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THE IDLER MAGAZINE.

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.

July 1893.

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THE IDLER'S CLUB



THE VENGEANCE OF HUND.

The Woman of the Saeter.

By JEROME K. JEROME.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. S. BOYD.

Wild-Reindeer stalking is hardly so exciting a sport as the evening's verandah talk in Norrway hotels would lead the trustful traveller to suppose. Under the charge of your guide, a very young man with the dreamy, wistful eyes of those who live in valleys, you leave the farmstead early in the forenoon, arriving towards twilight at the desolate hut which, for so long as you remain upon the uplands, will be your somewhat cheerless headquarters.

Next morning, in the chill, mist-laden dawn you rise; and, after a breakfast of coffee and dried fish, shoulder your Remington, and step forth silently into the raw, damp air; the guide locking the door behind you, the key grating harshly in the rusty lock.

For hour after hour you toil over the steep, stony ground, or wind through the pines, speaking in whispers, lest your voice reach the quick ears of your prey, that keeps its head ever pressed against the wind. Here and there, in the hollows of the hills, lie wide fields of snow, over which you pick your steps thoughtfully, listening to the smothered thunder of the torrent, tunnelling its way beneath your feet, and wondering whether the frozen arch above it be at all points as firm as is desirable. Now and again, as in single file you walk cautiously along some jagged ridge, you catch glimpses of the green world, three thousand feet below you; though you gaze not long upon the view, for your attention is chiefly directed to watching the footprints of the guide, lest by deviating to the right or left you find yourself at one stride back in the valley—or, to be more correct, are found there.

These things you do, and as exercise they are healthful and invigorating. But a reindeer you never see, and unless, overcoming the prejudices of your British-bred conscience, you care to take an occasional pop at a fox, you had better have left your rifle at the hut, and, instead, have brought a stick, which would have been helpful. Notwithstanding which the guide continues sanguine, and in broken English, helped out by stirring gesture, tells of the terrible slaughter generally done by sportsmen under his superintendence, and of the vast herds that generally infest these fjelds; and when you grow sceptical upon the subject of Reins he whispers alluringly of

Bears.

Once in a way you will come across a track, and will follow it breathlessly for hours, and it will lead to a sheer precipice. Whether the explanation is suicide, or a reprehensible tendency on the part of the animal towards practical joking, you are left to decide for yourself. Then, with many rough miles between you and your rest, you abandon the chase.

But I speak from personal experience merely.

All day long we had tramped through the pitiless rain, stopping only for an hour at noon to eat some dried venison, and smoke a pipe beneath the shelter of an overhanging cliff. Soon afterwards Michael knocked over a ryper (a bird that will hardly take the trouble to hop out of your way) with his gun-barrel, which incident cheered us a little, and, later on, our flagging spirits were still further revived by the discovery of apparently very recent deer-tracks. These we followed, forgetful, in our eagerness, of the lengthening distance back to the hut, of the fading daylight, of the gathering mist. The track led us higher and higher, further and further into the mountains, until on the shores of a desolate rock-bound vand it abruptly ended, and we stood staring at one another, and the snow began to fall.

Unless in the next half-hour we could chance upon a saeter, this meant passing the night upon the mountain. Michael and I looked at the guide, but though, with characteristic Norwegian sturdiness, he put a bold face upon it, we could see that in that deepening darkness he knew no more than we did. Wasting no time on words, we made straight for the nearest point of descent, knowing that any human habitation must be far below us.

Down we scrambled, heedless of torn clothes and bleeding hands, the darkness pressing closer round us. Then suddenly it became black—black as pitch—and we could only hear each other. Another step might mean death. We stretched out our hands, and felt each other. Why we spoke in whispers, I do not know, but we seemed afraid of our own voices. We agreed there was nothing for it but to stop where we were till morning, clinging to the short grass; so we lay there side by side, for what may have been five minutes or may have been an hour. Then, attempting to turn, I lost my grip and rolled. I made convulsive efforts to clutch the ground, but the incline was too steep. How far I fell I could not say, but at last something stopped me. I felt it cautiously with my foot; it did not yield, so I twisted myself round and touched it with my hand. It seemed planted firmly in the earth. I passed my arm along to the right, then to the left. Then I shouted with joy. It was a fence.

Rising and groping about me, I found an opening, and passed through, and crept forward with palms outstretched until I touched the logs of a hut; then, feeling my way round, discovered the door, and knocked. There came no response, so I knocked louder; then pushed, and the heavy woodwork yielded, groaning. But the darkness within was even darker than the darkness without. The others had contrived to crawl down and join me. Michael struck a wax vesta and held it up, and slowly the room came out of the darkness and stood round us.

Then something rather startling happened. Giving one swift glance about him, our guide uttered a cry, and rushed out into the night, and disappeared. We followed to the door, and called after him, but only a voice came to us out of the blackness, and the only words that we could catch, shrieked back in terror, were: "The woman of the saeter—the woman of the saeter."

"Some foolish superstition about the place, I suppose," said Michael. "In these mountain solitudes men breed ghosts for company. Let us make a fire. Perhaps, when he sees the light, his desire for food and shelter may get the better of his fears."

We felt about in the small enclosure round the house, and gathered juniper and birch-twigs, and kindled a fire upon the open stove built in the corner of the room. Fortunately, we had some dried reindeer and bread in our bag, and on that and the ryper, and the contents of our flasks, we supped. Afterwards, to while away the time, we made an inspection of the strange eyrie we had lighted on.

It was an old log-built saeter. Some of these mountain farmsteads are as old as the stone ruins of other countries. Carvings of strange beasts and demons were upon its



"CLINGING TO THE SHORT GRASS."

blackened rafters, and on the lintel, in runic letters, ran this legend: "Hund builded me in the days of Haarfager." The house consisted of two large apartments. Originally, no doubt, these had been separate dwellings standing beside one another, but they were now connected by a long, low gallery. Most of the scanty furniture was almost as ancient as the walls themselves, but many articles of a comparatively recent date had been added. All was now, however, rotting and falling into decay.



"BY THE DULL GLOW OF THE BURNING JUNIPER TWIGS."

The place appeared to have been deserted suddenly by its last occupants. Household utensils lay as they were left, rust and dirt encrusted on them. An open book, limp and mildewed, lay face downwards on the table, while many others were scattered about both rooms, together with much paper, scored with faded ink. The curtains hung in shreds about the windows; a woman's cloak, of an antiquated fashion, drooped from a nail behind the door. In an oak chest we found a tumbled heap of yellow letters. They were of various dates, extending over a period of four months, and with them, apparently intended to receive them, lay a large envelope, inscribed with an address in London that has since disappeared.

Strong curiosity overcoming faint scruples, we read them by the dull glow of the burning juniper twigs, and, as we lay aside the last of them, there rose from the depths below us a wailing cry, and all night long it rose and died away, and rose again, and died away again; whether born of our brain or of some human thing, God knows.

And these, a little altered and shortened, are the letters:—

Extract from first letter:

"I cannot tell you, my dear Joyce, what a haven of peace this place is to me after the racket and fret of town. I am almost quite recovered already, and am growing stronger every day; and, joy of joys, my brain has come back to me, fresher and more vigorous, I think, for its holiday. In this silence and solitude my thoughts flow freely, and the difficulties of my task are disappearing as if by magic. We are perched upon a tiny plateau halfway up the mountain. On one side the rock rises almost perpendicularly, piercing the sky; while on the other, two thousand feet below us, the torrent hurls itself into black waters of the fiord. The house consists of two rooms—or, rather, it is two cabins connected by a passage. The larger one we use as a living room, and the other is our sleeping apartment. We have no servant, but do everything for ourselves. I fear sometimes Muriel must find it lonely. The nearest human habitation is eight miles away, across the mountain, and not a soul comes near us. I spend as much time as I can with her, however, during the day, and make up for it by working at night after she has gone to sleep, and when I question her, she only laughs, and answers that she loves to have me all to herself. (Here you will smile cynically, I know, and say, 'Humph, I wonder will she say the same when they have been married six years instead of six months.')

At the rate I am working now I shall have finished my first volume by the end of August, and then, my dear fellow, you must try and come over, and we will walk and talk together 'amid these storm-reared temples of the gods.' I have felt a new man since I arrived here. Instead of having to 'cudgel my brains,' as we say, thoughts crowd upon me. This work will make my name."



"I SPEND AS MUCH TIME AS I CAN WITH HER."

Part of the third letter, the second being mere talk about the book (a history apparently) that the man was writing:

"My dear Joyce,—I have written you two letters—this will make the third—but have been unable to post them. Every day I have been expecting a visit from some farmer or villager, for the Norwegians are kindly people towards strangers—to say nothing

of the inducements of trade. A fortnight having passed, however, and the commissariat question having become serious, I yesterday set out before dawn, and made my way down to the valley; and this gives me something to tell you. Nearing the village, I met a peasant woman. To my intense surprise, instead of returning my salutation, she stared at me, as if I were some wild animal, and shrank away from me as far as the width of the road would permit. In the village the same experience awaited me. The children ran from me, the people avoided me. At last a grey-haired old man appeared to take pity on me, and from him I learnt the explanation of the mystery. It seems there is a strange superstition attaching to this house in which we are living. My things were brought up here by the two men who accompanied me from Dronthiem, but the natives are afraid to go near the place, and prefer to keep as far as possible from anyone connected with it.

"The story is that the house was built by one Hund, 'a maker of runes' (one of the old saga writers, no doubt), who lived here with his young wife. All went peacefully until, unfortunately for him, a certain maiden stationed at a neighbouring saeter grew to love him.—Forgive me if I am telling you what you know, but a 'saeter' is the name given to the upland pastures to which, during the summer, are sent the cattle, generally under the charge of one or more of the maids. Here for three months these girls will live in their lonely huts entirely shut off from the world. Customs change little in this land. Two or three such stations are within climbing distance of this house, at this day, looked after by the farmers' daughters, as in the days of Hund, 'maker of runes.'

"Every night, by devious mountain paths, the woman would come and tap lightly at Hund's door. Hund had built himself two cabins, one behind the other (these are now, as I think I have explained to you, connected by a passage); the smaller one was the homestead, in the other he carved and wrote, so that while the young wife slept the 'maker of runes' and the saeter woman sat whispering.

"One night, however, the wife learnt all things, but said no word. Then, as now, the ravine in front of the enclosure was crossed by a slight bridge of planks, and over this bridge the woman of the saeter passed and re-passed each night. On a day when Hund had gone down to fish in the fiord, the wife took an axe, and hacked and hewed at the bridge, yet it still looked firm and solid; and that night, as Hund sat waiting in his workshop, there struck upon his ears a piercing cry, and a crashing of logs and rolling rock, and then again the dull roaring of the torrent far below.

"But the woman did not die unavenged, for that winter a man, skating far down the fiord, noticed a curious object embedded in the ice; and when, stooping, he looked closer, he saw two corpses, one gripping the other by the throat, and the bodies were the bodies of Hund and his young wife.

"Since then, they say the woman of the saeter haunts Hund's house, and if she sees a light within she taps upon the door, and no man may keep her out. Many, at different times, have tried to occupy the house, but strange tales are told of them. 'Men do not live at Hund's saeter,' said my old grey-haired friend, concluding his tale, 'they die there.' I have persuaded some of the braver of the villagers to bring what provisions and other necessaries we require up to a plateau about a mile from the house and leave them there. That is the most I have been able to do. It comes somewhat as a shock to one to find men and women—fairly educated and intelligent as many of them are—slaves to fears that one would expect a child to laugh at. But there is no reasoning with superstition."

Extract from the same letter, but from a part seemingly written a day or two later:

"At home I should have forgotten such a tale an hour after I had heard it, but these mountain fastnesses seem strangely fit to be the last stronghold of the supernatural. The woman haunts me already. At night, instead of working, I find myself listening for her tapping at the door; and yesterday an incident occurred that makes me fear for my own common sense. I had gone out for a long walk alone, and the twilight was thickening into darkness as I neared home. Suddenly looking up from my reverie, I saw, standing on a knoll the other side of the ravine, the figure of a woman. She held a cloak about her head, and I could not see her face. I took off my cap, and called out a good-night to her, but she never moved or spoke. Then, God knows why, for my brain was full of other thoughts at the time, a clammy chill crept over me, and my tongue grew dry and parched. I stood rooted to the spot, staring at her across the yawning gorge that divided us, and slowly she moved away, and passed into the gloom; and I continued my way. I have said nothing to Muriel, and shall not. The



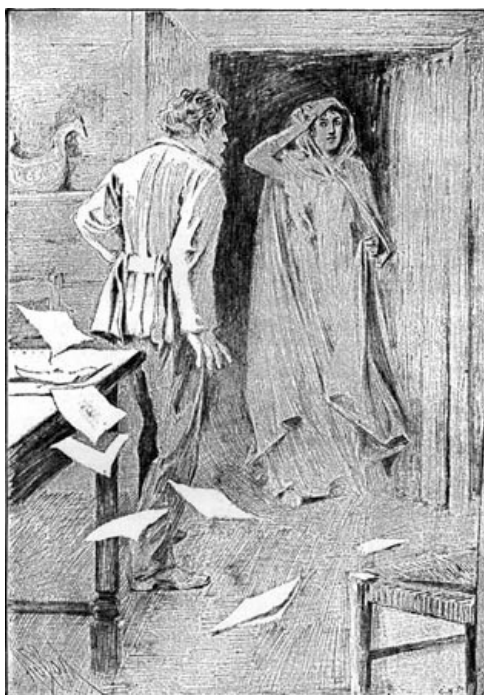
"THE WOMAN WOULD TAP LIGHTLY AT HUND'S DOOR."

effect the story has had upon myself warns me not to."

From a letter dated eleven days later:

"She has come. I have known she would since that evening I saw her on the mountain, and last night she came, and we have sat and looked into each other's eyes. You will say, of course, that I am mad—that I have not recovered from my fever—that I have been working too hard—that I have heard a foolish tale, and that it has filled my overstrung brain with foolish fancies—I have told myself all that. But the thing came, nevertheless—a creature of flesh and blood? a creature of air? a creature of my own imagination? what matter; it was real to me.

"It came last night, as I sat working, alone. Each night I have waited for it, listened for it—longed for it, I know now. I heard the passing of its feet upon the bridge, the tapping of its hand upon the door, three times—tap, tap, tap. I felt my loins grow cold, and a pricking pain about my head, and I gripped my chair with both hands, and waited, and again there came the tapping—tap, tap, tap. I rose and slipped the bolt of the door leading to the other room, and again I waited, and again there came the tapping—tap, tap, tap. Then I opened the heavy outer door, and the wind rushed past me, scattering my papers, and the woman entered in, and I closed the door behind her. She threw her hood back from her head, and unwound a kerchief from about her neck, and laid it on the table. Then she crossed and sat before the fire, and I noticed her bare feet were damp with the night dew.



"THE WOMAN ENTERED."

"I stood over against her and gazed at her, and she smiled at me—a strange, wicked smile, but I could have laid my soul at her feet. She never spoke or moved, and neither did I feel the need of spoken words, for I understood the meaning of those upon the Mount when they said, 'Let us make here tabernacles: it is good for us to be here.'

"How long a time passed thus I do not know, but suddenly the woman held her hand up, listening, and there came a faint sound from the other room. Then swiftly she drew her hood about her face and passed out, closing the door softly behind her; and I drew back the bolt of the inner door and waited, and hearing nothing more, sat down, and must have fallen asleep in my chair.

"I awoke, and instantly there flashed through my mind the thought of the kerchief the woman had left behind her, and I started from my chair to hide it. But the table was already laid for breakfast, and my wife sat with her elbows on the table and her head between her hands, watching me with a look in her eyes that was new to me.

"She kissed me, though her lips were a little cold, and I argued to myself that the whole thing must have been a dream. But later in the day, passing the open door when her back was towards me, I saw her take the kerchief from a locked chest and look at it.

"I have told myself it must have been a kerchief of her own, and that all the rest has been my imagination—that if not, then my strange visitant was no spirit, but a woman, and that, if human thing knows human thing, it was no creature of flesh and blood that sat beside me last night. Besides, what woman would she be? The nearest saeter is a three hours' climb to a strong man, the paths are dangerous even in daylight: what woman would have found them in the night? What woman would have

chilled the air around her, and have made the blood flow cold through all my veins? Yet if she come again I will speak to her. I will stretch out my hand and see whether she be mortal thing or only air."

The fifth letter:

"My dear Joyce,—Whether your eyes will ever see these letters is doubtful. From this place I shall never send them. They would read to you as the ravings of a madman. If ever I return to England I may one day show them to you, but when I do it will be when I, with you, can laugh over them. At present I write them merely to hide away—putting the words down on paper saves my screaming them aloud.

"She comes each night now, taking the same seat beside the embers, and fixing upon me those eyes, with the hell-light in them, that burn into my brain; and at rare times she smiles, and all my Being passes out of me, and is hers. I make no attempt to work. I sit listening for her footsteps on the creaking bridge, for the rustling of her feet upon the grass, for the tapping of her hand upon the door. No word is uttered between us. Each day I say: 'When she comes to-night I will speak to her. I will stretch out my hand and touch her.' Yet when she enters, all thought and will goes out from me.



"I STOOD GAZING AT HER."

"Last night, as I stood gazing at her, my soul filled with her wondrous beauty as a lake with moonlight, her lips parted, and she started from her chair, and, turning, I thought I saw a white face pressed against the window, but as I looked it vanished. Then she drew her cloak about her, and passed out. I slid back the bolt I always draw now, and stole into the other room, and, taking down the lantern, held it above the bed. But Muriel's eyes were closed as if in sleep."

Extract from the sixth letter:

"It is not the night I fear, but the day. I hate the sight of this woman with whom I live, whom I call 'wife.' I shrink from the blow of her cold lips, the curse of her stony eyes. She has seen, she has learnt; I feel it, I know it. Yet she winds her arms around my neck, and calls me sweetheart, and smooths my hair with her soft, false hands. We speak mocking words of love to one another, but I know her cruel eyes are ever following me. She is plotting her revenge, and I hate her, I hate her, I hate her!"

Part of the seventh letter:

"This morning I went down to the fiord. I told her I should not be back until the evening. She stood by the door watching me until we were mere specks to one another, and a promontory of the mountain shut me from view. Then, turning aside from the track, I made my way, running and stumbling over the jagged ground, round to the other side of the mountain, and began to climb again. It was slow, weary work. Often I had to go miles out of my road to avoid a ravine, and twice I reached a high point only to have to descend again. But at length I crossed the ridge, and crept down to a spot from where, concealed, I could spy upon my own house. She—my wife—stood by the flimsy bridge. A short hatchet, such as butchers use, was in her hand. She leant against a pine trunk, with her arm behind her, as one stands whose back aches with long stooping in some cramped position; and even at that distance I could see the cruel smile about her lips.

"Then I recrossed the ridge, and crawled down again, and, waiting until evening, walked slowly up the path. As I came in view of the house she saw me, and waved her handkerchief to me, and, in answer, I waved my hat, and shouted curses at her that the wind whirled away into the torrent. She met me with a kiss, and I breathed no hint to her that I had seen. Let her devil's work remain undisturbed. Let it prove to me what manner of thing this is that haunts me. If it be a Spirit, then the bridge will bear it safely; if it be woman—"

"But I dismiss the thought. If it be human thing why does it sit gazing at me, never speaking; why does my tongue refuse to question it; why does all power forsake me in its presence, so that I stand as in a dream? Yet if it be Spirit, why do I hear the passing of her feet; and why does the night-rain glisten on her hair?"

"I force myself back into my chair. It is far into the night, and I am alone, waiting, listening. If it be Spirit, she will come to me; and if it be woman, I shall hear her cry above the storm—unless it be a demon mocking me.

"I have heard the cry. It rose, piercing and shrill, above the storm, above the riving and rending of the bridge, above the downward crashing of the logs and loosened stones. I hear it as I listen now. It is cleaving its way upward from the depths below. It is wailing through the room as I sit writing.

"I have crawled upon my belly to the utmost edge of the still standing pier until I could feel with my hand the jagged splinters left by the fallen planks, and have looked down. But the chasm was full to the brim with darkness. I shouted, but the wind shook my voice into mocking laughter. I sit here, feebly striking at the madness that is creeping nearer and nearer to me. I tell myself the whole thing is but the fever in my brain. The bridge was rotten. The storm was strong. The cry is but a single one among the many voices of the mountain. Yet still I listen, and it rises, clear and shrill, above the moaning of the pines, above the mighty sobbing of the waters. It beats like blows upon my skull, and I know that she will never come again."



"TO THE UTMOST EDGE."

Extract from the last letter:

"I shall address an envelope to you, and leave it among them. Then, should I never come back, some chance wanderer may one day find and post them to you, and you will know.

"My books and writings remain untouched. We sit together of a night—this woman I call 'wife' and I—she holding in her hands some knitted thing that never grows longer by a single stitch, and I with a volume before me that is ever open at the same page. And day and night we watch each other stealthily, moving to and fro about the silent house; and at times, looking round swiftly, I catch the smile upon her lips before she has time to smooth it away.

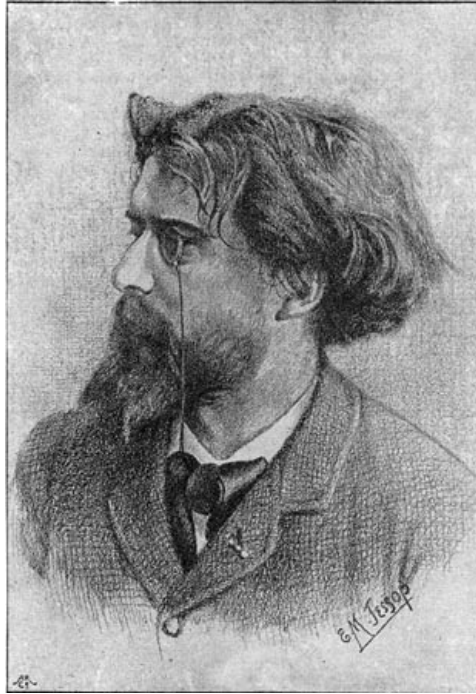
"We speak like strangers about this and that, making talk to hide our thoughts. We make a pretence of busying ourselves about whatever will help us to keep apart from one another.

"At night, sitting here between the shadows and the dull glow of the smouldering twigs, I sometimes think I hear the tapping I have learnt to listen for, and I start from my seat, and softly open the door and look out. But only the Night stands there. Then I close to the latch, and she—the living woman—asks me in her purring voice what sound I heard, hiding a smile as she stoops low over her work, and I answer lightly, and, moving towards her, put my arm about her, feeling her softness and her suppleness, and wondering, supposing I held her close to me with one arm while pressing her from me with the other, how long before I should hear the cracking of her bones.

"For here, amid these savage solitudes, I also am grown savage. The old primeval passions of love and hate stir within me, and they are fierce and cruel and strong, beyond what you men of the later ages could understand. The culture of the centuries has fallen from me as a flimsy garment whirled away by the mountain wind; the old savage instincts of the race lie bare. One day I shall twine my fingers about her full white throat, and her eyes will slowly come towards me, and her lips will part, and the red tongue creep out; and backwards, step by step, I shall push her before me, gazing the while upon her bloodless face, and it will be my turn to smile. Backwards through the open door, backwards along the garden path between the juniper bushes, backwards till her heels are overhanging the ravine, and she grips life with nothing but her little toes, I shall force her, step by step, before me. Then I shall lean

forward, closer, closer, till I kiss her purpling lips, and down, down, down, past the startled sea-birds, past the white spray of the foss, past the downward peeping pines, down, down, down, we will go together, till we find my love where she lies sleeping beneath the waters of the fiord."

With these words ended the last letter, unsigned. At the first streak of dawn we left the house, and, after much wandering, found our way back to the valley. But of our guide we heard no news. Whether he remained still upon the mountain, or whether by some false step he had perished upon that night, we never learnt.



ALPHONSE DAUDET.

Alphonse Daudet at Home.

BY MARIE ADELAIDE BELLOC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAN BERG, J. BARNARD DAVIS, AND E. M. JESSOP.

M. and Madame Alphonse Daudet—for it is impossible to mention the great French writer without also immediately recalling the personality of the lady who has been his best friend, his tireless collaboratrice, and his constant companion during the last twenty-five years—have made their home on the top storey of a fine stately house in the Rue de Belle Chasse, a narrow old-world street running from the Boulevard Saint Germain up into the Quartier Latin.

Like most houses on the left bank of the Seine, the "hotel" is built round a large courtyard, the Daudets' pretty *appartement* being situated on the side furthest from the street, and commanding a splendid view of Southern Paris, whilst in the immediate foreground is one of those peaceful, quiet gardens, owned by some of the old Paris religious foundations still left undisturbed by the march of Republican time.

The study in which Alphonse Daudet does all his work, and receives his more intimate friends, is opposite the hall door, but a strict watch is kept by Madame Daudet's faithful servants, and no one is allowed to break in upon the privacy of *le maître* without some good and sufficient reason. Few writers are so personally popular with their readers as is Alphonse Daudet; there is about most of his books a strange magnetic charm, and every post brings him quaint, curious, and often pathetic, epistles from



MADAME DAUDET.

men and women all over the world, and of every nationality, discussing his characters, suggesting alterations, offering him plots, and asking his advice on their own most intimate cases of conscience, whilst, if he were to grant all the requests for personal interviews which come to him day by day, he would literally have not a moment for work or leisure.



DAUDET AT WORK.

But to those who have the good fortune of his acquaintance, M. Daudet is the most delightful and courteous of hosts, and, though rarely alluding to his own work in conversation, he will always answer those questions put to him to the best of his ability, and as one who has thought much and deeply on most subjects of human interest.

The first glance shows you that Daudet's study is a real work room; there is no straining after effect; the plain, comfortable furniture, including the large solid writing table covered with papers, proofs, literary biblots, and the various instruments necessary to his craft, were made and presented to him by a number of

workmen, his military comrades during the war, and serve to perpetually remind him of what, he says, has been the most instructive and intensely interesting period of his life. "That terrible year," I have heard him exclaim more than once, "taught me many things. It was then for the first time that I learned to appreciate our workpeople, *le peuple*. Had it not been for what I then went through, one whole side of good human nature would have been shut to me. The Paris *ouvrier* is a splendid fellow, and among my best friends I reckon some of those who fought by my side in 1870."

During those same eventful months M. Daudet made the acquaintance of the man who was afterwards to prove his most indefatigable helper; it was between one of the long waits outside the fortifications. To his surprise, the novelist saw a young soldier reading a Latin book. In answer to a question, the *pioupiou* explained that he had been brought up to be a priest, but had finally changed his mind and become a workman. Now, the ex seminarist is M. Daudet's daily companion and literary agent; it is he who makes all the necessary arrangements with editors and publishers, and several of Daudet's later writings have been dictated to him.

All that refers to a great writer's methods cannot but be of interest. Daudet's novels are really human documents, for from early youth he has put down from day to day, almost from hour to hour, all that he has seen, heard, and done. He calls his note-books "my memory." When about to start a new novel he draws out a general plan, then he copies out all the incidents from his note-books which he thinks will be of value to him for the story. The next step is to make out a rough list of chapters, and then, with infinite care, and constant corrections, he begins writing out the book, submitting each page to his wife's criticism, and discussing with her the working out of every incident, and the arrangement of every episode. Unlike most novelists, M. Daudet does not care to always write on the same paper, and his manuscripts are not all written on paper of the same size. Of late he has been using some large, rough hand-made sheets, which Victor Hugo had specially made for his own use, and which have been given to M. Daudet by Georges Hugo, who knew what a pleasure his grandfather would have taken in the thought that any of his literary leavings would have been useful to his little Jeanne's father-in-law, for it will be remembered that Léon Daudet, the novelist's eldest child, married some three years ago "Peach Blossom" Hugo, for whom was written *L'Art d'être Grand-père*.

Although M. Daudet takes precious care of his little note-books, both past and present, he has never troubled himself much as to what became of the fair copies of his novels. They remain in the printers' and publishers' hands, and will probably some day attain a fabulous value.

His handwriting is clear, and somewhat feminine in form, and he always uses a steel pen. Till his health broke down he wrote every word of his manuscripts himself, but of late he has been obliged to dictate to his wife and two secretaries; re-writing, however, much of his work in the margin of the manuscript, and also adding to, and polishing, each chapter in proof, for no writer pays more attention to style and chiselled form than the man who has been called the French Dickens, and whose compositions, to the uninitiated, would seem to be singularly spontaneous.

Since the war M. Daudet has never had an hour's sleep without artificial aid, such as

chloral; but devotees of Lady Nicotine will be interested to learn that in answer to a question he once said, "I have smoked a great deal while working, and the more I smoked the better I worked. I have never noticed that tobacco is injurious, but I must admit that, when I am not well, even the smell of a cigarette is odious." He added that he had a great horror of alcohol as a stimulant for work, and has oftentimes been heard to say that those who believe in working on spirits had better make up their minds to become total abstainers if they hope to achieve anything in the way of literature.

Unlike most literary *ménages*, M. and Madame Daudet are one of those happy couples who are said by cynics to be the exceptions which prove the rule. Literary men are proverbially unlucky in their helpmates; and geniuses have been proved again and again to reserve their fitful humours and uncertain tempers for home use. M. and Madame Daudet are at once sympathetic, literary partners, and the happiest of married couples; in *L'Enfance d'une Parisienne*, *Enfants et Mères*, and *Fragments d'un Livre Inédit*, Madame Daudet has proved that she is in her own way as original and delicate an artist as her husband. She has never written a novel, but, as a great French critic once aptly remarked, "Each one of her books contains the essence of innumerable novels." Her literary work has been an afterthought, an accident; she is not anxious to make a name by her writing, and her most intimate friends have never heard her mention her literary faculty; like most Frenchwomen, a devoted mother, when not helping her husband, she is absorbed in her children, and whilst her boys were at the Lycée she taught herself Latin in order to help them prepare their lessons every evening; and she is now her young daughter's closest companion and friend.

One of the most charming characteristics of Alphonse Daudet is his love for, and pride in, his wife. "I often think of my first meeting with her," he will say. "I was quite a young fellow, and had a great prejudice against literary women, and especially against poetesses, but I came, saw, and was conquered, and," he will conclude smiling, "I have remained under the charm ever since.... People sometimes ask me whether I approve of women writing; how should I not, when my own wife has always written, and when all that is best in my literary work is owing to her influence and suggestion. There are whole realms of human nature which we men cannot explore. We have not eyes to see, nor hearts to understand, certain subtle things which a woman perceives at once; yes, women have a mission to fulfil in the literature of to-day."



THE PROVENCAL FURNITURE.

Strangely enough, M. Daudet made the acquaintance of his future wife through a favourable review he wrote of a volume of verse published by her parents, M. and Madame Allard. They were so pleased with the notice that they wrote and asked the critic to come and see them. How truly thankful the one time critic must now feel that he was inspired to deal gently by the little *bouquin*.

Madame Daudet is devoted to art, and her pretty *salon* is one of the most artistic *intérieurs* in Paris, whilst the dining-room, fitted up with old Provençal furniture, looks as though it had been lifted bodily out of some fastness in troubadour land.

The tie between the novelist and his children is a very close one; he has said of Léon that there stands his best work; and, indeed, the young man is in a fair way to make his father's words come true, for, inheriting much of both parents' literary faculty, M. Léon Daudet lately made his *débüt* as a novelist with *Hærens*, a remarkable story with a purpose, in which the author strove to explain his somewhat curious

theories on the laws of heredity. Having originally been intended for the medical profession, he takes a special interest in this subject. It is curious that three such distinct and different literary gifts should exist simultaneously in the same family.

As soon as even the cool, narrow streets of the Quartier Latin begin to grow dusty and sultry with summer heat, the whole Daudet family emigrate to the novelist's charming country cottage at Champrosay. There old friends, such as M. Edmond de Goncourt, are ever made welcome, and life is one long holiday for those who bring no work with them. Daudet himself has described his country home as being "situated thirty miles from Paris, at a lovely bend of the Seine, a provincial Seine invaded by bulrushes, purple irises, and water-lilies, bearing on its bosom tufts of grass, and clumps of tangled roots, on which the tired dragon-flies alight, and allow themselves to be lazily floated down the stream."



THE DRAWING ROOM.

It was in a round, ivy-clad pavilion overhanging the river that *le maître du logis* wrote *L'Immortel*. On an exceptionally fine day he would get into a canoe, and let it drift among the reeds, till, in the shadow of an old willow-tree, the boat became his study, and the two crossed oars his desk. Strange that so bitter and profoundly cynical a study of modern Paris life should have been evolved in such surroundings, whilst the *Contes de Mon Moulin*, and many other of his most ideal *nouvelles*, were written in the sombre grey house where M. and Madame Daudet lived during many years of their early married life.

The author of *Les Rois en Exile* has not yet utilised Champrosay as a background to any of his stories; he takes notes, however, of all that goes on in the little village community, much as he did in the Duc de Morny's splendid palace, and in time his readers may have the pleasure of perusing an idyllic yet realistic picture of French country life, an outcome of his summer experiences.

Alphonse Daudet was born just fifty-three years ago in the sunlit, white *bâtisse* at Nîmes, which he has described in the painful, melancholy history of his childhood, entitled *Le Petit Chose*. At an age when other French boys are themselves *lycéans*, he became usher in a kind of provincial Dotheboys Hall; and some idea of what the sensitive, poetical lad went through may be gained by the fact that he more than once seriously contemplated committing suicide. But fate had something better in store for *le petit Daudet*, and his seventeenth birthday found him in Paris sharing his brother Ernest's garret, having arrived in the great city with just forty sous remaining of his little store, after spending two days and nights in a third-class carriage.

Even now, there is a touch of protection and maternal affection in the way in which Ernest Daudet regards his younger brother, and the latter never mentions his early struggles without recalling the self-abnegation, generous kindness, and devotion of "*mon frère*." The two went through some hard times together. "Ah!" says the great writer, speaking of those days, "I thought my brother passing rich, for he earned seventy-five francs a month by being secretary to an old gentleman at whose dictation he took down his memoirs." And so they managed to live, going occasionally to the theatre, and seeing not a little of life, on the sum of thirty shillings a month apiece!

When receiving visitors, the author of *Tartarin* places himself with his back to the light on one of the deep, comfortable couches which line the fireplace of his study, but from out the huge mass of his powerful head, surrounded by the lionese mane, which has become famous in his portraits and photographs, gleam two piercing dark eyes, which, like those of most short-sighted people, seem to perceive what is immediately before them with an extra intensity of vision.

To ask one who has far outrun his fellows what he thinks of the race seems a superfluous question. Yet, in answer as to what he would say of literature as a profession, M. Daudet gave a startlingly clear and decided answer.

"The man who has it in him to write will do so, however great his difficulties, but I would never advise any young fellow to make literature his profession, and I think it is nothing short of madness to give up a good chance of making your livelihood in some other, though perhaps less congenial, fashion, in order to pursue the calling of letters. You would be surprised if you knew the number of young people who come to me for sympathy with their literary aspirations, and as for the manuscripts submitted to me, the sending of them back keeps one of my friends pretty busy, for of late years I have had to refuse to look at anything sent to me in this way. In vain I say to those who come to consult me, 'However much occupied you are with your present way of earning a livelihood, if you have it in you to



THE BILLIARD AND FENCING ROOM.

write anything you will surely find time to do it.' They go away unconvinced, and a few months later sees them launched on the perilous seas of journalism; with now really not a moment to spare for serious writing! Of course, if the would-be writer has already an income, I see no reason why he should not give himself up to literature altogether. It was in order to provide a certain number of coming geniuses with the wherewithal to find at least spare time in which to write possible masterpieces, that my friend Edmond de Goncourt and his brother Jules conceived the noble and unselfish idea to found an institute, the members of which would require but two qualifications, poverty and exceptional literary power. If a would-be writer can find someone

who will assist him in this manner, well and good; but no one is a prophet in his own country, and friends and relations are, as a rule, most unwilling to waste good money on their young literary acquaintances. Still I admit that the Academie de Goncourt would fulfil a want, for there have been, and are, great geniuses who positively cannot produce their masterpieces from bitter poverty."

"Then do you believe in journalism as a stepping-stone to literature?"

"I cannot say that I do, though, strangely enough, there is scarcely one of us—I allude to latter-day French novelists and critics—who did not spend at least a portion of his youth doing hard, pot-boiling newspaper work. But I deplore the necessity of a novelist having to make journalism his start in life, for, as all newspaper writing has to be done against time, his style must certainly deteriorate, and his literature becomes journalese."

"What was your own first literary essay, M. Daudet?"

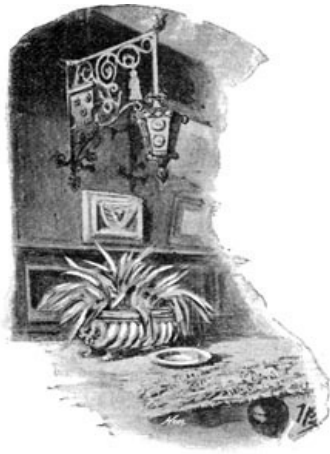
"You know I was born a poet, not a novelist; besides, when I was a lad everyone wrote poetry, so I made my *début* by a book of verse entitled *Mes Amoureuses*. I was just eighteen, and this was my first stroke of luck; for six weary months I had carried my poor little manuscript from publisher to publisher, but, strange to say, I never got further than these great people's ante-chamber; at last, a certain Tardieu, a publisher who was himself an author, took pity on my *Amoureuses*. The title had been a happy inspiration, and the volume received some favourable notices, and led indirectly to my getting journalistic work."

Indeed, it seems to have been more or less of an accident that M. Daudet did not devote himself entirely to poetry; and probably the very poverty which seemed so bitter to him during his youth obliged him to try what he could do in the way of story-writing, that branch of literature being supposed by the French to be the best from a pecuniary point of view. So remarkable were his verses felt to be by the critics of the day, that one of them wrote, "When dying, Alfred de Musset left his two pens as a last legacy to our literature—Feuillet has taken that of prose; into Daudet's hand has slipped that of verse."

But some years passed before the poet-journalist became the novelist; at one time he dreamed of being a great dramatist, and before he was five-and-twenty several of his plays had been produced at leading Paris theatres. Fortune smiled upon him, and he was appointed to be one of the Duc de Morny's secretaries, a post he held four years, and which supplied him with much valuable material for several of his later novels, notably *Les Rois en Exile*, *Le Nabab*, and *Numa Romestan*, for during this period he was brought into close and intimate contact with all the noteworthy personages of the Third Empire, making at the same time the acquaintance of most of the literary lions of the day—Flaubert, with whom he became very intimate; Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, the two gifted brothers who may be said to have founded the realistic school of fiction years before Emile Zola came forward as the apostle of realism; Tourguenieff, the two Dumas, and many others who welcomed enthusiastically the young Southern poet into their midst.

The first page of *Le Petit Chose* was written in the February of 1866, and was finished during the author's honeymoon, but it was with *Fromont Jeune et Risler Ainé*, published six years later, that he made his first real success as a novelist, the work being crowned by the French Academy, and arousing a veritable enthusiasm both at home and abroad.

Alphonse Daudet is not a quick worker; he often allows several years to elapse between his novels, and refuses to bind himself down to any especial date. *Tartarin de Tarascon* was, however, an exception to this rule, for the author wrote it for Messrs. Guillaume, the well-known art publishers, who, wishing to popularise an improved style of illustration, offered M. Daudet 150,000 francs (£6,000) to write them a serio-comic story. *Tartarin*, which obtained an



THE TUILERIES STONE.

instant popularity, proved the author's versatility, but won him the hatred of the good people of Provence, who have never forgiven him for having made fun of their foibles. On one occasion a bagman, passing through Tarascon, put, by way of a jest, the name "Alphonse Daudet" in his hotel register. The news quickly spread, and had it not been for the prompt help of the innkeeper, who managed to smuggle him out of the town, he might easily have had cause to regret his foolish joke.

Judging by sales, *Sapho* has been the most popular of Daudet's novels, for over a quarter of a million copies have been sold. Like most of his stories, its appearance provoked a great deal of discussion, as did the author's dedication "To my two sons at the age of twenty." But, in answer to his critics, Daudet always replies, "I wrote the book with a purpose, and I have succeeded in painting the picture as I wished it to appear. Each of the

types mentioned by me really existed; each incident was copied from life...."

The year following its publication M. Daudet dramatised *Sapho*, and the play was acted with considerable success at the Gymnase, Jane Hading being in the *title-rôle*. Last year the play was again acted in Paris, with Madame Rejane as the heroine.

M. Daudet, like most novelists, takes a special interest in all that concerns dramatic art and the theatre. When his health permits it he is a persistent first-nighter, and most of his novels lend themselves in a rare degree to stage adaptation.

I once asked him what he thought of the attempts now so frequently made to introduce unconventionality and naked realism on the stage.

"I have every sympathy," he replied, "with the attempts made by Antoine and his Théâtre Libre to discover strong and unconventional work. But I do not believe in the new terms which a certain school have invented for everything; after all, the play's the thing, whether it is produced by a group who dub themselves romantics, realists, old or new style. Realism is not necessarily real life; a photograph only gives a rigid, neutral side of the object placed in front of the camera. A dissection of what we call affection does not give so vivid an impression of the master-passion as a true love-sonnet written by a poet. Life is a thing of infinite gradations; a dramatist wishes to show existence as it really is, not as it may be under exceptionally revolting circumstances."

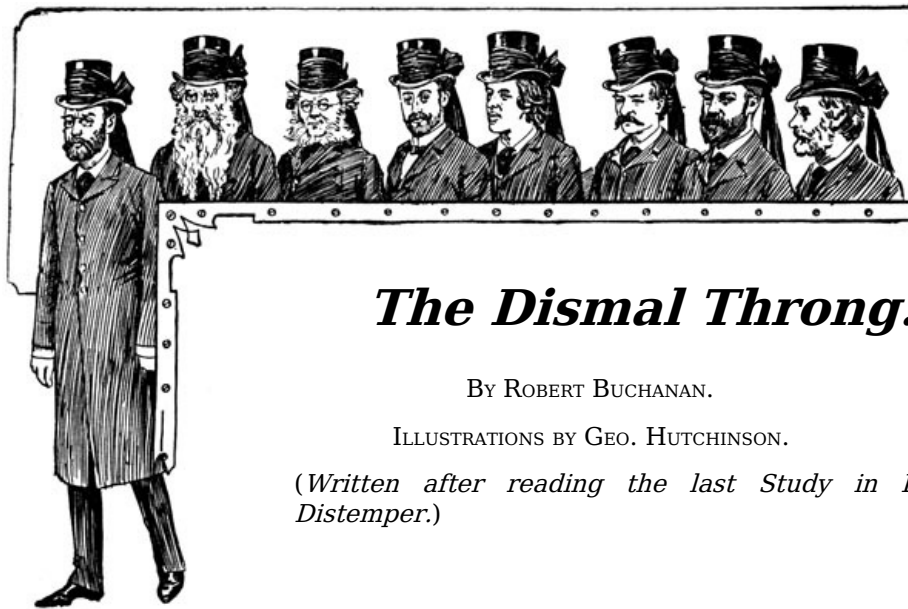


DAUDET'S YOUNGER SON.

His own favourite dramatist and writer is Shakespeare, whom, however, he only knows by translation, and *Hamlet* and *Desdemona* are his favourite hero and heroine in the fiction of the world, although he considered Balzac his literary master.

M. Daudet will seldom be beguiled into talking on politics. Like all Frenchmen, the late Panama scandals have profoundly shocked and disgusted him, as revealing a state of things discreditable to the Government of his country. But the creator of *Désirée Dolobelle* has a profound belief in human nature, and believes that, come what may, the novelist will never lack beautiful and touching models in the world round and about him.





The Dismal Throng.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.

(Written after reading the last Study in Literary Distemper.)

The Fairy Tale of Life is done,
 The horns of Fairyland cease
 blowing,
 The Gods have left us one by one,
 And the last Poets, too, are going!
 Ended is all the mirth and song,
 Fled are the merry Music-makers;
 And what remains? The Dismal Throng
 Of literary Undertakers!

Clad in deep black of funeral cut,
 With faces of forlorn expression,
 Their eyes half open, souls close shut,
 They stalk along in pale procession;
 The latest seed of Schopenhauer,
 Born of a Trull of Flaubert's choosing,
 They cry, while on the ground they glower,
 "There's nothing in the world amusing!"



THOMAS HARDY.



ZOLA.

There's Zola, grimy as his theme,
 Nosing the sewers with cynic pleasure,
 Sceptic of all that poets dream,
 All hopes that simple mortals treasure;
 With sense most keen for odours strong,
 He stirs the Drains and scents disaster,
 Grim monarch of the Dismal Throng
 Who bow their heads before "the Master."

There's Miss Matilda^[1] in the south,
 There's Valdes^[2] in Madrid and Seville,
 There's mad Verlaine^[3] with gangrened mouth.
 Grinning at Rimbaud and the Devil.
 From every nation of the earth,
 Instead of smiling merry-makers,
 They come, the foes of Love and Mirth,
 The Dismal Throng of Undertakers.

There's Tolstoi, towering in his place
 O'er all the rest by head and shoulders;
 No sunshine on that noble face
 Which Nature meant to charm beholders!
 Mad with his self-made martyr's

shirt,
 Obscene, through hatred of
 obsceneness,
 He from a pulpit built of Dirt
 Shrieks his Apocalypse of
 Cleanness!



TOLSTOI.



IBSEN.

There's
 Ibsen,[4]
 puckering
 up his
 lips,

Squirming at Nature and Society,
 Drawing with tingling finger-tips
 The clothes off naked Impropriety!
 So nice, so nasty, and so grim,
 He hugs his gloomy bottled thunder;
 To summon up one smile from *him*
 Would be a miracle of wonder!

There's Maupassant,[5] who takes
 his cue

From Dame Bovary's bourgeois
 troubles;
 There's Bourget, dyed his own sick
 "blue,"

There's Loti, blowing blue soap
 bubbles;

There's Mendès[6] (no Catullus, he!)

There's Richepin,[7] sick with
 sensual passion.

The Dismal Throng! So foul, so free,
 Yet sombre all, as is the fashion.



PIERRE LOTI.

"Turn down the lights! put out the Sun!
 Man is unclean and morals muddy.
 The Fairy Tale of Life is done,
 Disease and Dirt must be our study!
 Tear open Nature's genial heart,
 Let neither God nor gods escape us,
 But spare, to give our subjects zest,
 The basest god of all—Priapus!"

The Dismal Throng! 'Tis thus they preach,
 From Christiania to Cadiz,
 Recruited as they talk and teach
 By dingy lads and draggled ladies;
 Without a sunbeam or a song,
 With no clear Heaven to hunger after;
 The Dismal Throng! the Dismal Throng!
 The foes of Life and Love and Laughter!

By Shakespere's Soul! if this goes on,
 From every face of man and woman
 The gift of gladness will be gone,
 And laughter will be thought inhuman!
 The only beast who smiles is Man!
 That marks him out from meaner creatures!
 Confound the Dismal Throng, who plan
 To take God's birth-mark from our features!

Manfreds who walk the hospitals.
 Laras and Giaours grown scientific,
 They wear the clothes and bear the palls
 Of Stormy Ones once thought terrific;
 They play the same old funeral tune,
 And posture with the same dejection,
 But turn from howling at the moon
 To literary vivisection!

And while they loom before our view,
 Dark'ning the air that should be
 sunny,
 Here's Oscar,^[8] growing dismal too,
 Our Oscar, who was once so funny!
 Blue china ceases to delight
 The dear curl'd darling of society,
 Changed are his breeches, once so
 bright,
 For foreign breaches of propriety!



OSCAR WILDE.



GEORGE MOORE.

I like my Oscar, tolerate
 My Archer^[9] of the Dauntless Grammar,
 Nay, e'en my Moore^[10] I estimate
 Not too unkindly, 'spite his clamour;
 But I prefer my roses still
 To all the garlic in their garden—
 Let Hedda gabble as she will,
 I'll stay with Rosalind, in Arden!

O for one laugh of Rabelais,
 To rout these moralising croakers!
 (The cowls were mightier far than they,
 Yet fled before that King of Jokers)
 O for a slash of Fielding's pen
 To bleed these pimps of Melancholy!
 O for a Boz, born once again
 To play the Dickens with such folly!



MARK TWAIN.

Yet stay! why bid the dead arise?
 Why call them back from Charon's wherry?
 Come, Yankee Mark, with twinkling eyes,
 Confuse these ghouls with something merry!
 Come, Kipling, with thy soldiers three,
 Thy barrack-ladies frail and fervent,
 Forsake thy themes of butchery
 And be the merry Muses' servant!

Come, Dickens' foster-son, Bret Harte!
 Come, Sims, though gigmen flout thy labours!
 Tom Hardy, blow the clouds apart
 With sound of rustic fifes and tabors!
 Dick Blackmore, full of homely joy,
 Come from thy garden by the river,
 And pelt with fruit and flowers, old boy,
 These dismal bores who drone for ever!

Come, too, George Meredith, whose eyes,
 Though oft with vapours shadow'd over,
 Can catch the sunlight from the skies
 And flash it down on lass and lover;
 Tell us of Life, and Love's young dream,
 Show the prismatic soul of Woman,
 Bring back the Light, whose morning beam
 First made the Beast upright and human!



GEORGE MEREDITH.

You *can* be merry, George, I vow!
 Wit through your cloudiest prosing twinkles!
 Brood as you may, upon your brow
 The cynic, Art, has left no wrinkles!
 For you're a poet to the core,
 No ghouls can from the Muses win you;
 So throw your cap i' the air once more,
 And show the joy of earth that's in you!

By Heaven! we want you one and all,
 For Hypochondria is reigning—
 The Mater Dolorosa's squall
 Makes Nature hideous with complaining!
 Ah! who will paint the Face that smiled
 When Art was virginal and vernal—
 The pure Madonna with her Child,
 Pure as the light, and as eternal!

Pest on these dreary, dolent airs!
 Confound these funeral pomps and poses!
 Is Life Dyspepsia's and Despair's,
 And Love's complexion all *chlorosis*?
 A lie! There's Health, and Mirth, and Song,
 The World still laughs, and goes a-Maying—
 The dismal, droning, doleful Throng
 Are only smuts in sunshine playing!

Play up, ye horns of Fairyland!
 Shine out, O sun, and planets seven!
 Beyond these clouds a beckoning Hand
 Gleams from the lattices of Heaven!
 The World's alive—still quick, not dead,
 It needs no Undertaker's warning;
 So put the Dismal Throng to bed,
 And wake once more to Light and Morning!

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- [1] Mathilde Serao, an Italian novelist.
 [2] A Spanish novelist.
 [3] Verlaine and Rimbaud, two poets of the Parisian Decadence.
 [4] A Norwegian playwright.
 [5] Guy de Maupassant, Paul Bourget, and Pierre Loti, novelists of the Decadence.
 [6] Catulle Mendès, a Parisian poet and novelist.
 [7] Jean Richepin, ditto.
 [8] Mr. Oscar Wilde.
 [9] Mr. William Archer, a newspaper critic.
 [10] Mr. George Moore, an author and newspaper critic.

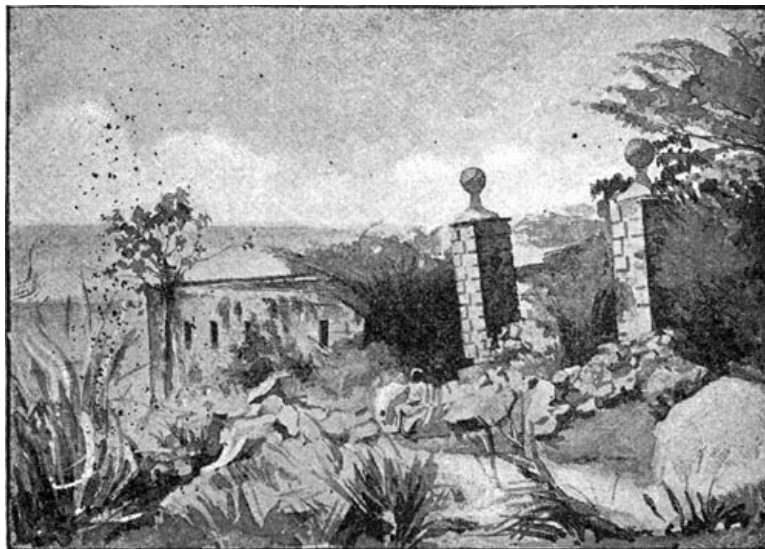
NOTE.—These verses refer to a literary phenomenon that will in time become historical, that phenomenon being the sudden growth, in all parts of Europe, of a fungus-literature bred of Foulness and Decay; and contemporaneously, the intrusion into all parts of human life of a Calvinistic yet materialistic Morality. This literature of a sunless Decadence has spread widely, by virtue of its own uncleanness, and its leading characteristics are gloom, ugliness, prurience, preachiness, and weedy flabbiness of style. That it has not flourished in Great Britain, save among a small and discredited Cockney minority, is due to the inherent manliness and vigour of the national character. The land of Shakespere, Scott, Burns, Fielding, Dickens, and Charles Reade is protected against literary miasmas by the strength of its humour and the sunniness of its temperament.—R.B.

In the Hands of Jefferson.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RONALD GRAY.

It is not difficult to appreciate the recent catastrophe in Oceania, where the island of Great Sangir was partially smothered by terrific volcanic and seismic convulsions, when one has visited the Western Indies.



“WHERE LORD NELSON ENJOYED HIS HONEYMOON.”

Many of these tropic isles probably owe their present isolation, if not their actual existence, to mighty earthquake throes in remote ages of terrestrial history beyond the memory of man. But man's memory is not a very extensive affair, and at best probes the past to the extent of a mere rind of a few thousand years. For the rest he has to read the word of God, written in fossil and stone and those wondrous arcana of Nature, which, each in turn, yields a fragment of the secret of truth to human intellect.

Regions that have been produced or largely modified by earthquake and volcanic upheaval may, probably enough, vanish at any moment under like conditions; and the island of Nevis, hard by St. Christopher, in the West Indies, strongly suggests a possibility of such disaster. It has always been the regular rendezvous of hurricanes and earthquakes, and it consists practically of one vast volcanic mountain which rises abruptly from the sea and pushes its densely-wooded sides three thousand two hundred feet into the sky. The crater shows no particularly active inclination at present, but it is doubtless wide awake and merely resting, like its volcanic neighbour in St. Christopher, where the breathing of the dormant giant can be noted through rent and rift. The Fourth Officer of our steamship “Rhine” assured me, as we approached the lofty dome of Nevis and gazed upon its fertile acclivities and fringe of palms, that it would never surprise him upon his rounds to find the place had altogether disappeared under the Caribbean Sea. He added, according to his custom, an allusion to Columbus, and explained also that, in the dead and gone days of Slave Traffic, Nevis was a much more important spot than it is ever likely to become again.

Then, indeed, the island enjoyed no little prosperity and importance, being a head centre and mart for the industry in negroes. Emancipation, however, wrecked Nevis, together with a good many other of the Antilles.

At Montpelier, on this island, Lord Nelson enjoyed his honeymoon, but now only a few trees and a little ruined masonry at the corner of a sugar-cane plantation appear to mark the spot. Further, it may be recorded, as a point in favour of the place, that it grows very exceptional Tangerine oranges. These, to taste in perfection, should be eaten at the turning point, before their skins grow yellow. We cannot judge of the noble possibilities in an orange at home. I brought back a dozen of these Nevis Tangerines with me, but I secretly suspected that, in spite of their fine reputation, quite inferior sorts would be able to beat them by the time they got to England; and it was so.

We stopped half-an-hour only at Charlestown, Nevis, and then proceeded to St. Christopher, a sister isle of greater size and scope.

At Antigua, there came aboard the "Rhine" a young man who implicitly leads us to understand that he is the most important person in the West Indies. He is the Governor of Antigua's own clerk, and is going to St. Christopher with a portmanteau, some walking-sticks, and a despatch-box. It appears that his significance is gigantic, and that, though the nominal seat of government lies at Antigua, yet the real active centre of political administration may be found immediately under the Panama hat of the Governor's own clerk. This he takes the trouble to explain to us. The Governor himself is a puppet, his trusted men of resource and portfolio-holders are the veriest fantoccini; for the Governor's own clerk pulls the strings, frames the foreign policy, conducts, controls, adjusts difficulties, and maintains a right balance between the parties. This he condescends to make clear to us.

I ventured to ask him how many of the more important nations were involved with the matters at present in his despatch-box; and he said lightly, as though the concern in hand was a mere bagatelle, that only the United States, Great Britain and Germany were occupying his attention at the moment.

The Model Man said:

"I suppose you'll soon knock off a flea-bite like that?"

And the Governor's own clerk answered:

"Yes, I fancy so, unless any unforeseen hitch happens. Negotiations are pending."

I liked his last sentence particularly. It smacked so strongly of miles of red tape and months of official delay.

When we reached St. Christopher, it was currently reported that the Governor's own clerk had simply come to settle a dispute between two negro landowners concerning a fragment of the island rather smaller than a table-napkin; but personally I doubt not this was a blind, under cover of which he secretly pushed forward those pending negotiations. He certainly had fine diplomatic instincts, and a sound view, from a political standpoint, of the value of veracity.

When we cast out anchor off Basseterre, St. Christopher, the Treasure hurried to me in some sorrow. He had proposed going ashore, with his Enchantress and her mother, to show them the sights, but now, to his dismay, he found that unforeseen official duties would keep him on the ship during our brief sojourn here. With anxiety almost pathetic, therefore, he entrusted the Enchantress to me, and commended her mother to the Doctor's care. I felt the compliment, and assured him that I would simply devote myself to her—platonically withal; but the Doctor was not quite so hearty about her mother. However, he must behave like a gentleman, whether he felt inclined to do so or not, which the Treasure knew, and, therefore, felt safe.

Our party of four started straightway for a ramble in St. Kitts (as St. Christopher is more generally called), and, upon landing, we were happily met by a middle-aged negro, who had evidently watched our boat from afar. He tumbled off a pile of planks, where he had been basking in the sun, girt his indifferent raiment about him, and then, by sheer force of character, took complete command of our contemplated expedition. It may have been hypnotism, or some kindred mystery, but we were unresisting children in his hands. He said: "Follow me, gem'men: me show you ebb'ryting for nuffing: de 'tanical Garns, de prison-house, de public buildings, de church, an' all. Dis way, dis way, ladies. Don't listen to dem niggers; dey nobody on dis island."

The Doctor alone fought feebly, but it was useless, and, in two minutes, our masterful Ethiop had led us all away to see the sights.

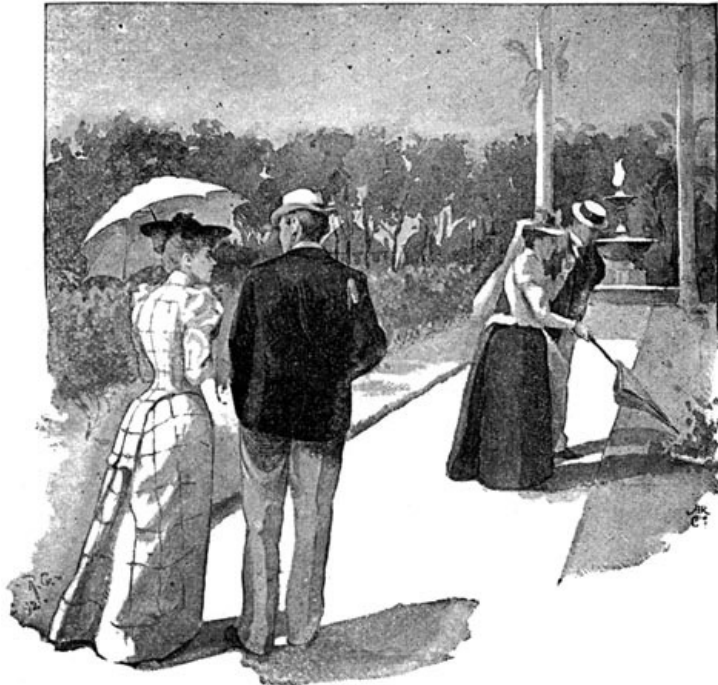


**"THE MOST
IMPORTANT PERSON IN
THE WEST INDIES."**



“FOLLOW ME, GEM'MEN!”

attention was instantly distracted by Jefferson, who, upon hearing the lily admired, walked straight up to it and picked it.



“THERE IS A SPECIMEN OF CRINUM ASIATICUM.”

I expostulated. I said:

“You mustn't go plucking curiosities here, Jefferson, or you will get us all into hot water.”

“Dat's right, massa,” he replied. “Me an' de boss garner great ole frens. De ladies jus' say what dey like, an' Jefferson pick him off for dem.”

He was as good as his word, and a fine theatrical display followed, as our party grew gradually bolder and bolder, and our guide, evidently upon his mettle, complied with each request in turn.

I will cast a fragment of the dialogue and action in dramatic form, so that you may the better judge of and picture that wild scene.

THE ENCHANTRESS (*timidly*): Should you think we might have this tiny flower?

JEFFERSON: I pick him, missy. (*Does so.*)

THE DOCTOR: I wonder if they'd miss one of those red things? They've got a good number. I believe they're medicinal. Should you think—?

(*Jefferson picks two of the flowers in question. The Doctor takes heart.*)

THE MOTHER OF THE ENCHANTRESS: Dear me! Here's a singularly fine specimen of the Somethingiensis. I wonder if you—?



(Jefferson picks it.)

THE DOCTOR: We might have that big affair there, hidden away behind those orange trees. Nobody will miss it. I should rather like it for my own.

(Jefferson wrestles with this concern, and the Doctor lends him a knife.)

THE ENCHANTRESS: Oh, there's a sweet, sweet blossom! Might we have that, and that bud, and that bunch of leaves next to them, Monsieur Jefferson?

(Jefferson, evidently feeling he is in for a hard morning's work, makes further onslaught upon the flora, and drags down three parts of an entire tree.)

THE MOTHER OF THE ENCHANTRESS: When you're done there, I will ask you to go into this fountain for one of those blue water-lilies.

“MIGHT WE HAVE THAT?”

(Jefferson, getting rather sick of it, pretends he does not hear.)

THE DOCTOR (*speaking in loud tones which Jefferson cannot ignore*): Pick that, please, and that, and those things half-way up that tree.

(Jefferson begins to grow very hot and uneasy. He peeps about nervously, probably with a view to dodging his old friend, the head gardener.)

THE CHRONICLER (*feeling that his party is disgracing itself, and desiring to reprove them in a parable*): I say, Jefferson, could you cut down that palm—the biggest of those two—and have it sent along to the ship? If the head gardener is here, he might help you.

JEFFERSON (*losing his temper, missing the parable, and turning upon the Chronicler*): No, sar! You no hab no more. I'se dam near pulled off ebb'ryting in de 'tanical Garns, an' I'se goin' right away now 'fore anyfing's said!

(Exit Jefferson rapidly, trying to conceal a mass of foliage under his ragged coat. The party follows him in single file.)

[Curtain.]

I doubt not that, had we met the head gardener just then, our guide would have lost a friend.

Henceforth, evidently feeling we were not wholly responsible in this foreign atmosphere of wonders, Jefferson stuck to the streets, and took us to churches and shops and other places where we had to control ourselves and leave things alone.

On the way to a photographer's he cooled down and became instructive again. He told us the name and address and bad actions of every white person we met. Society at St. Kitts, from his point of view, appeared to be in an utterly rotten condition. The most reputable clique was his own. We met several of his personal friends. They were generally brown or yellow, and he assured us that he had white blood in him too—a fact we could not possibly have guessed. Presently he grew confidential, and told us that his eldest son was a source of great discomfort to him. At the age of fifteen Jefferson Junior had run away from home and left St. Kitts to better himself at Barbados. Five years afterwards, however, when he had almost passed out of his parents' memory, so Jefferson declared, the young man returned, sick and penniless, to the home of his birth. I said here:



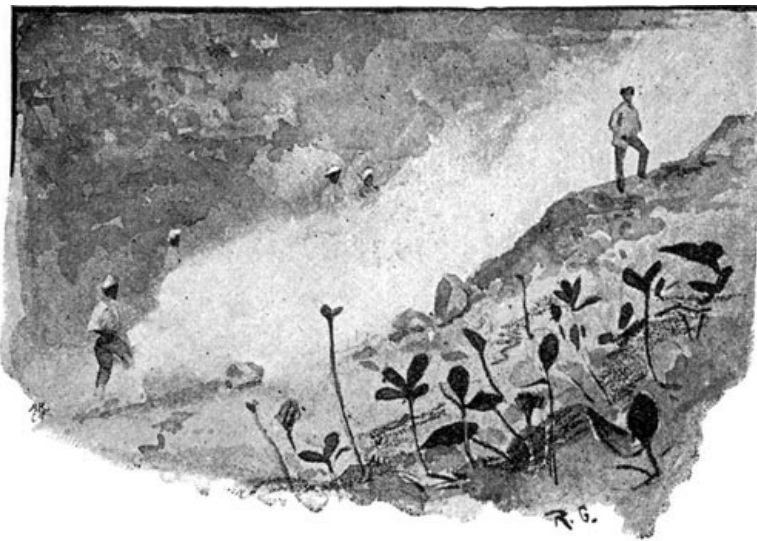
“I'SE PULLED OFF EBB'RYTING IN THE 'TANICAL GARNS.”

“This is the Prodigal Son story over again, Jefferson. Did you kill the fatted calf, I wonder, and make much of the lad?”

“No, sar,” he answered; “didn't kill no fatted nuffing, but I precious near kill de podigal son.”

Concerning St. Christopher, we have direct authority, from the immortal and ubiquitous Columbus himself, that it is an island of exceptional advantages; for,

delighted with its aspect in 1493, he bestowed his own name upon it. Indeed, the place has a beautiful and imposing appearance. Dark green forests and emerald tracts of sugar-cane now clothe its plains and hills; and Mount Misery, the loftiest peak, rises to a height of over four thousand feet. Caribs were the original inhabitants and possessors of St. Kitts, but when England and France agreed to divide this island between them in 1627, we find the local anthropophagi left out in the cold as usual. After bickering for about sixty years, the French enjoyed a temporary success, and slew their British brother colonists pretty generally. Then Fortune's wheel took a turn, and under the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713, St. Kitts became our property from strand to mountain-top.



"VOLCANIC INDICATIONS."

There is only one road in this island, I am told, but that is thirty miles long, and extends all round the place. Volcanic indications occur freely on Mount Misery, and, as at Nevis, so here, the entire community may, some day, find itself very uncomfortably situated. A feature of St. Kitts is said to be monkeys, which occur in the woods. These, however, like the deer at Tobago, are more frequently heard of than seen. People were rather alarmed here, during our flying visit, by a form of influenza which settled upon the town of Basseterre; but we, who had only lately come from England, and were familiar with the revolting lengths to which this malady will go in cold climes, reassured them, and laughed their puny tropical species to scorn. Finally, of St. Kitts, I would say: From information received in the first case, and from personal experience in the second, that there you shall find sugar culture in most approved and advanced perfection, and purchase walking-sticks of bewildering variety and beauty.

The ladies of our party decreed they had no wish to visit the gaol—a decision on their part which annoyed Jefferson considerably. He explained that the St. Kitts prison-house was, perhaps, better worth seeing than anything on the island; he also added that a book was kept there in which we should be invited to write our names and make remarks. They were proof, however, against even this inducement; and, having seen the church—a very English building, with homely little square tower—we left our Enchantress and her parent at the photographer's, to make such purchases as seemed good to them, and await our return.



"THE DOCTOR GREW DELIGHTED."

In this picture-shop, by the way, the Doctor grew almost boisterously delighted over a deplorable representation of negro lepers. Young and old, male and female, halt and maimed, the poor sufferers had been photographed in a long row; and my brother secured the entire panorama of them and whined for more. These lamentable representations of lepers gave him keener pleasure than anything he had seen since we left the Trinidad Hospital. In future, when we reached a new port, he would always hurry off to photographers' shops, where they existed, and simply clamour for lepers.

I asked Jefferson, as we proceeded to the prison, whether he thought we should be allowed to peer about among the inner secrets of the place, and he answered: "You see ebb'ryting, sar; de head p'liceman great ole fren' of mine."

My brother said:

"You seem to know all the best people in St. Kitts, Jefferson."

And he admitted that it was so. He replied:

"Jefferson 'quainted wid ebb'rybody, an' ebb'rybody 'quainted wid Jefferson."

Which put his position in a nutshell.

The prison was not very impressive viewed from outside, being but a mere mean black and white building, with outer walls which experienced criminals at home would have smiled at. We rang a noisy bell, and were allowed to enter upon the demand of Jefferson.

Four sinners immediately met our gaze. They sat pensively breaking stones in a wide courtyard. A building, with barred windows, threw black shade upon the blazing white ground of this open space; and here, shielded from the sun, the convicts reclined and made a show of work. Jefferson, with rather a lack of delicate feeling, drew up before this little stone-breaking party and beamed upon it. The Doctor and I walked past and tried to look as though we saw nobody, but our guide did not choose that we should miss the most interesting thing in the place thus.

"Look har, gem'men; see dese prisoners breakin' stones."

"All right, all right," answered my brother; "push on; don't stand staring there. We haven't come to gloat over those poor devils."

But I really think the culprits were as disappointed as Jefferson. They evidently felt that they were the most important part of the entire spectacle, and rather resented being passed over.

"You won't see no more prisoners, if you don't look at dese, sar," answered Jefferson. "Dar's only terrible few convics in de gaol jus' now."

"So much the better," answered the unsympathetic Doctor.

It certainly appeared to be a most lonely and languishing place of incarceration. We inspected the cells, and observed in one of them a peculiar handle fastened against the wall. This proved to be a West Indian substitute for the treadmill. The turning of the handle can be made easy or difficult by an arrangement of screws without the cell. The affair is set for a certain number of revolutions, and a warder explained to us that where hard labour has been meted to a prisoner, he spends long, weary hours struggling with this apparatus and earning his meals. When the necessary number of turns are completed, a bell rings, and one can easily picture the relief in many an erring black man's heart upon the sound of it. At another corner of the courtyard was piled a great heap of cannon-balls. These were used for shot-drill—an arduous form of exercise calculated to tame the wildest spirit and break the strongest back. The whitewashed cells were wonderfully clean and wholesome—more so, in fact, than most public apartments I saw elsewhere in the West Indies. This effect may be produced in some measure by the absolute lack of household goods and utensils, pictures or *bric-à-brac*. In fact, the only piece of furniture I could find anywhere was a massive wooden tripod, used for flogging prisoners upon.

Then we went in to have a chat with the Superintendent. He was rather nervous and downcast, and apparently feared that we had formed a poor opinion of his gaol. He apologised quite humbly for the paucity of prisoners, and explained that times were bad, and there was little or nothing doing in the criminal world of St. Kitts. He really did not know what had come to the place lately. He perfectly remembered, in the good old days, having had above fifty prisoners at a time in his hands. Why, blacks had been hung there before now. But of late days business grew to be a mere farce. If anybody did do anything of a capitally criminal nature at St. Kitts, during the next twenty years or so, he very



"A CHAT WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT."

much doubted if the authorities would permit him to carry the affair through. His opinion was that an assassin would be taken away altogether and bestowed upon Antigua. I asked him how he accounted for such a stagnation in crime, and he

answered, rather bitterly, that the churches and chapels and Moravian missions had to be thanked for it. There were far too many of them. Ordinary human instincts were frustrated at every turn. Little paltry sects of nobodies filled their tin meeting-houses Sunday after Sunday, and yet an important Government institution, like the gaol, remained practically empty. He could not understand it. At the rate things were going, it would be necessary to shut his prison up altogether in a year's time. Certainly, one of his present charges—a man he felt proud of in every way—was sentenced to penal servitude for life, and had only lately made a determined attempt to escape. But he could hardly expect the Government to keep up an entire gaol, with warders and a Superintendent and everything, for one man, however wicked he might be. I tried to cheer him up, and spoke hopefully about the natural depravity of everything human. I said:



"FILLED HALF A PAGE WITH COMPLIMENTARY CRITICISM."

"You must look forward. The Powers of Evil are by no means played out yet. Black sheep occur in every fold. After periods of drought, seasons of great plenty frequently ensue. There should be magnificent raw material in this island, which will presently mature and keep you as busy as a bee."

"Dar's my son, too," said Jefferson, encouragingly; "I'se pretty sure you hab him 'fore long."

Then the man grew slightly more sanguine, and asked if we should care to sign his book, and make a few remarks in it before departing.

"Of course I know it's only a small prison at best," he said, deferentially.

"As to that," answered the Doctor, speaking for himself, "I have certainly been in a great many bigger ones, but never in any house of detention better conducted and cleaner kept than yours. You deserve more ample recognition. I should

judge you to be a man second to none in your management of malefactors. For my part, I will assuredly write this much in your book."

The volume was produced, and my brother sat down and expatiated about the charms and advantages of St. Kitts prison-house. He filled half a page with complimentary and irresponsible criticism; then he handed the book to me. The Superintendent said that he should take it as particularly kind if, in my remarks, I would insert a good word for the drainage system. Advised by the Doctor that I might do so with truth and justice, I wrote as follows:

"A remarkably clean, ably-managed, and well-ordered establishment, with an admirable staff of officials, a gratifying scarcity of evil-doers, and particularly happy sanitary arrangements."

Then we went off to rejoin the Enchantress and her mother, and see further sights during the brief time which now remained at our disposal. The ladies had completed their purchases, and with them we now traversed extended portions of the town, and visited a negro colony, where thatched roofs peeped out from among tattered plantain leaves, and rustic cottages hid in the shade of tamarind and orange, lime and cocoanut. The lazy folks lounged about, chewing sugar-cane and munching bananas, according to their pleasant custom. The men chattered, and the women prattled and played with their yellow and ebony babies. One saw no ambition, no proper pride, no obtrusive morality anywhere. Jefferson appeared to be a personage in these parts. He marched along saluting his many friends and smoking a cigar which the Doctor had given him. He stopped occasionally to crack a joke or offer advice; and when we came to any negro or negress whose history embraced a matter of interest, Jefferson would stop and lecture upon the subject, while he or she stood and grinned and admitted his remarks were unquestionably true. As a rule, instead of grinning, they ought to have wept, for Jefferson's anecdotes and scraps of private scandals led me to fear that about ninety-nine in a hundred of his cronies ought to be under lock and key, in spite of what the prison authorities had told us.



"SALUTING HIS MANY FRIENDS."

Then we came down through a slum and found ourselves by the sea, upon a long, level beach of dark sand. The pier stood half-a-mile ahead, and we now determined to proceed without further delay to the boats, return to the "Rhine," and safely bestow our curiosities before she sailed. Apprised of this intention, Jefferson prepared to take leave of our party. He assured me that it had given him very considerable pleasure to thus devote his morning hours to our service. He trusted that we were satisfied with his efforts, and hinted that, though he should not dream of levying any formal charge, yet some trifling and negotiable memento of us would not be misunderstood or give him the least offence. We rewarded him adequately, thanked him much for all his trouble, and hoped that, when next we visited St. Kitts, his cheerful face might be the first to meet us. He answered:

"Please God, gem'men, I be at de pier-head when next you come 'long. Anyhow, you ask for Jefferson." Then, blessing us without stint, he departed.

And here I am reluctantly compelled to reprove the white and tawny-coloured inhabitants of St. Kitts for a breach of good manners. Boat-loads of gentlemen from shore crowded the "Rhine," like locusts, during her short stay at this island. They inundated the saloon bar, scrambled for seats at the luncheon-table, and showed a wild eagerness to eat and drink for nothing, which was most unseemly. One would have imagined that these worthy folks only enjoyed a hearty meal upon the occasional visits of a steamer; for after they had done with us they all rowed off to a neighbouring vessel, and boarded her in like manner, swarming up her sides to see what they could devour. That the intelligent male population of an island should come off to the ships, and chat with acquaintances and hear the latest news and enlarge its mind, is rational enough; but that it should organise greedy raids upon the provisions, and get in the way of the crew and passengers, and eat up refreshments which it is not justified in even approaching, appears to me unrefined, if not absolutely vulgar.

Leprosy and gluttony are the prevailing disorders at St. Kitts. The first is, unfortunately, incurable, but the second might easily be remedied, and should be. All that the white inhabitants need is a shade more self-control in the matter of other people's food, then they will be equal to the best of their brothers at home or abroad.

That afternoon the subject of influenza formed a principal theme in the smoking-room of the "Rhine." Our Fourth Officer said:

"Probably I am better qualified to discuss it than any of you men; for, two years ago, I had a most violent attack of Russian influenza *in* Russia. Mere English, suburban influenza is child's-play by comparison. I suffered at Odessa on the Black Sea, and my temperature went up to just under two hundred, and I singed the bed-clothes. A friend of mine, an old shipmate, had it at the same place; and his temperature went considerably over two hundred, and he set his bed-clothes on fire and was burnt to death, being too weak to escape."

This reminiscence would seem to show that our Fourth Officer has at last exhausted his supplies of facts, and will now no doubt fall back on reserves of fiction; which, judged from this sample, are probably very extensive. Though few mariners turn novelists, yet it is significant, as showing the great bond of union between seafaring life and pure imagination, that those who have done so can point to most gratifying results.



"PROBABLY I AM BETTER QUALIFIED TO
DISCUSS IT THAN ANY OF YOU."



I. ZANGWILL.

My First Book.

BY I. ZANGWILL.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.

As it is scarcely two years since my name (which, I hear, is a *nom de plume*) appeared in print on the cover of a book, I may be suspected of professional humour when I say I really do not know which was my first book. Yet such is the fact. My literary career has been so queer that I find it not easy to write my autobiibliography.

"What is a pound?" asked Sir Robert Peel in an interrogative mood futile as Pilate's. "What is a book?" I ask, and the dictionary answers with its usual dogmatic air, "A collection of sheets of paper, or similar material, blank, written, or printed, bound together." At this rate my first book would be that romance of school life in two volumes, which, written in a couple of exercise books, circulated gratuitously in the schoolroom, and pleased our youthful imaginations with teacher-baiting tricks we had not the pluck to carry out in the actual. I shall always remember this story because, after making the tour of the class, it was returned to me with thanks and a new first page from which all my graces of style had evaporated. Indignant enquiry discovered the criminal—he admitted he had lost the page, and had rewritten it from memory. He pleaded that it was better written (which in one sense was true), and that none of the facts had been omitted.

This ill-treated tale was "published" when I was ten, but an old schoolfellow recently wrote to me reminding me of an earlier novel written in an old account book. Of this I have no recollection, but, as he says he wrote it day by day at my dictation, I suppose he ought to know. I am glad to find I had so early achieved the distinction of keeping an amanuensis.

The dignity of print I achieved not much later, contributing verses and virtuous essays to various juvenile organs. But it was not till I was eighteen that I achieved a printed first book. The story of this first book is peculiar; and, to tell it in approved story form, I must request the reader to come back two years with me.

One fine day, when I was sixteen, I was wandering about the Ramsgate sands looking for Toole. I did not really expect to see him, and I had no reason to believe he was in Ramsgate, but I thought if providence were kind to him it might throw him in my way. I wanted to do him a good turn. I had written a three-act farcical comedy at the request of an amateur dramatic club. I had written out all the parts, and I think there were rehearsals. But the play was never produced. In the light of after knowledge I suspect some of those actors must have been of quite professional calibre. You understand, therefore, why my thoughts turned to Toole. But I could not find Toole.

Instead, I found on the sands a page of a



"LOOKING FOR TOOLE."

paper called *Society*. It is still running merrily at a penny, but at that time it had also a Saturday edition at threepence. On this page was a great prize-competition scheme, as well as details of a regular weekly competition. The competitions in those days were always literary and intellectual, but then popular education had not made such strides as to-day.

I sat down on the spot, and wrote something which took a prize in the weekly competition. This emboldened me to enter for the great stakes.

There were various events. I resolved to enter for two. One was a short novel, and the other a comedietta. The "£5 humorous story"



"I SAT DOWN AND WROTE SOMETHING."

competition I did not go in for; but when the last day of sending in MSS. for that had passed, I reproached myself with not having despatched one of my manuscripts. Modesty had prevented me sending in old work, as I felt assured it would stand no chance, but when it was too late I was annoyed with myself for having thrown away a possibility. After all I could have lost nothing. Then I discovered that I had mistaken the last date, and that there was still a day. In the joyful reaction I selected a story called "Professor Grimmer," and sent it in. Judge of my amazement when this got the prize (£5), and was published in serial form, running through three numbers of *Society*. Last year, at a press dinner, I found myself next to Mr. Arthur Goddard, who told me he had acted as Competition Editor, and that quite a number of now well-known people had taken part in these admirable competitions. My painfully laboured novel only got honourable mention, and my comedietta was lost in the post.



Arthur Goddard

But I was now at the height of literary fame, and success stimulated me to fresh work. I still marvel when I think of the amount of rubbish I turned out in my seventeenth and eighteenth years, in the scanty leisure of a harassed pupil-teacher at an elementary school, working hard in the evenings for a degree at the London University to boot. There was a fellow pupil-teacher (let us call him Y.) who believed in me, and who had a little money with which to back his belief. I was for starting a comic paper. The name was to be *Grimaldi*, and I was to write it all every week.

"But don't you think your invention would give way ultimately?" asked Y. It was the only time he ever doubted me.

"By that time I shall be able to afford a staff," I replied triumphantly.

Y. was convinced. But before the comic paper was born, Y. had another happy thought. He suggested that if I wrote a Jewish story, we might make enough to finance the comic paper. I was quite willing. If he had suggested an epic, I should have written it.

So I wrote the story in four evenings (I always write in spurts), and within ten days from the inception of the idea the booklet was on sale in a coverless pamphlet form. The printing cost ten pounds. I paid five (the five I had won), Y. paid five, and we divided the profits. He has since not become a publisher.

My first book (price one penny nett) went well. It was loudly denounced by Jews, and widely bought by them; it was hawked about the streets. One little shop in Whitechapel sold four hundred copies. It was even on Smith's book-stalls. There was great curiosity among Jews to know the name of the writer. Owing to my anonymity, I was enabled to see those enjoying its perusal, who were afterwards to explain to me their horror and disgust at its illiteracy and vulgarity. By vulgarity vulgar Jews mean the reproduction of the Hebrew words with which the poor and the old-fashioned interlard their conversation. It is as if English-speaking Scotchmen and Irishmen should object to "dialect" novels reproducing the idiom of their "uncultured" countrymen. I do not possess a copy of my first book, but somehow or other I discovered the MS. when writing



"IT WAS HAWKED ABOUT THE STREETS."

Fortune almost within our grasp.

One morning our headmaster walked into my room with a portentously solemn air. I felt instinctively that the murder was out. But he only said "Where is Y.?" though the mere coupling of our names was ominous, for our publishing partnership was unknown. I replied, "How should I know? In his room, I suppose."

He gave me a peculiar sceptical glance.

"When did you last see Y.?" he said.

"Yesterday afternoon," I replied wonderingly.

"And you don't know where he is now?"

"Haven't an idea—isn't he in school?"

"No," he replied in low, awful tones.

"Where then?" I murmured.

"In prison!"

"In prison," I gasped.

"In prison; I have just been to help bail him out."

It transpired that Y. had suddenly been taken with a further happy thought. Contemplation of those gorgeous tricoloured posters had turned his brain, and, armed with an amateur paste-pot and a ladder, he had sallied forth at midnight to stick them about the silent streets, so as to cut down the publishing expenses. A policeman, observing him at work, had told him to get down, and Y., being legal-minded, had argued it out with the policeman *de haut en bas* from the top of his ladder. The outraged majesty of the law thereupon haled Y. off to the cells.

Naturally the cat was now out of the bag, and the fat in the fire.

To explain away the poster was beyond the ingenuity of even a professed fiction-monger.

Straightway the committee of the school was summoned in hot haste, and held debate upon the scandal of a pupil-teacher being guilty of originality. And one dread afternoon, when all Nature seemed to hold its breath, I was called down to interview a member of the committee. In his hand were copies of the obnoxious publications.



I approached the great person with beating heart. He had been kind to me in the past, singling me out, on account of some scholastic successes, for an annual vacation at the seaside. It has only just struck me, after all these years, that, if he had not done so, I should not have found the page of *Society*, and so not have perpetrated the deplorable compositions.

In the course of a bad quarter of an hour, he told me that the ballad was tolerable, though not to be endured; he admitted the metre was perfect, and there wasn't a single false rhyme. But the prose novelette was disgusting. "It is such stuff," said he, "as little boys scribble up on walls."

I said I could not see anything objectionable in it.

"Come now, confess you are ashamed of it," he urged.

Children of the Ghetto. The description of market-day in Jewry was transferred bodily from the MS. of my first book, and is now generally admired.

What the profits were I never knew, for they were invested in the second of our publications. Still jealously keeping the authorship secret, we published a long comic ballad which I had written on the model of Bab. With this we determined to launch out in style, and so we had gorgeous advertisement posters printed in three colours, which were to be stuck about London to beautify that great dreary city. Y. saw the back-hair of



"A POLICEMAN TOLD HIM TO GET DOWN."

“SUCH STUFF AS LITTLE BOYS
SCRIBBLE UP ON WALLS.”

“You only wrote it to make money.”

“If you mean that I deliberately wrote low stuff to make money,” I replied calmly, “it is untrue. There is nothing I am ashamed of. What you object to is simply realism.” I pointed out Bret Harte had been as realistic, but they did not understand literature on that committee.

“Confess you are ashamed of yourself,” he reiterated, “and we will look over it.”

“I am not,” I persisted, though I foresaw only too clearly that my summer’s vacation was doomed if I told the truth. “What is the use of saying I am?”

The headmaster uplifted his hands in horror. “How, after all your kindness to him, he can contradict you—!” he cried.

“When I come to be your age,” I conceded to the member of the committee, “it is possible I may look back on it with shame. At present I feel none.”

In the end I was given the alternative of expulsion or of publishing nothing which had not passed the censorship of the committee. After considerable hesitation I chose the latter.

This was a blessing in disguise; for, as I have never been able to endure the slightest arbitrary interference with my work, I simply abstained from publishing. Thus, although I still wrote—mainly sentimental verses—my nocturnal studies were less interrupted. Not till I had graduated, and was of age, did I return to my inky vomit. Then came my next first book—a real book at last.

In this also I had the collaboration of a fellow-teacher, Louis Cowen by name. This time my colleague was part-author. It was only gradually that I had been admitted to the privilege of communion with him, for he was my senior by five or six years, and a man of brilliant parts who had already won his spurs in journalism, and who enjoyed deservedly the reputation of an Admirable Crichton. What drew me to him was his mordant wit (to-day, alas! wasted on anonymous journalism! If he would only reconsider his indetermination, the reading public would be the richer!) Together we planned plays, novels, treatises on political economy, and contributions to philosophy. Those were the days of dreams.



LIFE IN BETHNAL GREEN.

One afternoon he came to me with quivering sides, and told me that an idea for a little shilling book had occurred to him. It was that a Radical Prime Minister and a Conservative working man should change into each other by supernatural means, and the working man be confronted with the problem of governing, while the Prime Minister should be as comically out of place in the East End environment. He thought it would make a funny “Arabian Nights” sort of burlesque. And so it would have done; but, unfortunately, I saw subtler possibilities of political satire in it. I insisted the story must be real, not supernatural, the Prime Minister must be a Tory, weary of office, and it must be an ultra-Radical atheistic artisan bearing a marvellous resemblance to him who directs (and with complete success) the Conservative Administration. To add to the mischief, owing to my collaborator’s evenings being largely taken up by other work, seven-eighths of the book came to be written by me, though the leading ideas were, of course, threshed out and the whole revised in common, and thus it became a vent-hole for all the ferment of a youth of twenty-one,

whose literary faculty had furthermore been pent up for years by the potential censorship of a committee. The book, instead of being a shilling skit, grew to a ten-and-sixpenny (for that was the unfortunate price of publication) political treatise of over sixty long chapters and 500 closely-printed pages. I drew all the characters as seriously and complexly as if the fundamental conception were a matter of history; the out-going Premier became an elaborate study of a nineteenth century Hamlet; the Bethnal Green life amid which he came to live was presented with photographic fulness and my old trick of realism; the governmental manœuvres were described with infinite detail; numerous real personages were introduced under nominal disguises, and subsequent history was curiously anticipated in some of the Female Franchise and Home Rule episodes. Worst of all, so super-subtle was the satire, that it was never actually stated straight out that the Premier had changed places with the Radical working man, so that the door might be left open for satirically suggested alternative explanations of the metamorphosis in their characters; and as, moreover, the two men re-assumed their original rôles for one night only with infinitely complex effects, many readers, otherwise unimpeachable, reached the end without any suspicion of the actual plot—and yet (on their own confession) enjoyed the book!

In contrast to all this elephantine waggery the half-a-dozen chapters near the commencement, in which my collaborator sketched the first adventures of the Radical working man in Downing Street, were light and sparkling, and I feel sure the shilling skit he originally meditated would have been a great success. We christened the book *The Premier and the Painter*, ourselves J. Freeman Bell, had it type-written, and sent it round to the publishers in two enormous quarto volumes. I had been working at it for more than a year every evening after the hellish torture of the day's teaching, and all day every holiday, but now I had a good rest while it was playing its boomerang prank of returning to me once a month. The only gleam of hope came from Bentleys, who wrote to say that they could not make up their minds to reject it; but they prevailed upon themselves to part with it at last, though not without asking to see Mr. Bell's next book. At last it was accepted by Spencer Blackett, and, though it had been refused by all the best houses, it failed. Failed in a material sense, that is; for there was plenty of praise in the papers, though at too long intervals to do us any good. The *Athenæum* has never spoken so well of anything I have done since. The late James Runciman (I learnt after his death that it was he) raved about it in various unimportant organs. It even called forth a leader in the *Family Herald* (!), and there are odd people here and there, who know the secret of J. Freeman Bell, who declare that I. Zangwill will never do anything so good. There was some sort of a cheap edition, but it did not sell much, and when, some years ago, Spencer Blackett went out of business, I acquired the copyright and the remainder copies, which are still lying about somewhere. And not only did *The Premier and the Painter* fail with the great public, it did not even help either of us one step up the ladder; never got us a letter of encouragement nor a stroke of work. I had to begin journalism at the very bottom and entirely unassisted, narrowly escaping canvassing for advertisements, for I had by this time thrown up my scholastic position, and had gone forth into the world penniless and without even a "character," branded as an Atheist (because I did not worship the Lord who presided over our committee) and a Revolutionary (because I refused to break the law of the land).



"HAD IT SENT ROUND."



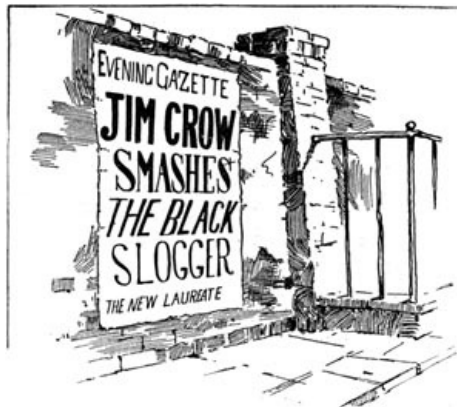
MR. ZANGWILL AT WORK.

I should stop here if I were certain I had written the required article. But as *The Premier and the Painter* was not entirely *my* first book, I may perhaps be expected to say something of my third first book, and the first to which I put my name—*The Bachelors' Club*. Years of literary apathy succeeded the failure of *The Premier and the Painter*. All I did was to publish a few serious poems (which, I hope, will survive *Time*), a couple of pseudonymous stories signed "The Baroness Von S." (!), and a long philosophical essay upon religion, and to lend a hand in the writing of a few playlets. Becoming convinced of the irresponsible mendacity of the dramatic profession, I gave up the stage, too, vowing never to write except on commission, and sank entirely into the slough of journalism (glad enough to get there), *inter alia* editing a comic paper (not *Grimaldi*, but *Ariel*) with a heavy heart. At last the long apathy wore off, and I resolved to cultivate literature again in my scraps of time. It is a mere accident that I wrote a pair of "funny" books, or put serious criticism of contemporary manners into a shape not understood in a country where only the dull are profound and only the ponderous are earnest. *The Bachelors' Club* was the result of a whimsical remark made by my dear friend, Eder of Bartholomew's, with whom I was then sharing rooms in Bernard Street, and who helped me greatly with it, and its publication was equally accidental. One spring day, in the year of grace 1891, having lived unsuccessfully for a score of years and seven upon this absurd planet, I crossed Fleet Street and stepped into what is called "success." It was like this. Mr. J. T. Grein, now of the Independent Theatre, meditated a little monthly called *The Playgoers' Review*, and he asked me to do an article for the first number, on the strength of some speeches I had made at the Playgoers' Club. When I got the proof it was marked "Please return at once to 6, Bouverie Street." My office boy being out, and Bouverie Street being only a few steps away, I took it over myself, and found myself, somewhat to my surprise, in the office of Henry & Co., publishers, and in the presence of Mr. J. Hannaford Bennett, an active partner in the firm. He greeted me by name, also to my surprise, and told me he had heard me speak at the Playgoers' Club. A little conversation ensued, and he mentioned that his firm was going to bring out a Library of Wit and Humour. I told him I had begun a book, avowedly humorous, and had written two chapters of it, and he straightway came over to my office, heard me read them, and immediately secured the book. (The then editor ultimately refused to have it in the "Whitefriars' Library of Wit and Humour," and so it was brought out separately.) Within three months, working in odds and ends of time, I finished it, correcting the proofs of the first chapters while I was writing the last; indeed, ever since the day I read those two chapters to Mr. Hannaford Bennett I have never written a line anywhere that has not been purchased before it was written. For, to my undying astonishment, two average editions of my real "First Book" were disposed of on the day of publication, to say nothing of the sale in New York. Unless I had acquired a reputation of which I was totally unconscious, it must have been the title that "fetched" the trade. Or, perhaps, it was the illustrations by my friend, Mr. George Hutchinson, whom I am proud to have discovered as a cartoonist for *Ariel*.



"EDITING A COMIC PAPER."

So here the story comes to a nice sensational climax. Re-reading it, I feel dimly that there ought to be a moral in it somewhere for the benefit of struggling fellow-scribblers. But the best I can find is this: That if you are blessed with some talent, a great deal of industry, and an amount of conceit mighty enough to enable you to disregard superiors, equals and critics, as well as the fancied demands of the public, it is possible, without friends, or introductions, or bothering celebrities to read your manuscripts, or cultivating the camp of the log-rollers, to attain, by dint of slaving day and night for years during the flower of your youth, to a fame infinitely less widespread than a prize-fighter's, and a pecuniary position which you might with far less trouble have been born to.



"A FAME LESS WIDESPREAD THAN
A PRIZE-FIGHTER'S."

By the Light of the Lamp.

BY HILDA NEWMAN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

A day in bed! Oh! the horror of it to a man who has never ailed anything in his life! A day away from the excitement (pleasurable or otherwise) of business, the moving throng of city streets, the anticipated chats with business friends and casual acquaintances—the world of men. Nothing to look upon but the four walls of the room, which, in spite of its cosiness, he only associates with dreams, nightmares, and dull memories of sleepless nights, and chilly mornings. Nothing to listen to but the twittering of the canary downstairs, and the distant wrangling of children in the nursery: no one to speak to but the harassed housewife, wanted in a dozen places at once, and the pert housemaid, whose noisiness is distracting. The man lay there, cursing his helplessness. In spite of his iron will, the unseen enemy, who had stolen in by night, conquered, holding him down with a hundred tingling fingers when he attempted to rise, and drawing a misty veil over his eyes when he tried to read, till at last he was forced to resign himself, with closed eyes, and turn day into night. But the lowered blind was a sorry substitute for the time of rest, and brought him no light, refreshing sleep, so, in the spirit, he occupied his customary chair at the office, writing and receiving cheques, drawing up new circulars, and ordering the clerks about in the abrupt, peremptory manner he thought proper to adopt towards subordinates—the wife included.

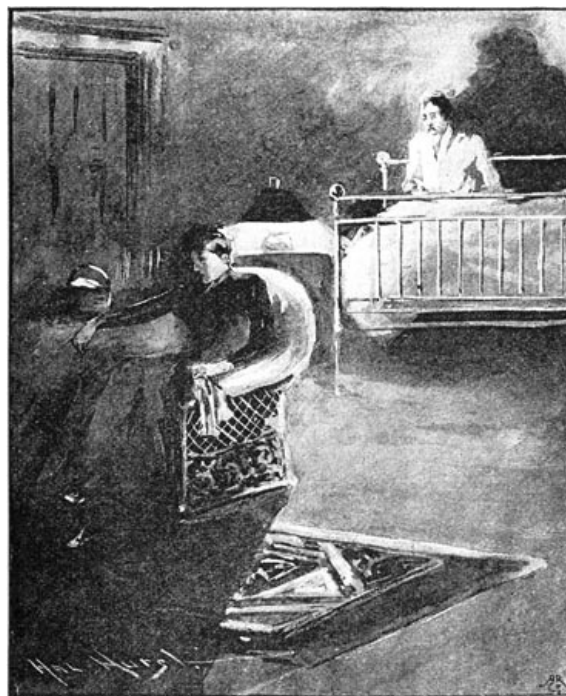
He tortured himself by picturing the

disorganisation of the staff in his enforced absence—for he had grown to believe that nothing could prosper without his personal supervision, though the head clerk had been ten years in his employ. Then he remembered an important document, that should have been signed before, and a foreign letter, which probably awaited him, and fretted himself into a fever of impatience and aggravation.

Just at the climax of his reflections his wife entered the room. She was a silent little woman, with weary eyes. Perhaps her burden of household cares, and the complaints of an exacting husband, had made her prematurely old, for there were already silver threads among the dark brown coils of hair that were neatly twisted in a bygone fashion, though she was young enough to have had a bright colour in her cheek, a merry light in her dark eyes, and a smile on her lips. These, and a becoming dress, would have made her a pretty woman; but a friendless, convent girlhood, followed by an early marriage, and unswerving obedience to the calls of a husband and family who demanded and accepted her unceasing attention and the sacrifice of her youth, without a word of gratitude or sympathy, had made her what she was—a plain, insignificant, faded-looking creature, with unsatisfied yearnings, and heartaches that she did not betray, fearing to be misunderstood or ridiculed.



“RETURNING WITH A DAINТИLY-SPREAD TRAY.”



“FAST ASLEEP IN THE LOW WICKER ARMCHAIR.”

She listened quietly to his complaints, and bore without reproach his mocking answers to her offers of help. Then she softly drew up the blind, and went downstairs, returning with a daintily-spread tray. But the tempting oysters she had had such trouble to procure were pettishly refused, and the tray was not even allowed to be in the room. The wife sat down near the window, and took up a little garment she was making—her face was flushed, and her lips trembled as she stitched and folded—it seemed so hard that she could do nothing to please him, knowing, as she did, that he considered hers an idle life, since they kept servants to do the work of the house. He did not know of her heart-breaking attempts to keep within the limits of her weekly allowance, with unexpected calls from the nursery, and kitchen breakages; he forgot that it would not go so far now that there were more children to clothe and feed, and, when she gently hinted this, he hurled the bitter taunt of extravagance at her, not dreaming that she was really pinched for money, and stinting herself of a hundred and one things necessary to her comfort and well-being for the sake of her family. Indeed, it was part of his theory never to yield to requests of this kind, since they were sure to be followed by others at no distant date, and, besides, he greatly prided himself on firmness in domestic matters.

She was very worried to-day; anxious about her husband's health, and sorely grieved at the futility of all her efforts to interest or help him. Great tears gathered in her eyes, and were ready to fall, but they had to be forced back, for she was called out of the room again.

And so it went on throughout the afternoon—in and out—up and down—never resting—never still—her thoughts always with the discontented invalid, who fell asleep towards evening, after a satisfactory meal, cooked and served by his patient helpmate, and eaten in a desultory manner, as if its speedier consumption would imply too much appreciation of her culinary kindness.

About midnight he awoke, refreshed in body and mind, and singularly clear of brain.

His first feeling was one of intense relief, for he felt quite free from pain, and to-morrow would find him in town, writing and scolding—in short, himself again. He sat up in bed, and looked round. The gas was turned low, but on a little table consecrated to his wants stood a carefully-shaded lamp. By its soft light he discovered his wife, fast asleep in the low, wicker armchair, whose gay chintz cover contrasted strangely with her neat dark dress. She had evidently meant to sit up all night in case he felt worse, but had succumbed from sheer weariness, still grasping the tiny frock she had been mending. He noticed her roughened forefinger, but excused it, when he saw the little, even stitches. Finally, he decided not to disturb her, but, as he settled down again on the comfortable pillow, he was haunted by the image of her pale face, and, raising himself on his elbow, looked at her again, reflectively. She was certainly very white.

He blamed the lamplight at first, but his conscience spoke clearly in the dim silence, as he recalled her anxiety for him, and her gentle, restless footsteps on the stairs, and, now that he began to think of it, she had not eaten all day. He scolded her severely for it in his mind. Was there not plenty for her if she wanted it?

But that inner self would not be silenced. "How about her idle life?" it said—"has she had time to eat to-day?"

He could not answer.

She sighed in her sleep, and her lashes were wet as from recent tears. For the first time he noticed the silver hairs, and the lines about her eyes, and wondered at them.



"SOBBING OUT YEARS OF LONELINESS."

And the still, small voice pierced his heart, saying, "Whose fault is it?"

As he shut his eyes—vainly endeavouring to dismiss the unwelcome thoughts that came crowding in upon his mind, and threatened to destroy his belief in the perfect theory he loved to expound—a past day rose before him. He held her hand, and, looking into her timid, girlish face, said to himself, "I can mould her to my will." Then she came to him, alone and friendless, with no one to help hide her inexperience and nervousness.

He recalled the gentle questions he was always too busy to answer, till they troubled him no more; and the silent reproach of her quivering lips when he blamed her for some little household error. And, though he believed that his training had made her useful and independent, he remembered, with a pang of remorse, many occasions on which an affectionate word of appreciation had hovered on his tongue, and wondered

what foolish pride or reserve had made him hesitate and choke it down, when he knew what it meant to her. Birthdays, and all those little anniversaries which stand out clearly on the calendar of a woman's heart, he had forgotten, or remembered only when the time for wishes and kisses was over. Yet he had never reproached himself for this before. But to-day he had seen enough to understand something of the responsibility that rested on her, the ignorance of the servants, the healthy, clamouring children, who would only obey *her*, and the hundred and one daily incidents that would have worried him into a frenzy, but which only left her serene and patient, and anxious to do her duty. The poor wan face had grown lovely to him, and the lines on her forehead spoke with an eloquence beyond the most passionate appeal for sympathy that she could have uttered—what would the house be without her? What if he were going to lose her? His heart was shaken by a terrible fear as he sat up with misty eyes, and, brokenly uttering her name, held out his arms imploringly.

Oh! God, if she should never wake again!... But she answered him, breathlessly, waking from a wonderful dream, in which she saw him wandering afar through a fragrant garden, that she longed to enter—then as she wept, despairingly hiding her face in her hands, she heard him calling her, first softly, then louder—and louder—

And the garden faded away.

But the dawn found her sobbing out years of loneliness on her husband's breast.

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

BY SOPHIE WASSILIEFF.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. ST. M. FITZ-GERALD.

III.—ONE DAY.



"AT BREAKFAST."

Eight o'clock in the morning. I am taking my tea while idly turning over the leaves of a book, when the noise of an explosion causes me to suddenly raise my head. Explosions are not of rare occurrence at the fortress of X—, of which the outer wall encloses several hundred barrack rooms and places where the garrison are exercised, and I am quite accustomed to the noise of cannon and small arms. This solitary explosion, however, seemed so close at hand, and has so strongly shaken the prison, that, anxious to know what has happened, I rise and approach the door and listen. A few moments of silence—then, suddenly, from somewhere in the corridor, comes the jingle of spurs, the clash of swords, and the sound of voices. At first, all this noise is stationary, then gradually it grows and appears to spread on all sides. Something extraordinary has surely happened behind this heavy door, something is now happening which

causes me anxiety. But what is it? Standing on tip-toes, I try to look through the small square of glass covering the wicket, but the outside shutter is closed, and in spite of the habit which I and other prisoners have of finding some small aperture through which a glimpse of the corridor may be obtained, to-day I can see nothing. Only the noise of heavy and rapid footsteps, each moment stronger and more distinct, comes to my ears. I seem to hear in the distance the choked and panting voice of Captain W— asking some question, then another nearer and unknown voice replies—"Oh! yes, killed! Killed outright!"

Killed? Who? How and why? Killed? My God! Have I heard aright? Killed! No, no; it is impossible! Breathless, and with beating heart, I consider for a moment in order to find some pretext for having this heavy door opened. Shall I ask to see the director—or the doctor—or say I am thirsty and have no water? The latter is the most simple, and, my jug hastily emptied, I return to the wicket to knock. In ordinary times the slightest blow struck on the little square of

glass brings my "blue angel," the warder. Now, I knock loudly, and again and again. The intervals seem like an eternity, but the little shutter remains closed, while the sound of spurs, swords, and voices cross each other in the corridor, sometimes near, then dying away into the distance. A few moments more of anxious waiting and agony almost insupportable, then I raise my arm determined to break the window, when a new noise from the outside causes a shudder to run through me.

Clear and sharp, the noise is that of windows broken in rapid succession; it is the signal that the prisoners have revolted. Distant at first, the noise approaches with lightning-like rapidity on the side of the principal building of the prison, and as it approaches it is accompanied by cries and loud questioning. Without knowing the cause of the outbreak, I seize the first hard object that comes to my hand, a dictionary, and with one bound I am on my table, and in my turn break the glass of my window, the fragments of which ring gaily as they fall, some into the court-yard, and the others on the stone floor of my cell.

As the window falls to pieces a flood of light invades my cell, and I feel the warm air, and smell a perfume as of new-mown hay. For a moment I am blinded, suffocated, then with both hands I seize the iron bars and draw myself up to the narrow window ledge. A confused noise of breaking glass gradually passing away in the distance, and the cracking of wood fills the pure air of the glorious summer morning; while on all sides are heard the voices of anxious men and women, all asking the same questions, "What has happened? Why are we revolting?"



"BREAKING THE CELL DOORS."



"SHOT HIM THROUGH THE HEAD."

For a long time these questions remain unanswered, then at last a new and distant voice—at times rendered inaudible by the wind—announces that a warder, or a guard, has killed one of our comrades, the prisoner Ivanoff, in his cell, and that the prisoners in the other buildings are breaking the furniture and the cell doors.

This reply, which comrades transmit from window to window, petrifies me. After hearing the explosion and the words spoken in the corridor; after a long and anxious incertitude; after this announcement of a revolt in which I myself am taking part—the reply is not unexpected. And yet I understand nothing of the matter; I am thoroughly upset, and my brain refuses to understand and believe. Killed? Ivanoff, the youth whom, by the way, I do not know personally. Killed? But why? Without weapons

and under lock and key, what can he have done to deserve death? Has he attempted to escape? But does one attempt such an enterprise in open day and under the eyes of sentries and warders? Besides, Ivanoff had committed no other crime than fetching from the post-office a letter intended for one of his friends whose name he refused to give, while the friend, arrested since, has assumed the responsibility of the correspondence. Ivanoff was to have been liberated on bail in the course of a few days, and do those in such a position attempt escape on the eve of their release? But why, why has he been killed?

These questions I ask myself while the sound of breaking glass continues. My neighbours appear to have been pursuing a train of thought similar to mine, for I hear several of them calling to our informant, and enquiring, "How and why was he killed?"

Then a long, long, anxious wait, and then the reply, "Yes, killed!" Not by a warder, but by a sentry on guard in the court-yard, who, seeing Ivanoff at his window, shot him through the head. The occupier of a neighbouring cell, also at that moment at his

window, saw the shot fired. Others heard the fall of the body. Some have called to him, and received no reply; therefore Ivanoff is dead. As to why he was assassinated, nobody knows.

This recital, several times interrupted by noises and screams, is nevertheless clear and precise. My neighbours, one after the other, descend from their windows, and commence to break up furniture and attack the doors. I follow their example, and recommence my work of destruction. Water-bottle, glass, basin, the wicket in the door, and all that is fragile in my cell flies to pieces, and, with the broken glass from the window, covers the floor. In spite of the feverish haste with which I accomplish this sad task, my heart is not in the work. All this is so unexpected, so unreal, so violent, that it bewilders me. But through the bewilderment the questions, "Is it possible? And why?" continue to force their way. Then I say to myself, "If this man, this soldier, has really killed Ivanoff, it was, perhaps, in a fit of drunkenness; or, perhaps, his gun went off accidentally; or, perhaps, seeing a prisoner at a window, he thought it an attempt at escape." While these ideas, rapid and confused, rush through my brain, I continue to break everything breakable that comes under my hands—because the others are doing the same—because, for prisoners, it is the only means of protest. The sentiment, however, which dominates me is not one of rage, but of infinite sadness, which presses me down and renders weak my trembling arms.

But now the uproar augments. Several prisoners have demolished their beds, and with the broken parts are attacking the doors. The noise of iron hurled with force against the oak panels dominates all others. Through my broken wicket, I hear the voice of the Commandant ordering the soldiers to fire on any prisoner leaving his cell, and to the warders to manacle all those who are attempting to break down their doors.



"NADINE'S DOOR FORCED."

All these noises, blended with screams and imprecations, the jingle of spurs, the clatter of sword-scabbards crossing and recrossing each other, excite and intoxicate me. Wild at my lack of energy and strength, I seize with both hands my stool. It is old and worm-eaten, and after I have several times flung it on the floor, the joints give way, and it falls to pieces. As I turn to find some other object for destruction, a flushed and agitated face appears at the wicket, and a moment later the door is partly opened, and a warder pushes with violence a woman into my cell. So great is the force employed, and so rapid the movement, that I have difficulty in seizing her in my arms to prevent her falling upon the floor amongst the broken glass and *débris* of furniture.

This unexpected visitor is one of my friends and fellow-captives, Nadine B—. Surprised at this unexpected meeting, and the conditions under which it takes place, we are for some instants speechless, but during those few moments I again see all our past, and also note the changes which ten months' imprisonment have wrought in my friend; then, very pale, and trembling with

nervous excitement, Nadine explains that her door having been forced during a struggle in the corridor, an officer ordered her to be removed and locked up with another female prisoner. Her cell was in the same corridor as that of Ivanoff, and of the death of the latter there is no doubt. Several comrades, her neighbours, have seen the body taken away. As to the grounds for his assassination, she heard a group of officers, before her door, conversing, and one said that the Commandant, not satisfied with the manner in which the warders in the corridors discharged their duties in watching the prisoners, gave orders to the sentries to watch from the courtyard and to shoot any prisoner who appeared at his window.

This, then, is the reason for this assassination, in open day, of a defenceless prisoner! The penalty of death for disobedience to one of the prison regulations. Is this, then, a caprice, or an access of ill-temper, on the part of an officer who has no authority in this matter, since prisoners awaiting trial are only responsible to the representatives of our so-called justice? Like a thunderclap this explanation drives away my hesitation and sadness, which are now replaced by indignation and a limitless horror; and while Nadine, sick and worn, throws herself upon my bed, I mount to my window in order to communicate the news to my neighbours. The narrow court-yard, into which the sunshine streams, is, as usual, empty, excepting for the sentry on his eternal march. Above the wall I see a row of soldiers and workwomen's faces, all pale, as they look at the prison and listen to the noises. As I appear at the window a woman covers her face with her hands and screams, and I recognise her as the wife of one of our comrades, a workman. This cry, this gesture, the word "torture" that I

hear run along the crest of the wall—all this at first surprises me. As, however, I follow the direction of the eyes of those gazing at me, I discover the cause. My hands, by which I am holding myself to the window bars, are covered with blood, the result of my recent work of destruction of glass and woodwork. There is blood, too, on my light-coloured dress. Poor woman! By voice and gesture I try to calm her. But does she hear me down there? The sentry looks towards me. He is young and very pale, and in his eyes, stupefied by what is going on around him, there is a world of carelessness and passiveness, and as I look into them a shudder of agony and despair passes through me.

The voice of Nadine calling brings me to her side. Partly unconscious, she sobs in the commencement of a nervous crisis, and asks for water. Water! I have none. Not a drop! What is to be done?



"A SOLDIER SEIZES THEM."

And while I try to calm her with gentle words and caresses, and look round in the vain hope that some few drops of the precious fluid may have escaped my notice, the door of the cell is suddenly opened, and several soldiers, drunk with the uproar and the fight, rush in. A cry of horror escapes me, and instinctively I retreat behind my bed. The noise of chains and the voice of the Commandant ordering that all prisoners be immediately manacled, reassures me. Ah! the chains! Only the chains! I do not intend to resist. All resistance on my part would be useless. Besides, I am anxious to be rid of the presence of these soldiers, and would willingly hold out to them my bleeding hands, if a confused idea in my brain did not tell me that such an act would be one of cowardice. And now a soldier seizes them, and drawing them behind my back, fastens heavy iron manacles to my wrists. Another attempts a similar operation upon Nadine, who, frightened, struggles and screams. Making an effort to calm her, I try to approach, but a sudden jerk on the chain attached to my manacles causes intense pain in my arms, and a rough voice cries "Back." Back? Why? I do not want to abandon Nadine, and instinctively I grasp the bed behind me. Another and a stronger jerk, I stumble, and a piece of broken glass pierces my thin shoe, and cuts my foot, and I am pulled backwards. I am now against that part of the wall where, at the height of about three feet, there is an iron ring, and whilst one of the soldiers attaches my chain to this ring Nadine is dragged towards the opposite wall.

All this passes quickly in our cell, and the soldiers are soon gone and the door closed and locked. But in other cells prisoners resist, and as the struggle goes on and the noise increases so does the beating of my heart, and to me the tumult takes the proportions of a thunderstorm, and, broken down, I listen for some time without understanding the reason for the uproar.

Slowly the noises die away. Nadine, either calmed or worn out, sobs quietly, and in this relative peace, the first for several hours, my mind becomes clearer, and I begin to have some idea of what is passing in and around me.

My principal preoccupation is Nadine. She is pale, and appears to be so exhausted that I momentarily expect her to faint and remain suspended by the chains that rattle as she sobs. With a negative motion of her head and a few words, she assures me that the crisis is passed, that her arms pain her very much, and that she is very thirsty.

Chained a few steps away, I cannot render her the slightest aid, and the thought of my helplessness is a cruel suffering. I, too, suffer in the arms. Heavy, they feel as though overrun and stung by thousands of insects, and, when I move, that sensation is changed to one of intense pain. My foot, too, is very painful, and as the blood oozes from my shoe it forms a pool, and I am very thirsty. All these sensations are lost in my extreme nervous excitement and anxiety for the others, who are now quiet, and for Nadine, from whom I instinctively turn my eyes.

It is very warm, and through the broken window I see a large patch of sky, so transparent and luminous that my eyes, long accustomed to the twilight of my cell, can hardly stand the brightness. There is light everywhere. The walls, dry and white at this period of the year, are flooded with light, and the sun's rays, as they fall on the broken glass on the floor, produce thousands of bright star-like points, flashing and filling the cell with iridescent stars.



“CHAINED AND THROWN FACE DOWNWARD.”

With all this light there is the perfume-laden air blowing in at the window, and bringing the odours of the country in summer. Such is the quiet reigning that I can hear the sound of a distant church bell, can count the steps taken by the sentry in the court-yard below, and can hear the rustle of leaves of an open book on the floor, turned over by the gentle breeze.

But this silence is only intermittent. In one of the cells during the struggle preceding the putting on of chains the soldiers threw a prisoner on the ground, and, in order to keep him still, one of them knelt upon his chest. Fainting, and with broken ribs, the unfortunate is rapidly losing his life's blood. His brother, a youth, who has been thrown into his cell as Nadine was into mine, grows frantic at the sight of the blood pouring from the victim's mouth, and screams for help. In another cell a prisoner who for a long time past has suffered from melancholia, suddenly goes mad, and sings the “Marseillaise” at the top of his voice, laughs wildly, and then shouts orders to imaginary soldiers. Elsewhere, of two sisters who for a long time past have shared the same cell, the eldest, chained to the wall, is shrieking to her sister, who, owing to the rupture of a blood-vessel, has suddenly died. At intervals she screams —“Comrades! Helena is dying—I think she is dead.” Below, beneath our feet, a prisoner, too tightly manacled, his hands and feet pressed back and chained behind and thrown face downward, after making desperate efforts to turn over or keep his head up, at last gives up the struggle, and with his mouth against the cold stones and a choking rattle in his throat, he at intervals moans, “Oh! oh!”

Each of these cries, accompanied by the strident clank of chains, produces upon me the effect of a galvanic battery, and I am obliged to put forth all that remains to me of moral strength to prevent myself from screaming and moaning like the others. With my feet in blood and my eyes burning with weeping, and the effect of the strong light, I try to maintain my upright position by leaning against the wall. Then from the depths of my heart something arises which causes it to throb as though it would burst.

I have never hated! My participation in the revolutionary movement was the outcome of my desire to soothe the suffering and misery, and to see realised the dream of a universal happiness and a universal brotherhood; and even here in prison, even this morning, within a few steps of an assassinated comrade, I sought explanations, that is to say, excuses; I thought of an accident, of a misunderstanding. Now, I hate. I hate with all the strength of my soul this stupid and ferocious *régime* whose arbitrary authority puts the lives of thousands of defenceless human beings at the mercy of any one of its mercenaries. I hate it, because of the sufferings and the tears it has caused; for the obstacles it throws in the way of my country's development; for the chains which it places on thousands of bodies and thousands of souls; because of this thirst for blood which is growing within me. Yes! I hate it, and if it sufficed to will—if this tension of my entire being could resolve itself into action—oh! there would at this instant be many heads forming a *cortège* to the bloody head of the comrade who has been so cowardly and ferociously assassinated.



"REMOVED BEFORE OUR CHAINS WERE TAKEN OFF."

Eight o'clock at night. Nadine, very ill, sleeps upon my bed, groaning plaintively each time that an unconscious movement causes her to touch her arms, whilst I, like all the other prisoners not invalided, remain at my window. In spite of the silence of several months which has imposed upon us, the conversation flags. We are too tired, and there are too many sick amongst us; there are also the dead. Where are they now? Removed before our chains were taken off, they will this night be buried with other corpses of political prisoners, secretly hid away to rest by the police in order to avoid any public manifestation on the part of friends, or remarks on the part of the local population. These thoughts, at intervals, awaken our anger, and then murmurs are heard. As the night grows deeper, and the sounds of evening are lost in the mists, covering the country as with a veil, our sick nerves become calmer, and our hatred gives place to an immense and tender sadness. Then we talk of our mothers, of the mother of Helena Q—, and of Ivanoff's mother, both of whom are probably still in ignorance of the death of their children, and are still waiting and hoping. And then we talk of the impression made upon our parents and friends when the echoes of this terrible day reach their ears.

Just as the rattle of drums announces that the gates of the fortress are about to be closed for the night, we hear the tramp of soldiers and the jingle of sword-scabbar ds in the ground-floor corridor. It is a detachment of soldiers, accompanied by their officers and Captain W—, who have come to fetch away two of our comrades in order to escort them to the military prison. Young and vigorous, these two prisoners fought fiercely before they were overpowered and chained, and as the Commandant of the fortress, impatient at the duration of the struggle, took part in it, he was roughly handled. Blows struck at a superior officer constitute a crime for which the offenders are to be tried by court-martial. They know it, and we know it. But this haste on the part of the Commandant to have them in his hands—this order to transfer them at night—which is given by the Director in a trembling voice—is it a provocation or a folly? The outer court-yard is gradually and silently filling with moving shadows. Rifles, of which the barrels glitter in the starlight, are pointed towards our windows. This mute menace of a massacre in the darkness finds us indifferent, and not one of us leaves his or her place at the window. But some are ill, and all wounded and tired out by the emotions and struggles of the day, and having been without food for over twenty-six hours; and can we revolt again? As regards the court-martial, none fear, and all would be willing to be tried by it. Its verdicts are pitiless, terrible; but they are verdicts, and it is an end. To-morrow, one after the other, we shall go to the Director's cabinet, and there sign a declaration of our entire solidarity with those who are now being taken away, and that declaration, every word of which will be an insult thrown in the face of the Government, will terminate by a demand for trial by court-martial, not only of ourselves, but also of the Commandant of the fortress. This demand, as usual, will be supported by famine, by the absolute refusal of all prisoners to take any nourishment whatsoever, a process which kills the prisoners, but before which the Government, anxious to avoid the disastrous impression which these numerous deaths produce, yields, at least in appearance. Whilst we wait all is darkness, for the warders have not lit the little lamps. Through the disordered cells run strange murmurs, and passions are again aroused; while below, those who are being taken away make hasty preparations for their short journey.

I do not know them. We are about a hundred



"TIRED OUT."

prisoners, arrested in different parts of the province at different times, and in spite of our being described as "accomplices," many of us have never met or heard of each other.

A few days later, before the windows are replaced, and the dull grey cloud again presses upon us, the desire to see and know each other suggests an idea. Each prisoner, standing at the window, holds a mirror which he or she passes outside the bars. Held at an angle these pieces of glass throw back floating images of pale, phantom-like faces, many of them unknown or unrecognisable. Those who are tonight leaving the prison are, for me, not even phantoms, but only voices heard for the first time this morning, and now so soon to be silenced, by the cord of Troloff, or in some cell at Schlüsselbourg or the Cross.^[11] And yet, as I listen to these voices dying away in the dark distance, I again experience all the despair and

all the hate of the day, and my last "adieu" is choked in a sob—and when, a few moments later, the heavy outer door is closed, a great shudder as of death passes over the prison.

(To be continued.)

- [11] Troloff—the Russian public executioner. Schlüsselbourg and the Cross—names of central prisons where the prisoners, placed in small cells, are always chained. Deprived of books or tools, not allowed to see their friends, forbidden to write or receive letters, those subject to the treatment, after a few months, become mad and die.

A Slave of the Ring.

BY ALFRED BERLYN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN GÜLICH.

The Rev. Thomas Todd, curate of S. Athanasius, Great Wableton, sat at the table in his little parlour with a local newspaper in his hand and a troubled expression on his face. There was something incongruous in the appearance of the deep frown that puckered the curate's brows; for his countenance, in its normal aspect, was chubby and plump and bland, and his little grey eyes were wont to shine with a benign and even a humorous twinkle. He was not remarkably young, as curates go; but he was quite young enough to be a subject of absorbing interest to the lady members of the S. Athanasius congregation, and to find himself the frequent recipient of those marks of feminine attention which are the recognised prerequisites of the junior assistant clergy.

Two or three times, the curate raised the paper from the table and re-read the passage that was evidently troubling him; and each time he did so the puckers deepened, and his expression became more and more careworn. It would have been difficult enough for a stranger to find any clue to the cause of his agitation in the portion of the *Wableton Post and Grubley Advertiser* which the clergyman held before him; and the wonder would certainly have been increased by the discovery that the passage to which the reverend gentleman's attention was directed was nothing else than the following innocent little paragraph of news:—

"Grubley.—We are asked to state that Benotti's Original Circus, one of the oldest established and most complete in the kingdom, will give two



"A TROUBLED EXPRESSION
ON HIS FACE."

performances daily at Bounders Green during the whole of next week."

There seemed little enough in such an announcement to bring disquiet to the curate's mind. Possibly, he cherished a conscientious objection to circuses, and remembered that, as Grubley and Great Wabbleton were only three miles apart, a section of the S. Athanasius flock might be allured next week by the meretricious attraction at Bounders Green. Yet even such solicitude for the welfare of the flock of which he was the assistant shepherd seemed scarcely to account either for his obvious distress, or for the fragments of soliloquy that escaped him at every fresh study of the paper.

"Here, of all places in the world—absolute ruin—no, not on any account!"

At length, throwing down the *Post*, the curate seized his hat, started at a rapid pace for the Vicarage, and was soon seated *tête-à-tête* with his superior, an amiable old gentleman with a portly presence and an abiding faith in his assistant's ability to do the whole work of the parish unaided.

"Vicar, do you think you can spare me for the next week or so? The fact is, I am feeling the want of a change badly, and should be glad of a few days to run down to my people in Devonshire."

"My dear Todd, how unfortunate! I have just made arrangements to be away myself next week—and—and the week following. I am going up to London to stay with my old friend Canon Crozier. I was just coming to tell you so when you called. If you don't mind waiting till I return, I've no doubt we can manage to spare you for a day or two. Sorry you're not feeling well. By-the-bye, has that tiresome woman Mrs. Dunderton been worrying you? She came here yesterday about those candles, and threatened to write to the Bishop and denounce us as Popish conspirators. Couldn't you go and talk to her, and see if you can bring her to a more reasonable frame of mind?"

The talk drifted to church and parish matters, and, as soon as he decently could, the curate took his leave, looking very much more depressed and anxious than ever. As he raised the latch of the Vicarage gate, a voice, whose sound he knew only too well, called to him by name; and, turning, he beheld Miss Caroline Cope, the Vicar's daughter, pursuing him skittishly down the garden path. Miss Caroline was not young, neither was she amiable, and her appearance was quite remarkably unattractive. All this would have mattered little to the curate, but for the fact that she had lately shown for him a marked partiality that had inspired him with considerable uneasiness. At this moment, when his mind was troubled with other matters, her unwelcome appearance aroused in his breast a feeling of extreme irritation.



"DON'T RUN AWAY FROM ME."

"Don't run away from me, you naughty, unfeeling man," she began, with an elephantine attempt at archness. "I was going to ask you to take me down to the schoolrooms, but I shall have to go alone if you fly away from me like this."

Mr. Todd, fervently wishing that flying were just then among his accomplishments, felt that now, while he was in the humour, was the time to free himself, finally if possible, from these embarrassing attentions.

"I am sorry I cannot give myself the pleasure of accompanying you, Miss Cope. I have several sick persons and others to call upon in different parts of the parish, and my

duties will fully occupy the whole of my morning. I'm afraid I don't happen to be going in the direction of the schools, so I must say 'good morning' here."

And the curate raised his hat and passed on, fortifying himself with the reflection that what might in an ordinary case have been rudeness was in this instance the merest and most necessary self-defence.



"A VIPEROUS LOOK
IN HER FACE."

Miss Cope stood looking after his retreating figure with a viperous look in her face, and with a feeling of intense rage, which she promised herself to translate into action at the very earliest opportunity.

Early in the following week, the Vicar started for London, and his curate was left in sole charge of the parish. That there was something amiss with Mr. Todd was evident to all who came in contact with him, both before and after the Vicar's departure. His former geniality seemed to have quite deserted him, and he looked worried, anxious, and ill. The ladies of S. Athanasius were greatly concerned at the change, and speculated wildly as to its cause. There was one among them, however, who made no comment upon the subject, and appeared, in fact, to ignore the curate's existence altogether. Whatever might be the source of that gentleman's troubles, he had, at any rate, freed himself from the unwelcome advances of Miss Caroline Cope.

The third morning after the Vicar's departure, his assistant was sent for to visit a sick parishioner who lived just outside Great Wabbleton, on the high road to Grubley. The summons was an imperative one; but he obeyed it with a curious and unwonted reluctance. As he reached the outskirts of the town and struck into the Grubley road, his distaste for his errand seemed to increase, and he looked uneasily from side to side with a strange, furtive glance, in singular contrast to his usual steady gaze and cheerful smile. He reached his destination, however, without adventure, and remained for some time at the invalid's bedside. His return journey was destined to be more eventful. He had not proceeded far on his way back to Great Wabbleton, when a showily-dressed woman, who was passing him on the road, stopped short and regarded him with a prolonged and half-puzzled stare that ended in a sudden cry of amazed recognition. "Well—I'm blest—it's Tommy!"

She was a buxom, and by no means unattractive, person of about five-and-thirty, with an irresistibly "horsey" suggestion about her appearance and gait. As the curate's eye met hers, he turned deadly pale, and his knees trembled beneath him. That which he had dreaded for days and nights had come to pass.

"Well, I'm blest!" said the lady again, "who'd have thought of meeting you here after all these years—and in this make-up, too! But I should have known you among a thousand, all the same. Why, Tommy, you don't mean to say they've gone and made a parson of you?"

The curate was desperate. His first impulse was to deny all knowledge of the woman who stood gazing into his face with a comical expression of mingled amusement and surprise. But her next words showed him the hopelessness of such a course.

"You're not going to say you don't know me, Tommy, though it *is* nigh twenty years since we were in the ring together, and you've got into a black coat and a dog-collar. Fancy them making a parson of you; Lord, who'd have thought it! Well, I've had a leg-up, too, since then. I'm Madame Benotti now. The old lady died, and he made me missus of himself and the show. He often talks about you, and wouldn't he stare, just, to see you in this rig-out!"



"IT'S TOMMY!"

By the time, the Rev. Thomas Todd had recovered himself sufficiently to speak, and had decided that a bold course was the safest.

"I'm really glad to see you again," he said, with a shuddering thought of the fate of Ananias; "it reminds me so of the old times. But, you see, things are changed with me. You remember the old gentleman who adopted me, and took me away from the circus? Well, he sent me to school and college, and then set his heart on my becoming, as you say, a parson. I haven't forgotten the old days, but—but you see, if the people round here knew about my having been—"

"Lor' bless you, Tommy," broke in the good-natured *équestrienne*, "you don't think

I'd be so mean as to go and queer an old pal's pitch; you've nothing to fear from me; don't be afraid, there's nobody coming"—for the curate was looking distractedly round. "Well, I'm mighty glad to have seen you again, even in this get-up, but I won't stop and talk to you any longer, or one of your flock might come round the corner, and then—O my! wouldn't there be a rumpus? Ha, ha, ha!"

She laughed loudly, and the clergyman looked round again in an agony.

"Now, Tommy, good-bye to you, and good luck. But look here, before you go, just for the sake of the old times, when you were 'little Sandy,' and I used to do the bare-backed business, you'll give us a kiss, won't you, old man?"

And before the unhappy curate could prevent her, Madame Benotti had flung her muscular arms round his neck, and imprinted two sounding kisses on his cheeks.

At that fatal moment, a female figure came round the bend of the road, and, to his indescribable horror, the curate recognised the dread form of the Vicar's daughter. She had seen all—of that there could be no doubt, but she came on, passed them, and continued on her way to Grubley without the smallest sign of recognition.

"My goodness, Tommy, I hope that old cat wasn't one of your flock," remarked Madame Benotti, with real concern, as soon as she had passed. "You look as scared as if you had seen a ghost; I hope I haven't—"

But the curate waited to hear no more. With a hurried "Good-bye" he tore himself away, and made his way back to his apartments in a state bordering on desperation.



"FLUNG HER MUSCULAR ARMS ROUND HIS NECK."

Locking himself in, he paced the room for some time, groaning aloud in a perfect frenzy of misery and apprehension. Then he flung himself into his chair, buried his face in his hands, and tried to think what was best to be done. After painful and intense thought, he decided that there was nothing for it but to tell Miss Cope the whole story, and appeal to her honour to keep it to herself. But how if she chose to revenge herself upon him by refusing to believe the story, or by declining to keep it secret? He could not conceal from himself that either of these results was more than possible. In that case, there remained only one resource; and it was of so terrible a nature that the curate positively shuddered at its contemplation. But it might even come to that; and better even *that*, he told himself, than the exposure, the ridicule, and the professional ruin that must otherwise befall him.

Hour after hour passed, and he was still nerving himself for the coming interview, when a tap came at the door, and a note, left by hand, was brought in to him. He glanced at the address, and tore open the envelope with trembling hand. It contained these few words, without any sort of preliminary:—

"I think it right to give you warning that I shall take the earliest opportunity of making known your disgraceful conduct witnessed by me in the public streets this morning.

"CAROLINE COPE."

The Rev. Thomas Todd placed the letter in his pocket with an air of desperate resolve, and started forth for the Vicarage without another moment's delay. It was now or never—if he hesitated, even for an hour, he might be irretrievably lost.

The first answer brought to him by the servant who opened the Vicarage door was not encouraging. "Miss Cope was engaged, and could not see Mr. Todd." But the curate dared not allow himself to be put off so easily. "Tell Miss Cope I *must* see her on business of the most serious importance," he said; and the message was duly carried to the Vicar's daughter. That lady, after a moment's hesitation, felt herself unable any longer to resist enjoying a foretaste of her coming triumph, and ordered Mr. Todd to be admitted.

The interview that followed confirmed the curate's worst



"MISS COPE WAS ENGAGED."

Within the next day or two, it became evident to all whom he met that there was something very seriously wrong with the Rev. Thomas Todd. His manner became first morose and abstracted, and then wild and eccentric. He was seen very little in the town, and when he did appear, his haggard face, his strange, absent air, and the unmistakable evidences of the profound depression that possessed him, were the objects of general remark. Some of the more charitable expressed a confident opinion that the curate had committed a crime; others decided, with more penetration, that he was going mad. From Miss Cope he kept carefully aloof. It had been arranged at that fatal interview that their engagement should be kept secret until the return of the Vicar, whose sanction must be obtained before the affair could be made public. Miss Cope was aware that the curate had two sermons to prepare in addition to his parish duties—for he would have to preach twice on Sunday owing to her father's absence; so she did not allow his non-appearance at the Vicarage on Friday or Saturday to greatly surprise her.

If she could have seen the way in which the preparation of those sermons was proceeding, she might have found more cause for anxiety. Shut up in his room with some sheets of blank paper before him, the curate sat for hours together, staring vacantly at the wall before him, and occasionally giving vent to a loud, strange laugh. The evening of Saturday passed into night, and still he sat on, looking before him into the darkness with the same vacant stare, and uttering from time to time the same wild, hoarse chuckle.

The light of Sunday morning, streaming into the room, fell upon a weird, dishevelled figure, that still stared fixedly at the wall, and every now and then muttered strange and wholly unclerical words and phrases. Still the hours wore on, until the sun rose high in the heavens, and the bells began to ring for church. Then came a knock at the curate's door. His landlady, surprised by his neglect of the breakfast hour, had been positively alarmed when he showed no sign of heeding the approach of church time. The knock was repeated; and then the clergyman sprang to his feet and unlocked the door.

"Wait a moment," he cried, with a wild laugh. "Now come in!"

The landlady put her head in at the door, and uttered a shriek of horror and amazement. The Rev. Thomas Todd was standing on his head in the middle of the hearthrug.

"God bless us and save us—the poor gentleman's gone clean out of his wits!"

The curate's only reply was a shrill whoop, followed by an agile leap into an upright position, and a wild grab at the terrified lady, whose thirteen stone of solid matronhood he whirled round his head and tossed across the room as if it had been a feather-weight. Then, hatless and unkempt, he tore down stairs into the street, and started at a furious pace in the direction of

fears. He told Miss Cope the whole story, and she flatly refused to believe a word of it. He begged her to go herself to the circus proprietor and his wife for proof of its truth, and she simply laughed in his face. He appealed to her honour to keep the story secret, and she coldly reminded him of the duty that devolved upon her, in her father's absence, of protecting the morals of his congregation.

Then at last, beaten and baffled at all points, the unhappy curate played his final card. He offered the Vicar's daughter the best possible evidence of his sincerity by asking her to become his wife. The effect was magical. It was the first chance of a husband that had ever come to Caroline in her thirty-nine years of life, and she had an inward conviction that it would be the last. The secret she had just learnt was known to no one in the parish but herself, and so, after a brief pretence of further parley to save appearances, she jumped at the offer, and the curate left the Vicarage an engaged man. His last desperate throw had succeeded. He had saved his position and his reputation; but at what a cost he dared not even think.



"SOMETHING VERY SERIOUSLY WRONG."

S. Athanasius.

It was three minutes to eleven, and the last stroke of the clanky church-bell had just died away in a series of unmusical vibrations. The townspeople, in all the added importance of Sunday clothes, gathered in an ever-thickening knot about the gates, greeting one another before they passed on into the church. At that moment, there floated towards them on the breeze a sudden, sharp shout that rooted them to the spot in positive consternation.



**"THE REV. THOMAS TODD WAS
STANDING ON HIS HEAD."**



"SCATTERED THEM RIGHT AND LEFT."

"Houp-la! Houp-la! Hey! Hey!! Hey!!!" And in another instant the unfortunate curate, tearing down the road, had flung himself among them and scattered them right and left by a series of vigorous and splendidly-executed somersaults. With a well-directed leap, and a wild cry of "Here we are again!" he vaulted lightly over the church gate, and began to run up the path towards the door, until, at last, the horrified onlookers awoke to the realities of the situation and half-a-dozen sturdy townsmen rushed upon and seized the unhappy man. Then a woman's piercing scream was heard, and the Vicar's daughter, who had just arrived on the scene, fell fainting to the ground.

There was no service at S. Athanasius that morning, and the Rev. Thomas Todd was later on conveyed, still shouting fragments of circus dialogue, to the County Lunatic Asylum. The curate's mind had temporarily given way beneath the strain of the position in which he had found himself placed, and of the horrible future that lay before him, and his insanity had taken the form of an imaginary return to the scenes of his early life. When, some two years later, he was discharged cured, he attached himself to a mission about to start for the South African Coast, and left England without re-visiting Great Wabbleton.

Long afterwards, Miss Caroline Cope, in a burst of confidence, one day related to her special friend, Miss Lavinia Murby, the doctor's daughter, how the Rev. Thomas Todd had proposed to her a few days before his melancholy seizure.

"Ah, my dear, you see he couldn't have been right, even then," was that lady's

sympathetic comment.



“HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN RIGHT, EVEN THEN.”

People I Have Never Met.

BY SCOTT RANKIN.

ZANGWILL.



“I will show this Anglo-Jewish community that I am a man to be reckoned with. I will crush it—not it me. Then some day it will find out its mistake; and it will seize the hem of my coat, and beseech me to be its Rabbi. Then, and only then, shall we have true Judaism in London.

“The folk who compose our picture are children of the Ghetto. If they are not the children, they are at least the grandchildren of the Ghetto.”

—“CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO.”



**Joseph
Hatton on
the art of
tipping.**

Almost everything has been reduced to an art. You can learn journalism outside a newspaper, playwriting by theory, French without a master. How to succeed in literature and how not; both ways have been laid down for the student. There is scarcely an art or a habit you cannot learn in books. Etiquette, how to make up, stock-jobbing, acting, gardening, and a host of intellectual pursuits, have their rules and regulations; but the mysterious and delicate art of tipping as yet remains unexploited in the social ethics of this much-taught generation. It is high time that the proper method of giving tips should be defined, its laws codified, its many possibilities of error guarded against, and some system set forth whereby the tipper may give the greatest satisfaction to the tipped at the most moderate, if not the least, outlay in current coin of the realm. The art could be illustrated with many examples from the earliest times. Pelagia's tip to Hypatia's father was the dancer's cestus, which was jewelled with precious stones enough to stock the shop of a Bond Street jeweller of our own time. According to the truthful interpretation of the old English days which we find in the drama, the most popular method of tipping was to present your gold in a long, knitted purse, which you threw at the tippee's feet or slapped into the palm of his hand; but this system seems to have lapsed; and no fresh regulation has been established in the unwritten laws of the *douceur*, which goes back even before the days when extravagant and unwilling tips were often enforced with pincers, racks, and other imperative inventions. Monte Cristo gave wonderful tips, and Monte Carlo is lavish to this day. The genius that wrecked Panama has an open hand. Promoters of London companies know how to be liberal. Not much art is required, I believe, to distribute largess of this kind. Nor are certain classes of American aldermen difficult to deal with. The art that should be made most clear is how to pay your host's servants for your host's hospitality; how to show your gratitude to a newspaper man without hurting his *amour propre*; how to meet the requirements of the middleman of life and labour without "giving yourself away"; how to tip the parson when you are married; and, in this connection, one may remark the consolation of dying; the tippee does not trouble you at your own funeral.

**With
reference
to waiters,
deans, and
other
public
servants.**

The waiter at public dinners is a very considerate person. He assists you in every possible way he can. With every dish he practically jogs your memory; and, as an accompaniment to the dessert, he informs you that he "must now leave"; is there "anything else he can do for you?" If you are of a reflective nature you may, in a moment of abstraction, rise from your seat and shake hands with him; but if, as a right-minded citizen, you have constantly in view the universal claim upon your purse, you will thank your friendly and condescending attendant, and pay him for the services he has rendered to his employer. You may in your thoughtlessness and abstraction have jeopardised the success of the waiter's arrangements for carrying off a certain bottle of wine which he had planted for convenient removal. How much you should give him is considered to depend upon the quality of the wine which you have been fully charged for with your ticket; and this question of cuisine and wine still further complicates the difficult adjustment of the rightful claims of the attendant and what is due to your own honour, not to mention your reputation as a *gourmet*. An irreverent American, after a first experience, I conclude, of English travel, said that you are safe in tipping any Britisher below the dignity of a bishop; but a fellow-countryman, guided by this opinion, felt very unhappy when, after being shown over a famous cathedral by the dean, he slipped half-a-sovereign into his very reverend guide's hand, and received, in return, an intimation that the poor's box was in the porch. I remember on one occasion, when I

was investigating a question that called for special courtesy on the part of a public official, I was disturbed during my work with the question whether I might tip him, and, if so, to what extent. The subject almost "got on my nerves" before the inquiry, which lasted an hour or two, came to an end; at last I determined that it was a case for a tip. I gave him ten shillings. For a moment I thought I had offended him, and, remembering the dean and the poor box, was about to say, "Give it to a charity," when the official plaintively inquired if I couldn't "make it a sovereign?"

**He
discourses
concerning
the ethics
of tipping.**

Give up the idea that tipping will succumb to any agitation. So long as commodities have to be paid for in cash, and not in fine words and sweet smiles, tipping will exist. The moralist may rave against it, but ask him in what way his gratitude manifests itself when a railway porter politely relieves him of half-a-dozen bags, and deposits them in a snug corner, whilst he has barely time to take his ticket at the booking-office.

It is surely impossible to abuse the same porter if, out of a feeling of recognition for favours previously received, he leaves the belated passenger to manage the best way he can under a cartload of shawls, rugs, hat and bonnet-boxes, to attend again to your comforts. You hardly sympathise with your fellow-traveller, although he may be using very strong language against the identical porter, in whose favour, for the second time, you part with a few coppers. It is the desire to secure the comforts and commodities provided by the activity of others that will perpetuate tipping. After all, this is not limited to menials. It is given, and unscrupulously accepted by all grades of society, and by all conditions of men. I have known a company director give to a titled nobody a berth promised to someone else, because he had been familiarly addressed by His Lordship in a public place, and had been "honoured" by a few minutes' conversation. That was not, of course, a tip in the ordinary sense of the word, but it amounted, however, to the same thing. It secured a good berth to his "Excellency." And what say you of the whiskies and waters, brandies and sodas, the champagne, oysters, luncheons, and dinners to which our good city men generously ask a would-be customer? That, I suppose, is called "paving the way to a good business." I have not unfrequently heard people regret that they were unable to refuse a favour in return for a civility. That civility was most likely a dinner, or even something less. Kisses distributed by ladies in hotly-contested constituencies, the promise of a Government post, an invitation to a party, a mere familiar recognition, a penny, are all varieties which make the thing so general.

**He believes
the custom
will die out
with
human
nature.**

Wedding presents are not given without an *arrière pensée*, and at Christmas our object is mostly to please the parents. Our indignation, however, is not roused by this, because we are in the habit, I suppose, of distributing and receiving such acknowledgments ourselves. We want to suppress small tips; in fact, such as are most wanted by the recipient, whose only source of revenue they constitute in many cases. We fail to realise that, were servants well paid, "tipping" would not take the form of an imposition. Employers, especially at hotels and restaurants, either

give ridiculously low wages, or suppress these altogether, and in many establishments hire the tables to the waiters at so much a day or week for the privilege of serving. At present this custom has become so deeply rooted that it has given growth to a most perfect secret code of signs and marks by which each class of servants is informed how much he has to expect from the liberality of the inexperienced and unwary stranger. This applies especially to hotel servants, and has become the crying abuse against which we try to react. This code is not local, but has acquired an internationality which professors of Volapuk would be proud to claim for their language. I remember once an irascible old gentleman complaining bitterly against the incivility of the hotel servants, who never helped him with his traps. He found no exception to the rule except when his wanderings took him to some remote part of Scotland, where, he assured me, the "*braying of the socialist pedants had not yet been heard.*" I suspected that my friend was not over-generous, and timidly sounded him on the point. His reply confirmed my suspicion. I thereupon showed him the cause of the servants' inattention, amounting sometimes even to rudeness—a *little chalk mark on each bag*. I advised him to carefully wipe that off after leaving the hotels. The effect was most satisfactory—my friend has had no reason to complain since, at least when he got into a hotel. The position of hotel labels also serves to indicate if anything can be expected from the traveller. Of course, this is not countenanced by "mine host," who dismisses the user of such messages, but as that man is generally a wide-awake and useful rogue, there is little doubt but that he is reinstated in his functions shortly after the traveller is gone. Beggars and tramps have a similar system of conveying to their *confrères* information as to the likely reception they may expect from the occupants of the different residences on the road. They never fail to warn them against dogs and other disagreeable surprise or dangers, should they by some unaccountable absent-mindedness forget that there is

such a thing as the eighth commandment. In conclusion, *pourboire*, *buona mancia*, *backshish*, tipping or bribery, was born with man, and will only die out with him.

**Giuseppe
of the Cafe
Doney, at
Florence:
his
experience.**

Ah! Milor, what do I think of "teeping?" What would become of me without it? In some forty or fifty years I shall be a rich man, and perhaps keep a *café* myself, thanks to the benevolence and generosity of the American and English milors. At first I was a cabman, but in Italy no one gives the cabman a *pourboire*; so my friends said, "Ah! Giuseppe, you must make money somehow. Become a waiter, and you will grow rich." So they took me to our padrone, and he made me a waiter, and I am growing rich on "teeps." But it is not my own compatriots, Milor, who make me rich. When I attend one of them, he will only give me ten centimes (a penny), and if I attend two of them they will give me fifteen centimes between them. But the English and Americans will sometimes give me fifty or a hundred centimes at a time. But, alas! that happens very seldom. When I am in luck I save two hundred centimes a day (1s. 8d.), and shall, in a great many years, have a *café* of my own. Perhaps Milor will assist? *Grazie*.

**The head
waiter at
the
— sets
forth his
views.**

Instead of complaining against tipping, the public should oblige the employers to pay their servants more liberally. In modern restaurants—and I suppose the custom has come from Paris—waiters have to pay the employers sums varying from one to four shillings a day according to the number and position of tables they serve. Their work averages from fourteen to sixteen hours a day. It begins at eight, and sometimes long after midnight they are still at work. Out of their earnings they have to pay all breakages and washing, and, for the thirty to thirty-five shillings they earn a week, they have to put up, from a class of customers, with patience and a perpetual smile, more abuse than one in any other ten men would stand. It not unfrequently happens that a waiter would do without it rather than accept a tip which assumes the form of an insult. We look upon it as a remuneration due to us, and, after trying to satisfy the client, we do not see why he should think it an unbearable nuisance, and treat the recipient with contempt. In many cases, after exacting the most constant attention, and heaping unmerited abuse on the irresponsible waiter, the client who has most likely spent on himself enough to keep a family a whole week, grudges the sixpence he has to give the attendant, and makes him feel it by throwing the coppers down, accompanying the action by an insulting remark. Like all men whose business it is to minister to the comfort of others, many among us are very shrewd observers, and can tell at a glance what treatment we may expect from certain customers, and we behave accordingly. We are seldom mistaken in our judgment. Experience has taught us that the most generous, and at the same time most gentlemanly, "tippers" are the Israelitish Anglo-German financiers. There is a difference between them and the young spendthrift who inconsiderately throws away his money. No, sir, the Anglo-German banker, orders, goes carefully through the account, and then gives his money liberally. After him comes the Russian. The Englishman, who is next best, is closely followed by the French and German.

**His opinion
of
Americans
as tippers.**

The American is nowhere. It is a mistaken idea to believe that he is generous. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule, but the majority of them come out here just to see the sights, and talk about them on their return. A certain sum is laid aside for the purpose, and I am sure they contrive to make economies upon it. The Americans are, besides, disagreeable to serve. They never lose the opportunity of making disparaging comparisons between their country and the old world. Our restaurants are country inns compared to theirs, their waiters are smarter, their services of better class, our cooking is miles behind theirs, and as to concoction of drinks, of course we have to take a back seat. We are also very slow. A steak, in Chicago, for instance, is cooked in about the fifteenth of the time required here. When it comes to paying, the American finds that everything is also dearer over here; gives very little or nothing to *that inattentive waiter*, threatens to lodge a complaint against him, and goes away satisfied that everyone is impressed by the grandeur of the Great Republic as represented by himself, one of its worthy citizens.

**Of
Scotchmen**

In England, the Scotch are the least liberal. In Scotland, waiters and hotel servants are paid. An attempt to introduce in Edinburgh the continental system failed most ignominiously in 1886, and the

and millionaires. enterprising *restaurateur* had to revert to the local system, and replace all the former waiters, who ran back to London rather than be reduced to the dire necessity of going into the workhouse. Young men, as a rule, are more generous than elderly people, and the fair sex is, in general, very stingy. A gentleman accompanied by a lady, if she is only an acquaintance, is sure to tip generously, *pour la galerie*, although he may look as if he wanted to accompany every penny by a kick. But when the same person dines with his wife or sister, the remuneration is as small as decency can permit. When a waiter spots such a relation between a party of diners, he generally tries to escape the obligation of offering them a table. At the large restaurants we gauge the diners' liberality very frequently at one glance, and in any case form an accurate opinion of him by the way he orders his *menu*. We know whether we have to do with a gentleman or a cad, and whether his subsequent parsimoniousness is caused by cussedness or simply ignorance of the customs of such establishments, and we treat him in consequence. It is pitiful sometimes to see all the ruses employed by well-meaning people, unwilling to be thought unaccustomed to the life of a large restaurant, and my advice to such persons would be to remain natural rather than become ridiculous. The manner in which the tip is given varies according to the nationality and character of the donor. The most ostentatious among these is the South American millionaire, whose gift varies according to the number of people present. As a rule, the wealthy man is not generous.

A commissionaire can tell people's dispositions at sight. I can say at first sight whether a person is of a kindly disposition, for I would rather assist such a person and get nothing than one who makes me feel the weight of his liberality. The amount a man may make depends a great deal on his wits. To forestall a gentleman's wishes, give him the necessary information, and to the point; to assist him when assistance is most needed, and not before, is what is most appreciated. When in a theatre I see a couple occupying a bad seat, when better ones are vacant, I make the suggestion, and would certainly be astonished if the gentleman did not acknowledge the hint. When the working classes do not syndicate they have to accept wages so ridiculously low that they are obliged to find some means of increasing their earnings. But will it ever be possible to suppress the "evil"? Allow me to doubt it. The thing is, therefore, to prevent tipping taking the form of an imposition. This can only be done by paying good wages.

Barr gives the straight tip. A native of Cuba once said to me, with an air of proud superiority, "We have the yellow fever *always* in Havana." I was unable to make any such boastful claim for North America, and so the Cuban rightly thought he had the advantage of me. They think nothing of the yellow fever in Havana, but when the malady is imported into Florida the people of that peninsula become panic-stricken. The yellow fever in the Southern States strikes terror. It seems to be worse in its effects when it enters the States than it is where they always have it. So it is with tipping. It is always present in Europe in a mild form, but periodically tipping swoops down upon the United States, and its effects are dreadful to contemplate. If tipping ever becomes epidemic in America, the unfortunate citizens will have to leave, and seek a cheaper country, for the haughty waiter in an American hotel scorns the humbler coins of the realm, and accepts nothing less than half a dollar. Happily, tipping has, up to date, been more or less of an exotic in America, but I have grave fears that the Chicago Exhibition, attracting as it does so many incurable tippers from Europe, will cause the disease to take firm root in the States, and entail years of suffering hereafter.

Summing up. I do not agree with the member of the club who holds in one paragraph that Scotsmen are mean in the giving of tips. Speaking as a Scotsman myself, I admit that we like to go the whole distance from Liverpool Street to Charing Cross for our penny. We desire to get the worth of our bawbee. And it is a cold day when we don't. But it must be remembered that a Scotsman is conscientious, and he knows that tipping is an indefensible vice, so he discourages it as much as possible, being compelled by custom to fall in with it. Then, again, the man who claims that Americans are not liberal doesn't know what he is talking about. The trouble with the American is that he does not know the exact amount to give, and that bothers him, and causes him to curse the custom in choice and varied language. Speaking now as an American, I will give a tip right here. If Conan Doyle, or George Meredith, or some author in whom Americans have confidence, would get out a book entitled, say, "The Right Tip, or Tuppence on the Shilling," giving exactly the correct sum to pay on all occasions, Americans would

buy up the whole edition and bless the author. I think Americans are altogether too lavish with their tips, and thus make it difficult for us poorer people, whom nobody tips, to get along. A friend of mine, on leaving one of the big London hotels, changed several five pound notes into half-crowns, and distributed these coins right and left all the way from his rooms to the carriage, giving one or more to every person who looked as if he would accept. He met no refusals, and departed amidst much *éclat*. He thought he had done the square thing, as he expressed it, but I looked on the action as corrupting and indefensible. He deserves to have his name blazoned here as a warning, but I shall not mention it, merely contenting myself by saying that he was formerly a United States senator, was at that time Minister to Spain, and is at the present moment President of the World's Fair.

The portrait of Mrs. Henniker, which appeared in *The Idler* for May —“LIONS IN THEIR DENS”: V. THE LORD LIEUTENANT AT DUBLIN CASTLE—was from a photograph taken by Messrs. WERNER AND SON, OF DUBLIN.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE IDLER MAGAZINE, VOLUME III., JULY 1893 ***

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