thirty-three-hour session.

To merely stand up in one spot twelve hours on a stretch is a feat which very few men could achieve; to add to the task the utterance of a hundred thousand words would be beyond the possibilities of the most of those few; to superimpose the requirement that the words should be put into the form of a compact, coherent, and symmetrical oration would probably rule out the rest of the few, bar Dr. Lecher.

III.—CURIOUS PARLIAMENTARY ETIQUETTE.

In consequence of Dr. Lecher's twelve-hour speech and the other obstructions furnished by the Minority, the famous thirty-three-hour sitting of the House accomplished nothing. The Government side had made a supreme effort, assisting itself with all the helps at hand, both lawful and unlawful, yet had failed to get the Ausgleich into the hands of a committee. This was a severe defeat. The Right was mortified, the Left jubilant.

Parliament was adjourned for a week—to let the members cool off, perhaps—a sacrifice of precious time; for but two months remained in which to carry the all-important Ausgleich to a consummation.

If I have reported the behaviour of the House intelligibly, the reader has been surprised by it, and has wondered whence these law-makers come and what they are made of; and he has probably supposed that the conduct exhibited at the Long Sitting was far out of the common, and due to special excitement and irritation. As to the make-up of the House, it is this: the deputies come from all the walks of life and from all the grades of society. There are princes, counts, barons, priests, peasants, mechanics, labourers, lawyers, judges, physicians, professors, merchants, bankers, shopkeepers. They are religious men, they are earnest, sincere, devoted, and they hate the Jews. The title of Doctor is so common in the House that one may almost say that the deputy who does not bear it is by that reason conspicuous. I am assured that it is not a self-granted title, and not an honorary one, but an earned one; that in Austria it is very seldom conferred as a mere compliment; that in Austria the degrees of Doctor of Music, Doctor of Philosophy, and so on, are not conferred by the seats of learning; and so, when an Austrian is called Doctor, it means that he is either a lawyer or a physician, and that he is not a self-educated man, but is college-bred, and has been diplomaed for merit.

Page 181

That answers the question of the constitution of the House. Now as to the House's curious manners. The manners exhibited by this convention of Doctors were not at that time being tried as a wholly new experiment. I will go back to a previous sitting in order to show that the deputies had already had some practice.

There had been an incident. The dignity of the House had been wounded by improprieties indulged in in its presence by a couple of the members. This matter was placed in the hands of a committee to determine where the guilt lay and the degree of it, and also to suggest the punishment. The chairman of the committee brought in his report. By this it appeared that in the course of a speech, Deputy Schrammel said that religion had no proper place in the public schools—it was a private matter. Whereupon Deputy Gregorig shouted, 'How about free love!'

To this, Deputy Iro flung out this retort: 'Soda-water at the Wimberger!'

This appeared to deeply offend Deputy Gregorig, who shouted back at Iro, 'You cowardly blatherskite, say that again!'

The committee had sat three hours. Gregorig had apologised. Iro explained that he didn't say anything about soda-water at the Wimberger. He explained in writing, and was very explicit: 'I declare upon my word of honour that I did not say the words attributed to me.'

Unhappily for his word of honour, it was proved by the official stenographers and by the testimony of several deputies that he did say them.

The committee did not officially know why the apparently inconsequential reference to soda-water at the Wimberger should move Deputy Gregorig to call the utterer of it a cowardly blatherskite; still, after proper deliberation, it was of the opinion that the House ought to formally censure the whole business. This verdict seems to have been regarded as sharply severe. I think so because Deputy Dr. Lueger, Burgermeister of Vienna, felt it a duty to soften the blow to his friend Gregorig by showing that the soda-water remark was not so innocuous as it might look; that, indeed, Gregorig's tough retory was justifiable—and he proceeded to explain why. He read a number of scandalous post-cards which he intimated had proceeded from Iro, as indicated by the handwriting, though they were anonymous. Some of them were posted to Gregorig at his place of business and could have been read by all his subordinates; the others were posted to Gregorig's wife. Lueger did not say—but everybody knew—that the cards referred to a matter of town gossip which made Mr. Gregorig a chief actor in a tavern scene where siphon-squirting played a prominent and humorous part, and wherein women had a share.

There were several of the cards; more than several, in fact; no fewer than five were sent in one day. Dr. Lueger read some of them, and described others. Some of them had

pictures on them; one a picture of a hog with a monstrous snout, and beside it a squirting soda-siphon; below it some sarcastic doggerel.

Page 182

Gregorig dealt in shirts, cravats, *etc.* One of the cards bore these words: 'Much-respected Deputy and collar-sewer—or stealer.'

Another: 'Hurrah for the Christian-Social work among the women-assemblages! Hurrah for the soda-squirter!' Comment by Dr. Lueger: 'I cannot venture to read the rest of that one, nor the signature, either.'

Another: 'Would you mind telling me if....' Comment by Dr. Lueger: 'The rest of it is not properly readable.'

To Deputy Gregorig's wife: 'Much-respected Madam Gregorig,—The undersigned desires an invitation to the next soda-squirt.' Comment by Dr. Lueger: 'Neither the rest of the card nor the signature can I venture to read to the House, so vulgar are they.'

The purpose of this card—to expose Gregorig to his family—was repeated in others of these anonymous missives.

The House, by vote, censured the two improper deputies.

This may have had a modifying effect upon the phraseology of the membership for a while, and upon its general exuberance also, but it was not for long. As has been seen, it had become lively once more on the night of the Long Sitting. At the next sitting after the long one there was certainly no lack of liveliness. The President was persistently ignoring the Rules of the House in the interest of the government side, and the Minority were in an unappeasable fury about it. The ceaseless din and uproar, the shouting and stamping and desk-banging, were deafening, but through it all burst voices now and then that made themselves heard. Some of the remarks were of a very candid sort, and I believe that if they had been uttered in our House of Representatives they would have attracted attention. I will insert some samples here. Not in their order, but selected on their merits:

Mr. Mayreder (to the President). 'You have lied! You conceded the floor to me; make it good, or you have lied!'

Mr. Glockner (to the President). 'Leave! Get out!'

Wolf (indicating the President). 'There sits a man to whom a certain title belongs!'

Unto Wolf, who is continuously reading, in a powerful voice, from a newspaper, arrive these personal remarks from the Majority: 'Oh, shut your mouth!' 'Put him out!' 'Out with him!' Wolf stops reading a moment to shout at Dr. Lueger, who has the floor but cannot get a hearing, 'Please, Betrayer of the People, begin!'

Dr. Lueger, 'Meine Herren—' ['Oho!' and groans.]

Wolf. 'That's the holy light of the Christian Socialists!'

Mr. Kletzenbauer (Christian Socialist). 'Dam—nation! Are you ever going to quiet down?'

Wolf discharges a galling remark at Mr. Wohlmeyer.

Wohlmeyer (responding). 'You Jew, you!'

There is a moment's lull, and Dr. Lueger begins his speech. Graceful, handsome man, with winning manners and attractive bearing, a bright and easy speaker, and is said to know how to trim his political sails to catch any favouring wind that blows. He manages to say a few words, then the tempest overwhelms him again.

Page 183

Wolf stops reading his paper a moment to say a drastic thing about Lueger and his Christian-Social pieties, which sets the C.S.S. in a sort of frenzy.

Mr. Vielohlawek. 'You leave the Christian Socialists alone, you word-of-honour-breaker! Obstruct all you want to, but you leave them alone! You've no business in this House; you belong in a gin-mill!'

Mr. Prochazka. 'In a lunatic-asylum, you mean!'

Vielohlawek. 'It's a pity that such man should be leader of the Germans; he disgraces the German name!'

Dr. Scheicher. 'It's a shame that the like of him should insult us.'

Strohbach (to Wolf). 'Contemptible cub—we will bounce thee out of this!' [It is inferable that the 'thee' is not intended to indicate affection this time, but to re-enforce and emphasise Mr. Strohbach's scorn.]

Dr. Scheicher. 'His insults are of no consequence. He wants his ears boxed.'

Dr. Lueger (to Wolf). 'You'd better worry a trifle over your Iro's word of honour. You are behaving like a street arab.'

Dr. Scheicher. 'It is infamous!'

Dr. Lueger. 'And these shameless creatures are the leaders of the German People's Party!'

Meantime Wolf goes whooping along with his newspaper readings in great contentment.

Dr. Pattai. 'Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! You haven't the floor!'

Strohbach. 'The miserable cub!'

Dr. Lueger (to Wolf, raising his voice strenuously above the storm). 'You are a wholly honourless street brat!' [A voice, 'Fire the rascalion out!' But Wolf's soul goes marching noisily on, just the same.]

Schonerer (vast and muscular, and endowed with the most powerful voice in the Reichsrath; comes ploughing down through the standing crowds, red, and choking with anger; halts before Deputy Wohlmeyer, grabs a rule and smashes it with a blow upon a desk, threatens Wohlmeyer's face with his fist, and bellows out some personalities, and a promise). 'Only you wait—we'll teach you!' [A whirlwind of offensive retorts assails him from the band of meek and humble Christian Socialists compacted around their leader, that distinguished religious expert, Dr. Lueger, Burgermeister of Vienna. Our

breath comes in excited gasps now, and we are full of hope. We imagine that we are back fifty years ago in the Arkansas Legislature, and we think we know what is going to happen, and are glad we came, and glad we are up in the gallery, out of the way, where we can see the whole thing and yet not have to supply any of the material for the inquest. However, as it turns out, our confidence is abused, our hopes are misplaced.]

Dr. Pattai (wildly excited). 'You quiet down, or we shall turn ourselves loose! There will be cuffing of ears!'

Prochazka (in a fury). 'No—not ear boxing, but genuine blows!'

Vieholawek. 'I would rather take my hat off to a Jew than to Wolf!'

Page 184

Strohbach (to Wolf). 'Jew flunky! Here we have been fighting the Jews for ten years, and now you are helping them to power again. How much do you get for it?'

Holansky. 'What he wants is a strait-jacket!'

Wolf continues his reading. It is a market report now.

Remark flung across the House to Schonerer: 'Die Grossmutter auf dem Misthaufen erzeugt worden!'

It will be judicious not to translate that. Its flavour is pretty high, in any case, but it becomes particularly gamy when you remember that the first gallery was well stocked with ladies.

Apparently it was a great hit. It fetched thunders of joyous enthusiasm out of the Christian Socialists, and in their rapture they flung biting epithets with wasteful liberality at specially detested members of the Opposition; among others, this one at Schonerer, 'Bordell in der Krugerstrasse!' Then they added these words, which they whooped, howled, and also even sang, in a deep-voiced chorus: 'Schmul Leeb Kohn! Schmul Leeb Kohn! Schmul Leeb Kohn!' and made it splendidly audible above the banging of desk-boards and the rest of the roaring cyclone of fiendish noises. [A gallery witticism comes flitting by from mouth to mouth around the great curve: 'The swan-song of Austrian representative government!' You can note its progress by the applause smiles and nods it gets as it skims along.]

Kletzenbauer. 'Holofernes, where is Judith?' [Storm of laughter.]

Gregorig (the shirt-merchant). 'This Wolf-Theatre is costing 6,000 florins!'

Wolf (with sweetness). 'Notice him, gentlemen; it is Mr. Gregorig.' [Laughter.]

Vieholawek (to Wolf). 'You Judas!'

Schneider. 'Brothel-knight!'

Chorus of Voices. 'East-German offal tub!'

And so the war of epithets crashes along, with never-diminishing energy, for a couple of hours.

The ladies in the gallery were learning. That was well; for by-and-by ladies will form a part of the membership of all the legislatures in the world; as soon as they can prove competency they will be admitted. At present, men only are competent to legislate; therefore they look down upon women, and would feel degraded if they had to have them for colleagues in their high calling.

Wolf is yelling another market report now.

Gessman. 'Shut up, infamous louse-brat!'

During a momentary lull Dr. Lueger gets a hearing for three sentences of his speech. The demand and require that the President shall suppress the four noisiest members of the Opposition.

Wolf (with a that-settles-it toss of the head). 'The shifty trickster of Vienna has spoken!'

Page 185

Iro belonged to Schonerer's party. The word-of-honour incident has given it a new name. Gregorig is a Christian Socialist, and hero of the post-cards and the Wimberger soda-squirting incident. He stands vast and conspicuous, and conceited and self-satisfied, and roosterish and inconsequential, at Lueger's elbow, and is proud and cocky to be in such a great company. He looks very well indeed; really majestic, and aware of it. He crows out his little empty remark, now and then, and looks as pleased as if he had been delivered of the Ausgleich. Indeed, he does look notably fine. He wears almost the only dress vest on the floor; it exposes a continental spread of white shirt-front; his hands are posed at ease in the lips of his trousers pockets; his head is tilted back complacently; he is attitudinising; he is playing to the gallery. However, they are all doing that. It is curious to see. Men who only vote, and can't make speeches, and don't know how to invent witty ejaculations, wander about the vacated parts of the floor, and stop in a good place and strike attitudes—attitudes suggestive of weighty thought, mostly—and glance furtively up at the galleries to see how it works; or a couple will come together and shake hands in an artificial way, and laugh a gay manufactured laugh, and do some constrained and self-conscious attitudinising; and they steal glances at the galleries to see if they are getting notice. It is like a scene on the stage—by-play by minor actors at the back while the stars do the great work at the front. Even Count Badeni attitudinises for a moment; strikes a reflective Napoleonic attitude of fine picturesqueness—but soon thinks better of it and desists. There are two who do not attitudinise—poor harried and insulted President Abrahamowicz, who seems wholly miserable, and can find no way to put in the dreary time but by swinging his bell and discharging occasional remarks which nobody can hear; and a resigned and patient priest, who sits lonely in a great vacancy on Majority territory and munches an apple.

Schonerer uplifts his fog-horn of a voice and shakes the roof with an insult discharged at the Majority.

Dr. Lueger. 'The Honourless Party would better keep still here!'

Gregorig (the echo, swelling out his shirt-front). 'Yes, keep quiet, pimp!'

Schonerer (to Lueger). 'Political mountebank!'

Prochazka (to Schonerer). 'Drunken clown!'

During the final hour of the sitting many happy phrases were distributed through the proceedings. Among them were these—and they are strikingly good ones:

'Blatherskite!'

'Blackguard!'

'Scoundrel!'

'Brothel-daddy!'

This last was the contribution of Dr. Gessman, and gave great satisfaction. And deservedly. It seems to me that it was one of the most sparkling things that was said during the whole evening.

At half-past two in the morning the House adjourned. The victory was with the Opposition. No; not quite that. The effective part of it was snatched away from them by an unlawful exercise of Presidential force —another contribution toward driving the mistreated Minority out of their minds.

Page 186

At other sittings of the parliament, gentlemen of the Opposition, shaking their fists toward the President, addressed him as 'Polish Dog'. At one sitting an angry deputy turned upon a colleague and shouted, '-----!'

You must try to imagine what it was. If I should offer it even in the original it would probably not get by the editor's blue pencil; to offer a translation would be to waste my ink, of course. This remark was frankly printed in its entirety by one of the Vienna dailies, but the others disguised the toughest half of it with stars.

If the reader will go back over this chapter and gather its array of extraordinary epithets into a bunch and examine them, he will marvel at two things: how this convention of gentlemen could consent to use such gross terms; and why the users were allowed to get out the place alive. There is no way to understand this strange situation. If every man in the House were a professional blackguard, and had his home in a sailor boarding-house, one could still not understand it; for, although that sort do use such terms, they never take them. These men are not professional blackguards; they are mainly gentlemen, and educated; yet they use the terms, and take them too. They really seem to attach no consequence to them. One cannot say that they act like schoolboys; for that is only almost true, not entirely. Schoolboys blackguard each other fiercely, and by the hour, and one would think that nothing would ever come of it but noise; but that would be a mistake. Up to a certain limit the result would be noise only, but, that limit overstepped, trouble would follow right away. There are certain phrases—phrases of a peculiar character—phrases of the nature of that reference to Schonerer's grandmother, for instance—which not even the most spiritless schoolboy in the English-speaking world would allow to pass unavenged. One difference between schoolboys and the law-makers of the Reichsrath seems to be that the law-makers have no limit, no danger-line. Apparently they may call each other what they please, and go home unmutated.

Now, in fact, they did have a scuffle on two occasions, but it was not on account of names called. There has been no scuffle where that was the cause.

It is not to be inferred that the House lacks a sense of honour because it lacks delicacy. That would be an error. Iro was caught in a lie, and it profoundly disgraced him. The House cut him, turned its back upon him. He resigned his seat; otherwise he would have been expelled. But it was lenient with Gregorig, who had called Iro a cowardly blatherskite in debate. It merely went through the form of mildly censuring him. That did not trouble Gregorig.

Page 187

The Viennese say of themselves that they are an easy-going, pleasure-loving community, making the best of life, and not taking it very seriously. Nevertheless, they are grieved about the ways of their Parliament, and say quite frankly that they are ashamed. They claim that the low condition of the parliament's manners is new, not old. A gentleman who was at the head of the government twenty years ago confirms this, and says that in his time the parliament was orderly and well-behaved. An English gentleman of long residence here endorses this, and says that a low order of politicians originated the present forms of questionable speech on the stump some years ago, and imported them into the parliament.[2] However, some day there will be a Minister of Etiquette and a sergeant-at-arms, and then things will go better. I mean if parliament and the Constitution survive the present storm.

IV.—THE HISTORIC CLIMAX

During the whole of November things went from bad to worse. The all-important Ausgleich remained hard aground, and could not be sparred off. Badeni's government could not withdraw the Language Ordinance and keep its majority, and the Opposition could not be placated on easier terms. One night, while the customary pandemonium was crashing and thundering along at its best, a fight broke out. It was a surging, struggling, shoulder-to-shoulder scramble. A great many blows were struck. Twice Schonerer lifted one of the heavy ministerial fauteuils —some say with one hand—and threatened members of the Majority with it, but it was wrenched away from him; a member hammered Wolf over the head with the President's bell, and another member choked him; a professor was flung down and belaboured with fists and choked; he held up an open penknife as a defence against the blows; it was snatched from him and flung to a distance; it hit a peaceful Christian Socialist who wasn't doing anything, and brought blood from his hand. This was the only blood drawn. The men who got hammered and choked looked sound and well next day. The fists and the bell were not properly handled, or better results would have been apparent. I am quite sure that the fighters were not in earnest.

On Thanksgiving Day the sitting was a history-making one. On that day the harried, bedevilled, and despairing government went insane. In order to free itself from the thralldom of the Opposition it committed this curiously juvenile crime; it moved an important change of the Rules of the House, forbade debate upon the motion, put it to a stand-up vote instead of ayes and noes, and then gravely claimed that it had been adopted; whereas, to even the dumbest witness—if I without immodesty may pretend to that place—it was plain that nothing legitimately to be called a vote had been taken at all.

I think that Saltpeter never uttered a truer thing than when he said, 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' Evidently the government's mind was tottering

when this bald insults to the House was the best way it could contrive for getting out of the frying-pan.

Page 188

The episode would have been funny if the matter at stake had been a trifle; but in the circumstances it was pathetic. The usual storm was raging in the House. As usual, many of the Majority and the most of the Minority were standing up—to have a better chance to exchange epithets and make other noises. Into this storm Count Falkenhayn entered, with his paper in his hand; and at once there was a rush to get near him and hear him read his motion. In a moment he was walled in by listeners. The several clauses of his motion were loudly applauded by these allies, and as loudly disappaluded—if I may invent a word—by such of the Opposition as could hear his voice. When he took his seat the President promptly put the motion—persons desiring to vote in the affirmative, stand up! The House was already standing up; had been standing for an hour; and before a third of it had found out what the President had been saying, he had proclaimed the adoption of the motion! And only a few heard that. In fact, when that House is legislating you can't tell it from artillery practice.

You will realise what a happy idea it was to side-track the lawful ayes and noes and substitute a stand-up vote by this fact: that a little later, when a deputation of deputies waited upon the President and asked him if he was actually willing to claim that that measure had been passed, he answered, 'Yes—and unanimously.' It shows that in effect the whole House was on its feet when that trick was sprung.

The 'Lex Falkenhayn,' thus strangely born, gave the President power to suspend for three days any deputy who should continue to be disorderly after being called to order twice, and it also placed at his disposal such force as might be necessary to make the suspension effective. So the House had a sergeant-at-arms at last, and a more formidable one, as to power, than any other legislature in Christendom had ever possessed. The Lex Falkenhayn also gave the House itself authority to suspend members for thirty days.

On these terms the Ausgleich could be put through in an hour—apparently. The Opposition would have to sit meek and quiet, and stop obstructing, or be turned into the street, deputy after deputy, leaving the Majority an unvexed field for its work.

Certainly the thing looked well. The government was out of the frying-pan at last. It congratulated itself, and was almost girlishly happy. Its stock rose suddenly from less than nothing to a premium. It confessed to itself, with pride, that its Lex Falkenhayn was a master-stroke—a work of genius.

However, there were doubters—men who were troubled, and believed that a grave mistake had been made. It might be that the Opposition was crushed, and profitably for the country, too; but the manner of it—the manner of it! That was the serious part. It could have far-reaching results; results whose gravity might transcend all guessing. It might be the initial step toward a return to government by force, a restoration of the irresponsible methods of obsolete times.

Page 189

There were no vacant seats in the galleries next day. In fact, standing-room outside the building was at a premium. There were crowds there, and a glittering array of helmeted and brass-buttoned police, on foot and on horseback, to keep them from getting too much excited. No one could guess what was going to happen, but every one felt that something was going to happen, and hoped he might have a chance to see it, or at least get the news of it while it was fresh.

At noon the House was empty—for I do not count myself. Half an hour later the two galleries were solidly packed, the floor still empty. Another half-hour later Wolf entered and passed to his place; then other deputies began to stream in, among them many forms and faces grown familiar of late. By one o'clock the membership was present in full force. A band of Socialists stood grouped against the ministerial desks, in the shadow of the Presidential tribune. It was observable that these official strongholds were now protected against rushes by bolted gates, and that these were in ward of servants wearing the House's livery. Also the removable desk-boards had been taken away, and nothing left for disorderly members to slat with.

There was a pervading, anxious hush—at least what stood very well for a hush in that House. It was believed by many that the Opposition was cowed, and that there would be no more obstruction, no more noise. That was an error.

Presently the President entered by the distant door to the right, followed by Vice-President Fuchs, and the two took their way down past the Polish benches toward the tribune. Instantly the customary storm of noises burst out, and rose higher and higher, and wilder and wilder, and really seemed to surpass anything that had gone before it in that place. The President took his seat and begged for order, but no one could hear him. His lips moved—one could see that; he bowed his body forward appealingly, and spread his great hand eloquently over his breast—one could see that; but as concerned his uttered words, he probably could not hear them himself. Below him was that crowd of two dozen Socialists glaring up at him, shaking their fists at him, roaring imprecations and insulting epithets at him. This went on for some time. Suddenly the Socialists burst through the gates and stormed up through the ministerial benches, and a man in a red cravat reached up and snatched the documents that lay on the President's desk and flung them abroad. The next moment he and his allies were struggling and fighting with the half-dozen uniformed servants who were there to protect the new gates. Meantime a detail of Socialists had swarmed up the side steps and overflowed the President and the Vice, and were crowding and shouldering and shoving them out of the place. They crowded them out, and down the steps and across the House, past the Polish benches; and all about them swarmed hostile Poles and Czechs, who resisted them. One could

Page 190

see fists go up and come down, with other signs and shows of a heady fight; then the President and the Vice disappeared through the door of entrance, and the victorious Socialists turned and marched back, mounted the tribune, flung the President's bell and his remaining papers abroad, and then stood there in a compact little crowd, eleven strong, and held the place as if it were a fortress. Their friends on the floor were in a frenzy of triumph, and manifested it in their deafening way. The whole House was on its feet, amazed and wondering.

It was an astonishing situation, and imposingly dramatic. Nobody had looked for this. The unexpected had happened. What next? But there can be no next; the play is over; the grand climax is reached; the possibilities are exhausted; ring down the curtain.

Not yet. That distant door opens again. And now we see what history will be talking of five centuries hence: a uniformed and helmeted battalion of bronzed and stalwart men marching in double file down the floor of the House—a free parliament profaned by an invasion of brute force!

It was an odious spectacle—odious and awful. For one moment it was an unbelievable thing—a thing beyond all credibility; it must be a delusion, a dream, a nightmare. But no, it was real—pitifully real, shamefully real, hideously real. These sixty policemen had been soldiers, and they went at their work with the cold unsentimentality of their trade. They ascended the steps of the tribune, laid their hands upon the inviolable persons of the representatives of a nation, and dragged and tugged and hauled them down the steps and out at the door; then ranged themselves in stately military array in front of the ministerial estrade, and so stood.

It was a tremendous episode. The memory of it will outlast all the thrones that exist to-day. In the whole history of free parliaments the like of it had been seen but three times before. It takes its imposing place among the world's unforgettable things. I think that in my lifetime I have not twice seen abiding history made before my eyes, but I know that I have seen it once.

Some of the results of this wild freak followed instantly. The Badeni government came down with a crash; there was a popular outbreak or two in Vienna; there were three or four days of furious rioting in Prague, followed by the establishing there of martial law; the Jews and Germans were harried and plundered, and their houses destroyed; in other Bohemian towns there was rioting—in some cases the Germans being the rioters, in others the Czechs—and in all cases the Jew had to roast, no matter which side he was on. We are well along in December now;[3] the next new Minister-President has not been able to patch up a peace among the warring factions of the parliament, therefore there is no use in calling it together again for the present; public opinion believes that parliamentary government and the Constitution are actually threatened

with extinction, and that the permanency of the monarchy itself is a not absolutely certain thing!

Page 191

Yes, the Lex Falkenhayn was a great invention, and did what was claimed for it—it got the government out of the frying-pan.

[1] That is, revolution.

[2] 'In that gracious bygone time when a mild and good-tempered spirit was the atmosphere of our House, when the manner of our speakers was studiously formal and academic, and the storms and explosions of to-day were wholly unknown,' *etc.*—Translation of the opening remark of a leading article in this morning's 'Neue Freie Presse,' December 11.

[3] It is the 9th.—M.T.

PRIVATE HISTORY OF THE 'JUMPING FROG' STORY

Five or six years ago a lady from Finland asked me to tell her a story in our Negro dialect, so that she could get an idea of what that variety of speech was like. I told her one of Hopkinson Smith's Negro stories, and gave her a copy of 'Harper's Monthly' containing it. She translated it for a Swedish newspaper, but by an oversight named me as the author of it instead of Smith. I was very sorry for that, because I got a good lashing in the Swedish press, which would have fallen to his share but for that mistake; for it was shown that Boccaccio had told that very story, in his curt and meagre fashion, five hundred years before Smith took hold of it and made a good and tellable thing out of it.

I have always been sorry for Smith. But my own turn has come now. A few weeks ago Professor Van Dyke, of Princeton, asked this question:

'Do you know how old your "Jumping Frog" story is?'

And I answered:

'Yes—forty-five years. The thing happened in Calaveras County, in the spring of 1849.'

'No; it happened earlier—a couple of thousand years earlier; it is a Greek story.'

I was astonished—and hurt. I said:

'I am willing to be a literary thief if it has been so ordained; I am even willing to be caught robbing the ancient dead alongside of Hopkinson Smith, for he is my friend and a good fellow, and I think would be as honest as any one if he could do it without occasioning remark; but I am not willing to antedate his crimes by fifteen hundred years. I must ask you to knock off part of that.'

But the professor was not chaffing: he was in earnest, and could not abate a century. He offered to get the book and send it to me and the Cambridge text-book containing the English translation also. I thought I would like the translation best, because Greek makes me tired. January 30th he sent me the English version, and I will presently insert it in this article. It is my 'Jumping Frog' tale in every essential. It is not strung out as I have strung it out, but it is all there.

To me this is very curious and interesting. Curious for several reasons. For instance:

Page 192

I heard the story told by a man who was not telling it to his hearers as a thing new to them, but as a thing which they had witnessed and would remember. He was a dull person, and ignorant; he had no gift as a story-teller, and no invention; in his mouth this episode was merely history—history and statistics; and the gravest sort of history, too; he was entirely serious, for he was dealing with what to him were austere facts, and they interested him solely because they were facts; he was drawing on his memory, not his mind; he saw no humour in his tale, neither did his listeners; neither he nor they ever smiled or laughed; in my time I have not attended a more solemn conference. To him and to his fellow gold-miners there were just two things in the story that were worth considering. One was the smartness of its hero, Jim Smiley, in taking the stranger in with a loaded frog; and the other was Smiley's deep knowledge of a frog's nature—for he knew (as the narrator asserted and the listeners conceded) that a frog likes shot and is already ready to eat it. Those men discussed those two points, and those only. They were hearty in their admiration of them, and none of the party was aware that a first-rate story had been told in a first-rate way, and that it brimful of a quality whose presence they never suspected—humour.

Now, then, the interesting question is, did the frog episode happen in Angel's Camp in the spring of '49, as told in my hearing that day in the fall of 1865? I am perfectly sure that it did. I am also sure that its duplicate happened in Boeotia a couple of thousand years ago. I think it must be a case of history actually repeating itself, and not a case of a good story floating down the ages and surviving because too good to be allowed to perish.

I would now like to have the reader examine the Greek story and the story told by the dull and solemn Californian, and observe how exactly alike they are in essentials.

[Translation.]

THE ATHENIAN AND THE FROG.[1]

An Athenian once fell in with a Boeotian who was sitting by the road-side looking at a frog. Seeing the other approach, the Boeotian said his was a remarkable frog, and asked if he would agree to start a contest of frogs, on condition that he whose frog jumped farthest should receive a large sum of money. The Athenian replied that he would if the other would fetch him a frog, for the lake was near. To this he agreed, and when he was gone the Athenian took the frog, and, opening its mouth, poured some stones into its stomach, so that it did not indeed seem larger than before, but could not jump. The Boeotian soon returned with the other frog, and the contest began. The second frog first was pinched, and jumped moderately; then they pinched the Boeotian frog. And he gathered himself for a leap, and used the utmost effort, but he could not move his body the least. So the Athenian departed with the money. When he was gone

the Boeotian, wondering what was the matter with the frog, lifted him up and examined him. And being turned upside down, he opened his mouth and vomited out the stones.

Page 193

And here is the way it happened in California:

From 'the celebrated jumping frog of Calaveras county'

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers and chicken cocks, and tom-cats, and all of them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'lated to educate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he did learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut—see him turn one summerset, or maybe a couple if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of ketching flies, and kep' him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as fur as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do 'most anything—and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this flor—Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog—and sing out, 'Flies, Dan'l, flies!' and quicker'n you could wink he'd spring straight up and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor ag'in as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor'ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it came to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had travelled and been everywheres all said he laid over any frog that ever they see.

Well, Smiley kep' the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down-town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come acrost him with his box, and says:

'What might it be that you've got in the box?'

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent-like, 'It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, maybe, but it's ain't—it's only just a frog.'

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, 'H'm—so 'tis. Well, what's he good for?'

'Well,' Smiley says, easy and careless, 'he's good enough for one thing, I should judge—he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County.'

The feller took the box again and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, 'Well,' he says, 'I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog.'

Page 194

'Maybe you don't,' Smiley says. 'Maybe you understand frogs and maybe you don't understand 'em; maybe you've had experience, and maybe you ain't only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I've got my opinion, and I'll resk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras County.'

And the feller studies a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, 'Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I ain't got no frog, but if I had a frog I'd bet you.'

And then Smiley says: 'That's all right—that's all right; if you'll hold my box a minute, I'll go and get you a frog.' And so the feller took the box and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley's and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog and fetched him in and give him to this feller, and says:

'Now, if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his fore-paws just even with Dan'l's, and I'll give the word.' Then he says, 'One —two—three—git!' and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off lively; but Dan'l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it warn't no use—he couldn't budge; he was planted as solid as a church, and he couldn't no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted, too, but he didn't have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulder—so—at Dan'l, and says again, very deliberate: 'Well,' he says, 'I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog.'

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, 'I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for—I wonder if there ain't something the matter with him—he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow.' And he ketched Dan'l by the nape of the neck, and hefted him, and says, 'Why, blame my cats if he don't weigh five pound!' and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feeler, but he never ketched him.

The resemblances are deliciously exact. There you have the wily Boeotain and the wily Jim Smiley waiting—two thousand years apart—and waiting, each equipped with his frog and 'laying' for the stranger. A contest is proposed—for money. The Athenian would take a chance 'if the other would fetch him a frog'; the Yankee says: 'I'm only a stranger here, and I ain't got a frog; but if I had a frog I'd

Page 195

bet you.' The wily Boeotian and the wily Californian, with that vast gulf of two thousand years between, retire eagerly and go frogging in the marsh; the Athenian and the Yankee remain behind and work a best advantage, the one with pebbles, the other with shot. Presently the contest began. In the one case 'they pinched the Boeotian frog'; in the other, 'him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind.' The Boeotian frog 'gathered himself for a leap' (you can just see him!), but 'could not move his body in the least'; the Californian frog 'give a heave, but it warn't no use—he couldn't budge.' In both the ancient and the modern cases the strangers departed with the money. The Boeotian and the Californian wonder what is the matter with their frogs; they lift them and examine; they turn them upside down and out spills the informing ballast.

Yes, the resemblances are curiously exact. I used to tell the story of the 'Jumping Frog' in San Francisco, and presently Artemus Ward came along and wanted it to help fill out a little book which he was about to publish; so I wrote it out and sent it to his publisher, Carleton; but Carleton thought the book had enough matter in it, so he gave the story to Henry Clapp as a present, and Clapp put it in his 'Saturday Press,' and it killed that paper with a suddenness that was beyond praise. At least the paper died with that issue, and none but envious people have ever tried to rob me of the honour and credit of killing it. The 'Jumping Frog' was the first piece of writing of mine that spread itself through the newspapers and brought me into public notice. Consequently, the 'Saturday Press' was a cocoon and I the worm in it; also, I was the gay-coloured literary moth which its death set free. This simile has been used before.

Early in '66 the 'Jumping Frog' was issued in book form, with other sketches of mine. A year or two later Madame Blanc translated it into French and published it in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' but the result was not what should have been expected, for the 'Revue' struggled along and pulled through, and is alive yet. I think the fault must have been in the translation. I ought to have translated it myself. I think so because I examined into the matter and finally retranslated the sketch from the French back into English, to see what the trouble was; that is, to see just what sort of a focus the French people got upon it. Then the mystery was explained. In French the story is too confused and chaotic and unreposeful and ungrammatical and insane; consequently it could only cause grief and sickness—it could not kill. A glance at my retranslation will show the reader that this must be true.

[My Retranslation.]

THE FROG JUMPING OF THE COUNTY OF CALAVERAS

Page 196

Eh bien! this Smiley nourished some terriers a rats, and some cocks of combat, and some cats, and all sorts of things: and with his rage of betting one no had more of repose. He trapped one day a frog and him imported with him (et l'emporta chez lui) saying that he pretended to make his education. You me believe if you will, but during three months he not has nothing done but to him apprehend to jump (apprendre a sauter) in a court retired of her mansion (de sa maison). And I you respond that he have succeeded. He him gives a small blow by behind, and the instant after you shall see the frog turn in the air like a grease-biscuit, make one summersault, sometimes two, when she was well started, and refall upon his feet like a cat. He him had accomplished in the art of to gobble the flies (gober des mouches), and him there exercised continually—so well that a fly at the most far that she appeared was a fly lost. Smiley had custom to say that all which lacked to a frog it was the education, but with the education she could do nearly all—and I him believe. Tenez, I him have seen pose Daniel Webster there upon this plank—Daniel Webster was the name of the frog—and to him sing, 'Some flies, Daniel, some flies!'—in a fash of the eye Daniel had bounded and seized a fly here upon the counter, then jumped anew at the earth, where he rested truly to himself scratch the head with his behind-foot, as if he no had not the least idea of his superiority. Never you not have seen frog as modest, as natural, sweet as she was. And when he himself agitated to jump purely and simply upon plain earth, she does more ground in one jump than any beast of his species than you can know.

To jump plain—this was his strong. When he himself agitated for that Smiley multiplied the bests upon her as long as there to him remained a red. It must to know, Smiley was monstrously proud of his frog, and he of it was right, for some men who were travelled, who had all seen, said that they to him would be injurious to him compare to another frog. Smiley guarded Daniel in a little box latticed which he carried bytimes to the village for some bet.

One day an individual stranger at the camp him arrested with his box and him said:

'What is this that you have then shut up there within?'

Smiley said, with an air indifferent:

'That could be a paroquet, or a syringe (ou un serin), but this no is nothing of such, it not is but a frog.'

The individual it took, it regarded with care, it turned from one side and from the other, then he said:

'Tiens! in effect!—At what is she good?'



'My God!' responded Smiley, always with an air disengaged, 'she is good for one thing, to my notice (a mon avis), she can better in jumping (elle peut batter en sautant) all frogs of the county of Calaveras.'

The individual retook the box, it examined of new longly, and it rendered to Smiley in saying with an air deliberate:

Page 197

'Eh bien! I no saw not that that frog had nothing of better than each frog.' (Je ne vois pas que cette grenouille ait rien de mieux qu'aucune grenouille.) [If that isn't grammar gone to seed, then I count myself no judge.—M.T.]

'Possible that you not it saw not,' said Smiley; 'possible that you—you comprehend frogs; possible that you not you there comprehend nothing; possible that you had of the experience, and possible that you not be but an amateur. Of all manner (de toute maniere) I bet forty dollars that she batter in jumping no matter which frog of the country of Calaveras.'

The individual reflected a second, and said like sad:

'I not am but a stranger here, I no have not a frog; but if I of it had one, I would embrace the bet.'

'Strong, well!' respond Smiley; 'nothing of more facility. If you will hold my box a minute, I go you to search a frog (j'irai vous chercher).'

Behold, then, the individual who guards the box, who puts his forty dollars upon those of Smiley, and who attends (et qui attendre). He attended enough longtimes, reflecting all solely. And figure you that he takes Daniel, him opens the mouth by force and with a teaspoon him fills with shot of the hunt, even him fills just to the chin, then he him puts by the earth. Smiley during these times was at slopping in a swamp. Finally he trapped (attrape) a frog, him carried to that individual, and said:

'Now if you be ready, put him all against Daniel, with their before-feet upon the same line, and I give the signal'—then he added: 'One, two three—advance!'

Him and the individual touched their frogs by behind, and the frog new put to jump smartly, but Daniel himself lifted ponderously, exalted the shoulders thus, like a Frenchman—to what good? He could not budge, he is planted solid like a church, he not advance no more than if one him had put at the anchor.

Smiley was surprised and disgusted, but he not himself doubted not of the turn being intended (mais il ne se doutait pas du tour bien entendre). The individual empocketed the silver, himself with it went, and of it himself in going is that he no gives not a jerk of thumb over the shoulder—like that—at the poor Daniel, in saying with his air deliberate —(L'individu empoche l'argent, s'en va et en s'en allant est-ce qu'il ne donne pas un coup de pouce pas-dessus l'épaule, comme ca, au pauvre Daniel, en disant de son air delibere).

'Eh bien! I no see not that that frog has nothing of better than another.'

Smiley himself scratched longtimes the head, the eyes fixed upon Daniel, until that which at last he said:

'I me demand how the devil it makes itself that this beast has refused. Is it that she had something? One would believe that she is stuffed.'

He grasped Daniel by the skin of the neck, him lifted and said:

'The wolf me bite if he no weigh not five pounds.'

Page 198

He him reversed and the unhappy belched two handfuls of shot (et le malheureux, etc.). When Smiley recognised how it was, he was like mad. He deposited his frog by the earth and ran after that individual, but he not him caught never.

It may be that there are people who can translate better than I can, but I am not acquainted with them.

So ends the private and public history of the Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, an incident which has this unique feature about it—that it is both old and new, a ‘chestnut’ and not a ‘chestnut;’ for it was original when it happened two thousand years ago, and was again original when it happened in California in our own time.

P.S.

London, July, 1900.—Twice, recently, I have been asked this question:

‘Have you seen the Greek version of the “Jumping Frog”?’

And twice I have answered—‘No.’

‘Has Professor Van Dyke seen it?’

‘I suppose so.’

‘Then your supposition is at fault.’

‘Why?’

‘Because there isn’t any such version.’

‘Do you mean to intimate that the tale is modern, and not borrowed from some ancient Greek book.’

‘Yes. It is not permissible for any but the very young and innocent to be so easily beguiled as you and Van Dyke have been.’

‘Do you mean that we have fallen a prey to our ignorance and simplicity?’

‘Yes. Is Van Dyke a Greek scholar?’

‘I believe so.’

‘Then he knew where to find the ancient Greek version if one existed. Why didn’t he look? Why did he jump to conclusions?’

‘I don’t know. And was it worth the trouble, anyway?’

As it turns out, now, it was not claimed that the story had been translated from the Greek. It had its place among other uncredited stories, and was there to be turned into Greek by students of that language. 'Greek Prose Composition'—that title is what made the confusion. It seemed to mean that the originals were Greek. It was not well chosen, for it was pretty sure to mislead.

Thus vanishes the Greek Frog, and I am sorry: for he loomed fine and grand across the sweep of the ages, and I took a great pride in him.

M.T.

[1] Sidgwick, Greek Prose Composition, page 116

MY MILITARY CAMPAIGN

You have heard from a great many people who did something in the war; is it not fair and right that you listen a little moment to one who started out to do something in it, but didn't? Thousands entered the war, got just a taste of it, and then stepped out again, permanently. These, by their very numbers, are respectable, and are therefore entitled to a sort of voice—not a loud one, but a modest one; not a boastful one, but an apologetic one. They ought not to be allowed much space among better people—people who did something—I grant that; but they ought at least to be allowed to state why they didn't do anything, and also to explain the process by which they didn't do anything. Surely this kind of light must have a sort of value.

Page 199

Out West there was a good deal of confusion in men's minds during the first months of the great trouble—a good deal of unsettledness, of leaning first this way, then that, then the other way. It was hard for us to get our bearings. I call to mind an instance of this. I was piloting on the Mississippi when the news came that South Carolina had gone out of the Union on December 20, 1860. My pilot-mate was a New Yorker. He was strong for the Union; so was I. But he would not listen to me with any patience; my loyalty was smirched, to his eye, because my father had owned slaves. I said, in palliation of this dark fact, that I had heard my father say, some years before he died, that slavery was a great wrong, and that he would free the solitary Negro he then owned if he could think it right to give away the property of the family when he was so straitened in means. My mate retorted that a mere impulse was nothing—anybody could pretend to a good impulse; and went on decrying my Unionism and libelling my ancestry. A month later the secession atmosphere had considerably thickened on the Lower Mississippi, and I became a rebel; so did he. We were together in New Orleans, January 26, when Louisiana went out of the Union. He did his full share of the rebel shouting, but was bitterly opposed to letting me do mine. He said that I came of bad stock—of a father who had been willing to set slaves free. In the following summer he was piloting a Federal gun-boat and shouting for the Union again, and I was in the Confederate army. I held his note for some borrowed money. He was one of the most upright men I ever knew; but he repudiated that note without hesitation, because I was a rebel, and the son of a man who had owned slaves.

In that summer—of 1861—the first wash of the wave of war broke upon the shores of Missouri. Our State was invaded by the Union forces. They took possession of St. Louis, Jefferson Barracks, and some other points. The Governor, Claib Jackson, issued his proclamation calling out fifty thousand militia to repel the invader.

I was visiting in the small town where my boyhood had been spent —Hannibal, Marion County. Several of us got together in a secret place by night and formed ourselves into a military company. One Tom Lyman, a young fellow of a good deal of spirit but of no military experience, was made captain; I was made second lieutenant. We had no first lieutenant; I do not know why; it was long ago. There were fifteen of us. By the advice of an innocent connected with the organisation, we called ourselves the Marion Rangers. I do not remember that any one found fault with the name. I did not; I thought it sounded quite well. The young fellow who proposed this title was perhaps a fair sample of the kind of stuff we were made of. He was young, ignorant, good-natured, well-meaning, trivial, full of romance, and given to reading chivalric novels and singing forlorn love-ditties. He had some

Page 200

pathetic little nickel-plated aristocratic instincts, and detested his name, which was Dunlap; detested it, partly because it was nearly as common in that region as Smith, but mainly because it had a plebeian sound to his ear. So he tried to ennoble it by writing it in this way: d'Unlap. That contented his eye, but left his ear unsatisfied, for people gave the new name the same old pronunciation—emphasis on the front end of it. He then did the bravest thing that can be imagined—a thing to make one shiver when one remembers how the world is given to resenting shams and affectations; he began to write his name so: d'Un Lap. And he waited patiently through the long storm of mud that was flung at this work of art, and he had his reward at last; for he lived to see that name accepted, and the emphasis put where he wanted it, by people who had known him all his life, and to whom the tribe of Dunlaps had been as familiar as the rain and the sunshine for forty years. So sure of victory at last is the courage that can wait. He said he had found, by consulting some ancient French chronicles, that the name was rightly and originally written d'Un Lap; and said that if it were translated into English it would mean Peterson: Lap, Latin or Greek, he said, for stone or rock, same as the French Pierre, that is to say, Peter; d', of or from; un, a or one; hence d'Un Lap, of or from a stone or a Peter; that is to say, one who is the son of a stone, the son of a Peter—Peterson. Our militia company were not learned, and the explanation confused them; so they called him Peterson Dunlap. He proved useful to us in his way; he named our camps for us, and he generally struck a name that was 'no slouch,' as the boys said.

That is one sample of us. Another was Ed Stevens, son of the town jeweller,—trim-built, handsome, graceful, neat as a cat; bright, educated, but given over entirely to fun. There was nothing serious in life to him. As far as he was concerned, this military expedition of ours was simply a holiday. I should say that about half of us looked upon it in the same way; not consciously, perhaps, but unconsciously. We did not think; we were not capable of it. As for myself, I was full of unreasoning joy to be done with turning out of bed at midnight and four in the morning, for a while; grateful to have a change, new scenes, new occupations, a new interest. In my thoughts that was as far as I went; I did not go into the details; as a rule one doesn't at twenty-five.

Another sample was Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice. This vast donkey had some pluck, of a slow and sluggish nature, but a soft heart; at one time he would knock a horse down for some impropriety, and at another he would get homesick and cry. However, he had one ultimate credit to his account which some of us hadn't: he stuck to the war, and was killed in battle at last.

Jo Bowers, another sample, was a huge, good-natured, flax-headed lubber; lazy, sentimental, full of harmless brag, a grumbler by nature; an experienced, industrious, ambitious, and often quite picturesque liar, and yet not a successful one, for he had had no intelligent training, but was allowed to come up just any way. This life was serious

enough to him, and seldom satisfactory. But he was a good fellow, anyway, and the boys all liked him. He was made orderly sergeant; Stevens was made corporal.

Page 201

These samples will answer—and they are quite fair ones. Well, this herd of cattle started for the war. What could you expect of them? They did as well as they knew how, but really what was justly to be expected of them? Nothing, I should say. That is what they did.

We waited for a dark night, for caution and secrecy were necessary; then, toward midnight, we stole in couples and from various directions to the Griffith place, beyond the town; from that point we set out together on foot. Hannibal lies at the extreme south-eastern corner of Marion County, on the Mississippi River; our objective point was the hamlet of New London, ten miles away, in Ralls County.

The first hour was all fun, all idle nonsense and laughter. But that could not be kept up. The steady trudging came to be like work; the play had somehow oozed out of it; the stillness of the woods and the sombreness of the night began to throw a depressing influence over the spirits of the boys, and presently the talking died out and each person shut himself up in his own thoughts. During the last half of the second hour nobody said a word.

Now we approached a log farm-house where, according to report, there was a guard of five Union soldiers. Lyman called a halt; and there, in the deep gloom of the overhanging branches, he began to whisper a plan of assault upon that house, which made the gloom more depressing than it was before. It was a crucial moment; we realised, with a cold suddenness, that here was no jest—we were standing face to face with actual war. We were equal to the occasion. In our response there was no hesitation, no indecision: we said that if Lyman wanted to meddle with those soldiers, he could go ahead and do it; but if he waited for us to follow him, he would wait a long time.

Lyman urged, pleaded, tried to shame us, but it had no effect. Our course was plain, our minds were made up: we would flank the farmhouse —go out around. And that is what we did. We turned the position.

We struck into the woods and entered upon a rough time, stumbling over roots, getting tangled in vines, and torn by briars. At last we reached an open place in a safe region, and sat down, blown and hot, to cool off and nurse our scratches and bruises. Lyman was annoyed, but the rest of us were cheerful; we had flanked the farm-house, we had made our first military movement, and it was a success; we had nothing to fret about, we were feeling just the other way. Horse-play and laughing began again; the expedition was become a holiday frolic once more.

Page 202

Then we had two more hours of dull trudging and ultimate silence and depression; then, about dawn, we straggled into New London, soiled, heel-blistered, fagged with our little march, and all of us except Stevens in a sour and raspy humour and privately down on the war. We stacked our shabby old shot-guns in Colonel Ralls's barn, and then went in a body and breakfasted with that veteran of the Mexican War. Afterwards he took us to a distant meadow, and there in the shade of a tree we listened to an old-fashioned speech from him, full of gunpowder and glory, full of that adjective-piling, mixed metaphor, and windy declamation which was regarded as eloquence in that ancient time and that remote region; and then he swore us on the Bible to be faithful to the State of Missouri and drive all invaders from her soil, no matter whence they might come or under what flag they might march. This mixed us considerably, and we could not make out just what service we were embarked in; but Colonel Ralls, the practised politician and phrase-juggler, was not similarly in doubt; he knew quite clearly that he had invested us in the cause of the Southern Confederacy. He closed the solemnities by belting around me the sword which his neighbour, colonel Brown, had worn at Buena Vista and Molino del Rey; and he accompanied this act with another impressive blast.

Then we formed in line of battle and marched four miles to a shady and pleasant piece of woods on the border of the far-reached expanses of a flowery prairie. It was an enchanting region for war—our kind of war.

We pierced the forest about half a mile, and took up a strong position, with some low, rocky, and wooded hills behind us, and a purling, limpid creek in front. Straightway half the command were in swimming, and the other half fishing. The ass with the French name gave this position a romantic title, but it was too long, so the boys shortened and simplified it to Camp Ralls.

We occupied an old maple-sugar camp, whose half-rotted troughs were still propped against the trees. A long corn-crib served for sleeping quarters for the battalion. On our left, half a mile away, was Mason's farm and house; and he was a friend to the cause. Shortly after noon the farmers began to arrive from several directions, with mules and horses for our use, and these they lent us for as long as the war might last, which they judged would be about three months. The animals were of all sizes, all colours, and all breeds. They were mainly young and frisky, and nobody in the command could stay on them long at a time; for we were town boys, and ignorant of horsemanship. The creature that fell to my share was a very small mule, and yet so quick and active that it could throw me without difficulty; and it did this whenever I got on it. Then it would bray—stretching its neck out, laying its ears back, and spreading its jaws till you could see down to its works. It was

Page 203

a disagreeable animal, in every way. If I took it by the bridle and tried to lead it off the grounds, it would sit down and brace back, and no one could budge it. However, I was not entirely destitute of military resources, and I did presently manage to spoil this game; for I had seen many a steam-boat aground in my time, and knew a trick or two which even a grounded mule would be obliged to respect. There was a well by the corn-crib; so I substituted thirty fathom of rope for the bridle, and fetched him home with the windlass.

I will anticipate here sufficiently to say that we did learn to ride, after some days' practice, but never well. We could not learn to like our animals; they were not choice ones, and most of them had annoying peculiarities of one kind or another. Stevens's horse would carry him, when he was not noticing, under the huge excrescences which form on the trunks of oak-trees, and wipe him out of the saddle; in this way Stevens got several bad hurts. Sergeant Bowers's horse was very large and tall, with slim, long legs, and looked like a railroad bridge. His size enabled him to reach all about, and as far as he wanted to, with his head; so he was always biting Bowers's legs. On the march, in the sun, Bowers slept a good deal; and as soon as the horse recognised that he was asleep he would reach around and bite him on the leg. His legs were black and blue with bites. This was the only thing that could ever make him swear, but this always did; whenever the horse bit him he always swore, and of course Stevens, who laughed at everything, laughed at this, and would even get into such convulsions over it as to lose his balance and fall off his horse; and then Bowers, already irritated by the pain of the horse-bite, would resent the laughter with hard language, and there would be a quarrel; so that horse made no end of trouble and bad blood in the command.

However, I will get back to where I was—our first afternoon in the sugar-camp. The sugar-troughs came very handy as horse-troughs, and we had plenty of corn to fill them with. I ordered Sergeant Bowers to feed my mule; but he said that if I reckoned he went to war to be dry-nurse to a mule, it wouldn't take me very long to find out my mistake. I believed that this was insubordination, but I was full of uncertainties about everything military, and so I let the thing pass, and went and ordered Smith, the blacksmith's apprentice, to feed the mule; but he merely gave me a large, cold, sarcastic grin, such as an ostensibly seven-year-old horse gives you when you lift his lip and find he is fourteen, and turned his back on me. I then went to the captain, and asked if it was not right and proper and military for me to have an orderly. He said it was, but as there was only one orderly in the corps, it was but right that he himself should have Bowers on his staff. Bowers said he wouldn't serve on anybody's staff; and if anybody thought he could make him, let him try it. So, of course, the thing had to be dropped; there was no other way.

Page 204

Next, nobody would cook; it was considered a degradation; so we had no dinner. We lazed the rest of the pleasant afternoon away, some dozing under the trees, some smoking cob-pipes and talking sweethearts and war, some playing games. By late supper-time all hands were famished; and to meet the difficulty all hands turned to, on an equal footing, and gathered wood, built fires, and cooked the meal. Afterward everything was smooth for a while; then trouble broke out between the corporal and the sergeant, each claiming to rank the other. Nobody knew which was the higher office; so Lyman had to settle the matter by making the rank of both officers equal. The commander of an ignorant crew like that has many troubles and vexations which probably do not occur in the regular army at all. However, with the song-singing and yarn-spinning around the camp-fire, everything presently became serene again; and by-and-by we raked the corn down level in one end of the crib, and all went to bed on it, tying a horse to the door, so that he would neigh if any one tried to get in.[1]

We had some horsemanship drill every forenoon; then, afternoons, we rode off here and there in squads a few miles, and visited the farmers' girls, and had a youthful good time, and got an honest good dinner or supper, and then home again to camp, happy and content.

For a time, life was idly delicious, it was perfect; there was nothing to mar it. Then came some farmers with an alarm one day. They said it was rumoured that the enemy were advancing in our direction, from over Hyde's prairie. The result was a sharp stir among us, and general consternation. It was a rude awakening from our pleasant trance. The rumour was but a rumour—nothing definite about it; so, in the confusion, we did not know which way to retreat. Lyman was for not retreating at all, in these uncertain circumstances; but he found that if he tried to maintain that attitude he would fare badly, for the command were in no humour to put up with insubordination. So he yielded the point and called a council of war—to consist of himself and the three other officers; but the privates made such a fuss about being left out, that we had to allow them to remain, for they were already present, and doing the most of the talking too. The question was, which way to retreat; but all were so flurried that nobody seemed to have even a guess to offer. Except Lyman. He explained in a few calm words, that inasmuch as the enemy were approaching from over Hyde's prairie, our course was simple: all we had to do was not to retreat toward him; any other direction would answer our needs perfectly. Everybody saw in a moment how true this was, and how wise; so Lyman got a great many compliments. It was now decided that we should fall back upon Mason's farm.

Page 205

It was after dark by this time, and as we could not know how soon the enemy might arrive, it did not seem best to try to take the horses and things with us; so we only took the guns and ammunition, and started at once. The route was very rough and hilly and rocky, and presently the night grew very black and rain began to fall; so we had a troublesome time of it, struggling and stumbling along in the dark; and soon some person slipped and fell, and then the next person behind stumbled over him and fell, and so did the rest, one after the other; and then Bowers came with the keg of powder in his arms, whilst the command were all mixed together, arms and legs, on the muddy slope; and so he fell, of course, with the keg, and this started the whole detachment down the hill in a body, and they landed in the brook at the bottom in a pile, and each that was undermost pulling the hair and scratching and biting those that were on top of him; and those that were being scratched and bitten, scratching and biting the rest in their turn, and all saying they would die before they would ever go to war again if they ever got out of this brook this time, and the invader might rot for all they cared, and the country along with them—and all such talk as that, which was dismal to hear and take part in, in such smothered, low voices, and such a grisly dark place and so wet, and the enemy maybe coming any moment.

The keg of powder was lost, and the guns too; so the growling and complaining continued straight along whilst the brigade pawed around the pasty hillside and slopped around in the brook hunting for these things; consequently we lost considerable time at this; and then we heard a sound, and held our breath and listened, and it seemed to be the enemy coming, though it could have been a cow, for it had a cough like a cow; but we did not wait, but left a couple of guns behind and struck out for Mason's again as briskly as we could scramble along in the dark. But we got lost presently among the rugged little ravines, and wasted a deal of time finding the way again, so it was after nine when we reached Mason's stile at last; and then before we could open our mouths to give the countersign, several dogs came bounding over the fence, with great riot and noise, and each of them took a soldier by the slack of his trousers and began to back away with him. We could not shoot the dogs without endangering the persons they were attached to; so we had to look on, helpless, at what was perhaps the most mortifying spectacle of the civil war. There was light enough, and to spare, for the Masons had now run out on the porch with candles in their hands. The old man and his son came and undid the dogs without difficulty, all but Bowers's; but they couldn't undo his dog, they didn't know his combination; he was of the bull kind, and seemed to be set with a Yale time-lock; but they got him loose at last with some scalding water, of which Bowers got his share and returned thanks. Peterson Dunlap afterwards made up a fine name for this engagement, and also for the night march which preceded it, but both have long ago faded out of my memory.

Page 206

We now went into the house, and they began to ask us a world of questions, whereby it presently came out that we did not know anything concerning who or what we were running from; so the old gentleman made himself very frank, and said we were a curious breed of soldiers, and guessed we could be depended on to end up the war in time, because no Government could stand the expense of the shoe-leather we should cost it trying to follow us around. 'Marion Rangers! good name, b'gosh!' said he. And wanted to know why we hadn't had a picket-guard at the place where the road entered the prairie, and why we hadn't sent out a scouting party to spy out the enemy and bring us an account of his strength, and so on, before jumping up and stampeding out of a strong position upon a mere vague rumour—and so on, and so forth, till he made us all feel shabbier than the dogs had done, and not half so enthusiastically welcome. So we went to bed shamed and low-spirited; except Stevens. Soon Stevens began to devise a garment for Bowers which could be made to automatically display his battle-scars to the grateful, or conceal them from the envious, according to his occasions; but Bowers was in no humour for this, so there was a fight, and when it was over Stevens had some battle-scars of his own to think about.

Then we got a little sleep. But after all we had gone through, our activities were not over for the night; for about two o'clock in the morning we heard a shout of warning from down the lane, accompanied by a chorus from all the dogs, and in a moment everybody was up and flying around to find out what the alarm was about. The alarmist was a horseman who gave notice that a detachment of Union soldiers was on its way from Hannibal with orders to capture and hang any bands like ours which it could find, and said we had no time to lose. Farmer Mason was in a flurry this time, himself. He hurried us out of the house with all haste, and sent one of his negroes with us to show us where to hide ourselves and our tell-tale guns among the ravines half a mile away. It was raining heavily.

We struck down the lane, then across some rocky pasture-land which offered good advantages for stumbling; consequently we were down in the mud most of the time, and every time a man went down he blackguarded the war, and the people who started it, and everybody connected with it, and gave himself the master dose of all for being so foolish as to go into it. At last we reached the wooded mouth of a ravine, and there we huddled ourselves under the streaming trees, and sent the negro back home. It was a dismal and heart-breaking time. We were like to be drowned with the rain, deafened with the howling wind and the booming thunder, and blinded by the lightning. It was indeed a wild night. The drenching we were getting was misery enough, but a deeper misery still was the reflection that the halter might end us before we were a day older. A death of this shameful sort had not occurred to us as being among the possibilities of war. It took the romance all out of the campaign, and turned our dreams of glory into a repulsive nightmare. As for doubting that so barbarous an order had been given, not one of us did that.

Page 207

The long night wore itself out at last, and then the negro came to us with the news that the alarm had manifestly been a false one, and that breakfast would soon be ready. Straightway we were light-hearted again, and the world was bright, and life as full of hope and promise as ever—for we were young then. How long ago that was! Twenty-four years.

The mongrel child of philology named the night's refuse Camp Devastation, and no soul objected. The Masons gave us a Missouri country breakfast, in Missourian abundance, and we needed it: hot biscuits; hot 'wheat bread' prettily criss-crossed in a lattice pattern on top; hot corn pone; fried chicken; bacon, coffee, eggs, milk, buttermilk, *etc.*;—and the world may be confidently challenged to furnish the equal to such a breakfast, as it is cooked in the South.

We stayed several days at Mason's; and after all these years the memory of the dullness, the stillness and lifelessness of that slumberous farm-house still oppresses my spirit as with a sense of the presence of death and mourning. There was nothing to do, nothing to think about; there was no interest in life. The male part of the household were away in the fields all day, the women were busy and out of our sight; there was no sound but the plaintive wailing of a spinning-wheel, forever moaning out from some distant room—the most lonesome sound in nature, a sound steeped and sodden with homesickness and the emptiness of life. The family went to bed about dark every night, and as we were not invited to intrude any new customs, we naturally followed theirs. Those nights were a hundred years long to youths accustomed to being up till twelve. We lay awake and miserable till that hour every time, and grew old and decrepit waiting through the still eternities for the clock-strikes. This was no place for town boys. So at last it was with something very like joy that we received news that the enemy were on our track again. With a new birth of the old warrior spirit, we sprang to our places in line of battle and fell back on Camp Ralls.

Captain Lyman had taken a hint from Mason's talk, and he now gave order that our camp should be guarded against surprise by the posting of pickets. I was ordered to place a picket at the forks of the road in Hyde's prairie. Night shut down black and threatening. I told Sergeant Bowers to go out to that place and stay till midnight; and, just as I was expecting, he said he wouldn't do it. I tried to get others to go, but all refused. Some excused themselves on account of the weather; but the rest were frank enough to say they wouldn't go in any kind of weather. This kind of thing sounds odd now, and impossible, but it seemed a perfectly natural thing to do. There were scores of little camps scattered over Missouri where the same thing was happening. These camps were composed of young men who had been born and reared to a sturdy independence, and who

Page 208

did not know what it meant to be ordered around by Tom, Dick, and Harry, whom they had known familiarly all their lives, in the village or on the farm. It is quite within the probabilities that this same thing was happening all over the South. James Redpath recognised the justice of this assumption, and furnished the following instance in support of it. During a short stay in East Tennessee he was in a citizen colonel's tent one day, talking, when a big private appeared at the door, and without salute or other circumlocution said to the colonel:

'Say, Jim, I'm a-goin' home for a few days.'

'What for?'

'Well, I hain't b'en there for a right smart while, and I'd like to see how things is comin' on.'

'How long are you going to be gone?'

'Bout two weeks.'

'Well don't be gone longer than that; and get back sooner if you can.'

That was all, and the citizen officer resumed his conversation where the private had broken it off. This was in the first months of the war, of course. The camps in our part of Missouri were under Brigadier-General Thomas H. Harris. He was a townsman of ours, a first-rate fellow, and well liked; but we had all familiarly known him as the sole and modest-salaried operator in our telegraph office, where he had to send about one dispatch a week in ordinary times, and two when there was a rush of business; consequently, when he appeared in our midst one day, on the wing, and delivered a military command of some sort, in a large military fashion, nobody was surprised at the response which he got from the assembled soldiery:

'Oh, now, what'll you take to don't, Tom Harris!'

It was quite the natural thing. One might justly imagine that we were hopeless material for war. And so we seemed, in our ignorant state; but there were those among us who afterward learned the grim trade; learned to obey like machines; became valuable soldiers; fought all through the war, and came out at the end with excellent records. One of the very boys who refused to go out on picket duty that night, and called me an ass for thinking he would expose himself to danger in such a foolhardy way, had become distinguished for intrepidity before he was a year older.

I did secure my picket that night—not by authority, but by diplomacy. I got Bowers to go, by agreeing to exchange ranks with him for the time being, and go along and stand the



watch with him as his subordinate. We stayed out there a couple of dreary hours in the pitchy darkness and the rain, with nothing to modify the dreariness but Bowers's monotonous growlings at the war and the weather; then we began to nod, and presently found it next to impossible to stay in the saddle; so we gave up the tedious job, and went back to the camp without waiting for the relief guard. We rode into camp without interruption or objection from anybody, and the enemy could have done the same, for there were no sentries. Everybody was asleep; at midnight there was nobody to send out another picket, so none was sent. We never tried to establish a watch at night again, as far as I remember, but we generally kept a picket out in the daytime.

Page 209

In that camp the whole command slept on the corn in the big corn-crib; and there was usually a general row before morning, for the place was full of rats, and they would scramble over the boys' bodies and faces, annoying and irritating everybody; and now and then they would bite some one's toe, and the person who owned the toe would start up and magnify his English and begin to throw corn in the dark. The ears were half as heavy as bricks, and when they struck they hurt. The persons struck would respond, and inside of five minutes every man would be locked in a death-grip with his neighbour. There was a grievous deal of blood shed in the corn-crib, but this was all that was spilt while I was in the war. No, that is not quite true. But for one circumstance it would have been all. I will come to that now.

Our scares were frequent. Every few days rumours would come that the enemy were approaching. In these cases we always fell back on some other camp of ours; we never stayed where we were. But the rumours always turned out to be false; so at last even we began to grow indifferent to them. One night a negro was sent to our corn-crib with the same old warning: the enemy was hovering in our neighbourhood. We all said let him hover. We resolved to stay still and be comfortable. It was a fine warlike resolution, and no doubt we all felt the stir of it in our veins—for a moment. We had been having a very jolly time, that was full of horse-play and school-boy hilarity; but that cooled down now, and presently the fast-waning fire of forced jokes and forced laughs died out altogether, and the company became silent. Silent and nervous. And soon uneasy—worried—apprehensive. We had said we would stay, and we were committed. We could have been persuaded to go, but there was nobody brave enough to suggest it. An almost noiseless movement presently began in the dark, by a general and unvoiced impulse. When the movement was completed, each man knew that he was not the only person who had crept to the front wall and had his eye at a crack between the logs. No, we were all there; all there with our hearts in our throats, and staring out toward the sugar-troughs where the forest foot-path came through. It was late, and there was a deep woodsy stillness everywhere. There was a veiled moonlight, which was only just strong enough to enable us to mark the general shape of objects. Presently a muffled sound caught our ears, and we recognised it as the hoof-beats of a horse or horses. And right away a figure appeared in the forest path; it could have been made of smoke, its mass had so little sharpness of outline. It was a man on horseback; and it seemed to me that there were others behind him. I got hold of a gun in the dark, and pushed it through a crack between the logs, hardly knowing what I was doing, I was so dazed with fright. Somebody said 'Fire!' I pulled the trigger. I seemed to see a hundred

Page 210

flashes and hear a hundred reports, then I saw the man fall down out of the saddle. My first feeling was of surprised gratification; my first impulse was an apprentice-sportsman's impulse to run and pick up his game. Somebody said, hardly audibly, 'Good—we've got him!—wait for the rest.' But the rest did not come. There was not a sound, not the whisper of a leaf; just perfect stillness; an uncanny kind of stillness, which was all the more uncanny on account of the damp, earthy, late-night smells now rising and pervading it. Then, wondering, we crept stealthily out, and approached the man. When we got to him the moon revealed him distinctly. He was lying on his back, with his arms abroad; his mouth was open and his chest heaving with long gasps, and his white shirt-front was all splashed with blood. The thought shot through me that I was a murderer; that I had killed a man—a man who had never done me any harm. That was the coldest sensation that ever went through my marrow. I was down by him in a moment, helplessly stroking his forehead; and I would have given anything then—my own life freely—to make him again what he had been five minutes before. And all the boys seemed to be feeling in the same way; they hung over him, full of pitying interest, and tried all they could to help him, and said all sorts of regretful things. They had forgotten all about the enemy; they thought only of this one forlorn unit of the foe. Once my imagination persuaded me that the dying man gave me a reproachful look out of his shadowy eyes, and it seemed to me that I would rather he had stabbed me than done that. He muttered and mumbled like a dreamer in his sleep, about his wife and child; and I thought with a new despair, 'This thing that I have done does not end with him; it falls upon them too, and they never did me any harm, any more than he.'

In a little while the man was dead. He was killed in war; killed in fair and legitimate war; killed in battle, as you might say; and yet he was as sincerely mourned by the opposing force as if he had been their brother. The boys stood there a half hour sorrowing over him, and recalling the details of the tragedy, and wondering who he might be, and if he were a spy, and saying that if it were to do over again they would not hurt him unless he attacked them first. It soon came out that mine was not the only shot fired; there were five others—a division of the guilt which was a grateful relief to me, since it in some degree lightened and diminished the burden I was carrying. There were six shots fired at once; but I was not in my right mind at the time, and my heated imagination had magnified my one shot into a volley.

Page 211

The man was not in uniform, and was not armed. He was a stranger in the country; that was all we ever found out about him. The thought of him got to preying upon me every night; I could not get rid of it. I could not drive it away, the taking of that unoffending life seemed such a wanton thing. And it seemed an epitome of war; that all war must be just that—the killing of strangers against whom you feel no personal animosity; strangers whom, in other circumstances, you would help if you found them in trouble, and who would help you if you needed it. My campaign was spoiled. It seemed to me that I was not rightly equipped for this awful business; that war was intended for men, and I for a child's nurse. I resolved to retire from this avocation of sham soldiery while I could save some remnant of my self-respect. These morbid thoughts clung to me against reason; for at bottom I did not believe I had touched that man. The law of probabilities decreed me guiltless of his blood; for in all my small experience with guns I had never hit anything I had tried to hit, and I knew I had done my best to hit him. Yet there was no solace in the thought. Against a diseased imagination, demonstration goes for nothing.

The rest of my war experience was of a piece with what I have already told of it. We kept monotonously falling back upon one camp or another, and eating up the country—I marvel now at the patience of the farmers and their families. They ought to have shot us; on the contrary, they were as hospitably kind and courteous to us as if we had deserved it. In one of these camps we found Ab Grimes, an Upper Mississippi pilot, who afterwards became famous as a dare-devil rebel spy, whose career bristled with desperate adventures. The look and style of his comrades suggested that they had not come into the war to play, and their deeds made good the conjecture later. They were fine horsemen and good revolver-shots; but their favourite arm was the lasso. Each had one at his pommel, and could snatch a man out of the saddle with it every time, on a full gallop, at any reasonable distance.

In another camp the chief was a fierce and profane old blacksmith of sixty, and he had furnished his twenty recruits with gigantic home-made bowie-knives, to be swung with the two hands, like the machetes of the Isthmus. It was a grisly spectacle to see that earnest band practising their murderous cuts and slashes under the eye of that remorseless old fanatic.

The last camp which we fell back upon was in a hollow near the village of Florida, where I was born—in Monroe County. Here we were warned, one day, that a Union colonel was sweeping down on us with a whole regiment at his heels. This looked decidedly serious. Our boys went apart and consulted; then we went back and told the other companies present that the war was a disappointment to us and we were going to disband. They were getting ready, themselves,

Page 212

to fall back on some place or other, and were only waiting for General Tom Harris, who was expected to arrive at any moment; so they tried to persuade us to wait a little while, but the majority of us said no, we were accustomed to falling back, and didn't need any of Tom Harris's help; we could get along perfectly well without him and save time too. So about half of our fifteen, including myself, mounted and left on the instant; the others yielded to persuasion and stayed—stayed through the war.

An hour later we met General Harris on the road, with two or three people in his company—his staff, probably, but we could not tell; none of them was in uniform; uniforms had not come into vogue among us yet. Harris ordered us back; but we told him there was a Union colonel coming with a whole regiment in his wake, and it looked as if there was going to be a disturbance; so we had concluded to go home. He raged a little, but it was of no use; our minds were made up. We had done our share; had killed one man, exterminated one army, such as it was; let him go and kill the rest, and that would end the war. I did not see that brisk young general again until last year; then he was wearing white hair and whiskers.

In time I came to know that Union colonel whose coming frightened me out of the war and crippled the Southern cause to that extent—General Grant. I came within a few hours of seeing him when he was as unknown as I was myself; at a time when anybody could have said, 'Grant?—Ulysses S. Grant? I do not remember hearing the name before.' It seems difficult to realise that there was once a time when such a remark could be rationally made; but there was, and I was within a few miles of the place and the occasion too, though proceeding in the other direction.

The thoughtful will not throw this war-paper of mine lightly aside as being valueless. It has this value: it is a not unfair picture of what went on in many and many a militia camp in the first months of the rebellion, when the green recruits were without discipline, without the steadying and heartening influence or trained leaders; when all their circumstances were new and strange, and charged with exaggerated terrors, and before the invaluable experience of actual collision in the field had turned them from rabbits into soldiers. If this side of the picture of that early day has not before been put into history, then history has been to that degree incomplete, for it had and has its rightful place there. There was more Bull Run material scattered through the early camps of this country than exhibited itself at Bull Run. And yet it learned its trade presently, and helped to fight the great battles later. I could have become a soldier myself, if I had waited. I had got part of it learned; I knew more about retreating than the man that invented retreating.



Page 213

[1] It was always my impression that that was what the horse was there for, and I know that it was also the impression of at least one other of the command, for we talked about it at the time, and admired the military ingenuity of the device; but when I was out West three years ago I was told by Mr. A. G. Fuqua, a member of our company, that the horse was his, that the leaving him tied at the door was a matter of mere forgetfulness, and that to attribute it to intelligent invention was to give him quite too much credit. In support of his position, he called my attention to the suggestive fact that the artifice was not employed again. I had not thought of that before.

MEISTERSCHAFT

In three acts [1]

DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

*Mr. Stephenson. Margaret Stephenson.
George Franklin. Annie Stephenson.
William Jackson. Mrs. Blumenthal, the Wirthin.
Gretchen, Kellnerin*

ACT I. SCENE I.

Scene of the play, the parlour of a small private dwelling in a village. (*Margaret discovered crocheting—has a pamphlet.*)

Margaret. (Solus.) Dear, dear! it's dreary enough, to have to study this impossible German tongue: to be exiled from home and all human society except a body's sister in order to do it, is just simply abscheulich. Here's only three weeks of the three months gone, and it seems like three years. I don't believe I can live through it, and I'm sure Annie can't. (Refers to her book, and rattles through, several times, like one memorising:) Entschuldigen Sie, mein Herr, können Sie mir vielleicht sagen, um wie viel Uhr der erste Zug nach Dresden abgeht? (Makes mistakes and corrects them.) I just hate Meisterschaft! We may see people; we can have society; yes, on condition that the conversation shall be in German, and in German only—every single word of it! Very kind—oh, very! when neither Annie nor I can put two words together, except as they are put together for us in Meisterschaft or that idiotic Ollendorff! (Refers to book, and memorises: Mein Bruder hat Ihren Herrn Vater nicht gesehen, als er gestern in dem Laden des deutschen Kaufmannes war.) Yes, we can have society, provided we talk German. What would conversation be like! If you should stick to Meisterschaft, it would change the subject every two minutes; and if you stuck to Ollendorff, it would be all about your sister's mother's good stocking of thread, or your grandfather's aunt's good



hammer of the carpenter, and who's got it, and there an end. You couldn't keep up your interest in such topics. (Memorising: Wenn irgend möglich—mochte ich noch heute Vormittag Geschäftsfreunde zu treffen.) My mind is

Page 214

made up to one thing: I will be an exile, in spirit and in truth: I will see no one during these three months. Father is very ingenious—oh, very! thinks he is, anyway. Thinks he has invented a way to force us to learn to speak German. He is a dear good soul, and all that; but invention isn't his *fach*'. He will see. (With eloquent energy.) Why, nothing in the world shall—Bitte, können Sie mir vielleicht sagen, ob Herr Schmidt mit diesem Zuge angekommen ist? Oh, dear, dear George—three weeks! It seems a whole century since I saw him. I wonder if he suspects that I—that I—care for him—j-just a wee, wee bit? I believe he does. And I believe Will suspects that Annie cares for him a little, that I do. And I know perfectly well that they care for us. They agree with all our opinions, no matter what they are; and if they have a prejudice, they change it, as soon as they see how foolish it is. Dear George! at first he just couldn't abide cats; but now, why now he's just all for cats; he fairly welters in cats. I never saw such a reform. And it's just so with all his principles: he hasn't got one that he had before. Ah, if all men were like him, this world would—(Memorising: Im Gegenteil, mein Herr, dieser Stoff ist sehr billig. Bitte, sehen Sie sich nur die Qualität an.) Yes, and what did they go to studying German for, if it wasn't an inspiration of the highest and purest sympathy? Any other explanation is nonsense—why, they'd as soon have thought of studying American history.

[Turns her back, buries herself in her pamphlet, first memorising aloud, until Annie enters, then to herself, rocking to and fro, and rapidly moving her lips, without uttering a sound.]

Enter *Annie*, absorbed in her pamphlet—does not at first see *Margaret*.

Annie. (Memorising: Er liess mich gestern fruh rufen, und sagte mir dass er einen sehr unangenehmen Brief von Ihrem Lehrer erhalten hatte. Repeats twice aloud, then to herself, briskly moving her lips.)

M. (Still not seeing her sister.) Wie geht es Ihrem Herrn Schwiegervater? Es freut mich sehr dass Ihre Frau Mutter wieder wohl ist. (Repeats. Then mouths in silence.)

A. (Repeats her sentence a couple of times aloud; then looks up, working her lips, and discovers Margaret.) Oh, you here? (Running to her.) O lovey-dovey, dovey-lovey, I've got the gr-reatest news! Guess, guess, guess! You'll never guess in a hundred thousand million years—and more!

M. Oh, tell me, tell me, dearie; don't keep me in agony.

A. Well I will. What—do—you—think? They're here!

M. Wh-a-t! Who? When? Which? Speak!



A. Will and George!

M. Annie Alexandra Victoria Stephenson, what do you mean?

A. As sure as guns!

M. (Spasmodically embracing and kissing her.) 'Sh! don't use such language. O darling, say it again!



Page 215

A. As sure as guns!

M. I don't mean that! Tell me again, that—

A. (Springing up and waltzing about the room.) They're here—in this very village—to learn German—for three months! Es sollte mich sehr freuen wenn Sie—

M. (Joining in the dance.) Oh, it's just too lovely for anything! (Unconsciously memorising:) Es ware mir lieb wenn Sie morgen mit mir in die Kirche gehen konnten, aber ich kann selbst nicht gehen, weil ich Sonntags gewöhnlich krank bin. Juckhe!

A. (Finishing some unconscious memorising.)—morgen Mittag bei mir speisen konnten. Juckhe! Sit down and I'll tell you all I've heard. (They sit.) They're here, and under that same odious law that fetters us —our tongues, I mean; the metaphor's faulty, but no matter. They can go out, and see people, only on condition that they hear and speak German, and German only.

M. Isn't—that—too lovely!

A. And they're coming to see us!

M. Darling! (Kissing her.) But are you sure?

A. Sure as guns—Gatling guns!

M. 'Sh! don't, child, it's schrecklich! Darling—you aren't mistaken?

A. As sure as g—batteries! [They jump up and dance a moment—then—]

M. (With distress.) But, Annie dear!—we can't talk German—and neither can they!

A. (Sorrowfully.) I didn't think of that.

M. How cruel it is! What can we do?

A. (After a reflective pause, resolutely.) Margaret—we've got to.

M. Got to what?

A. Speak German.

M. Why, how, child?

A. (Contemplating her pamphlet with earnestness.) I can tell you one thing. Just give me the blessed privilege: just hinsetzen Will Jackson here in front of me, and I'll talk German to him as long as this Meisterschaft holds out to burn.



M. (Joyously.) Oh, what an elegant idea! You certainly have got a mind that's a mine of resources, if ever anybody had one.

A. I'll skin this Meisterschaft to the last sentence in it!

M. (With a happy idea.) Why Annie, it's the greatest thing in the world. I've been all this time struggling and despairing over these few little Meisterschaft primers: but as sure as you live, I'll have the whole fifteen by heart before this time day after to-morrow. See if I don't.

A. And so will I; and I'll trowel in a layer of Ollendorff mush between every couple of courses of Meisterschaft bricks. Juckhe!

M. Hoch! hoch! hoch!

A. Stoss an!

M. Juckhe! Wir werden gleich gute deutsche Schulerinnen werden! Juck—

A. —he!

M. Annie, when are they coming to see us? To-night?

A. No.

M. No? Why not? When are they coming? What are they waiting for? The idea! I never heard of such a thing! What do you—

A. (Breaking in.) Wait, wait, wait! give a body a chance. They have their reasons.

Page 216

M. Reasons?—what reasons?

A. Well, now, when you stop and think, they're royal good ones. They've got to talk German when they come, haven't they? Of course. Well, they don't know any German but *Wie befinden Sie sich*, and *Haben Sie gut geschlafen*, and *Vater unser*, and *Ich trinke lieber Bier als Wasser*, and a few little parlour things like that; but when it comes to talking, why, they don't know a hundred and fifteen German words, put them all together.

M. Oh, I see.

A. So they're going to neither eat, sleep, smoke, nor speak the truth till they've crammed home the whole fifteen *Meisterschafts* auswendig!

M. Noble hearts!

A. They've given themselves till day after to-morrow, half-past 7 P.M., and then they'll arrive here loaded.

M. Oh, how lovely, how gorgeous, how beautiful! Some think this world is made of mud; I think it's made of rainbows. (Memorising.) Wenn irgend möglich, so mochte ich noch heute Vormittag dort ankommen, da es mir sehr daran gelegen ist—Annie, I can learn it just like nothing!

A. So can I. *Meisterschaft's* mere fun—I don't see how it ever could have seemed difficult. Come! We can't be disturbed here; let's give orders that we don't want anything to eat for two days; and are absent to friends, dead to strangers, and not at home even to nougat peddlers—

M. Schon! and we'll lock ourselves into our rooms, and at the end of two days, whosoever may ask us a *Meisterschaft* question shall get a *Meisterschaft* answer—and hot from the bat!

Both. (Reciting in unison.) Ich habe einen Hut für meinen Sohn, ein Paar Handschuhe für meinen Bruder, und einen Kamm für mich selbst gekauft. [Exeunt.]

Enter Mrs. *Blumenthal*, the Wirthin.

Wirthin. (Solus.) Ach, die armen Mädchen, sie hassen die deutsche Sprache, drum ist es ganz und gar unmöglich dass sie sie je lernen können. Es bricht mir ja mein Herz ihre Kummer über die Studien anzusehen.... Warum haben sie den Entschluss gefasst in ihren Zimmern ein Paar Tage zu bleiben?... Ja—gewiss—das versteht sich; sie sind entmuthigt—arme Kinder!(A knock at the door.) Herein!

Enter *Gretchen* with card.



GR. Er ist schon wieder da, und sagt dass er nur Sie sehen will. (Hands the card.)
Auch-*Wirthin*. Gott im Himmel—der Vater der Mädchen? (Puts the card in her pocket.)
Er wünscht die Tochter nicht zu treffen? Ganz recht; also, Du schweigst.

GR. Zu Befehl. *Wirthin*. Lass ihn hereinkommen.

GR. Ja, Frau *Wirthin*! [Exit *Gretchen*.]

Wirthin. (Solus.) Ah—jetzt muss ich ihm die Wahrheit offenbaren.

Enter Mr. *Stephenson*.

Stephenson. Good-morning, Mrs. Blumenthal—keep your seat, keep your seat, please. I'm only here for a moment—merely to get your report, you know. (Seating himself.) Don't want to see the girls—poor things, they'd want to go home with me. I'm afraid I couldn't have the heart to say no. How's the German getting along?

Page 217

Wirthin. N-not very well; I was afraid you would ask me that. You see, they hate it, they don't take the least interest in it, and there isn't anything to incite them to an interest, you see. And so they can't talk at all.

S. M-m. That's bad. I had an idea that they'd get lonesome, and have to seek society; and then, of course, my plan would work, considering the cast-iron conditions of it.

Wirthin. But it hasn't, so far. I've thrown nice company in their way—I've done my very best, in every way I could think of—but it's no use; they won't go out, and they won't receive anybody. And a body can't blame them; they'd be tongue-tied—couldn't do anything with a German conversation. Now, when I started to learn German—such poor German as I know—the case was very different: my intended was a German. I was to live among Germans the rest of my life; and so I had to learn. Why, bless my heart! I nearly lost the man the first time he asked me—I thought he was talking about the measles. They were very prevalent at the time. Told him I didn't want any in mine. But I found out the mistake, and I was fixed for him next time.... Oh yes, Mr. Stephenson, a sweetheart's a prime incentive.

S. (Aside.) Good soul! she doesn't suspect that my plan is a double scheme—includes a speaking knowledge of German, which I am bound they shall have, and the keeping them away from those two young fellows—though if I had known that those boys were going off for a year's foreign travel, I—however, the girls would never learn that language at home; they're here, and I won't relent—they've got to stick the three months out. (Aloud.) So they are making poor progress? Now tell me—will they learn it—after a sort of fashion, I mean—in three months?

Wirthin. Well, now, I'll tell you the only chance I see. Do what I will, they won't answer my German with anything but English; if that goes on, they'll stand stock-still. Now I'm willing to do this: I'll straighten everything up, get matters in smooth running order, and day after to-morrow I'll go to bed sick, and stay sick three weeks.

S. Good! You are an angel? I see your idea. The servant girl—

Wirthin. That's it; that's my project. She doesn't know a word of English. And Gretchen's a real good soul, and can talk the slates off a roof. Her tongue's just a flutter-mill. I'll keep my room—just ailing a little—and they'll never see my face except when they pay their little duty-visits to me, and then I'll say English disorders my mind. They'll be shut up with Gretchen's windmill, and she'll just grind them to powder. Oh, they'll get a start in the language—sort of a one, sure's you live. You come back in three weeks.

S. Bless you, my Retterin! I'll be here to the day! Get ye to your sick-room—you shall have treble pay. (Looking at watch.) Good! I can just catch my train. Leben Sie wohl! [Exit.]

Page 218

Wirthin. Leben Sie wohl! mein Herr!

ACT II. SCENE I.

Time, a couple of days later. The girls discovered with their work and primers.

Annie. Was fehlt der Wirthin?

Margaret. Das weiss ich nicht. Sie ist schon vor zwei Tagen ins Bett gegangen—

A. My! how fliegend you speak!

M. Danke schon—und sagte dass sie nicht wohl sei.

A. Good? Oh no, I don't mean that! no—only lucky for us—glücklich, you know I mean because it'll be so much nicer to have them all to ourselves.

M. Oh, natürlich! Ja! Dass ziehe ich durchaus vor. Do you believe your Meisterschaft will stay with you, Annie?

A. Well, I know it is with me—every last sentence of it; and a couple of hods of Ollendorff, too, for emergencies. Maybe they'll refuse to deliver—right off—at first, you know—der Verlegenheit wegen—aber ich will sie später herausholen—when I get my hand in—und vergisst Du das nicht!

M. Sei nicht grob, Liebste. What shall we talk about first—when they come?

A. Well—let me see. There's shopping—and—all that about the trains, you know—and going to church—and—buying tickets to London, and Berlin, and all around—and all that subjunctive stuff about the battle in Afghanistan, and where the American was said to be born, and so on—and—and ah—oh, there's so many things—I don't think a body can choose beforehand, because you know the circumstances and the atmosphere always have so much to do in directing a conversation, especially a German conversation, which is only a kind of an insurrection, anyway. I believe it's best to just depend on Prov—(Glancing at watch, and gasping.) —half-past—seven!

M. Oh, dear, I'm all of a tremble! Let's get something ready, Annie! (Both fall nervously to reciting): Entschuldigen Sie, mein Herr, können Sie mir vielleicht sagen wie ich nach dem norddeutschen Bahnhof gehe? (They repeat it several times, losing their grip and mixing it all up.)

Both. Herein! Oh, dear! O der heilige—

Enter *Gretchen*.



Gretchen (Ruffled and indignant.) Entschuldigen Sie, meine gnädigsten Fraulein, es sind zwei junge rasende Herren draussen, die herein wollen, aber ich habe ihnen geschworen dass—(Handing the cards.)

M. Due liebe Zeit, they're here! And of course down goes my back hair! Stay and receive them, dear, while I—(Leaving.)

A. I—alone? I won't! I'll go with you! (To *gr.*) Lassen Sie die Herren naher treten; und sagen Sie ihnen dass wir gleich zuruckkommen werden. [Exit.]

Page 219

GR. (Solus.) Was! Sie freuen sich darüber? Und ich sollte wirklich diese Blodsinnigen, dies grobe Rindvieh hereinlassen? In den hilflosen Umständen meiner gnadigen jungen Damen?—Unsinn! (Pause—thinking.) Wohlan! Ich werde sie mal beschützen! Sollte man nicht glauben, dass sie einen Sparren zu viel hatten? (Tapping her skull significantly.) Was sie mir doch Alles gesagt haben! Der Eine: Guten Morgen! wie geht es Ihrem Herrn Schwiegervater? Du liebe Zeit! Wie sollte ich einen Schwiegervater haben können! Und der Andere: 'Es thut mir sehr leid dass Ihrer Herr Vater meinen Bruder nicht gesehen hat, als er doch gestern in dem Laden des deutschen Kaufmannes war!' Potztausendhimmelsdonnerwetter! Oh, ich war ganz rasend! Wie ich aber rief: 'Meine Herren, ich kenne Sie nicht, und Sie kennen meinen Vater nicht, wissen Sie, denn er ist schon lange durchgebrannt, und geht nicht beim Tage in einen Laden hinein, wissen Sie—und ich habe keinen Schwiegervater, Gott sei Dank, werde auch nie einen kriegen, werde überhaupt, wissen Sie, ein solches Ding nie haben, nie dulden, nie ausstehen: warum greifen Sie ein Mädchen an, das nur Unschuld kennt, das Ihnen nie Etwas zu Leide gethan hat?' Dann haben sie sich beide die Finger in die Ohren gesteckt und gebetet: 'Allmächtiger Gott! Erbarme Dich unser?' (Pauses.) Nun, ich werde schon diesen Schurken Einlass gönnen, aber ich werde ein Auge mit ihnen haben, damit sie sich nicht wie reine Teufel geberden sollen. [Exit, grumbling and shaking her head.]

Enter *William* and *George*.

W. My land, what a girl! and what an incredible gift of gabble!—kind of patent climate-proof compensation-balance self-acting automatic Meisterschaft—touch her button, and br-r-r! away she goes!

Geo. Never heard anything like it; tongue journalled on ball-bearings! I wonder what she said; seemed to be swearing, mainly.

W. (After mumbling Meisterschaft a while.) Look here, George, this is awful—come to think—this project: we can't talk this frantic language.

Geo. I know it, Will, and it is awful; but I can't live without seeing Margaret—I've endured it as long as I can. I should die if I tried to hold out longer—and even German is preferable to death.

W. (Hesitatingly.) Well, I don't know; it's a matter of opinion.

Geo. (Irritably.) It isn't a matter of opinion either. German is preferable to death.

W. (Reflectively.) Well, I don't know—the problem is so sudden—but I think you may be right: some kinds of death. It is more than likely that a slow, lingering—well, now, there in Canada in the early times a couple of centuries ago, the Indians would take a missionary and skin him, and get some hot ashes and boiling water and one thing and

another, and by-and-by that missionary—well, yes, I can see that, by-and-by, talking German could be a pleasant change for him.

Page 220

Geo. Why, of course. Das versteht sich; but you have to always think a thing out, or you're not satisfied. But let's not go to bothering about thinking out this present business; we're here, we're in for it; you are as moribund to see Annie as I am to see Margaret; you know the terms: we've got to speak German. Now stop your mooning and get at your Meisterschaft; we've got nothing else in the world.

W. Do you think that'll see us through?

Geo. Why it's got to. Suppose we wandered out of it and took a chance at the language on our own responsibility, where the nation would we be! Up a stump, that's where. Our only safety is in sticking like wax to the text.

W. But what can we talk about?

Geo. Why, anything that Meisterschaft talks about. It ain't our affair.

W. I know; but Meisterschaft talks about everything.

Geo. And yet don't talk about anything long enough for it to get embarrassing. Meisterschaft is just splendid for general conversation.

W. Yes, that's so; but it's so blamed general! Won't it sound foolish?

Geo. Foolish! Why, of course; all German sounds foolish.

W. Well, that is true; I didn't think of that.

Geo. Now, don't fool around any more. Load up; load up; get ready. Fix up some sentences; you'll need them in two minutes new. [They walk up and down, moving their lips in dumb-show memorising.]

W. Look here—when we've said all that's in the book on a topic, and want to change the subject, how can we say so?—how would a German say it?

Geo. Well, I don't know. But you know when they mean 'Change cars,' they say Umsteigen. Don't you reckon that will answer?

W. Tip-top! It's short and goes right to the point; and it's got a business whang to it that's almost American. Umsteigen!—change subject! —why, it's the very thing!

Geo. All right, then, you umsteigen—for I hear them coming.

Enter the girls.



A. to W. (With solemnity.) Guten Morgen, mein Herr, es freut mich sehr, Sie zu sehen.

W. Guten Morgen, mein Fraulein, es freut mich sehr Sie zu sehen.

[*Margaret* and *George* repeat the same sentences. Then, after an embarrassing silence, *Margaret* refers to her book and says:]

M. Bitte, meine Herren, setzen Sie sich.

The gentlemen. Danke schon.[The four seat themselves in couples, the width of the stage apart, and the two conversations begin. The talk is not flowing—at any rate at first; there are painful silences all along. Each couple worry out a remark and a reply: there is a pause of silent thinking, and then the other couple deliver themselves.]

W. Haben Sie meinen Vater in dem Laden meines Bruders nicht gesehen?

A. Nein, mein Herr, ich habe Ihren Herrn Vater in dem Laden Ihres Herrn Bruders nicht gesehen.

Page 221

Geo. Waren Sie gestern Abend im Konzert, oder im Theater?

M. Nein, ich war gestern Abend nicht im Konzert, noch im Theater, ich war gestern Abend zu Hause.[General break-down—long pause.]

W. Ich store doch nicht etwa?

A. Sie storen mich durchaus nicht.

Geo. Bitte, lassen Sie sich nicht von mir storen.

M. Aber ich bitte Sie, Sie storen mich durchaus nicht.

W. (To both girls.) Wenn wir Sie storen so gehen wir gleich wieder.

A. O, nein! Gewiss, nein!

M. Im Gegentheil, es freut uns sehr, Sie zu sehen, alle beide.

W. Schon!

Geo. Gott sei dank!

M. (Aside.) It's just lovely!

A. (Aside.) It's like a poem. [Pause.]

W. Umsteigen!

M. Um—welches?

W. Umsteigen.

Geo. Auf English, change cars—oder subject.

Both girls. Wie schon!

W. Wir haben uns die Freiheit genommen, bei Ihnen vorzusprechen.

A. Sie sind sehr gutig.

Geo. Wir wollten uns erkundigen, wie Sie sich befanden.

M. Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—meine Schwester auch.

W. Meine Frau lasst sich Ihnen bestens empfehlen.



A. Ihre Frau?

W. (Examining his book.) Vielleicht habe ich mich geirrt. (Shows the place.) Nein, gerade so sagt das Buch.

A. (Satisfied.) Ganz recht. Aber—

W. Bitte empfehlen Sie mich Ihrem Herrn Bruder.

A. Ah, das ist viel besser—viel besser. (Aside.) Wenigstens es wäre viel besser wenn ich einen Bruder hatte.

Geo. Wie ist es Ihnen gegangen, seitdem ich das Vergnügen hatte, Sie anderswo zu sehen?

M. Danke bestens, ich befinde mich gewöhnlich ziemlich wohl.

[*Gretchen slips in with a gun, and listens.*]

Geo. (Still to Margaret.) Befindet sich Ihre Frau Gemahlin wohl?

GR. (Raising hands and eyes.) Frau Gemahlin—heiliger Gott! [Is like to betray herself with her smothered laughter, and glides out.]

M. Danke sehr, meine Frau ist ganz wohl. [Pause.]

W. Durfen wir vielleicht—umsteigen?

The others. Gut!

Geo. (Aside.) I feel better, now. I'm beginning to catch on. (Aloud.) Ich möchte gern morgen früh einige Einkäufe machen und würde Ihnen sehr verbunden sein, wenn Sie mir den Gefallen thaten, mir die Namen der besten hiesigen Firmen aufzuschreiben.

M. (Aside.) How sweet!

W. (Aside.) Hang it, I was going to say that! That's one of the noblest things in the book.

A. Ich möchte Ihnen gern begleiten, aber es ist mir wirklich heute Morgen ganz unmöglich auszugehen. (Aside.) It's getting as easy as 9 times 7 is 46.

M. Sagen Sie dem Briefträger, wenn's gefällig ist, er, möchte Ihnen den eingeschriebenen Brief geben lassen.

Page 222

W. Ich wurde Ihnen sehr verbunden sein, wenn Sie diese Schachtel für mich nach der Post tragen würden, da mir sehr daran liegt einen meiner Geschäftsfreunde in dem Laden des deutschen Kaufmanns heute Abend treffen zu können. (Aside.) All down but nine; set'm up on the other alley!

A. Aber, Herr Jackson! Sie haben die Sätze gemischt. Es ist unbegreiflich wie Sie das haben thun können. Zwischen Ihrem ersten Theil und Ihrem letzten Theil haben Sie ganz funfzig Seiten ubergeschlagen! Jetzt bin ich ganz verloren. Wie kann man reden, wenn man seinen Platz durchaus nicht wieder finden kann?

W. Oh, bitte, verzeihen Sie; ich habe das wirklich nicht beabsichtigt.

A. (Mollified.) Sehr wohl, lassen Sie gut sein. Aber thun Sie es nicht wieder. Sie müssen ja doch einräumen, das solche Dinge unertragliche Verwirrung mit sich führen.

[*Gretchen slips in again with her gun.*]

W. Unzweifelhaft haben Sie Recht, meine holdselige Landsmannin....
Umsteigen!

[*As George gets fairly into the following, Gretchen draws a bead on him, and lets drive at the close, but the gun snaps.*]

Geo. Glauben Sie dass ich ein hubsches Wohnzimmer für mich selbst und ein kleines Schlafzimmer für meinen Sohn in diesem Hotel für funfzehn Mark die Woche bekommen kann, oder, würden Sie mir rathen, in einer Privatwohnung Logis zu nehmen? (Aside.) That's a daisy!

GR. (Aside.) Schade! [*She draws her charge and reloads.*]

M. Glauben Sie nicht Sie werden besser thun bei diesem Wetter zu Hause zu bleiben?

A. Freilich glaube ich, Herr Franklin, Sie werden sich erkalten, wenn Sie bei diesem unbestandigen Wetter ohne Ueberrock ausgehen.

GR. (Relieved—aside.) So? Man redet von Ausgehen. Das klingt schon besser. [*Sits.*]

W. (To A.) Wie theuer haben Sie das gekauft? [*Indicating a part of her dress.*]

A. Das hat achtzehn Mark gekostet.

W. Das ist sehr theuer.



Geo. Ja, obgleich dieser Stoff wunderschön ist und das Muster sehr geschmackvoll und auch das Vorzüglichste dass es in dieser Art gibt, so ist es doch furchtbar theuer für einen solchen Artikel.

M. (Aside.) How sweet is this communion of soul with soul!

A. Im Gegentheil, mein Herr, das ist sehr billig. Sehen Sie sich nur die Qualität an.

[They all examine it.]

Geo. Möglicherweise ist es das allerneueste das man in diesem Stoff hat; aber das Muster gefällt mir nicht.

[Pause.]

W. Umsteigen!

A. Welchen Hund haben Sie? Haben Sie den hübschen Hund des Kaufmanns, oder den hässlichen Hund der Urgrossmutter des Lehrlings des bogenbeinigen Zimmermanns?

W. (Aside.) Oh, come, she's ringing in a cold deck on us: that's Ollendorff.

Geo. Ich habe nicht den Hund des—des—(Aside.) Stuck! That's no Meisterschaft; they don't play fair. (Aloud.) Ich habe nicht den Hund des—des—In unserem Buche leider, gibt es keinen Hund; daher, ob ich auch gern von solchen Thieren sprechen möchte, ist es mir doch unmöglich, weil ich nicht vorbereitet bin. Entschuldigen Sie, meine Damen.



Page 223

GR. (Aside) Beim Teufel, sie sind alle blodsinnig geworden. In meinem Leben habe ich nie ein so narrisches, verfluchtes, verdammtes Gespräch gehört.

W. Bitte, umsteigen.

[Run the following rapidly through.]

M. (Aside.) Oh, I've flushed an easy batch! (Aloud.) Wurden Sie mir erlauben meine Reisetasche heir hinzustellen?

GR. (Aside.) Wo ist seine Reisetasche? Ich sehe keine.

W. Bitte sehr.

Geo. Ist meine Reisetasche Ihnen im Wege?

GR. (Aside.) Und wo ist seine Reisetasche?

A. Erlauben Sie mir Sie von meiner Reisetasche zu bereien.

GR. (Aside.) Du Esel!

W. Ganz und gar nicht. (To Geo.) Es ist sehr schwul in diesem Coupe.

GR. (Aside.) Coupe.

Geo. Sie haben Recht. Erlauben Sie mir, gefälligst, das Fenster zu öffnen. Ein wenig Luft wurde uns gut thun.

M. Wir fahren sehr rasch.

A. Haben Sie den Namen jener Station gehört?

W. Wie lange halten wir auf dieser Station an?

Geo. Ich reise nach Dresden, Schaffner. Wo muss ich umsteigen?

GR. (Aside.) Sie sind ja alle ganz und gar verrückt. Man denke sich sie glauben dass sie auf der Eisenbahn reisen.

Geo. (Aside, to William.) Now brace up; pull all your confidence together, my boy, and we'll try that lovely goodbye business a flutter. I think it's about the gaudiest thing in the book, if you boom it right along and don't get left on a base. It'll impress the girls. (Aloud.) Lassen Sie uns gehen: es ist schon sehr spat, und ich muss morgen ganz fruh aufstehen.



GR. (Aside—grateful.) Gott sei Dank dass sie endlich gehen.

[Sets her gun aside.]

W. (To Geo.) Ich danke Ihnen hoflichst fur die Ehre die Sie mir erweisen, aber ich kann nicht langer bleiben.

Geo. (To W.) Entschuldigen Sie mich gutigst, aber ich kann wirklich nicht langer bleiben.

[*Gretchen* looks on stupefied.]

W. (To Geo.) Ich habe schon eine Einladung angenommen; ich kann wirklich nicht langer bleiben.

[*Gretchen* fingers her gun again.]

Geo. (To W.) Ich muss gehen.

W. (To Geo.) Wie! Sie wollen schon wieder gehen? Sie sind ja eben erst gekommen.

M. (Aside.) It's just music!

A. (Aside.) Oh, how lovely they do it!

Geo. (To W.) Also denken Sie doch noch nicht an's Gehen.

W. (To Geo.) Es thut mir unendlich leid, aber ich muss nach Hause.
Meine Frau wird sich wundern, was aus mir geworden ist.

Geo. (To W.) Meine Frau hat keine Ahnung wo ich bin: ich muss wirklich jetzt fort.

W. (To Geo.) Dann will ich Sie nicht langer aufhalten; ich bedaure sehr dass Sie uns einen so kurzen Besuch gemacht haben.

Geo. (To W.) Adieu—auf recht baldiges Wiedersehen.



Page 224

W. UMSTEIGNEN!

[Great hand-clapping from the girls.]

M. (Aside.) Oh, how perfect! how elegant!

A. (Aside.) Per-fectly enchanting!

Joyous chorus. (All) Ich habe gehabt, du hast gehabt, er hat gehabt, wir haben gehabt, ihr habet gehabt, sie haben gehabt.

[*Gretchen* faints, and tumbles from her chair, and the gun goes off with a crash. Each girl, frightened, seizes the protecting hand of her sweetheart. *Gretchen* scrambles up. Tableau.]

W. (Takes out some money—beckons *Gretchen* to him. George adds money to the pile.) Hubsches Madchen (giving her some of the coins), hast Du etwas gesehen?

GR. (Courtesy—aside.) Der Engel! (Aloud—impressively.) Ich habe nichts gesehen.

W. (More money.) Hast Du etwas gehort?

GR. Ich habe nichts gehort.

W. (More money.) Und morgen?

GR. Morgen—ware es nothig—bin ich taub und blind.

W. Unvergleichbares Madchen! Und (giving the rest of the money) darnach?

GR. (Deep courtesy—aside.) Erzengel! (Aloud.) Darnach, mein gnadgister, betrachten Sie mich also taub—blind—todt!

All. (In chorus—with reverent joy.) Ich habe gehabt, du hast gehabt, er hat gehabt, wir haben gehabt, ihr habet gehabt, sie haben gehabt!

ACT III.

Three weeks later.

Scene I.

Enter *Gretchen*, and puts her shawl on a chair. Brushing around with the traditional feather-duster of the drama. Smartly dressed, for she is prosperous.



GR. Wie hatte man sich das vorstellen können! In nur drei Wochen bin ich schon reich geworden! (Gets out of her pocket handful after handful of silver, which she piles on the table, and proceeds to repile and count, occasionally ringing or biting a piece to try its quality.) Oh, dass (with a sigh) die Frau Wirthin nur ewig krank bliebe!... Diese edlen jungen Männer—sie sind ja so liebenswürdig! Und so fleissig! —und so treu! Jeden Morgen kommen sie gerade um drei Viertel auf neun; und plaudern und schwatzen, und plappern, und schnattern, die jungen Damen auch; um Schlage zwölf nehmen sie Abschied; um Schlage eins kommen sie schon wieder, und plaudern und schwatzen und plappern und schnattern; gerade um sechs Uhr nehmen sie wiederum Abschied; um halb acht kehren sie noch'e'mal zurück, und plaudern und schwatzen und plappern und schnattern bis zehn Uhr, oder vielleicht ein Viertel nach, falls ihre Uhren nach gehen (und stets gehen sie nach am Ende des Besuchs, aber stets vor Beginn desselben), und zuweilen unterhalten sich die jungen Leute beim Spaziergehen; und jeden Sonntag gehen sie dreimal in die Kirche; und immer plaudern sie, und schwatzen und plappern und schnattern bis ihnen die Zähne aus dem Munde fallen. Und ich? Durch Mangel an Uebung, ist mir die Zunge

Page 225

mit Moos belegt worden! Freilich ist's mir eine dumme Zei gewesen. Aber—um Gotteswillen, was geht das mir an? Was soll ich daraus machen? Taglich sagt die Frau Wirthin, 'Gretchen' (dumb-show of paying a piece of money into her hand), 'du bist eine der besten Sprach —Lehrerinnen der Welt!' Act, Gott! Und taglich sagen die edlen jungen Manner, 'Gretchen, liebes Kind' (money-paying again in dumb-show—three coins), 'bleib' taub—blind—todt!' und so bleibe ich.... Jetzt wird es ungefahr neun Uhr sein; bald kommen sie vom Spaziergehen zuruck. Also, es ware gut dass ich meinem eigenen Schatz einen Besuch abstatte und spazieren gehe.

[Dons her shawl. Exit. L.]

Enter *Wirthin*. R.

Wirthin. That was Mr. Stephenson's train that just came in. Evidently the girls are out walking with Gretchen;—can't find them, and she doesn't seem to be around. (A ring at the door.) That's him. I'll go see. [Exit. R.]

Enter *Stephenson* and *Wirthin*. R.

S. Well, how does sickness seem to agree with you?

Wirthin. So well that I've never been out of my room since, till I heard your train come in.

S. Thou miracle of fidelity! Now I argue from that, that the new plan is working.

Wirthin. Working? Mr. Stephenson, you never saw anything like it in the whole course of your life! It's absolutely wonderful the way it works.

S. Succeeds? No—you don't mean it.

Wirthin. Indeed I do mean it. I tell you, Mr. Stephenson, that plan was just an inspiration—that's what it was. You could teach a cat German by it.

S. Dear me, this is noble news! Tell me about it.

Wirthin. Well, it's all Gretchen—ev-ery bit of it. I told you she was a jewel. And then the sagacity of that child—why, I never dreamed it was in her. Sh-she, 'Never you ask the young ladies a question—never let on—just keep mum—leave the whole thing to me,' sh-she.

S. Good! And she justified, did she?



Wirthin. Well, sir, the amount of German gabble that that child crammed into those two girls inside the next forty-eight hours—well, I was satisfied! So I've never asked a question—never wanted to ask any. I've just lain curled up there, happy. The little dears! they've flitted in to see me a moment, every morning and noon and supper-time; and as sure as I'm sitting here, inside of six days they were clattering German to me like a house afire!

S. Sp-lendid, splendid!

Wirthin. Of course it ain't grammatical—the inventor of the language can't talk grammatical; if the dative didn't fetch him the accusative would; but it's German all the same, and don't you forget it!

S. Go on—go on—this is delicious news—

Wirthin. Gretchen, she says to me at the start, 'Never you mind about company for 'em,' sh-she—'I'm company enough.' And I says, 'All right —fix it your own way, child;' and that she was right is shown by the fact that to this day they don't care a straw for any company but hers.

Page 226

S. Dear me; why, it's admirable!

Wirthin. Well, I should think so! They just dote on that hussy—can't seem to get enough of her. Gretchen tells me so herself. And the care she takes of them! She tells me that every time there's a moonlight night she coaxes them out for a walk; and if a body can believe her, she actually bullies them off to church three times every Sunday!

S. Why, the little dev—missionary! Really, she's a genius!

Wirthin. She's a bud, I tell you! Dear me, how she's brought those girls' health up! Cheeks?—just roses. Gait?—they walk on watch-springs! And happy?—by the bliss in their eyes, you'd think they're in Paradise! Ah, that Gretchen! Just you imagine our trying to achieve these marvels!

S. You're right—every time. Those girls—why, all they'd have wanted to know was what we wanted done, and then they wouldn't have done it—the mischievous young rascals!

Wirthin. Don't tell me? Bless you, I found that out early—when I was bossing.

S. Well, I'm im-mensely pleased. Now fetch them down. I'm not afraid now. They won't want to go home.

Wirthin. Home! I don't believe you could drag them away from Gretchen with nine span of horses. But if you want to see them, put on your hat and come along; they're out somewhere trapseing along with Gretchen. [Going.]

S. I'm with you—lead on.

Wirthin. We'll go out the side door. It's towards the Anlage. [Exit both. L.]

Enter *George* and *Margaret*. R. Her head lies upon his shoulder, his arm is about her waist; they are steeped in sentiment.

M. (Turning a fond face up at him.) Du Engel!

Geo. Liebste!

M. Oh, das Liedchen dass Du mir gewidmet hast—es ist so schon, so wunderschön. Wie hatte ich je geahnt dass Du ein Poet warest!

Geo. Mein Schatzchen!—es ist mir lieb wenn Dir die Kleinigkeit gefällt.

M. Ah, es ist mit der zartlichsten Musik gefüllt—klingt ja so süss und selig—wie das Flüstern des Sommerwindes die Abenddämmerung hindurch. Wieder—Theuerste!—sag'es wieder.



Geo. Du bist wie eine Blume!—So schön und hold und rein—Ich schau' Dich an, und WehmuthSchleicht mir ins Herz hinein. Mir ist als ob ich die HandeAufs Haupt Dir legen sollt', Betend, dass Gott Dich erhalte, So rein und schön und hold.

M. A-ch! (Dumb-show sentimentalisms.) Georgie—

Geo. Kindchen!

M. Warum kommen sie nicht?

Geo. Das weiss ich gar nicht. Sie waren—

M. Es wird spät. Wir müssen sie antreiben. Komm!

Geo. Ich glaube sie werden recht bald ankommen, aber—[Exit both. L.]

Enter *Gretchen*, R., in a state of mind. Slumps into a chair limp with despair.



Page 227

GR. Ach! was wird jetzt aus mir werden! Zufällig habe ich in der Ferne den verdamnten Papa gesehen!—und die Frau Wirthin auch! Oh, diese Erscheinung—die hat mir beinahe das Leben genommen. Sie suchen die jungen Damen—das weiss ich wenn sie diese und die jungen Herren zusammen fanden—du heileger Gott! Wenn das geschieht, waren wir Alle ganz und gar verloren! Ich muss sie gleich finden, und ihr eine Warnung geben! [Exit. L.]

Enter *Annie* and *Will*, R., posed like the former couple and sentimental.

A. Ich liebe Dich schon so sehr—Deiner edlen Natur wegen. Dass du dazu auch ein Dichter bist!—ach, mein Leben ist übermassig reich geworden! Wer hatte sich doch einbilden können dass ich einen Mann zu einem so wunderschönen Gedicht hatte begeistern können?

W. Liebste! Es ist nur eine Kleinigkeit.

A. Nein, nein, es ist ein echtes Wunder! Sage es noch einmal—ich flehe Dich an.

W. Du bist wie eine Blume!—So schön und hold und rein—Ich schau' Dich an, und WehmuthSchleicht mir ins Herz hinein. Mir ist als ob ich die HandeAufs Haupt Dir legen sollt', Betend, dass Gott Dich erhalt, So rein und schön und hold.

A. Ach, es ist himmlisch—einfach himmlisch. [Kiss.] Schreibt auch George Gedicht?

W. Oh, ja—zuweilen.

A. Wie schön!

W. (Aside.) Smouches 'em, same as I do! It was a noble good idea to play that little thing on her. George wouldn't ever think of that —somehow he never had any invention.

A. (Arranging chairs.) Jetzt will ich bei Dir sitzen bleiben, und Du—

W. (They sit.) Ja—und ich—

A. Du wirst mir die alte Geschichte, die immer neu bleibt, noch wieder erzählen.

W. Zum Beispiel, dass ich Dich liebe!

A. Wieder!

W. Ich—sie kommen!



Enter *George* and *Margaret*.

A. Das macht nichts. Fortan! [*George* unties M.'s bonnet. She reties his cravat—interspersings of love-pats, *etc.*, and dumb show of love-quarrellings.]

W. Ich liebe Dich.

A. Ach! Noch einmal!

W. Ich habe Dich vom Herzen lieb.

A. Ach! Abermals!

W. Bist Du denn noch nicht satt?

A. Nein! (The other couple sit down, and *Margaret* begins a retying of the cravat. Enter the *Wirthin* and *Stephenson*, he imposing silence with a sign.) Mich hungert sehr, ich verhungre!

W. Oh, Du armes Kind! (Lays her head on his shoulder. Dumb-show between *Stephenson* and *Wirthin*.) Und hungert es nicht mich? Du hast mir nicht einmal gesagt —

A. Dass ich Dich liebe? Mein Eigener! (Frau *Wirthin* threatens to faint—is supported by *Stephenson*.) Hore mich nur an: Ich liebe Dich, ich liebe Dich—

Enter *Gretchen*.

GR. (Tears her hair.) Oh, dass ich in der Holle ware!



Page 228

M. Ich liebe Dich, ich liebe Dich! Ah, ich bin so glücklich dass ich nicht schlafen kann, nicht lesen kann, nicht reden kann, nicht—

A. Und ich! Ich bin auch so glücklich dass ich nicht speisen kann, nicht studieren, arbeiten, denken, schreiben—

S. (To Wirthin—aside.) Oh, there isn't any mistake about it —Gretchen's just a rattling teacher!

Wirthin. (To Stephenson—aside.) I'll skin her alive when I get my hands on her!

M. Komm, alle Verliebte! [They jump up, join hands, and sing in chorus—] Du, Du, wie ich Dich liebe, Du, Du, liebest auch mich! Die, die zartlichsten Triebe—

S. (Stepping forward.) Well! [The girls throw themselves upon his neck with enthusiasm.]

The girls. Why, father!

S. My darlings! [The young men hesitate a moment, they they add their embrace, flinging themselves on Stephenson's neck, along with the girls.]

The young men. Why, father!

S. (Struggling.) Oh, come, this is too thin!—too quick, I mean. Let go, you rascals!

Geo. We'll never let go till you put us on the family list.

M. Right! hold to him!

A. Cling to him, Will! [*Gretchen* rushes in and joins the general embrace, but is snatched away by the *Wirthin*, crushed up against the wall, and threatened with destruction.]

S. (Suffocating.) All right, all right—have it your own way, you quartette of swindlers!

W. He's a darling! Three cheers for papa!

Everybody. (Except Stephenson, who bows with hand on heart) Hip—hip —hip: hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!

GR. Der Tiger—ah-h-h!

Wirthin. Sei ruhig, you hussy!



S. Well, I've lost a couple of precious daughters, but I've gained a couple of precious scamps to fill up the gap with; so it's all right. I'm satisfied, and everybody's forgiven—
[With mock threats at Gretchen.]

W. Oh, wir werden für Dich sorgen—für herrliches Gretchen!

GR. Danke schon!

M. (To Wirthin.) Und für Sie auch; denn wenn Sie nicht so freundlich gewesen wären, krank zu werden, wie waren wir je so glücklich geworden wie jetzt?

Wirthin. Well, dear, I was kind, but I didn't mean it. But I ain't sorry—not one bit—that I ain't. [Tableau.]

S. Come, now, the situation is full of hope, and grace, and tender sentiment. If I had in the least poetic gift, I know I could improvise under such an inspiration (each girl nudges her sweetheart) something worthy to—to—Is there no poet among us? [Each youth turns solemnly his back upon the other, and raises his hands in benediction over his sweetheart's bowed head.]

Both youths at once. Mir ist als ob ich die Hände auf's Haupt Dir legen sollt'—[They turn and look reproachfully at each other—the girls contemplate them with injured surprise.]

Page 229

S. (Reflectively.) I think I've heard that before somewhere.

Wirthin. (Aside.) Why, the very cats in Germany know it!

(Curtain.)

[1] [*Explanatory.*] I regard the idea of this play as a valuable invention. I call it the Patent Universally-Applicable Automatically Adjustable Language Drama. This indicates that it is adjustable to any tongue, and performable in any tongue. The English portions of the play are to remain just as they are, permanently; but you change the foreign portions to any language you please, at will. Do you see? You at once have the same old play in a new tongue. And you can keep changing it from language to language, until your private theatrical pupils have become glib and at home in the speech of all nations. Zum Beispiel, suppose we wish to adjust the play to the French tongue. First, we give Mrs. Blumenthal and Gretchen French names. Next, we knock the German Meisterschaft sentences out of the first scene, and replace them with sentences from the French Meisterschaft—like this, for instance: 'Je voudrais faire des emplettes ce matin; voulez-vous avoir l'obligeance de venir avec moi chez le tailleur francais?' And so on. Wherever you find German, replace it with French, leaving the English parts undisturbed. When you come to the long conversation in the second act, turn to any pamphlet of your French Meisterschaft, and shovel in as much French talk on any subject as will fill up the gaps left by the expunged German. Example—page 423, French Meisterschaft: On dirait qu'il va faire chaud. J'ai chaud. J'ai extrêmement chaud. Ah! qu'il fait chaud! Il fait une chaleur etouffante! L'air est brulant. Je meurs de chaleur. Il est presque impossible de supporter la chaleur. Cela vous fait transpirer. Mettons-nous a l'ombre. Il fait du vent. Il fait un vent froid. Il fait un tres agreable pour se promener aujourd'hui. And so on, all the way through. It is very easy to adjust the play to any desired language. Anybody can do it.

MY BOYHOOD DREAMS

The dreams of my boyhood? No, they have not been realised. For all who are old, there is something infinitely pathetic about the subject which you have chosen, for in no greyhead's case can it suggest any but one thing—disappointment. Disappointment is its own reason for its pain: the quality or dignity of the hope that failed is a matter aside. The dreamer's valuation of the thing lost—not another man's—is the only standard to measure it by, and his grief for it makes it large and great and fine, and is worthy of our reverence in all cases. We should carefully remember that. There are sixteen hundred million people in the world. Of these there is but a trifling number—in fact, only thirty-eight millions—who can understand why a person should have an ambition to belong to the French army; and why, belonging to it, he should be proud of that;

Page 230

and why, having got down that far, he should want to go on down, down, down till he struck the bottom and got on the General Staff; and why, being stripped of this livery, or set free and reinvested with his self-respect by any other quick and thorough process, let it be what it might, he should wish to return to his strange serfage. But no matter: the estimate put upon these things by the fifteen hundred and sixty millions is no proper measure of their value: the proper measure, the just measure, is that which is put upon them by Dreyfus, and is cipherable merely upon the littleness or the vastness of the disappointment which their loss cost him. There you have it: the measure of the magnitude of a dream-failure is the measure of the disappointment the failure cost the dreamer; the value, in others' eyes, of the thing lost, has nothing to do with the matter. With this straightening out and classification of the dreamer's position to help us, perhaps we can put ourselves in his place and respect his dream—Dreyfus's, and the dreams our friends have cherished and reveal to us. Some that I call to mind, some that have been revealed to me, are curious enough; but we may not smile at them, for they were precious to the dreamers, and their failure has left scars which give them dignity and pathos. With this theme in my mind, dear heads that were brown when they and mine were young together rise old and white before me now, beseeching me to speak for them, and most lovingly will I do it. Howells, Hay, Aldrich, Matthews, Stockton, Cable, Remus—how their young hopes and ambitions come flooding back to my memory now, out of the vague far past, the beautiful past, the lamented past! I remember it so well—that night we met together—it was in Boston, and Mr. Fiends was there, and Mr. Osgood, Ralph Keeler, and Boyle O'Reilly, lost to us now these many years—and under the seal of confidence revealed to each other what our boyhood dreams had been: dreams which had not as yet been blighted, but over which was stealing the grey of the night that was to come—a night which we prophetically felt, and this feeling oppressed us and made us sad. I remember that Howells's voice broke twice, and it was only with great difficulty that he was able to go on; in the end he wept. For he had hoped to be an auctioneer. He told of his early struggles to climb to his goal, and how at last he attained to within a single step of the coveted summit. But there misfortune after misfortune assailed him, and he went down, and down, and down, until now at last, weary and disheartened, he had for the present given up the struggle and become the editor of the Atlantic Monthly. This was in 1830. Seventy years are gone since, and where now is his dream? It will never be fulfilled. And it is best so; he is no longer fitted for the position; no one would take him now; even if he got it, he would not be able to do himself credit in it, on account of his deliberateness of speech and lack

Page 231

of trained professional vivacity; he would be put on real estate, and would have the pain of seeing younger and abler men intrusted with the furniture and other such goods—goods which draw a mixed and intellectually low order of customers, who must be beguiled of their bids by a vulgar and specialised humour and sparkle, accompanied with antics. But it is not the thing lost that counts, but only the disappointment the loss brings to the dreamer that had coveted that thing and had set his heart of hearts upon it, and when we remember this, a great wave of sorrow for Howells rises in our breasts, and we wish for his sake that his fate could have been different. At that time Hay's boyhood dream was not yet past hope of realisation, but it was fading, dimming, wasting away, and the wind of a growing apprehension was blowing cold over the perishing summer of his life. In the pride of his young ambition he had aspired to be a steamboat mate; and in fancy saw himself dominating a forecastle some day on the Mississippi and dictating terms to roustabouts in high and wounding terms. I look back now, from this far distance of seventy years, and note with sorrow the stages of that dream's destruction. Hay's history is but Howells's, with differences of detail. Hay climbed high toward his ideal; when success seemed almost sure, his foot upon the very gang-plank, his eye upon the capstan, misfortune came and his fall began. Down—down—down—ever down: Private Secretary to the President; Colonel in the field; Charge d'Affaires in Paris; Charge d'Affaires in Vienna; Poet; Editor of the Tribune; Biographer of Lincoln; Ambassador to England; and now at last there he lies—Secretary of State, Head of Foreign Affairs. And he has fallen like Lucifer, never to rise again. And his dream—where now is his dream? Gone down in blood and tears with the dream of the auctioneer. And the young dream of Aldrich—where is that? I remember yet how he sat there that night fondling it, petting it; seeing it recede and ever recede; trying to be reconciled and give it up, but not able yet to bear the thought; for it had been his hope to be a horse-doctor. He also climbed high, but, like the others, fell; then fell again, and yet again, and again and again. And now at last he can fall no further. He is old now, he has ceased to struggle, and is only a poet. No one would risk a horse with him now. His dream is over. Has any boyhood dream ever been fulfilled? I must doubt it. Look at Brander Matthews. He wanted to be a cowboy. What is he to-day? Nothing but a professor in a university. Will he ever be a cowboy? It is hardly conceivable. Look at Stockton. What was Stockton's young dream? He hoped to be a barkeeper. See where he has landed. Is it better with Cable? What was Cable's young dream? To be ring-master in the circus, and swell around and crack the whip. What is he to-day? Nothing but a theologian and novelist. And Uncle Remus—what

Page 232

was his young dream? To be a buccaneer. Look at him now. Ah, the dreams of our youth, how beautiful they are, and how perishable! The ruins of these might-have-beens, how pathetic! The heart-secrets that were revealed that night now so long vanished, how they touch me as I give them voice! Those sweet privacies, how they endeared us to each other! We were under oath never to tell any of these things, and I have always kept that oath inviolate when speaking with persons whom I thought not worthy to hear them. Oh, our lost Youth—God keep its memory green in our hearts! for Age is upon us, with the indignity of its infirmities, and Death beckons!

TO THE ABOVE OLD PEOPLE

Sleep! for the Sun that scores another Day
Against the Tale allotted You to stay,
Reminding You, is Risen, and now
Serves Notice—ah, ignore it while You stay!

The chill Wind blew, and those who stood before
The Tavern murmured, 'Having drunk his Score,
Why tarries He with empty Cup? Behold,
The Wine of Youth once poured, is poured no more

'Come, leave the Cup, and on the Winter's Snow
Your Summer Garment of Enjoyment throw:
Your Tide of Life is ebbing fast, and it,
Exhausted once, for You no more shall flow.'

While yet the Phantom of false Youth was mine,
I heard a Voice from out the Darkness whine,
'O Youth, O whither gone? Return,
And bathe my Age in thy reviving Wine.'

In this subduing Draught of tender green
And kindly Absinth, with its wimpling Sheen
Of dusky half-lights, let me drown
The haunting Pathos of the Might-Have-Been.

For every nicked Joy, marred and brief,
We pay some day its Weight in golden Grief
Mined from our Hearts. Ah, murmur not
—From this one-sided Bargain dream of no Relief!



The Joy of Life, that streaming through their Veins
Tumultuous swept, falls slack—and wanes
The Glory in the Eye—and one by one
Life's Pleasures perish and make place for Pains.

Whether one hide in some secluded Nook
—Whether at Liverpool or Sandy Hook
—'Tis one. Old Age will search him out—and He
—He—He—when ready will know where to look.

From Cradle unto Grave I keep a House
of Entertainment where may drowse
Bacilli and kindred Germs—or feed—or breed
Their festering Species in a deep Carouse.

Think—in this battered Caravanserai,
Whose Portals open stand all Night and Day,
How Microbe after Microbe with his Pomp
Arrives unasked, and comes to stay.

Our ivory Teeth, confessing to the Lust
Of masticating, once, now own Disgust
Of Clay-Plug'd Cavities—full soon our Snags
Are emptied, and our Mouths are filled with Dust.

Our Gums forsake the Teeth and tender grow,
And fat, like over-ripened Figs—we know
The Sign—the Riggs' Disease is ours, and we
Must list this Sorrow, add another Woe;



Page 233

Our Lungs begin to fail and soon we Cough,
And chilly Streaks play up our Backs, and off
Our fever'd Foreheads drips an icy Sweat
—We scoffed before, but now we may not scoff.

Some for the Bunions that afflict us prate
Of Plasters unsurpassable, and hate
To Cut a corn—ah cut, and let the Plaster go,
Nor murmur if the Solace come too late.

Some for the Honours of Old Age, and some
Long for its Respite from the Hum
And Clash of sordid Strife—O Fools,
The Past should teach them what's to Come:

Lo, for the Honours, cold Neglect instead!
For Respite, disputatious Heirs a Bed
Of Thorns for them will furnish. Go,
Seek not Here for Peace—but Yonder—with the Dead.

For whether Zal and Rustam heed this Sign,
And even smitten thus, will not repine,
Let Zal and Rustam shuffle as they may,
The Fine once levied they must Cash the Fine.

O Voices of the Long Ago that were so dear!
Fall'n Silent, now, for many a Mould'ring Year,
O whither are ye flown? Come back,
And break my heart, but bless my grieving ear.

Some happy Day my Voice will Silent fall,
And answer not when some that love it call:
Be glad for Me when this you note—and think
I've found the Voices lost, beyond the Pall.

So let me grateful drain the Magic Bowl
That medicines hurt Minds and on the Soul
The Healing of its Peace doth lay—if then
Death claim me—Welcome be his Dole!

Sanna, Sweden, September 15th.

Private.—If you don't know what Riggs's Disease of the Teeth is, the dentist will tell you. I've had it—and it is more than interesting.

M.T.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Fearing that there might be some mistake, we submitted a proof of this article to the (American) gentlemen named in it, and asked them to correct any errors of detail that might have crept in among the facts. They reply with some asperity that errors cannot creep in among facts where there are no facts for them to creep in among; and that none are discoverable in this article, but only baseless aberrations of a disordered mind. They have no recollection of any such night in Boston, nor elsewhere; and in their opinion there was never any such night. They have met Mr. Twain, but have had the prudence not to intrust any privacies to him—particularly under oath; and they think they now see that this prudence was justified, since he has been untrustworthy enough to even betray privacies which had no existence. Further, they think it a strange thing that Mr. Twain, who was never invited to meddle with anybody's boyhood dreams but his own, has been so gratuitously anxious to see that other people's are placed before the world that he has quite lost his head in his zeal and forgotten to make any mention of his own at all. Provided we insert this explanation, they are willing to let his article pass; otherwise they must require its suppression in the interest of truth.



Page 234

P.S.—These replies having left us in some perplexity, and also in some fear lest they distress Mr. Twain if published without his privity, we judged it but fair to submit them to him and give him an opportunity to defend himself. But he does not seem to be troubled, or even aware that he is in a delicate situation. He merely says: 'Do not worry about those former young people. They can write good literature, but when it comes to speaking the truth, they have not had my training.—*Mark Twain.*' The last sentence seems obscure, and liable to an unfortunate construction. It plainly needs refashioning, but we cannot take the responsibility of doing it.—*Editor.*

IN MEMORIAM

OLIVIA SUSAN CLEMENS

DIED AUGUST 18, 1896; AGED 24

In a fair valley—oh, how long ago, how long ago!—
Where all the broad expanse was clothed in vines,
And fruitful fields and meadows starred with flowers,
And clear streams wandered at their idle will;
And still lakes slept, their burnished surfaces
A dream of painted clouds, and soft airs
Went whispering with odorous breath,
And all was peace—in that fair vale,
Shut from the troubled world, a nameless hamlet drowsed.

Hard by, apart, a temple stood;
And strangers from the outer world
Passing, noted it with tired eyes,
And seeing, saw it not:
A glimpse of its fair form—an answering momentary thrill—
And they passed on, careless and unaware.

They could not know the cunning of its make;
They could not know the secret shut up in its heart;
Only the dwellers of the hamlet knew;
They knew that what seemed brass was gold;
What marble seemed, was ivory;
The glories that enriched the milky surfaces—
The trailing vines, and interwoven flowers,
And tropic birds a-wing, clothed all in tinted fires—
They knew for what they were, not what they seemed:
Encrustings all of gems, not perishable splendours of the brush.



They knew the secret spot where one must stand—
They knew the surest hour, the proper slant of sun—
To gather in, unmarred, undimmed,
The vision of the fane in all its fairy grace,
A fainting dream against the opal sky.

And more than this. They knew
That in the temple's inmost place a spirit dwelt,
Made all of light!
For glimpses of it they had caught
Beyond the curtains when the priests
That served the altar came and went.

All loved that light and held it dear
That had this partial grace;
But the adoring priests alone who lived
By day and night submerged in its immortal glow
Knew all its power and depth, and could appraise the loss
If it should fade and fail and come no more.

All this was long ago—so long ago!

The light burned on; and they that worshipped it,
And they that caught its flash at intervals and held it dear,
Contented lived in its secure possession. Ah,
How long ago it was!

Page 235

And then when they
Were nothing fearing, and God's peace was in the air,
And none was prophesying harm,
The vast disaster fell:
Where stood the temple when the sun went down
Was vacant desert when it rose again!

Ah yes! 'Tis ages since it chanced!
So long ago it was,
That from the memory of the hamlet-folk the Light has passed—
They scarce believing, now, that once it was,
Or if believing, yet not missing it,
And reconciled to have it gone.

Not so the priests! Oh, not so
The stricken ones that served it day and night,
Adoring it, abiding in the healing of its peace:
They stand, yet, where erst they stood
Speechless in that dim morning long ago;
And still they gaze, as then they gazed,
And murmur, 'It will come again;
It knows our pain—it knows—it knows—
Ah surely it will come again.

S.L.C.

Lake Lucerne, August 18, 1897.