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THE

STRAND MAGAZINE

An Illustrated Monthly

Vol. 5, Issue. 27.

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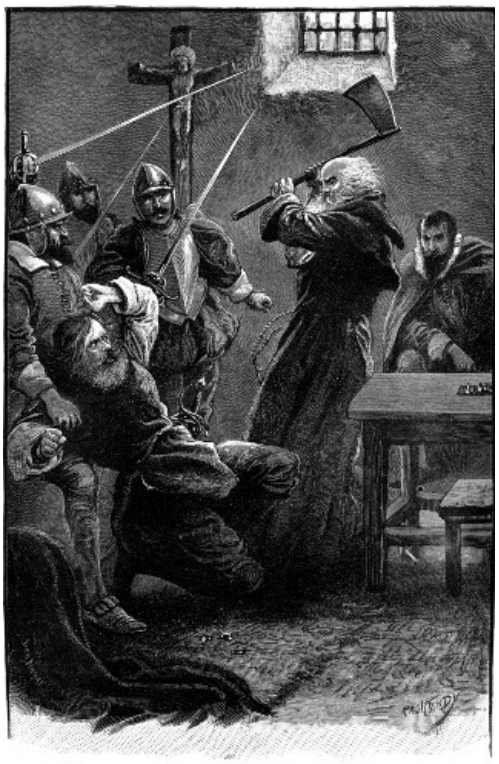

"By Heaven," cried Ruy Lopez, "the Duke shall finish his Game!"
(*A Game of Chess.*)

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From the French.

I.

King Phillip II. was playing at chess in the Escurial Palace. His opponent was Ruy Lopez, a humble priest, but a chess player of great skill. Being the King's particular favourite, the great player was permitted to kneel upon a brocaded cushion, whilst the courtiers grouped about the King were forced to remain standing in constrained and painful attitudes.

It was a magnificent morning. The air was perfumed with the orange groves, and the violet curtains of the splendid hall hardly softened the burning rays which streamed in through the windows. The blaze of living light seemed scarcely in harmony with the King's gloomy countenance. His brow was black as night, and from time to time he bent his eyes impatiently upon the door. The nobles stood in silence, darting meaning glances at each other. It was easily to be discerned that some event of great importance weighed upon the spirits of the assembly. No one paid any attention to the chess-board except Ruy Lopez, who, as he moved the pieces,

hesitated between the temptation of checkmating his opponent and the deference due to his King. The silence was unbroken except by the sound made by the players moving their pieces.

Suddenly the door opened, and a man of rude and savage aspect advanced into the hall, and, presenting himself before the King, stood waiting his commands to speak. This man's appearance was anything but prepossessing, and on his entrance the nobles, as if animated with one thought, shrank back with contempt and loathing, as if some unclean animal had entered into their midst. His massive, herculean figure was clad in a doublet of black leather, and his face, in which could be seen no trace of intelligence, expressed, on the contrary, nothing but vileness and villainy; a great scar, running right across his face and losing itself in a bushy beard, added still further to the natural brutality of his countenance.

An electric thrill ran through the assembly. The new comer was Fernando Calavar, high executioner of Spain.

"Is he dead?" asked the King, in an imperious tone.

"No, sire," replied Calavar, bowing low.

The King frowned.

"Great Sovereign of Spain," Calavar continued, "the prisoner has claimed his privileges, and I cannot take proceedings against a man whose blood belongs to the noblest in Spain, without having a more imperative order from your Majesty," and he bowed again. [Pg 220]

The nobles, who had listened with great attention to these words, broke into a murmur of approbation as the man finished speaking. The proud Castilian blood rushed like a stream of lava through their veins, and dyed their faces crimson. The manifestation became general. Young Alonza D'Ossuna openly asserted his opinion by putting on his plumed cap. His bold example was followed by the majority of the nobles, and their lofty nodding crests seemed to proclaim with defiance that their masters protested in favour of the privilege, which the hidalgos of Spain have always enjoyed, of covering their heads before their Sovereign.

The King gave a furious start, and striking his fist violently upon the chess-board, scattered the chessmen in all directions.

"He has been judged by our Royal Court of Justice," he cried, "and condemned to death. What does the traitor demand?"

"Sire!" replied the executioner, "he asks permission to die upon the block, and also to pass the three last hours of his life with a priest."

"Ah, that is granted!" replied Philip, in a tone of relief. "Is not our confessor in the prison according to our orders?"

"Yes, sire!" said Calavar, "the holy man is there; but the Duke refuses to see St. Diaz de Silva. He says he cannot receive absolution from anyone below the dignity of a Bishop. Such is the privilege of a noble condemned to death for high treason."

"Yes, these are our rights!" boldly interrupted the fiery D'Ossuna; "and we claim from the King our cousin's privileges."

This demand acted as a signal.

"Our rights and the King's justice are inseparable," cried Don Diego de Tarraxas, Count of Valence, an old man of gigantic stature, clothed in armour, holding in his hands the bâton of Great Constable of Spain, and leaning upon his long Toledo blade.

"Our rights and our privileges!" cried the nobles, repeating the words like an echo. Their audacity made the King start with fury from his ebony throne.

"By the bones of Campeador!" he cried. "By the soul of St. Jago! I have sworn neither to eat nor sleep until the bleeding head of Don Gusman lies before me. As I have sworn, so shall it be. But Don Tarraxas has said well, 'The King's justice confirms his subjects' rights.' My Lord Constable, where does the nearest Bishop reside?"

"Sire, I have more to do with camp than with the Church," the Constable replied, somewhat abruptly. "Your Majesty's chaplain, Don Silvas, is present: he can tell you better than I."

Don Silvas began to speak in trepidation.

"WHAT DOES THE TRAITOR DEMAND?"

"Sire," he said, humbly, "the Bishop of Segovia is an official of the King, but he who filled the duty died last week, and the parchment which names his successor is still upon the Council table, and is yet to be submitted to the Pope's seal." [Pg 221]

At these words a joyous smile hovered about D'Ossuna's lips. This joy was but natural, for the young man was of the blood of the Gusmans, and his cousin, the condemned prisoner, was his dearest friend. The King perceived the smile, and his eye shot forth lightning.

"We are the King!" he said, gravely, with the calm which presages a storm; "our Royal person must be no butt for raillery. This sceptre appears light, my lords, but he who ridicules it shall be crushed thereby as with a block of iron. I believe that our holy father the Pope is somewhat indebted to us, so that we do not fear his displeasure at the step which we are about to take. Since the King of Spain can make a Prince, he can also make a Bishop. Rise, then, Don Ruy Lopez. I create you Bishop of Segovia. Rise, I command you, and take your rank in the Church."

The courtiers stood dumfounded.

Don Ruy Lopez rose mechanically. His head was whirling, and he stammered as he strove to speak.

"If your Majesty pleases——" he began.

"Silence, my Lord Bishop!" replied the King. "Obey your Sovereign. The formalities of your installation shall be performed another day; our subjects will not fail to acknowledge our wishes in this affair. Bishop of Segovia, go with Calavar to the condemned man's cell. Give absolution to his soul, and in three hours leave his body to the executioner's axe. As for you, Calavar, I will await you here; you will bring us the traitor's head. Let justice be accomplished."

Then Philip turned to Ruy Lopez.

"I give you my signet ring," he said, "to show the Duke as a token of the truth of your story."

The executioner left the chamber, followed by Ruy Lopez.

"Well, gentlemen," said the King, turning to the others, "do you still doubt the King's justice?"

But the nobles answered not a word.

The King, having taken his seat, made a sign to one of his favourites to place himself before the chess-board, and Don Ramirez, Count of Biscay, accordingly knelt down upon the velvet cushion.

"With a game of chess, gentlemen," said the King, smiling, "and your company, I cannot fail to make the time pass agreeably. Let no one leave the chamber until Calavar's return. We cannot spare a single one of you."

With these ironical words, Philip commenced a game with Don Ramirez, whilst the nobles, almost dropping with fatigue, resumed the positions about their august master which they had occupied at the beginning of this story.

II.

Calavar, leading the way, conducted the new Bishop to the condemned man's cell. Ruy Lopez walked like one in a dream. Was he awake, or not? He hardly knew. At the bottom of his heart he cursed the King and his Court. He understood perfectly that he had become Bishop of Segovia, but he felt deeply at what a price he had bought his dignity. What had Don Gusman done that he should be thus sacrificed? Don Gusman, the best chess player in Spain! He thought of all this as he proceeded over the marble flags which led to the State prison, and as he thought he prayed that the ground would open and swallow him up.

Don Gusman was pacing impatiently up and down his narrow cell with a hurried step that

betrayed the feverish anxiety of his mind. The cell was furnished with a massive table and two heavy wooden stools, the floor being covered with coarse, thick mats. Shut out from all the noises of the outer world, here silence reigned supreme. A crucifix, roughly carved, was fixed to the wall in the niche of a high window, which was carefully barred with iron. Except for this image of resignation and mercy, the walls were bare. Well might this dungeon serve as antechamber to the tomb.

As Ruy Lopez entered the cell a sudden burst of sunshine flooded the walls as if in bitter mockery of him who was soon to see it no more.

The Duke saluted the new Bishop with great courtesy. They regarded each other, and exchanged in that look a thousand words which they alone could understand. Ruy Lopez felt the painfulness of his position deeply, and the Duke understood his embarrassment. Their thoughts were both the same, that in the condemnation of one of the principal favourites of the King an innocent life was threatened! The proofs of the crime imputed to the Duke were grave; the most important being a despatch written in Don Gusman's hand to the French Court, in which he unfolded a scheme for assassinating Philip II. This had sufficed to condemn him.

Don Gusman, strong in his innocence, had kept a rigorous silence when brought before his judges, and the accusation not being denied, sentence of death was passed upon him. Don Gusman since his incarceration had not altered. He had braved the storm, and looked upon death with an unmoved countenance. His last hours had no terrors for him. If his forehead was overshadowed, if his steps were agitated and his breathing hurried, it was because there rose before his eye the image of his betrothed, Dona Estella, who, ignorant of her lover's fate, was waiting for him in her battlemented castle on the banks of the Guadalquiver. If he felt weak at this fatal moment, and if a pang shot through his heart, it was because his thoughts were of her who was to him the dearest thing in all the world. [Pg 222]

"RUY LOPEZ ENTERED THE CELL."

Ruy Lopez had not entered alone. Calavar was at his side; and it was he who announced to the Duke the King's decision and reply. Ruy Lopez confirmed the executioner's words, and the Duke, falling on his knees before the new Bishop, asked his blessing, then turning to Calavar with a gesture of authority, he dismissed him, saying:—

"In three hours I shall be at your disposal."

Calavar obeyed him and went out, and the Duke and Bishop were left alone.

Ruy Lopez was trembling with nervousness, whilst Don Gusman's face wore a calm and serene expression. He took the Bishop's hand, and wrung it warmly. There was a pause. The Duke was the first to break the silence.

"We have met before in happier circumstances," he said, smiling.

"It is true," stammered Ruy Lopez, who, pale and agitated, resembled rather the penitent than the confessor.

"Much happier," repeated the Duke, absently. "Do you remember, when you played your celebrated game of chess with Paoli Boy, the Sicilian, in the presence of the King and Court, that it was upon my right arm that the King leant?" Then after a pause he continued: "Do you remember also, father, those words of Cervantes, 'Life is a game of chess?' I have forgotten the exact place in which the passage occurs, but its meaning is, that upon earth men play different rôles. There are, as in chess, kings, knights, soldiers, bishops, according to their birth, fate and fortune; and when the game is over death lays them all as equals in the tomb, even as we gather

together the chessmen into a box."

"Yes, I remember those words of Don Quixote," replied Don Lopez, astonished at this singular conversation, "and I remember also Sancho's reply: 'That however good the comparison was, it was not so new that he had not heard it before.'"

"I was your favourite pupil, even your rival," said the Duke, without appearing to hear Don Lopez.

"It is true," cried the Bishop. "You are a great master of the game, and I have been often proud of having such a pupil. But now, on your knees, my son."

They knelt down together, and there before the crucifix Don Gusman made confession to Ruy Lopez, who as he listened could hardly restrain his tears.

When the Duke had finished, two hours after—for the confession under the Church seal was long and touching—the Bishop blessed the prisoner, and gave him absolution. The face of Don Gusman, as he rose, was calm and resigned. [Pg 223]

But there remained still an hour to wait.

"This delay is torture," cried the Duke. "Why do they not cut off the prisoners at once, instead of stretching their souls upon such a rack of agony? An eternity of suffering is in each of these minutes." And the prisoner began to walk impatiently to and fro, with his eyes constantly bent upon the door. The Duke's firmness was shaken by the thought of that weary hour of waiting. Ruy Lopez had fulfilled his duty. The prisoner's soul was purified, and now the priest could become the friend.

As Don Lopez heard Don Gusman utter this exclamation, and saw his face grow white, he understood what agony he was undergoing, and felt at once that something must be done to divert his thoughts. But in vain he racked his brain for an idea. He could think of nothing. What could he propose to a man about to die? For such as he, the flower has no longer perfume, woman has no longer beauty. Then suddenly a thought flashed across his brain.

"How would a game of chess—" he began, timidly.

"An excellent idea!" cried Don Gusman, recalled to himself by this singular proposal. "A farewell game of chess."

"You consent?"

"THEY KNELT DOWN TOGETHER."

"Most readily; but where are the chessmen, my friend?"

"Am I not always provided with the instruments of war?" said Ruy Lopez, smiling. Then he pulled forward the two stools and set out upon the table a microscopic set of chessmen. "Our Lady pardon me!" he continued. "I often pass my spare time in the confessional in working out some problem."

The chessmen being set out, the players took their seats, and were soon absorbed in the excitement of the game.

This strange contest, between a priest and a condemned prisoner, made a picture worthy of the brush of Rembrandt or Salvator Rosa. The light which streamed from the arched windows fell upon the pale, noble features of Don Gusman, and upon the venerable head of Ruy Lopez.

The emotions of the two players were very different. Ruy Lopez played with a preoccupation which was not usual to him, and which rendered him much inferior to his ordinary strength. Don Gusman, on the contrary, stimulated by excitement, played with more than his ordinary skill. At this moment his noble Castilian blood did not fail him, for never had the Duke given better proof of the clearness of his mind. Such a flash of intellect must be compared to the last flickers of the failing lamp, or to the last song of the dying swan.

Don Gusman suddenly attacked his adversary with an impetuosity which nearly gained him a certain victory; but Ruy Lopez, recalled to himself by this vigorous effort, defended himself bravely. The game became more and more complicated. The Bishop strove to gain a mate which he saw, or believed he saw, at hand, whilst Don Gusman played with the eagerness of certain victory. Everything was forgotten, and time passed unnoticed. The chess-board was their universe, and a life of anxiety was in each move.

The minutes, the quarters, the half-hours flew by, and the fatal hour arrived at last.

A distant sound struck on their ears; it grew nearer, it increased, and the door swinging open gave admittance to Calavar and his assistants, who advanced into the cell with torches in their hands. They were armed with swords, and two of them bore the block, covered with a black cloth, [Pg 224]

on which lay an axe.

"THE GAME BECAME MORE AND MORE COMPLICATED."

The torches were placed in the receptacle prepared for them, whilst one of the men scattered cedar sawdust on the floor. All this was the work of a moment, while the executioner stood waiting for the prisoner.

As Calavar entered, Ruy Lopez started to his feet, in a tremor of alarm, but the Duke did not move. His eyes were fixed upon the chess-board. It was his turn to play. Calavar, seeing his abstracted gaze, advanced to the Duke's side and placed his hand upon his shoulder.

"Come," he said.

The prisoner shuddered as if he had trodden upon a serpent.

"I must finish this game," he said, imperiously.

"It is impossible," Calavar replied.

"But, fellow, the game is mine! I can force mate in a few moves. Let me play it out."

"I cannot. It is impossible," repeated the executioner.

"Are the three hours gone already?"

"The last stroke has just struck. We must obey the King."

The assistants, who had until then stood leaning on their swords, came forward at these words.

The Duke was sitting against the wall, under the high window, with the table between him and Calavar. He started to his feet.

"I shall not move until the game is over. In half an hour my head shall be at your disposal."

"My lord," replied Calavar, "I respect you deeply, but I cannot grant you this request. I answer for your life with mine."

Don Gusman made a gesture of impatience, and pulling off his diamond rings, he threw them at the executioner's feet. "I mean to finish the game," he said, carelessly.

The jewels sparkled as they rolled and settled in the dust.

"My orders are imperative," cried Calavar, "and you must pardon us, noble Duke, if we have to use force; but the King's orders and the law of Spain must be carried out. Obey, then, and do not waste your last moments in a useless struggle. Speak to the Duke, my lord Bishop. Tell him to submit to his fate."

Ruy Lopez's reply was as prompt as it was decisive. He seized the axe which lay upon the block and swung it with both hands above his head.

"By Heaven!" he cried, "the Duke *shall* finish his game!"

Scared by the gesture which accompanied these words, Calavar drew back in such a fright that he stumbled and fell back on his companions. The swords flashed from their scabbards, and the band prepared for attack. But Ruy Lopez, who appeared to have put forth the strength of a Hercules, cast upon the ground his heavy wooden stool.

"The first of you who passes this limit dies!" he cried in a loud voice. "Courage, Duke!—to the attack! There are only four of these miscreants. The last desire of your Grace shall be gratified, were I to lose my life in the attempt. And you, wretched man, beware how you lay a finger upon a Bishop of the Church. Down with your swords and respect the Lord's anointed!" And Ruy Lopez

continued to hurl forth, in a jargon of Spanish and Latin, one of those formulas of excommunication and malediction which at that period acted so strongly upon the masses of the people. [Pg 225]

The effect was prompt. The men stood rooted to the spot with terror, whilst Calavar, thinking that to kill a Bishop without a sealed order from the King was to run the risk of putting his life in jeopardy in this world and his soul in the next, avowed himself vanquished. He knew not what to do next. To rush with the news to the King, who was waiting impatiently for Don Gusman's head, was only to expose himself. To attack the prisoner and the priest would be too hazardous, for Ruy Lopez was a man of no mean strength. The position of affairs was critical. At last he decided to take the easiest way out of the difficulty—to wait.

"Will you promise me faithfully to give yourself up in half an hour?" he demanded of Don Gusman.

"I promise," replied the Duke.

"Play on, then," said the executioner.

The truce being thus concluded, the players returned to their seats and their game, whilst Calavar and his companions, forming themselves into a circle, stationed themselves round the two players. Calavar, who was himself a chess player, looked on with interest, and could not prevent himself from involuntarily considering each move the players made.

Don Gusman looked up for an instant upon the circle of faces which surrounded him, but his *sang froid* did not abandon him.

"Never have I played in the presence of such a noble company!" he cried. "Bear witness, rascals, that at least once in my life I have beaten Don Lopez." Then he returned to the game with a smile upon his lips. The Bishop gripped the handle of the axe which he still held in his hand.

"If I were only sure of escaping from this tigers' den," he thought, "I would break every head of the four of them."

III.

If three hours had dragged in the prisoner's cell, they had not passed more quickly in the Royal chamber of King Philip.

The King had finished his game with Don Ramirez de Biscay, and the nobles, still compelled from etiquette to remain standing, appeared almost ready to drop with fatigue, rendered still more painful from the weight of their armour.

Don Tarraxas stood motionless, with closed eyes like one of those iron figures which ornamented the castles of the savage Goths. Young D'Ossuna, with drooping head, stood propped against a marble pillar, whilst King Philip strode impatiently about the apartment, only stopping at intervals to listen to some imaginary noise. According to the superstitious custom of the age, the King knelt for a few moments at the foot of a figure of the Virgin placed upon a porphyry pedestal to pray the Madonna to pardon him the deed of blood which was about to take place. Silence reigned, for no one, whatever his rank might be, dared to speak before his Sovereign without his commands.

As the King's eyes saw the last grain of sand fall in the hour-glass he uttered an exclamation of joy.

"The traitor dies!" he cried.

An almost inaudible murmur ran through the assembly.

"The hour is passed, Count of Biscay," said Philip, turning to Don Ramirez, "and with it your enemy."

"My enemy, sire?" asked Ramirez, affecting surprise.

"Why do you repeat my words, Count?" replied the King. "Were you not a rival to Don Gusman in the affections of Dona Estella, and can rivals be friends? Dona Estella shall be yours. This young girl will bring you her beauty and her fortune. I have not spoken of this to our Council, but my Royal word is pledged. If the ingratitude of Sovereigns is ever spoken of before you, Count, you will be able to reply that we did not forget the true friend of the King and of Spain who discovered the plot and the correspondence of Don Gusman with France."

Don Ramirez de Biscay seemed to listen to the King with uneasiness. He kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, as if he disliked to be thus praised in public. Then he made an effort to reply.

"Sire!" he said, "it was with great repugnance that I fulfilled such a painful duty"—he hesitated, and then was silent.

Tarraxas gave a slight start, whilst D'Ossuna struck sharply the pommel of his sword with his iron glove.

"Before Dona Estella shall belong to this man," thought D'Ossuna, "I will have vengeance or perish in the attempt. Tomorrow shall be the day of my revenge."

The King continued:—

"Your zeal, Don Ramirez, and your devotion must be rewarded. The saviour of our throne, and perhaps of our dynasty, merits a particular gift. This morning I ordered you to make out some *lettres-patentes*, which confer upon you the rank of Duke and Governor of Valence. Are these ready to be signed?" [Pg 226]

Don Ramirez grew pale with pleasure. He shook like an aspen and his eyes grew dim. But the King made an impatient movement, and the Count, drawing a roll of parchment hastily from his breast, presented it on his knees to the King.

"My first public duty to-day shall be to sign these papers," said the King. "The executioner has already punished treason; it is now time for the King to recompense fidelity."

The King unrolled the parchment and began to read. As he read, his face became convulsed with fury, and his eyes shot forth flames of wrath.

"By my father's soul!" he shouted; "what do I behold?"

IV.

The game of chess was finished. Don Gusman had beaten Ruy Lopez, and his triumph was complete. He rose to his feet.

"I am now, as ever, ready to obey the wishes of my King," he said to Calavar.

The executioner understood him, and began to prepare the block. Whilst this was being done Don Gusman advanced towards the crucifix, and said in a firm voice:—

"Oh, Heaven! may this unjust and rash act which is about to take place fall upon the head of him who is the instigator of this treachery; but let not my blood recoil upon the head of my King."

"WHAT DO I BEHOLD?"

Ruy Lopez, crouching in a corner of the cell, and burying his face in his mantle, began to recite the prayers for the dying.

Calavar approached Don Gusman, and putting his hand upon the Duke's shoulder began to loosen his ruff. Don Gusman shrank back from the contact.

"Nothing that belongs to you, except this axe, shall touch a Gusman," he said, taking off his ruff himself and placing his head upon the block. "Strike!" he added, "I am ready!"

The executioner raised the axe—the King's justice was at last to be satisfied, when shouts, rapid footsteps and confused voices arrested the sweep of the executioner's arm.

The door gave way under the united efforts of a troop of armed men, and D'Ossuna, rushing into the cell, threw himself between the executioner and his victim. He was just in time.

"He lives!" cried Tarraxas.

"He is saved!" repeated D'Ossuna. "My beloved cousin, I never hoped to have seen you alive again. God in His mercy has not let the innocent perish for the guilty. God be praised!"

"God be praised!" echoed all the spectators, and louder than the rest rang out the voice of Ruy Lopez.

"You have arrived in time, my friend," said Don Gusman to his cousin; "but now I shall have no longer strength to die," and he sank back fainting on the block. The shock had been too much for him.

Ruy Lopez seized the Duke in his arms, and, followed by all the nobles, bore him along the passages to the King's apartment. When Don Gusman opened his eyes he found himself in the midst of a circle of his friends, amongst which stood the King, looking down upon him with an expression of joy. [Pg 227]

Don Gusman could hardly believe his senses. From the axe and the block he had passed to the King's apartment. He did not understand why this change had taken place. He did not know that Don Ramirez, in giving his *lettres-patentes* to the King to sign, had, in his agitation, given him instead a paper containing a plot in which he schemed to get rid for ever of Don Gusman, a detested rival, and one of the firmest supporters of the throne. He was ignorant of all that had passed, and did not know how he had escaped from the clutches of the executioner. It was some time before everything could be made clear to him.

Three days afterwards, at the same hour as Gusman's miraculous delivery, Calavar beheaded Don Ramirez, Count of Biscay, traitor and false witness. Don Gusman was overwhelmed with congratulations on all sides. King Philip grasped him cordially by his hand.

"Gusman," he said, "I have been very unjust. I can never forgive my folly."

"Sire," replied the Duke, "let us speak of it no more. Such words spoken by my King are worth a thousand lives."

But the King continued.

"I desire," he said, "that henceforth, in commemoration of your almost miraculous deliverance, you carry upon your escutcheon a silver axe emblazoned on an azure chess-board. This month we shall celebrate your marriage with Dona Estella. The marriage shall take place in our Escurial Palace."

Then he added, turning to Ruy Lopez:—

"I believe that the Church will possess a good servant in its new Bishop. You shall be consecrated Lord Prelate, with a scarlet robe, enriched with diamonds; that will be the recompense of your game of chess with Don Gusman."

"Sire," replied Don Lopez, "never before this day have I been satisfied to be checkmated."

The King smiled, and the courtiers followed his example.

"Now, my lords," continued Philip, "we invite you all to our Royal banquet. Let Don Gusman's seat be placed upon our right, and the Bishop of Segovia's on our left. Give me your arm, Don Gusman."

Illustrated Interviews

[Pg 228]

XXL—MR. AND MRS. KENDAL.

If one had waited for a few months, "The Kendals" would have been getting settled in their new home in Portland Place. But, then, the happiest associations are always centred around the old, and the pleasantest and frequently the dearest recollections are gathered about the familiar. That is why I went to them once more to their home of many years at 145, Harley Street.

It would be difficult to realize a woman of more striking characteristics than she who was for so many years known as "Madge" Robertson, and notwithstanding a very important visit one morning in August twenty-three years ago to St. Saviour's, Plymouth Grove, Manchester, when she became the wife of Mr. William Hunter Grimston, there are many who still know and speak of her by her happily-remembered maiden name. From that day husband and wife have never played apart—they have remained sweethearts on the stage and lovers in their own home. At night—the footlights; by day—home and children. Mrs. Kendal assured me that neither her eldest daughter, Margaret, nor Ethel, nor Dorothy—the youngest—nor "Dorrie," who is now at Cambridge, nor Harold, a "Marlborough" boy, would ever go on the stage. Home, husband, and children—home, wife, and children, are the embodiment of the life led by the Kendals.

THE DRAWING-ROOM
From a Photo by Elliott & Fry.

Together with Mr. Kendal we sat down in the drawing-room, and were joined for a moment by Miss Grimston, a quiet, unaffected young girl, who looked as though she could never rid herself of a smile, either in her eyes or about her mouth—a young maiden who suggested "sunshine." She was carrying Victoria, a pet dog. The mother's whole thoughts seemed to go out to her daughter.

"Our Jubilee dog," she cried. "I bought her on Jubilee Day, and, curiously enough, Mr. Kendal bought one too, neither of us telling the other we were going to make such canine purchases."

Then, when Miss Grimston had left the room, her mother turned to me quietly, and said:—

"The image of my brother Tom. The same hair, the same expression of eyes, the same kind and loving ways. I think he lives in my girl. Come with me and you shall see his portrait."

It hung in Miss Grimston's boudoir—an apartment the walls of which were decorated with pictures of the Comédie-Française Company, the original designs for the dresses in "A Wife's Secret"; while over the mantel-board are Mr. and Mrs. Kendal in "The Ironmaster," and many family portraits are about. [Pg 229]

MISS GRIMSTON'S BOUDOIR.
From a Photo by Elliott & Fry.

"It is so amusing to hear people talk and write about my eldest brother Tom and me playing together as children," she said. "My mother was married when she was eighteen, and my brother was born when she was nineteen; I was born when she was forty-eight, and was her twenty-second child! So my brother was a grown man with a moustache when I knew him. I was brought up with his two children—little Tom and Maude, my own nephew and niece."

What a delightful story it was! Little Madge Robertson used to dress up as a policeman and take Maude into custody before Tom, the younger, as the judge. And this was the trial:—

"What is the prisoner charged with, constable?" asked the judge.

"Murder, my lord," replied the representative of law and order.

"Prisoner, are you guilty?"

"Yes, my lord," answered the poor prisoner.

"Prisoner, have you anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon you according to law?"

"Yes, my lord. *I'm the daughter of the author of 'Caste'.*"

The prisoner always got off, and dear old William Robertson would watch this little scene and roar with laughter.

"Yes," Mrs. Kendal said quietly, as we again looked at "Tom's" picture, "my brother was kindness itself, even from his infancy. I remember hearing how, when he was a very small boy and living with his aunt, he went out one summer's day with a new velvet jacket on. He caught sight of a poor little beggar child his own size, who was in tatters, and, beckoning him across, at once divested himself of his new coat, put it on the wondering youngster, and ran away home as fast as he could. His aunt questioned him, and upon finding out the true circumstances of the case, and not wishing to damp the kind spirit in the little fellow's heart, said:—

"'Well, we'll go and try to find the boy you gave it to, and buy your jacket back.'

"Fortunately the search was successful, and the coat was bought back for no less a sum than half-a-sovereign.

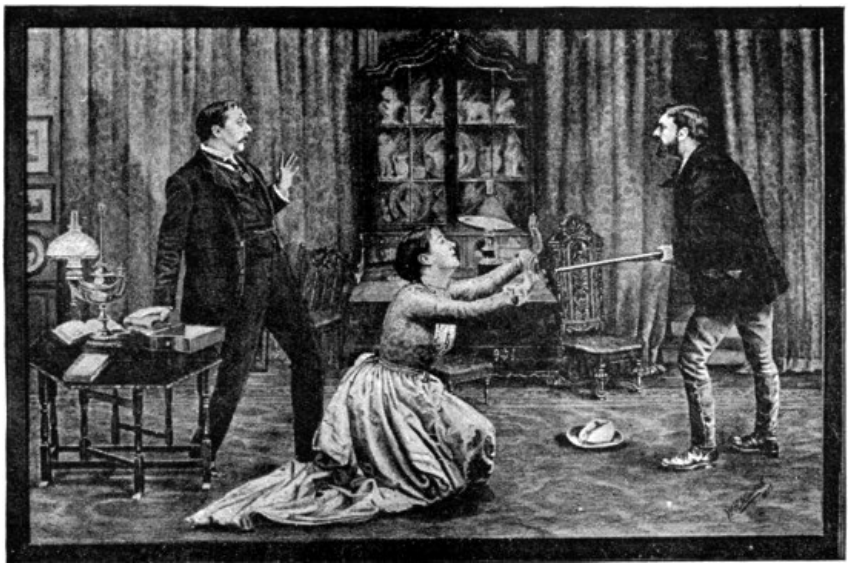
"And in later years it was just the same with Tom. He could never pass by a common cookshop, in front of the windows of which was often a crowd of men, women, and children, looking on with longing eyes, without getting them inside and giving them a fill to their hearts' content. When out driving it was no different. He would stop the horse, and have all the watching hungry ones inside, and the next moment they would be revelling in the satisfying properties of thick slices of plum-pudding and roast beef."

The house throughout is most artistic. Mr. Kendal is a painter of great merit, and he "knows" a picture as soon as he sees it. Pictures are his hobby; hence there is not a room in the house—even to the kitchen—which does not find a place for some canvas, etching, or engraving. The entrance-hall is at once striking, with its quaint thirteenth century furniture, bronzes, and Venetian ware. There are some fine engravings of Miss Brunton—who became Countess of Craven—Kemble, Garrick, Phelps, and Mrs. Siddons. A picture of Mrs. Kendal in "The Falcon" was done at the express wish of, and paid for by, the late Poet Laureate. Tennyson said it reminded him of a woman he liked and admired. In the shadow is a fine bust of Macready, given by the great actor to the father of Mrs. Kendal; resting against the fireplace on either side are the two lances used in "The Queen's Shilling," and close by are two huge masks representing a couple of very hirsute individuals. They came from California, and represent "The King of the Devils" and "The King of the Winds." [Pg 230]

THE HALL. (*From a Photo, by Elliott & Fry.*)

THE DINING ROOM. (*From a Photo, by Elliott & Fry.*)

The entrance to the dining-room is typical of all the other door decoration in the house—a carving of cream enamel of beautiful design and workmanship. The walls of this apartment are terra-cotta, with a finely carved oak-panelling. It is a little treasure room of canvases, the gem of which is probably C. Van Hannen's "Mask Shop in Venice"—a painter of a school which Luke Fildes, R.A., has done so much to popularize. Macbeth is represented by a couple of delightful efforts, and there are samples of the skill of Eugene Du Blas, Crofts, John Reid, Andriotti, Sadler, De Haas, Rivers; a grand landscape by Webb—nearly all of which are Academy works. The decorative articles are as artistic as in some cases they are peculiar. Running about above the oaken fireplace, amongst choice bronzes and blue ware, and a black boy who is trudging along with a very useful clock on his back, are many quaint animals of polished brass—even mice are not missing, with wonderfully long tails—that sparkle and glisten in the firelight. Ascending the staircase you find etchings after Alma Tadema, Briton Riviere, and others; the walls are covered with them. [Pg 231]



SCENE FROM "THE SQUIRE." *From the Picture by Mr. Kendal.*

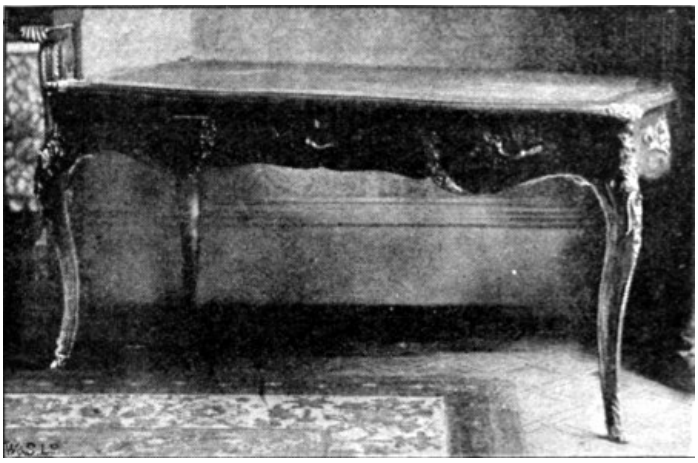
Here are a series of delightful pictures showing Mr. and Mrs. Kendal in Gilbert's "Sweethearts," and I am reminded that the gifted actor and actress were the first to appear before the Queen after a period of five-and-twenty years, during which Her Majesty had never seen a play, the performance that night consisting of "Sweethearts" and Theyre Smith's "Uncle's Will." And as one takes note of many rare works—the bedroom is almost entirely given up to Doré's marvellous creations, though near the window is a splendid specimen of the photographer's art: a head of Miss Mary Anderson—one cannot fail to observe the family spirit everywhere—sometimes portraits of children, sometimes small and dainty pencil studies made of them by their father. Occasionally theatrical sketches by Mr. Kendal appear. Here are some of the principal members of the old St. James's Company, who used to give Mr. Kendal sittings between the acts—here a capital bit of artistic work depicting a scene from "The Squire," made from stray memorandums and with the aid of a looking-glass for securing the actor-artist's face.

Leaving Mr. Kendal for a time, Mrs. Kendal and I returned to the drawing-room. It overlooks Harley Street and is a handsome two-roomed apartment, the prevailing tone of blue, cream, and gold harmonizing to perfection. It is positively one huge collection of curios.

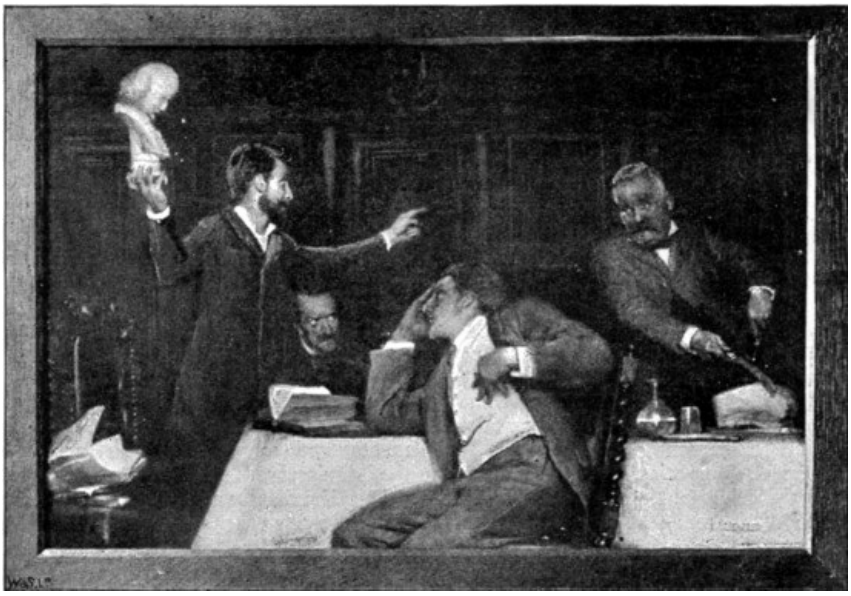
The screen at the far end is rather shuddery, not to say creepy, to those of nervous temperament. It is decorated with tomahawks of fearful and wonderful shapes and sizes, and other Indian implements of warfare.

"These came from California," Mrs. Kendal explained. "No sooner are you out of the train than the Indians tomahawk you! Look at this bow and arrow."

The pots of palms and ferns all hold American flags. These colours—the stars and stripes—once surmounted baskets of flowers and floral emblems—five, six, and even seven feet high—handed to Mrs. Kendal during her recent tour in the States; and amongst the sweetly-perfumed blossoms diamonds, pearls, and other precious gems have glistened in the shape of ornaments. A table near the window tells you of the generosity of the Americans. It is crowded with silver ornaments and mementos. You may handle the diminutive silver candlesticks to light "The Kendals" away—silver jugs, souvenir spoons, frying-pans, coffee-pots—all in miniature. This silver dollar is only one of a hundred. You touch a spring, when, lo and behold! the portrait of the donor appears. All [Pg 232] American women have dainty feet. These little ebony and silver lasts for your boots remind you of this. On this table is a letter from the Princess of Wales, thanking Mrs. Kendal for "the lovely silver wedding bells and flowers which you so kindly sent me on the tenth." You may examine George IV.'s cigar-case—a silver tube in which the King was wont to carry a single cigar. It is impossible to number all the treasured odds and ends, but still more difficult to total up the miniature articles set out in a pair of cabinets.



NAPOLEON'S WRITING-TABLE ***From a Photo by Elliott & Fry.***



"SHAKESPEARE AND BACON" ***From the Picture by A. E. Emslie.***

Mrs. Kendal has a hobby—it lies in the collecting of the tiniest of tiny things. If her intimate friends come across any curiosity particularly choice and small, it is at once snapped up and dispatched to Harley Street. I had some little leaden mice in my hand the size of half-a-dozen pins' heads. Handkerchiefs an inch square, babies' woollen shoes, pinafores, shirts, all of the tiniest, but perfectly made, with buttons and button-holes complete, and even buns with currants no bigger than a pin's point. Sheep, dogs, cats, monkeys, pigs, giraffes—in short, convert the entire Zoo into miniature china knick-knacks, and you have a considerable portion of Mrs. Kendal's collection realized. One must needs stand for a moment at Napoleon's writing-table, near which rests a characteristic clay by Van Beers. The pictures here are many. Millais' work is well represented by several etchings, and a remarkably clever thing by Emslie, entitled

"Shakespeare and Bacon," suggests the two extremes of taste to a nicety. Whilst a young enthusiast is declaiming Shakespeare, one of his listeners—doubtless, equally enthusiastic, but with an eye for victuals—is interrupting a soliloquy with the remark: "Now! who says bacon?" Every portrait has a history—Prince and Princess Henry of Battenberg in their wedding garments, the late Duke of Albany, Professor Huxley, Mrs. Beecher Stowe, Mr. and Mrs. Pinero, [Pg 233] Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, and many others. Three suggestive pictures, however, cannot be passed by. This dear little fellow is the son of Mr. B. J. Farjeon. Mr. Farjeon married "Rip Van Winkle" Jefferson's daughter, and the youngster is pictured dressed in the tattered garments of merry, rollicking *Rip*. You know how *Rip* always drinks your health? He holds the glass of hollands high up and cries, "Here's your health and your family's good health, and may they all live long and prosper!" but Mr. Farjeon's little boy cries out, "Here's your health, and your family's good health, and may you all live long and *proper*!"

GROUP IN CLAY BY JAN VAN BEERS.

A photo, of Dr. Pancoast stands near a bust of Mrs. Kendal as *Galatea*, done when she was seventeen. Dr. Pancoast—a celebrated American physician—saved Mrs. Kendal's life when her maid accidentally administered a poisonous drug to her mistress. The poor girl herself nearly died of fright.

But perhaps the portrait of the late Duchess of Cambridge, which Mrs. Kendal now holds in her hand, is more interesting than them all. "Her late Royal Highness," Mrs. Kendal said, "always addressed me and wrote to me as Mrs. Grimston. She was paralyzed in her right hand and wrote with her left; perhaps that is why this letter, written in pencil and with great effort, is treasured more than it otherwise would have been."

MRS. KENDAL AS "GALATEA"

It was one of the last letters written by Her Royal Highness. The letters and words were wonderfully legible; it read:—

> "Dear Mrs. Grimston,—One line only to thank you for sending me the stalls for my dressers, who enjoyed your and Mr. Grimston's charming acting immensely. My first deaf one was able to follow perfectly, thanks to your having kindly let her have the book previously. Again thanking you,
>
> "I remain,
>
> "Yours very sincerely,
> Augusta."

And in a little cabinet in the far corner is a beautiful Sèvres bowl. In the bowl is a telegram from "Princess Mary," asking Mrs. Kendal to come to St. James's Palace at once. Written on a black-edged envelope were these words: "To dearest Mrs. Grimston Kendal. A little souvenir. Found amongst the last wishes of her late Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge."

It is only just possible to hasten through the collection of substantial reminiscences which add to the charm of this corner of the house. The quaint white china hare was given to Mrs. Kendal many years ago by Mr. John Hare, when playing together at the Court. A curious but vividly suggestive idea of Japanese wit, in the shape of a couple of characteristically dressed figures, typifies "Health" and "Wealth"; the figure, representing "Health" has a countenance of the deepest red, the other a face all golden and as resplendent as the sun. In a small frame is the [Pg 234] letter from the Goethe Club of New York, making Mrs. Kendal an honorary member. She is the only woman member of this club. And this pretty little doll dressed as a Quakeress—a charming compliment to the recipient—was presented by the Quakeresses of Philadelphia, who never, never, never go the play, yea, verily! So they sent this as a tribute of their admiration for the talents and character of the woman who has been called "The Matron of the Drama."

We sat down on a settee in front of the fire. The cushions were of white lawn marked with the initial "M.," and were worked by the late Lady Eglinton.

Mrs. Kendal's happy and homely face is familiar to all. She has a truly tender and sympathetic expression there at all times. Her hair was once that of the fair one with golden locks, now it is of a rich brown colour—very neatly and naturally trimmed about her head. She is very kind—very motherly; just the woman you would single out in time of trouble and ask, "What would you advise me to do?" I gathered these impressions whilst listening to many things she said of which I need not write. Her views on theatrical life are strong, nay, severe. She is not afraid to speak, and she hits hard and sends her shots home. But you cannot mistake

the earnestness of her manner, the true intent of her motives.

MRS. KENDALL'S LITTLE QUAKERESS.

"I am only a common-place woman," she said to me. "I used to be ever so light-hearted—now, I'm a morbid creature. Here we are sitting down by the fireside. I may tell you happy reminiscences that may make one merry, and all the time I should be thinking about—what? Cancer! I return to my dressing-room from the stage at night. As I am passing along a fellow player may turn to me and say, 'How well the play has gone to-night!' I am only thinking of those who have trod that same stage before me. What are they now? Dust—earth—worms!"

I stirred the fire, and the bright glow from its burning embers lit up the corner where we sat. And we talked together.

Margaret Brunton Robertson was born at Great Grimsby on March 15th, 1849—curiously enough these lines will be read on the anniversary of her birthday. Her grandfather, father, and uncle were all actors.

"I lived alone with my father and mother," she said, "and the only real recollection I have of my father is his fine white beard, which he grew towards the latter days of his life, and a little advice he once gave me.

"'Always count twenty,' he said, 'when you are walking across the quay at Bristol, then you won't hear the sailors swear!' Yet he would use very bad language to me when he was teaching me my parts; for you know I commenced acting at a very early age. I was only three when I made my first appearance—and I ruined the play. It was at the Marylebone Theatre in the 'Three Poor Travellers,' and I was a blind child. My nurse was in the front row of the pit—that is, in the very first row, for there were no stalls. All I thought about was my new shoes—a very pretty, dainty little pair, and as soon as I stepped on the stage, I opened my eyes, caught sight of the delighted face of my nurse, and cried out:—

"'Oh! nursey, dear, look at my new shoes!'

"I played at Chute's Theatre in Bristol in many child's parts. When my father went to the wall over the Lincoln Circuit, Mr. Chute engaged him as an actor, and I went with him. I remember in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'—I was *Mustard Seed*, I think, or *Peas Blossom*; at any rate, some small character that required very prettily dressing, and plenty of flowers on my little costume. I am as fond of flowers to-day as I was then. Well, when once I got on the stage in my pretty dress—of which I was particularly proud—before I would leave it, I had to be bought off with apples and oranges! There they would stand at the wings, and the price would go up—up—up—two oranges, three oranges, three oranges and two apples—until I inwardly murmured a childish equivalent for 'sold,' and toddled off. [Pg 235]

"I acted *Eva* in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' when I was eight. I think I was always a sad child—I looked forty when I was fifteen. After little *Eva* I used to play anything."

And they were hard times for little Madge—she worked like the brave little woman she was. Her childish thoughts were constantly with her parents—how best could she add to the weekly income. And this is what the same little Madge would do. Night after night, after playing in a serious piece, she would appear in burlesque, sing, dance, and crack her small jokes with the best of them. It was hard work that made her a woman—it was dearly-bought experience that gave birth to the sympathetic heart she has to-day.

MRS. KENDAL. ***From a Photo. by Bassano.***

So at fourteen she was a woman grown—and at fifteen at Hull played *Lady Macbeth* to Phelps's *Macbeth*!

"I was dressed in my mother's clothes," Mrs. Kendal said, "and I fear I must have looked a fearful guy!"

At rehearsal Phelps looked upon the young woman.

"And who—who is this child?" asked the great actor.

"Madge Robertson," the manager answered; "a rare favourite here. It was a choice between her and a very old woman, Mr. Phelps."

"Then let the young woman play, by all means," Phelps said.

What a night it was! At the end of the play they wanted her on again, but Phelps was obdurate. A party of men came round, and threatened to throw Phelps into the Humber! Phelps remained firm.

"He was kindness itself through it all," Mrs. Kendal assured me, "and though I did not go on again, he proved his thoughtfulness a little later on by sending for me to play *Lady Teazle*. I played the leading parts during the three nights Phelps remained in Hull in

'The Man of the World,' 'Richelieu,' and 'Macbeth.' On July 29th, 1865, I made my *début* in London, at the Haymarket, as *Ophelia* to the *Hamlet* of Walter Montgomery. Poor Montgomery! He was what you would call a 'lady-killer'—very conceited, but, withal, very kind. He once wrote a letter to my father, and added a postscript, saying: 'Keep this letter. Should poverty fall upon you or yours, your great-grand-children may be able to sell it for a good sum of money!' I was only with him six weeks."

The only play of her brother's in which Mrs. Kendal has appeared was "Dreams," when the Gaiety first opened. At this time the managers always tried to induce Mrs. Kendal to appear in a riding habit—a costume in which she looked strikingly handsome.

"Alfred Wigan played in 'Dreams,'" continued Mrs. Kendal. "His wife was one of the kindest women I ever met. She gave me a gold bracelet for a very curious little service I used to render her husband every night. He had to sing a song in 'Dreams,' and one or two of the high notes were beyond his reach. I used to take these notes for him, and the audience never guessed the truth."

"And have you not played *Desdemona*?" I asked.

"Oh! yes—and to a real black man, and so he did not have to put his head up the chimney to make himself up for the part! His name was Ira Aldridge, and scandal said he was the dresser of some great actor whom he used to imitate. But he had very ingenious ideas as to the character of *Othello*. He thought him a brute, and played him as such. His great notion was to get the fairest woman possible for *Desdemona*—and I was selected, for at that time my hair was quite golden.

"In one part of the play he would cry out, 'Give me thy hand, Desdemona!' and certainly the effect of my hand in his huge grasp was impressive. Then in the last act he would pull me from the couch by the hair of my head. Oh! there was something in his realism, I can tell you!" [Pg 236]

Miss Robertson made a great sensation when she appeared as *Blanche Dumont*, in Dr. Westland Marston's "Hero of Romance," when it was performed for the first time at the Haymarket Theatre, on March 14th, 1868. Seventeen months after this, on August 7th, 1869, she was Madge Robertson no longer. On that day she was married to Mr. William Hunter Grimston, whose stage name is Kendal. It is a charming little story.

It occurred at Manchester. Mr. Kendal and Miss Robertson were on tour with the elder Compton, and they were—sweethearts. A convenient time seemed to have arrived for their wedding day, for on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights pieces were to be played in which neither of them would be required. This would mean a nice little honeymoon—and the two lovers would reappear on the Monday night. So the day was fixed—Thursday; the church chosen—St. Saviour's, Plymouth Grove; and the best man booked—Walter Gowing, who used to play under the name of Walter Gordon.

Then bad news came. Compton's brother was taken ill, and he had to hurry away from Cottonopolis. Another play had to be put in the bill, both Mr. Kendal and Miss Robertson would be needed—for it was "As You Like It," and the one would be wanted for *Orlando* and the other for *Rosalind*. Still, the wedding was proceeded with on Thursday morning, quietly and happily, and in the evening husband and wife met on the stage in the Forest of Arden. There, with *Celia* as the priest, amidst the leafy trees and grassy pathways, *Orlando* turns to the merry *Celia*, and pointing to the far, far happier *Rosalind*, cries out:—

"Pray thee, marry us!"

"Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?"

"I will."

"Then," *Rosalind* pertly remarks, "you must say, 'I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.'"

"I take thee, Rosalind, for wife," said *Orlando*, earnestly.

Then *Rosalind* asked, "Now tell me how long you would have her after you have possessed her?"

And *Orlando* replied—both in the words of Shakespeare and in the language of his own heart—"For ever and a day!"

That is the true story of the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. It was a natural desire of each never to play apart from the other, and from that day they have never separated. For some seven years Mr. and Mrs. Kendal played at the Haymarket, under Buckstone's management, and the gifted actress merrily referred to the little jokes played on "Bucky" by some of the actors. He was stone deaf, and could only take his cues when to speak from the movements of his fellow-actors' lips, so they would annoy him by continuing the lip movement, and "Bucky" sometimes got "stuck."

THE DRAWING-ROOM. ***From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.***

Little need be said of Mrs. Kendal's subsequent work—her acting at the Court, the Prince of Wales's, and her labours at the St. James's, when, in 1881, she appeared there under the joint management of Mr. Kendal and Mr. Hare. Not only in this country has her name become fondly familiar in the homes of those who "go to the theatre" and those who "never would," but in America the artistic acting of herself and husband has been instantly and enthusiastically recognised. [Pg 237]

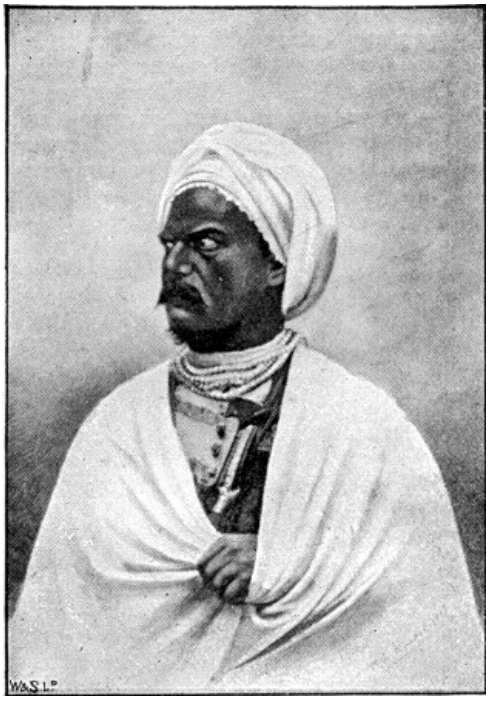
I left the drawing-room—pausing, before entering Mr. Kendal's study, to admire the aviary—a veritable home of song—and to notice one diminutive member of the feathered tribe in particular, who has been taught by Miss Grimston to perform tricks *ad lib.*, in addition to giving forth the sweetest of notes.

The study is a very delicate apartment in terra-cotta and gold—here and there are quaint blue china vases and many exquisite bronzes. The window in the recess where the table is—a typical study table, suggesting plenty of work—is of stained glass, the quartet of divisions representing the four seasons. A glance round the walls of this room at once reveals the substantial side of Mr. Kendal's artistic hobby—pictures. In this apartment there is nothing but water-colours, save a very clever pen-and-ink sketch by a New York artist, called "Six Months After Marriage," which Jefferson caught sight of at the New York Dramatic Bazaar, and reminded Mr. Kendal to "keep his eye on," and a portrait or two of Mrs. Kendal and the children. "Hetty Sorrell" at her butter pats, with her thoughts very far from the churning-pan, is a gem. "The Last of St. Bartholomew" is a magnificent bit of painting, and the Venetian views at once carry one back to the home of the merry gondolier and perfect moonlight nights. This picture of Salvini—who its possessor assured me was the finest tragedian he had ever seen—was painted by Mr. Kendal himself. The bookcase, running along opposite the window, contains many rare first editions, of which Mr. Kendal is a very persevering and successful collector, and a bound manuscript copy of every play produced by him, together with the original sketches for the scenery. You may look over the "Scrap of Paper," "The Falcon," "Queen's Shilling," "Ladies' Battle," "Clancarty," "The Ironmaster," "The Money Spinner," and "The Squire"—Pinero's play, of which somebody wrote that it wafted the scent of the new-mown hay across the footlights.

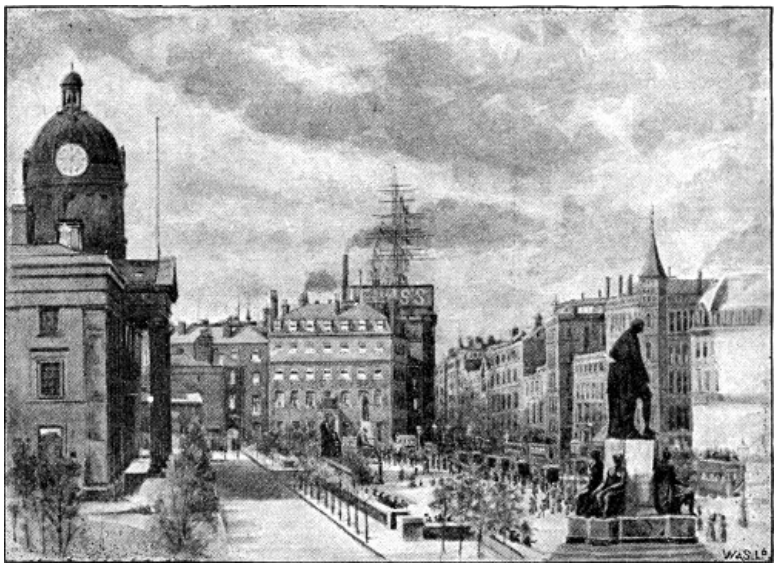
It is interesting to learn how Mr. Kendal first came across Pinero.

"I only knew him as an actor at the Lyceum," he said, "and had never met him. He wrote and asked if we would let him read a play to us. As a rule we never do that; but, remembering that Pinero was himself a player, we made an exception. So it came about that one day, after a rehearsal, the actor playwright read his piece to us in the *foyer* of the St. James's. We never expected anything at first, but the reading ended in our taking the play immediately, though we scarcely knew what we should do with it, seeing it was a two-act play. We found an opportunity, however, and you know the success it was. It was called 'The Money Spinner.'"

Mr. Kendal is a striking-looking man—the very ideal of a picturesque soldier, with a constitution of steel. He talks to you frankly, easily, for there is not two penny-worth of presumption about him. He lives and labours very quietly—he enjoys his days, and a good cigar. He divides his talents between the stage and the brush. His pencil and palette have been with him in far-off places, and there is always a corner in his bag for them if he only travels twenty miles from Harley Street. His peculiarity of painting—so to speak—lies in the fact that he never fails to chronicle the view obtained from any hotel where he may be staying. He showed me a book full of these hasty impressions—all of which were most beautifully done—many of them he could only give ten minutes or a quarter of an hour to. Two of these I brought away for reproduction in these pages; they are both unfinished, however—the pencil reminders of certain little additions tell that. [Pg 238]



PORTRAIT OF SALVANI, BY MR. KENDAL.



SKETCH FROM THE QUEEN's HOTEL, MANCHESTER, BY MR. KENDAL.

The first of these is a view of the Infirmary as seen from Mr. Kendal's window at the Queen's Hotel, Manchester; the second—done in a quarter of an hour—shows the way the Americans erect their buildings for exhibiting a cyclorama—popularly known here as a panorama. It was done from a back window in an hotel in Cleveland, U.S.A. The actor-artist never learnt drawing, save for a few hours' lessons he took at the Slade Schools under the tuition of Le Gros. He draws everything that impresses him—his painting memory is remarkable. He sees a man's face in the street, carries it home in his mind, and it will be very faithfully put on paper or canvas.

We talked for a long time on "pictures"—he was so happy and earnest about it that it was some time before we made an attempt to tread the boards and get behind the footlights.

Mr. Kendal—William Hunter Grimston—was born at Notting Hill, and just outside the sound of Bow Bells, on December 16th, 1843. His parents belonged to the Low Church, and their views of the theatre in general, and on adopting the stage as a profession in particular, will be readily understood. Mr. Kendal was intended for the Army—how he came to "go on" the stage is best told in his own words:

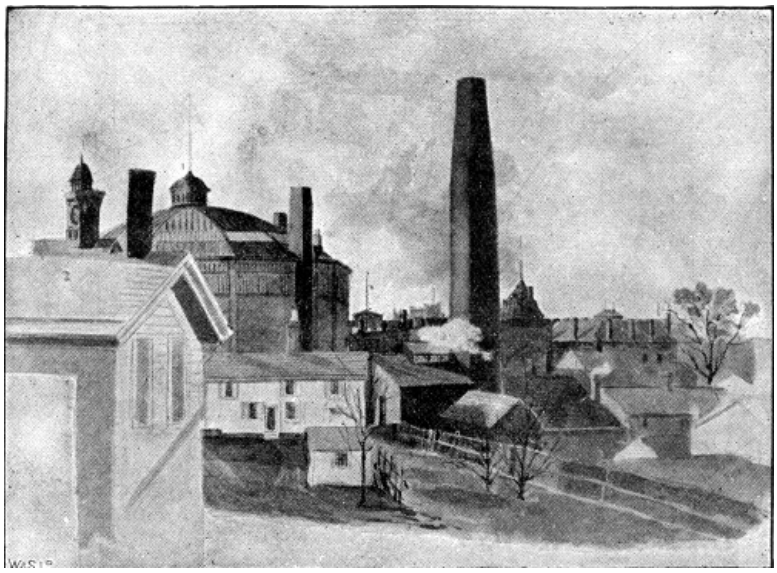
"I had only been to three or four pantomimes previously," he said, "and one night—I was about eighteen years of age at the time—I found myself in the stalls of the old Soho Theatre, in Dean Street, Soho, now known as the Royalty Theatre. My paper and pencil were out, and I was busily engaged in making sketches of the various actors and actresses. The piece was 'Billie Taylor.' Suddenly I felt a gentle tap on the shoulder from behind. I turned round.

"'Would you allow me to take those sketches round and show the 'parties' interested?' a gentleman asked.

"'Certainly; with pleasure,' I replied.

"'Perhaps you would like to come behind the scenes as well?'

"It was just what I wanted, so I followed the person who had so kindly interested himself in my scribble. He proved to be Mr. Mowbray, the manager of the theatre. The picture behind the scenes that night was a perfect Elysium to me. I think Mowbray must have noticed the impression it made upon me, for he asked if I would like to go on the stage. I did—as a sort of super." [Pg 239]



SKETCH FROM HOTEL WINDOW, CLEVELAND, U.S.A., BY MR. KENDAL.

Mr. Kendal's first important engagement lasted four or five years at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow. Here he met and played with such people as Helen Faucit (Lady Martin), G. V. Brooke, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Dion Boucicault, Fechter, Miss Bateman (Mrs. Crowe), and the elder Sothern. When Sothern left, the accomplished young actor played *Dundreary*, and found himself straying in the footsteps of the famous originator of the part, even to the hop. One would have thought that people would have praised the actor for taking such a worthy example—but it displeased Tom Taylor, and he wrote very wrathfully. Then Mr. Kendal went to the Haymarket, met Miss Robertson, and from their wedding day their lives may be said to have been the same in thought, word, and deed.

As an organizer and man of business his tact and judgment were tested and proved during his joint management of the St. James's with Mr. Hare in 1881. For some time previous to this Mr. Kendal had been on the look-out for a theatre, and his mind wandered towards the St. James's, but it required a large sum of money spending on it before it could be opened.

"One night I was talking to Lord Newry at my club," said Mr. Kendal, "and happened to say that if £2,000 or so were spent on the St. James's I might feel inclined to take it.

"'Suppose I spend that amount of money on the place, will you take it?' Lord Newry asked.

"My only reply was that I would think about it. In the meantime I went to the Court, from there to the Prince of Wales's to play in 'Diplomacy'—it ran a year—'Peril' and 'London Assurance.' Then I returned to the Court again, and during this time Lord Newry had practically gutted the old and unlucky St. James's, turned it inside out—John Hare, my wife and self entered, and we remained there nearly ten years."

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal share the same opinion of America—it is the land of to-day, the land of the future. As to its theatres in comparison with ours, Mrs. Kendal—who had now joined us—was most enthusiastic. I had reached the pillars, from which hung curtains of intricate Japanese workmanship, leading to the hall. Victoria, the Jubilee dog, was barking a friendly "Good-bye," and the lusty throats of Miss Grimston's two-and-twenty canaries forced their sweet notes from a far-away room into the passage.

"I will give you some idea of what an American theatre is like," said Mrs. Kendal. "You reach your destination by rail at some small place for a one-night stay. If it is raining and the ground is wet, men in long jack-boots catch hold of you and gallantly take you across the puddles. You do not see a soul about—and you are in fear and trembling as to where your night's audience is coming from. You get to your hotel, and then your next thought is—where is the theatre? You expect to find a little, uncomfortable, band-box of a place, and you set out to see it with a heavy heart. It is a palace—a marble palace—a positive poem! And your heart leaps happily—only to drop dull again, for you suddenly remember that you have seen—nobody, not even the oldest inhabitant. You turn to the manager. [Pg 240]

"'Yes, yes—but, what about an audience, how are you going to fill it?' you ask.

"'Wall,' he replies, 'I don't trouble myself much about that. I reckon that every seat in this theatre is sold for to-night, that's all!'"

MR. KENDAL. From a Photo. by Maurice Stephens, Harrogat.

"*Author! Author!*"

[Pg 241]

BY E. W. HORNUNG.

This story has to do with two men and a play, instead of a woman, and it is none of mine. I had it from an old gentleman I love: only he ought to have written it himself. This, however, he will never do; having known intimately in his young days one of the two men concerned. But I have his leave to repeat the story more or less as he told it—if I can. And I am going to him for my rebuke—when I dare.

"You want to hear the story of poor old Pharazyn and his play? I'm now going to tell it you.

"Ah, well! My recollection of the matter dates from one summer's night at my old rooms in the Adelphi, when he spoilt my night's work by coming in flushed with an idea of his own. I remember banging the drawer into which I threw my papers to lock them away for the night; but in a few minutes I had forgotten my unfinished article, and was glad that Pharazyn had come. We were young writers, both of us; and, let me tell you, my good fellow, young writing wasn't in those days what it is now. I am thinking less of merit than of high prices, and less of high prices than of cheap notoriety. Neither of us had ever had our names before the public—not even in the advertised contents of an unread and unreadable magazine. No one cared about names in my day, save for the half-dozen great ones that were then among us; so Pharazyn's and mine never used to appear in the newspapers, though some of them used our stuff.

"In a manner we were rivals, for we were writing the same sort of thing for the same sort of publications, and that was how we had come together; but never was rivalry friendlier, or mutually more helpful. Our parts were strangely complementary; if I could understand for the life of me the secret of collaboration, which has always been a mystery to me, I should say that I might have collaborated with Pharazyn almost ideally. I had the better of him in point of education, and would have turned single sentences against him for all he was worth; and I don't mind saying so, for there my superiority ended. When he had a story to tell, he told it with a swing and impetus which I coveted him, as well I might to this day; and if he was oftener without anything to write about, his ideas would pay twenty shillings in the pound, in strength and originality, where mine made some contemptible composition in pence. That is why I have been a failure at fiction—oh, yes, I have! That is why Pharazyn would have succeeded, if only he had stuck to plain ordinary narrative prose.

"HE SKETCHED THE NEW STORY."

"The idea he was unable to keep within his own breast, on the evening of which I am telling you, was as new, and simple, and dramatic as any that ever intoxicated the soul of story-teller or made a brother author green with envy. I can see him now, as I watched him that night, flinging to and fro with his quick, nervous stride, while he sketched the new story—bit by bit, and often the wrong bit foremost; but all with his own flashing vividness, which makes me so sorry—so sorry [Pg 242] whenever I think of it. At moments he would stand still before the chair on which I sat intent, and beat one hand upon the other, and look down at me with a grand, wondering smile, as though he himself could hardly believe what the gods had put into his head, or that the gift was real gold, it glittered so at first sight. On that point I could reassure him. My open jealousy made me admire soberly. But when he told me, quite suddenly, as though on an afterthought, that he meant to make a play of it and not a story, I had the solid satisfaction at that moment of calling him a fool.

"The ordinary author of my day, you see, had a certain timorous respect for the technique of the stage. It never occurred to us to make light of those literary conventions which it was not our business to understand. We were behind you fellows in every way. But Pharazyn was a sort of forerunner: he said that any intelligent person could write a play, if he wanted to, and provided he could write at all. He said his story was a born play; and it was, in a way; but I told him I doubted whether he could train it up with his own hand to be a good-acting one. I knew I was right. He had neither the experience nor the innate constructive faculty, one or other of which is absolutely necessary for the writing of possible plays. I implored him to turn the thing into a good dramatic novel, and so make his mark at one blow. But no; the fatal fit was on him, and I saw that it must run its course. Already he could see and hear his audience laughing and crying, so he said, and I daresay he could also feel the crinkle of crisp weekly receipts. I only know that we sat up all night over it, arguing and smoking and drinking whisky until my windows overlooking the river caught the rising sun at an angle. Then I gave in. For poor old Pharazyn was more obstinate than ever, though he thanked me with the greatest good temper for my well-meant advice.

"'And look here, my boy,' says he, as he puts on his hat, 'you shan't hear another word about this till the play's written; and you are to ask no questions. Is that a bargain? Very well, then. When I've finished it—down to the very last touches—*you* shall come and sit up all night with *me*, and I'll read you every word. And by gad, old chap, if they give me a call the first night, and want a speech—and I see you sitting in your stall, like a blessed old fool as you are—by gad, sir, I'll hold up you and your judgment to the ridicule of the house, so help me never!'

"Well, I am coming to that first night presently. Meanwhile, for the next six months, I saw very little of Pharazyn, and less still in the new year. He seldom came to my rooms now; when he did I could never get him to stay and sit up with me; and once when I climbed up to his garret (it was literally that), he would not answer me, though I could smell his pipe through the key-hole, in which he had turned the key. Yet he was perfectly friendly whenever we did meet. He said he was working very hard, and indeed I could imagine it; his personal appearance, which he had never cherished, being even untidier, and I am obliged to add seedier, than of old. He continued to send me odd magazines in which his stuff happened to appear, or occasionally a proof for one's opinion and suggestions; we had done this to each other all along; but either I did not think about it, or somehow he led me to suppose that his things were more or less hot from the pen, whereas many of mine had been written a twelvemonth before one saw them in type. One way or another, I gathered that he was at work in our common groove, and had shelved, for the present at all [Pg 243] events, his proposed play, about which you will remember I had undertaken to ask no questions.

"I was quite mistaken. One night in the following March he came to me with a haggard face, a beaming eye, and a stout, clean manuscript, which he brought down with a thud on my desk. It

"I COULD SMELL HIS PIPE THROUGH THE KEYHOLE."

was the play he had sketched out to me eight or nine months before. I was horrified to hear he had been at work upon it alone from that night to this. He had written, so he said, during all this time, not another line, only each line of his play some ten times over.

"I recollect looking curiously at his shabby clothes, and then reminding him that it was at his place, not mine, I was to have heard him read the play: and how he confessed that he had no chair for me there—that his room was, in fact, three parts dismantled—that he had sacrificed everything to the play, which was worth it. I was extremely angry. I could have helped him so easily, independent as I was of the calling I loved to follow. But there was about him always an accursed, unnecessary independence, which has since struck me—and I think I may say so after all these years—as the mark of a rather humble, very honest origin.

"He read me the play, and I cried over the third act, and so did he. I thought then, and still think, that there was genius in that third act—it took you off your feet. And to me, certainly, it seemed as if the piece must act as well as it read, though indeed, as I took care to say and to repeat, my opinion was well-nigh valueless on that point. I only knew that I could see the thing playing itself, as I walked about the room (for this time I was the person who was too excited to sit still), and that was enough to make one sanguine. I became as enthusiastic about it as though the work were mine (which it never, never would or could have been), yet I was unable to suggest a single improvement, or to have so much as a finger-tip in the pie. Nor could I afterwards account for its invariable reception at the hands of managers, whose ways were then unknown to me. That night we talked only of one kind of reception. We were still talking when the sun came slanting up the river to my windows; you could hardly see them for tobacco-smoke, and we had emptied a bottle of whisky to the success of Pharazyn's immortal play.

"Oh, those nights—those nights once in a way! God forgive me, but I'd sacrifice many things to be young again and feel clever, and to know the man who would sit up all night with me to rule the world over a bottle of honest grog. In the pale light of subsequent revelations I ought, perhaps, to recall such a night, with that particular companion, silently and in spiritual ashes. But it is ridiculous, in my opinion, to fit some sort of consequence to every little insulated act; nor will I ever admit that poor Pharazyn's ultimate failing was in any appreciable degree promoted or prepared for by those our youthful full-souled orgies. I know very well that afterwards, when his life was spent in waylaying those aforesaid managers, in cold passages, on stage doorsteps, or, in desperation, under the public portico on the street; and when a hundred snubs and subterfuges would culminate in the return of his manuscript, ragged but unread: I know, and I knew then, that the wreck who would dodge me in Fleet Street, or cut me in the Strand, had taken to his glass more seriously and more steadily than a man should. But I am not sure that it matters much—*much*, you understand me—when that man's heart is broken.

"HIS MANUSCRIPT RAGGED BUT UNREAD."

[Pg 244]

"The last words I was ever to exchange with my poor old friend keep ringing in my head to this day, whenever I think of him; and I can repeat them every one. It was some few years after our intimacy had ceased, and when I only knew that he had degenerated into a Fleet Street loafer of the most dilapidated type, that I caught sight of him one day outside a theatre. It was the theatre which was for some years a gold-mine to one Morton Morrison, of whom you may never have heard; but he was a public pet in his day, I can tell you, and his day was just then at its high noon. Well, there stood Pharazyn, with his hands in his pockets and a cutty-pipe sticking out between his ragged beard and moustache, and his shoulders against the pit door, so that for once

he could not escape me. But he wouldn't take a hand out of his pocket to shake mine; and when I asked him how he was, without thinking, he laughed in my face, and it made me feel cruel. He was dreadfully emaciated, and almost in rags. And as I wondered what I ought to do, and what to say next, he gave a cough, and spat upon the pavement, and I could see the blood.

"THERE STOOD PHARAZYN."

"I don't know what you would have done for him—but for all I knew what had brought him to this, I could think of nothing but a drink. It was mid-winter, and I tell you the man was in rags. I felt that if I could get him to a bar he might eat something, too, and that I should get a hold of him this time which I would never again let go. Judge of my surprise when he flatly refused to come with me even for a drink.

"'Can't you see? he said in his hollow voice. 'There'll be a crowd here directly, and I want the best seat in the pit—the best in the house. I've been going dry for it these two days, and I'm going dry till I've seen the piece. No, I've been here an hour already, and there's three hours more, I know; but I'm not going to risk it, thanks all the same.'

"By this I had remembered that Morton Morrison was to re-open that night with a new piece. Indeed, I ought not to have forgotten that, seeing that I had my order about me somewhere, and it meant a column from my pen between twelve and one that night. But this sudden, sorry meeting had put all other thoughts out of my head.

"'My dear fellow,' I said, with a sort of laugh, 'are you a first-nighter, too?'

"'Only at this theatre.'

"He looked me queerly in the face.

"'You admire Morrison very much?'

"'I love him!'

"I suppose my eyes thawed him, though God knows how hard I was trying not to hurt him with pitying looks. At all events he began to explain himself of his own accord, very impetuously; indeed I rather think the outburst was purely involuntary.

"'Look here,' he said, with his hoarse voice lowered: 'I hoped never to see your face again. I hoped you'd never see mine. But now you are here, don't go this minute, and I'll tell you why I think so much of Morton Morrison. I don't know him, mind you—he doesn't know me from Adam—but once long ago I had something to do with him. And God bless him, but damn every other manager in London, for he was the only one of the lot that gave me a civil hearing and a kind word!'

"I knew what he was talking about, and he knew that I knew, for we had understood one another in the old days. [Pg 245]

"'I took it to him last of all,' he went on, wiping his damp lips with his hand. 'When I began hawking it about he was an unknown man; when his turn came he was here. He let me read it to him. Then he asked me to leave it with him for a week; and when I went back to him, he said what they had all said—that it would never act! But Morton Morrison said it nicely. And when he saw how it cut me up, into little bits, he got me to tell him all about everything; and then he persuaded me to burn the play, instead of ruining my life for it; and I burnt it in his dressing-room fire, but the ruin was too far gone to mend. I wrote that thing with my heart's blood—old man, you know I did! And none of them would think of it! My God! But Morrison was good about it—he's a good soul—and that's why you'll see me at every first night of his until the drink finishes its work.'

"I had not followed him quite to the end. One thing had amazed me too much.

"'You burnt your play,' I could only murmur, 'when it would have turned into such a novel! Surely you have some draft of it still?'

"'I burnt the lot when I got home,' Pharazyn replied; 'and by-and-by I shall join 'em and burn too!'

"I had nothing to answer to that, and was, besides, tenacious of my point. 'I don't think much of the kindness that makes one man persuade another to burn his work and throw up the sponge,' said I, with a good deal of indignation, for I did feel wroth with that fellow Morrison—a bread-and-butter drawing-room actor, whose very vogue used to irritate me.

"WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS?"

"'Then what do you think of this?' asked Pharazyn, as he dipped a hand within his shabby coat, and cautiously unclenched it under my nose.

"'Why, it's a five-pound note!'

"'I know; but wasn't *that* kind, then?'

"'So Morrison gave you this!' I exclaimed.

"Two or three persons had stopped to join us at the pit door, and Pharazyn hastily put the note back in his pocket. As he did so, his dreadfully shabby condition gave my heart a fresh cut.

"'Are you never going to spend that?' I asked in a whisper; and in a whisper he answered:—

"'Never! It is all my play has brought me—all. It was given me as a charity, but I took it as my earnings—my earnings for all the work and waiting, and blood and tears, that one thing cost me. Spend it? Not I! It will bury me as decently as I deserve.'

"We could converse no more. And the presence of other people prevented me from giving him my overcoat, though I spoke of it into his ear, begging and imploring him to come away and take it while there was still time for him to clip back and get a seat in the front row. But he would not hear of it, and the way he refused reminded me of his old stubborn independence; all I got was a promise that he would have a bite with me after the performance. And so I left him in the frosty dusk, ill-clad and unkempt, with the new-lit lamp over the pit door shining down upon the haggard mask that had once been the eager, memorable face of my cleverest friend.

"I saw him next the moment I entered the theatre that evening, and I nodded my head to him, which he rebuked with the slightest shake of his own. So I looked no more at him before the play began, comprehending that he desired me not to do so. The temptation, however, was too strong to go on resisting, for while Pharazyn was in the very centre of the front row in the pit, I was at one end of the last row of the stalls; and I was very anxious about him, wanting to make sure that he was there and not going to escape me again, and nervous of having him out of my sight for five minutes together. [Pg 246]

"Thus I know more about the gradual change which came over Pharazyn's poor face, as scene followed scene, than of the developments and merits of those scenes themselves. My mind was in any case running more on my lost friend than on the piece; but it was not till near the end of the first act that the growing oddity of his look first struck me.

"His eyebrows were raised; it was a look of incredulity chiefly; yet I could see nothing to impale for improbability in the play as far as it had gone. I was but lightly attending, for my own purposes, as you youngsters skim your betters for review; but thus far the situation struck me as at once feasible and promising. Also it seemed not a little familiar to me; I could not say why, for watching Pharazyn's face. And it was his face that told me at last, in the second act. By God, it was his own play!

"It was Pharazyn's play, superficially altered all through, nowhere substantially; but the only play for me, when I knew that, was being acted in the front row of the pit, and not on the stage, to which I had turned the side of my head. I watched my old friend's face writhe and work until it stiffened in a savage calm; and watching, I thought of the 'first night' he had pictured jovially in the old days, when the bare idea of the piece was bursting his soul; and thinking, I wondered whether it could add a drop to his bitterness to remember that too.

"Yet, through all my thoughts, I was listening, intently enough, now. And in the third act I heard the very words my friend had written: they had not meddled with his lines in the great scene which had moved us both to tears long ago in my rooms. And this I swear to, whether you believe it or no—that at the crisis of that scene, which was just as Pharazyn made it, the calm ferocity

transfiguring his face died away all at once, and I saw it shining with the sweetest tears our eyes can shed—the tears of an artist over his own work.

"And when the act was over he sat with his head on his hand for some minutes, drinking in the applause, as I well knew; then he left his seat and squeezed out on my side of the house, and I made sure he was coming to speak to me over the barrier; and I got up to speak to him; but he would not see me, but stood against the barrier with a mien as white and set as chiselled marble.

"What followed on the first fall of the curtain I shall relate as rapidly as it happened. Louder call for an author I never heard, and I turned my eyes to the stage in my intense curiosity to see who would come forward; for the piece had been brought out anonymously; and I divined that Morrison himself was about to father it. And so he did; but as the lie passed his lips, and in the interval before the applause—the tiny interval between flash and peal—the lie was given him in a roar of fury from my left; there fell a thud of feet at my side, and Pharazyn was over the barrier and bolting down the gangway towards the stage. I think he was near making a leap for the footlights and confronting Morrison on his own boards; but the orchestra came between, and the fiddlers rose in their places. Then he turned wildly to us pressmen, and I will say he had our ear, if not that of the whole house besides, for the few words he was allowed to utter.

"'Gentlemen!' he cried at the top of his voice—'Gentlemen, I'm one of you! I'm a writing man like yourselves, and I wrote this play that you've seen. That man never wrote it at all—I wrote it myself! That man has only altered it. I read it to him two years ago—two years ago, gentlemen! He kept it for a week, and then got me to burn it as rubbish—when he had made a copy of it! And he gave me this, gentlemen—he gave me this that I give him back!'

"It was a matter of only a few seconds, but not till my own last hour shall I forget Morrison's painted face on the stage, or that sweating white one beneath the boxes; or the fluttering from Pharazyn's poor fingers of the five-pound note he had treasured for two years; or the hush all over the house until the first hand was laid upon his dirty collar.

"'What!' he screamed, 'do none of you believe me? Will none of you stand by me—isn't there a man—not one man among you——' [Pg 247]

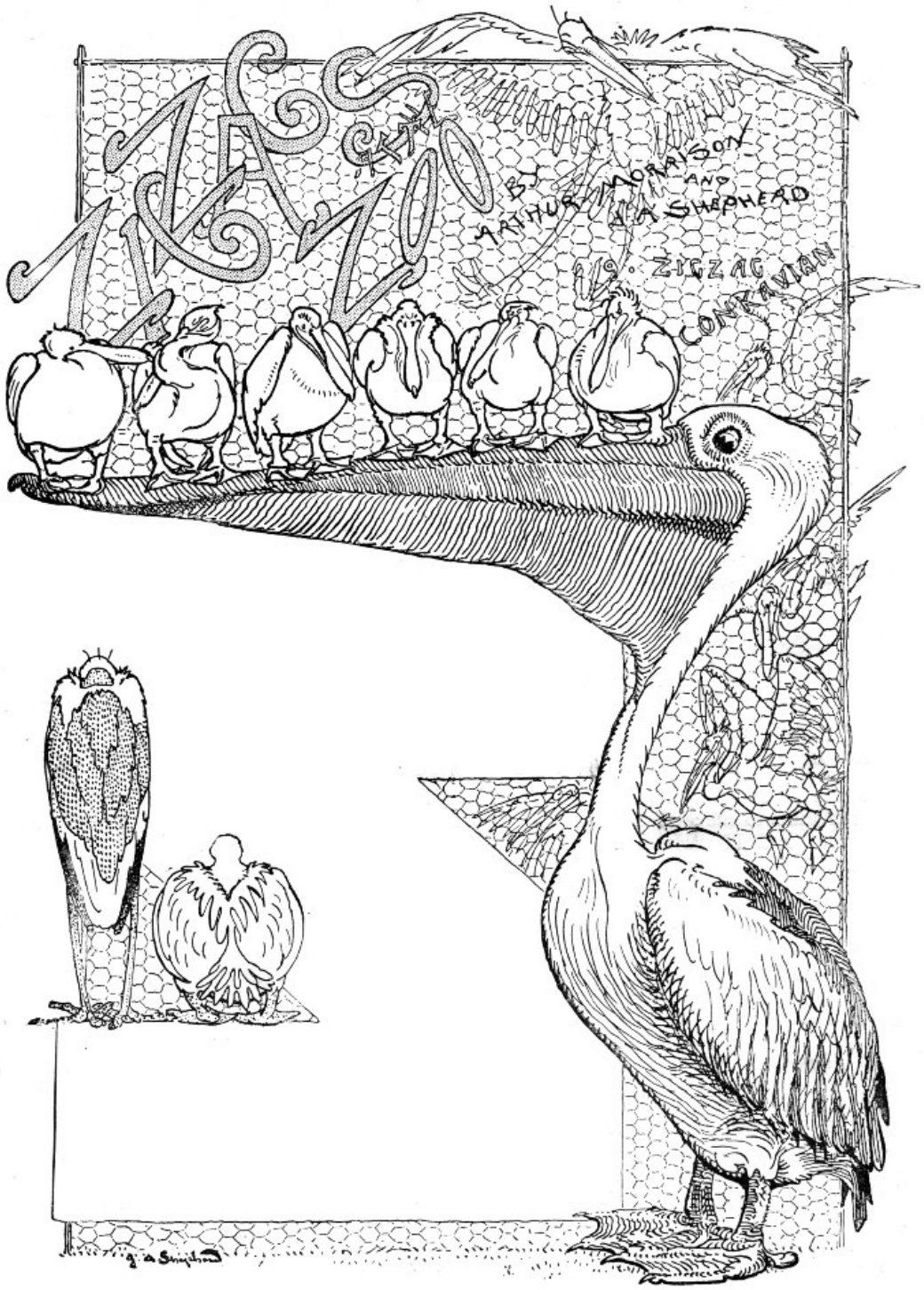
"And they threw him out with my name on his lips. And I followed, and floored a brute who was handling him roughly. And nothing happened to me—because of what happened to Pharazyn!"

The dear old boy sat silent, his grey head on his hand. Presently he went on, more to himself than to me: "What could I do? What proof had I? He had burnt them every one. And as long as the public would stand him, Morrison kept his good name at least. And that play was his great success!"

"HE GAVE ME THIS."

I ventured gently to inquire what had happened to Pharazyn.

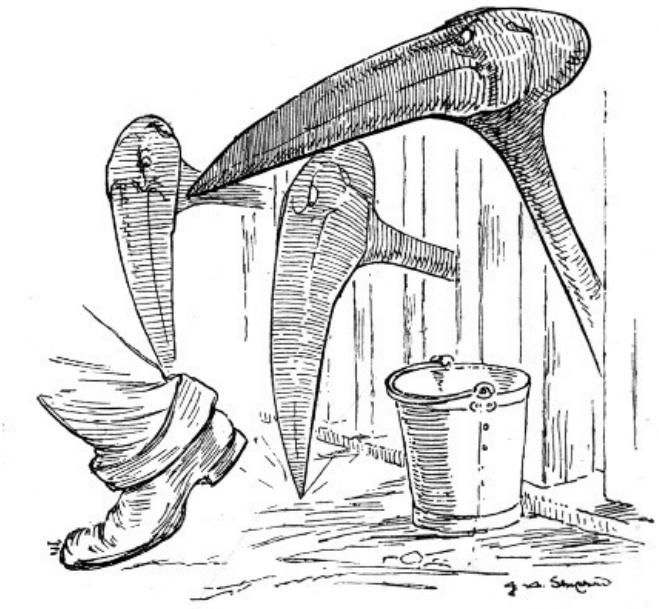
"He died in my arms," my old friend cried, throwing up his head with an oath and a tear. "He died in a few minutes, outside the theatre. I could hear them clapping after he was dead—clapping his piece."



If the gentle reader, full of a general desire for knowledge and a particular enthusiasm for natural history, will refer to any one of the great standard works on birds, and, turning to the index, seek for the family title of the Conkaves, I have every hope and confidence that he will not find it; because, as a matter of fact, it is a little invention of my own, and, I may modestly urge, rather a neat thing in scientific nomenclature, on the whole. It has the advantage of including in one family the storks and the pelicans, which in all orthodox books on birds are planted far apart and out of sight of each other, with many orders, tribes, and families between. Under my title they are gathered amicably together in the common possession of very long bills, like two tailors on a man's doorstep. The word is derived, in the proper and regular manner, from ancient sources; from *conk*, a venerable Eastern word, signifying a nose or beak, and the Latin *avis*, a bird. And I offer the term freely as my humble, but I trust useful, contribution to science; my first contribution. [Pg 249]

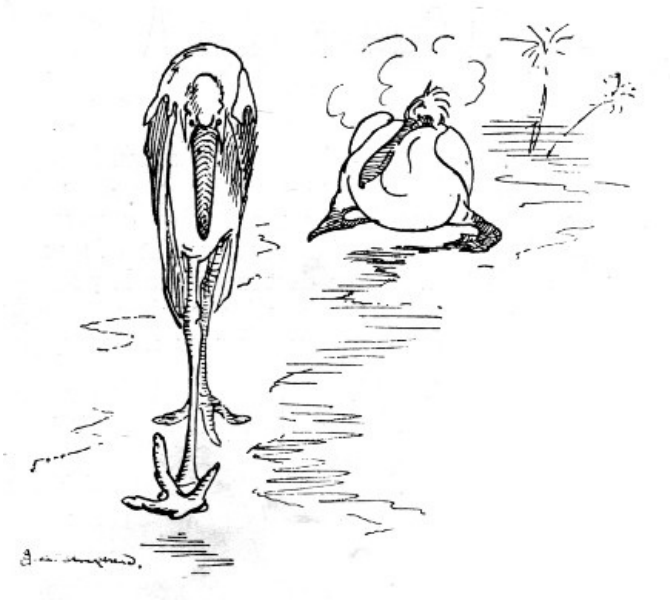
The stork is regarded, in many countries, with a certain semi-superstitious reverence and esteem. After many prolonged and serious attempts to saturate myself with a similar feeling, I regret to confess to a certain smallness of esteem for the stork. You can't esteem a bird that makes ugly digs at your feet and heels with such a very big beak. Out in their summer quarters the storks are kept in by close wire, and close wire will give an air of inoffensiveness to most things. But, away in a by-yard, with a gate marked "private," there stands a shed wherein the storks are kept warm in winter, behind wooden bars; and between these bars stork-heads have a way of dropping at the toes of the favoured passer-by, like to action of a row of roadmen's picks.

The stork has come off well in the matter of bodily endowment. The pelican has a tremendous beak—achieved, it would seem, by a



PICKS AND CHEWS.

skimping of material in the legs; but the stork has the tremendous beak and legs of surprising growth as well. His wings, too, are something more than respectable. At flying, at eating, at portentous solemnity of demeanour—in all these and in other things the pelican and the stork score fairly evenly; but at walking the pelican is left behind at once. This makes one suspect the stork's honesty. The pelican has a good beak and wings, and pays for them, like an honest bird, out of its legs, just as the ostrich pays for its neck and legs out of its wings. But the stork is abnormally lucky in beak, neck, legs, and wings together, and even then has material left to lay out in superfluous knobs and wens to hang round its neck, which leads to a suspicion that many of its personal fittings belong properly to some other bird. I've a notion that the unlucky kiwi might identify some of the property.



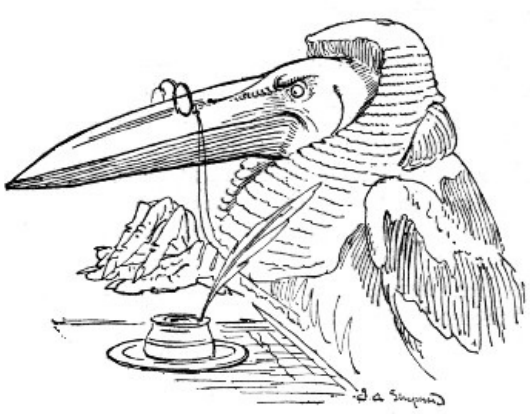
THE PELICAN LEFT.

ARMY.

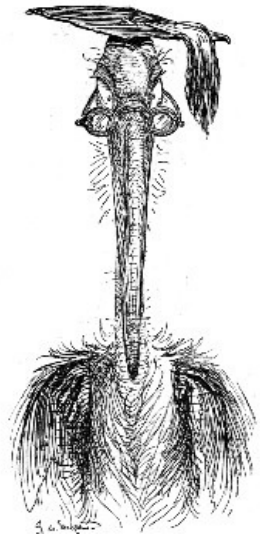
Perhaps the adjutant should be acknowledged king of the conkavians. Billy, the Zoo adjutant, has, I believe, no doubt on the subject at all. Billy is an ornament to the military profession—a very fine fellow, with a thing on the back of his neck like a Tangerine orange, and a wen on the front of it, which he can blow out whenever he wants to amuse himself, and everything else handsome about him. He is an old soldier, too, is Billy, having been Adjutant of the Regent's Park Conkavian Corps for seventeen years; but if you knew nothing of his age, still you would call Billy an old soldier—upon a little acquaintance with his habits. [Pg 250]

There seems no valid reason why the professional aspirations of the stork should be restricted to the army. If an adjutant, why not a dean? Why not a proctor? There is the making of a most presentable don about a stork; and I have caught a stork in an attitude of judicial meditation that might do honour to any bench. There is no reason why "sober as a judge" should not be made to read "sober as a stork," except that the stork is the

more solemn creature of the two; and I think that some species of stork—say the marabou, for instance—might fairly claim brevet rank as judge, after the example of the adjutant. The elevation of a beak to the bench might be considered an irregular piece of legal procedure; but, bless you, it's nothing unusual with a stork. Put any bench with something to eat on it anywhere within reach of a stork's beak in this place, and you shall witness that same elevation, precedent or no precedent.



LAW.



UNIVERSITIES.

A common white stork hasn't half the solid gravity of an adjutant or a marabou. He has a feline habit of expressing his displeasure by blowing and swearing—a habit bad and immoral in a cat, but worse in a stork accustomed to Church. Church, by-the-bye, is the keeper of all the conkavians, as well as of the herons, the flamingoes, the ibises, the egrets, and a number of other birds with names more difficult to spell. It is impossible to treat disrespectfully a man with such widespread responsibilities as this, or there might be a temptation to mention that he is not an unusually high Church, although his services are not always simple, often involving a matter of doctorin'. But, then, some people will say anything, temptation or none. And after all, it is pleasant to know that, whatever a stork or a pelican wants, he always goes to Church.

CHURCH.

This being the case, there is a proverb about cleanliness that makes one wonder why the marabou stork doesn't wash himself. It isn't as though he never wanted it. I have a horrible suspicion about this philosophic old sloven. I believe his profession of philosophic contemplation is assumed, because it is the easiest excuse for indolence. Now, a pelican is not a bird of graceful outline, but he *is* careful about his feathers. The pelican is a scrupulous old Dutchman, and the stork is an uncleanly old Hindu. And uncleanly he must be left, for it takes a deal to shame a stork. You can't shame a bird that wraps itself in a convenient philosophy. "Look here—look at me!" you can imagine a pelican cleanliness-missionary saying to the stork. "See how white and clean I keep all my feathers!" "Um," says the stork, "it only makes 'em a different colour." "But observe! I just comb through my pinions with my beak, so, and they all lie neat and straight!" "Well, and what's the good of that?" grunts the stork. "And then you see," says the pelican, ignoring the question, "with a good long beak you can reach everywhere, over your back and under your wings; see, I'm as clean under my wings as anywhere else, although it's covered up!" "Beastly vanity," growls the old Hindu, getting bored. "Then," continues the Dutchman, "you give yourself a good shake, and there you are!" "And then," says the philosopher sarcastically, "to-morrow, I suppose, you'll have to do it all over again?" "Of course!" "Oh! I hate a fool!" says the stork, and closes the lecture.

SWEARING.

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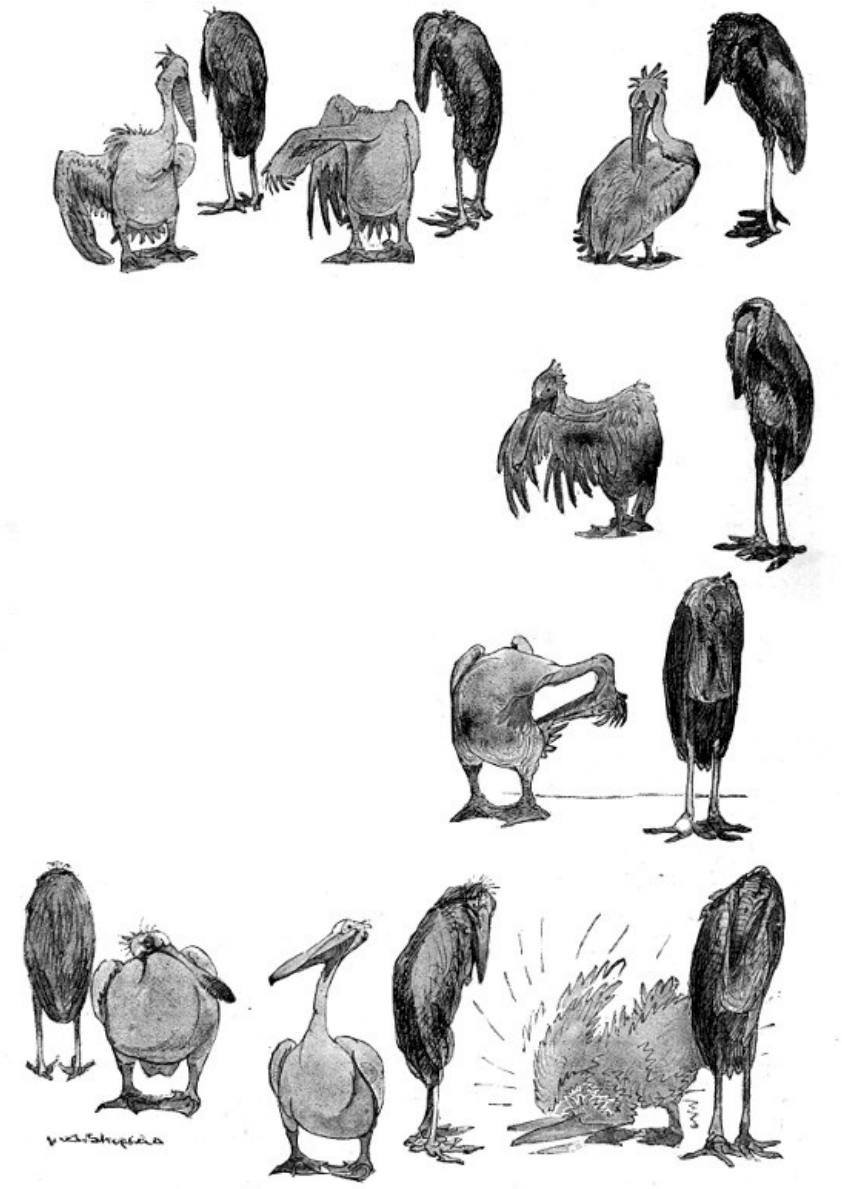
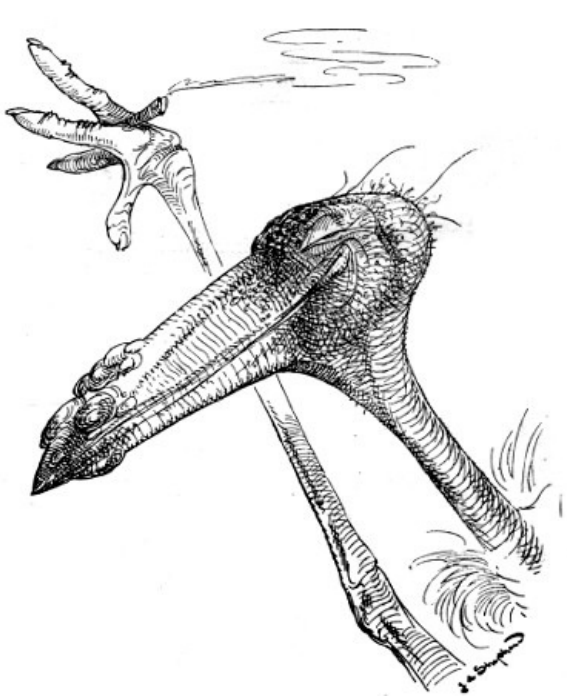


Thus the marabou. The ordinary white stork is comparatively respectable, and so is the adjutant—or comparatively almost respectable, let us say; you can't be too cautious in giving a personal character to a stork. For long, long, the stork has enjoyed a reputation for solemn wisdom, for [Pg 252] philosophical dignity. Now for the first time I venture to question this reputation—to impeach the stork as a humbug. It is easy to achieve a reputation for profound and ponderous wisdom, so long as one looks very solemn and says nothing. This is the stork's recipe. Go up to Billy here, or one of the marabous, as he stands with his shoulders humped up about his head, and make a joke. He won't see it. He will lift his eyebrows with a certain look of contempt, and continue to cogitate—about nothing. If the joke is a very bad pun—such a frightful pun that even a stork will see and resent it—perhaps he will chatter his beak savagely, with a noise like the clatter of the lid on an empty cigar-box; but he will continue his sham meditations. "Ah, my friend," he seems to say, "you are empty and frivolous—I cogitate the profounder immensities of esoteric cogibundity." The fact being that he is very seedy after his previous night's dissipation.

That is the chief secret of the stork's solemnity, I am convinced. He has a certain reputation to maintain before visitors, but after hours, when the gates are shut and the keepers are not there to see, the marabou stork is a sad dog. I haven't quite made up my mind what he drinks, but if he has brandies and sodas he leaves out too much soda. Look at that awful nose! It is long past the crimson and pimply stage—it is taking a decided tinge of blue. It *looks* worse than brandy and soda—almost like bad gin—but we will be as charitable as possible, and only call it brandy and soda.

I should like to see the marabou stork on his nightly ran-tan, if only to gloat over his lapse of dignity, just as one would give much to see Benjamin Franklin with his face blacked, drunk and disorderly and being locked up. But, as a shocking example, the marabou is quite bad enough with his awful head in the morning; his awful head and his disreputable nose, that looks to want a good scraping. I respect Billy, the adjutant, for his long service and the Tangerine at the back of his neck. The ordinary stork (although he swears and snaps) I also respect, because the goody books used to tell pious lies about him. The whale-headed stork, which is also called the shoe-bird, I respect as a sort of relative of the shoo-fly that didn't bother somebody. But the marabou has forfeited all respect—converted it into nose-tint. I must talk to Church seriously about the marabou.



THE RAN-TAN.

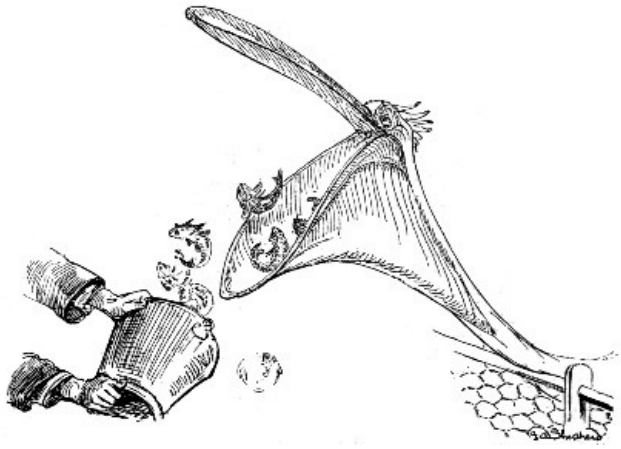
Now, the pelican is no humbug. There is nothing like concealment about his little dissipations; and he is perfectly sober. Any little irregularity at the pelican club just opposite the eastern aviary never goes beyond a quiet round or two for a little fish dinner. It is quite a select and a most proper club. Indeed, the first rule is, that if any loose fish be found on the club premises, he is got rid of at once by the first member who detects him. And the club spirit is such that disputes frequently occur among members for the honour of carrying out this salutary rule. The chairman of the club is an old crested pelican, who, by some oversight, has never been provided with a private name of his own. I think he should be called Peter, because he can take such a miraculous draught of fishes. It *is* a draught; you know—a pelican doesn't eat fishes—he drinks them down in bulk. For Peter, a dozen or so fresh herrings is a mere swill round of the mouth. [Pg 253]

A QUIET ROUND OR TWO.

Peter walks about the club premises with much dignity, deferred to on all sides by the other members. His kingship is rarely disputed, having been achieved by the sort of conquest most familiar in the pelican club; and his divine right is as much respected as his tremendous left.

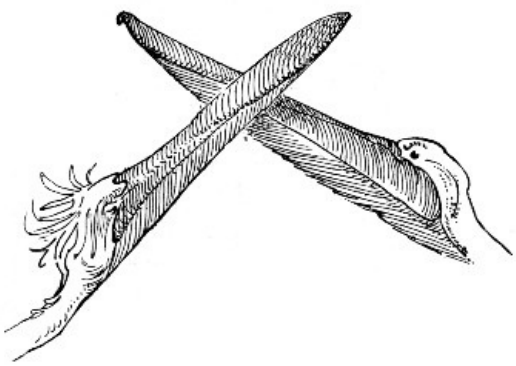
A pelican never bears malice; he hasn't time, especially now, with competition so keen in the fish business, and Church's fish pails only of the ordinary size. There is never any ill-feeling after a little spar, and each proceeds, in the most amicable way, to steal some other pelican's fish. A spar at this club, by-the-bye, is a joyous and hilarious sight. Two big birds with stumpy legs and top-heavy beaks, solemnly prancing and manœuvring before one another with an accompaniment of valiant gobbles and a punctuation of occasional pecks—a gleesome spectacle.

PETER.



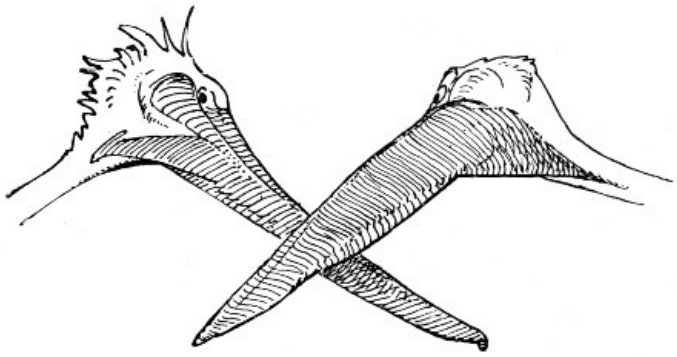
A SWILL ROUND.

Another sport much exhibited at the pelican club is that of the broadsword. The school of fence is that of Mr. Vincent Crummies—one—two—three—four—over; one—two—three—four—under. You see, when a dozen or two birds with beaks a couple of feet long or so get together in a small area, and now and again rush all in the same direction for fish, fencing is certain to develop, sooner or later. So here you have it, *secundum artem*—one—two—three—four—over; one—two—three—four—under; and although none have yet attained the Crummleian degree of knocking out sparks, there is a deal of hollow noise, as of thumping on a wooden box. But there is never any after-malice, and in less than five minutes either combatant will swallow a fish rightfully belonging to the other, with perfect affability. [Pg 254]



There is a good deal of the philosopher about the pelican, and of a more genuine sort than characterizes the stork. The pelican always makes the best of a bad job, without going into an unnecessary tantrum over it. If another member of the club snatches a fish first, the pelican doesn't bother, but devotes his attention to the next that Church throws; a fish in the pouch is worth a shoal in somebody else's. Now and again Peter loses his temper for a moment if the others catch the first snack, and lays about him with his bill—but then, when a fellow's chairman, and a lot of other fellows come snatching the lunch from under his nose—why, hang it all, you know.... But it is only for a moment, and Peter is soon in position for the next pouchful.

He is artful about this position. When Church appears at the rails with a pailful of fish most of the members rush to those rails, jostle together and shove their beaks through them and over them—any way to get nearer the pail. But the chairman knows very well that Church doesn't throw the fish outside the rails, but into the inclosure, somewhere near the middle; and near the middle the sagacious Peter waits, to his early profit—unless Church is unusually slow about throwing the fish, in which case Peter is apt to let his excitement steal his



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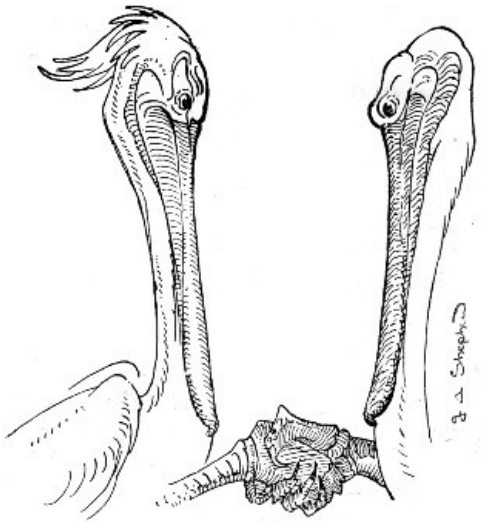
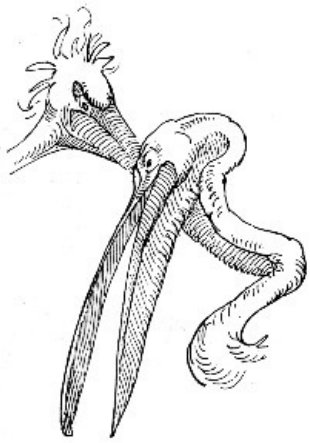


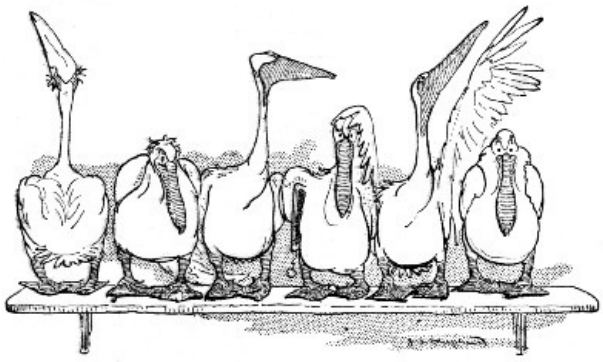
sagacity, and to rush into the pell-mell, anxious to investigate the delay.



A LITTLE SOLEING AND HEELING.

There is a deal of excellent wear in a pelican. One has been here about thirty years, and two more have been established on the same premises for a quarter of a century. All these three are in capital working repair and will probably last, with a patch or two, and a little soleing and heeling, for a century or two more; no respectable pelican is ever bowled out for less than three figures.

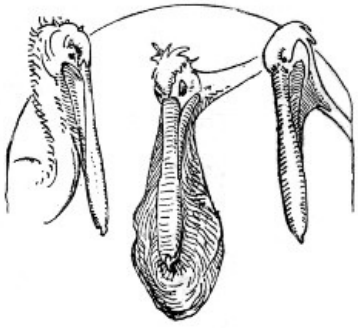
In the winter the club takes up its quarters in the shed behind the inclosure; a shed sumptuously furnished with certain benches and forms, whereon the club stands in rows, with a general appearance of a number of very solemn naughty boys in a Board school. In winter, too, Church will often put his bucketful of fish on the ground, so that the club may dine in a clubbier way. But whether you watch this club feeding together from the pail, each member doing his best to put away the whole pailful at a gulp, or whether you observe them playing a sort of greedy game of lacrosse with fish which Church throws them, you will be equally amazed that the pelican was used as a symbol of charity and brotherly love in early and middle Christian art.

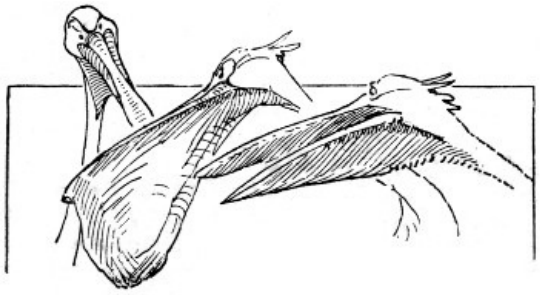


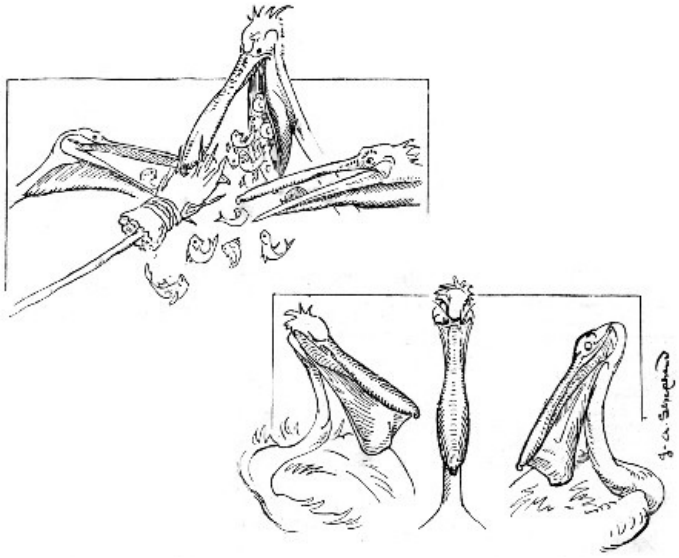
SCHOOL.

CLUB DINNER.

I have seen a pelican enact a most instructive moral lesson at a pail-dinner. Observe the bill and pouch of a pelican. The pouch is an elastic fishing-net, and the lower mandible is a mere flexible frame to carry it. Now, I have observed a pelican to make a bounce at the fish-pail, with outspread wings, and scoop the whole supply. But then his trouble began. The whole catch hung weightily low in the end of the pouch, and jerk and heave as he might, he could never lift the load at the end of that long beak sufficiently high to bolt it. Meanwhile, his friends collected about him [Pg 256] and remonstrated, with many flops and gobbles, betting him all his fish to nothing that he would lose it after all; this way they chased that bag, and that way, while the bagger, in much trepidation and with many desperate heaves, wildly sought remote corners away from his persecutors. Now, by the corner of the club premises stands an appliance, the emblem of authority, the instrument of justice, and the terror of the evilly-disposed pelican—a birch-broom. This, brandished in the hands of Church, caused a sudden and awful collapse of the drag-nets, an opening, a shower of fish and many snaps; wherefrom walked away many pelicans with fish, and one with none, who had looked to take all. The moral is plain to the verge of ugliness.







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A pelican has no tongue—or none to speak of. It is a mere little knob scarcely the size of a cherry. The long, long meditations of the pelican (lasting between feeding times) are given up to consideration whether or not the disgrace of this deficiency is counter-balanced by the greater capacity for fish which it gives the pouch. After all, it is only another instance of that commercial honesty which makes the pelican pay for his beak out of his legs; he gives his tongue for a pouch. There should be a legend of the pelican applying honestly to Adam to buy a pouch, and the wily stork waiting and waiting on the chance of snatching one without paying for it, until all had been served out; afterwards living all its life on earth in covetous dudgeon, unconsoled by its wealth of [Pg 257] beak, legs, wings, and neck, and pining hopelessly for the lost pouch. There are many legends of this sort which ought to exist, but don't, owing to the negligence of Indian solar myth merchants, or whoever it is has charge of that class of misrepresentation.

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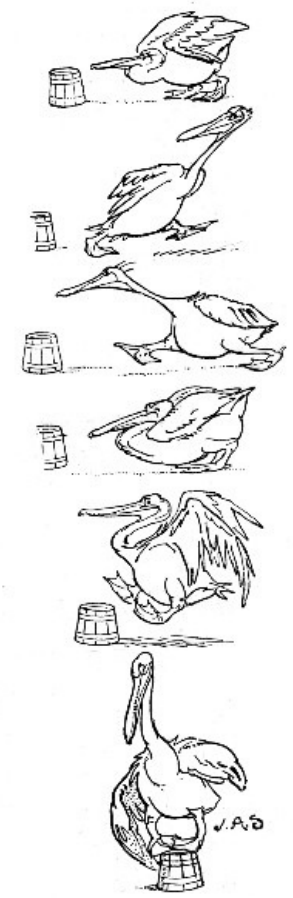
The pelican can fly, although you would never believe it, to look at the club members here. To a Zoo pelican a flight of two feet is an undertaking to be approached with much circumspection and preparation, and a summoning of resolution and screwing of courage proper to the magnitude of the feat. It takes a long time to learn to fly on to a bottom-up bucket. The Zoo pelican begins on a shadow—not a very dark one at first—and works his way up by jumping over, darker shadows to straws and pebbles, before he tries a bucket. The accomplished bucket-jumper makes a long preliminary survey and circumnavigation of his bucket before performing, and when he does begin it is with a number of wild rushes and irresolute stops. When at last he gets the proper length of run, and the right foot in front, and doesn't see anything to baulk him, he rises with a great effort, and all the lookers-on who don't know him stare up over the trees, and are astonished to find him, after all, only on the bucket. His pinions are cut, poor fellow! If they were not, what would become of the fishmongers' shops?



IX.—MAW-SAYAH: THE KEEPER OF THE GREAT BURMAN NAT.

By Charles J. Mansford, B.A.

I.

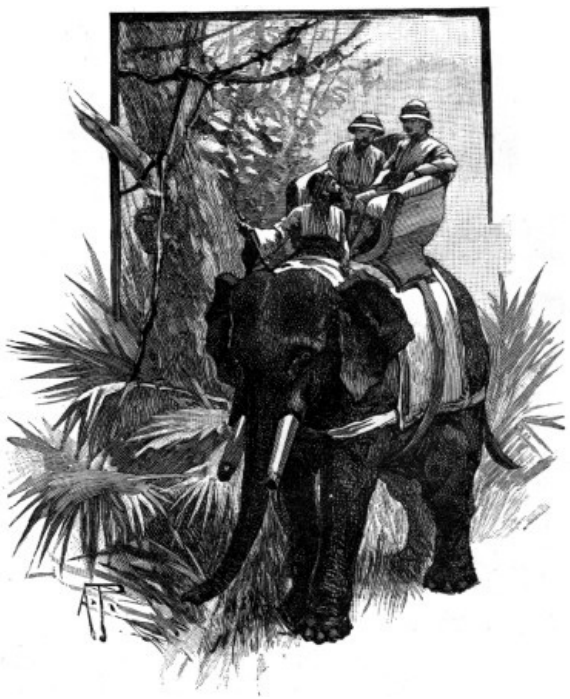
"The fine points of an elephant, sahib," said our guide Hassan, "are a colour approaching to white, the nails perfectly black, and an intact tail."

"I am glad to hear that an elephant has some qualities which recommend it," said Denviers, good-humouredly. "I should think that the one upon which we are riding is about as lazy as it is possible to be. I suppose slowness is an unusually good point, isn't it, Hassan?" The Arab, who was sitting before us on the elephant, gave it a stir with the sharply-pointed spear which he held in his hand to urge it on, and then glancing back at us, as we reclined lazily in the cushioned howdah, he said inquiringly: "Are the sahibs tired already of travelling thus? Yet we have fully two hours' journey before us."

"Hassan," I interposed, "this is a good opportunity for you to tell us exactly what you heard about that Maw-Sayah when we were at Bhamo. It is in consequence of that, indeed, that we are going to try to get among these strange Kachyens; but as we are not quite sure of the details, you may as well repeat them."

"The sahib shall be obeyed," responded our guide, and although careful to keep a good watch in front, he turned his body slightly towards us as he prepared to begin the narrative.

On reaching Burmah we stayed for several days in Rangoon, the Queen of the East as it is called nowadays, although only remarkable formerly for its famous monasteries of Talapoins and as a halting-place for the bands of pilgrims on their way to the mighty Shway Dagohn pagoda. Thence we journeyed up the Irawaddy, and having duly paid reverence to some of the nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine pagodas of Pagan—the outcast slaves of which city seemed a strange contrast to its otherwise absolute desertion—we continued our journey by steamer as far as Mandalay. Having endured the doubtful pleasure of a jaunt in a seatless, jolting bullock-carriage—the bruises from which were not easily forgotten—we eventually reached Bhamo, where Hassan entered into conversation with a hill-man. From the latter he learnt a strange story, which was later on told to us and the truth of which we hoped before long to fully test, for soon afterwards we set out on an elephant, our faithful guide in this new adventure again proving himself of the greatest service.



"THE SAHIB SHALL BE OBEYED."

"Now, Hassan," said Denviers, "we are quite ready to hear this story fully, but don't add any imaginary details of your own."

"By the Koran, sahib," began the Arab, "these are the words which were those of him to whom I spoke under the shade of the log stockade."

"Which are, of course, unimpeachable," responded Denviers. "Anyone could tell that from his shifty eyes, which failed to rest upon us fixed even for a minute when we spoke to him afterwards." The Arab seemed a little disconcerted at this, but soon continued:—

"The great Spirits or Nats, who guard the prosperity of Burmah, have become greatly incensed with the Kachyens, not because they failed to resist stoutly when the monarch was deposed a few years ago——"

"Then we are to have a modern story, this time, Hassan?" interrupted Denviers. "I quite expected that you would commence with some long worn-out tradition."

"The sahibs shall hear," the Arab went on. "No one who offends the Nats of Burmah need expect anything but evil to follow. There are the Nats of the sky, the Nats of the earth, the Nats of the Irawaddy, the Nats of the five hundred little rivers, and the thousand Nats which guarded the sacred person of the monarch——"

"Yes, Hassan," said Denviers, impatiently, "you mentioned them all before. We haven't time to hear the list enumerated now; go on about this one particular Nat which you say is causing such havoc among the hill-tribes."

"Patience, sahib. The Nats were justly roused to anger because the deposed monarch was not afterwards taken to the water's edge riding upon an elephant instead of in a bullock-carriage."

"Well, Hassan," said Denviers, "judging from our own experience the Nats seem to be pretty sensible, I must say—but how do they affect the peace of mind of the Kachyens?"

"Listen, sahib. High among the hills which may be seen stretching before us lies a village in which many of the Kachyens dwell, their occupation being sometimes that of tillers of the land, but more often consisting in planning and carrying out raids upon other hill-men, or of descending at times to the plains, and there looting the towns wherein dwell more peaceable tribes. In all their forays they had been successful, for whenever their trusty dahs or swords were drawn, those who opposed them invariably obtained the worst of the encounter. So powerful did they become that at last those dwelling in the plains—Shans, Karenns, and Talaings, too—made no resistance against their attacks; and when they saw the produce of their fields carried away, thought themselves happy not to have been slain. The reason why the Kachyens became so successful in all they undertook was that a powerful forest Nat placed them under its protection, and hence they could not be harmed by their foes.

"Now it chanced that the King was in great danger through following the advice of his impetuous ministers, whereupon he summoned the Kachyens to his assistance—for their fame as warriors had reached his ears long before. But they, confident of securing their own safety whatever happened to the monarch, refused to obey his command to march against the Burman foes. The consequence was that when the indignity which I have mentioned was offered to the deposed monarch, the Nats throughout Burmah were furious with that one who ruled the village in which the Kachyens dwelt, and they sent some of their number to destroy it. The latter, however, appeased them by making a grim promise, which has been only too faithfully kept.

"A few days afterwards a hill-man, who was clearing a part of the land on the woody slope of the height, *saw the Nat*, which had never before been visible, and, terrified at the strange form which it had assumed, he ran hastily to the rest of the tribe, and, gathering them together, held a consultation as to what should be done to appease it. Some suggested that upon every tree trunk should be scratched appealing messages, which the Nat might read; others were in favour of placing a huge heap of spears and swords near the spot where the embodied Nat had been seen in order that it might be tempted to destroy all those who urged it to injure them. The messages and weapons, however, when placed for the Nat to observe did no good, for one dreadful night a rattling was heard of the bamboos, which lay before one of the Kachyen's huts, and the man, going hastily to see what caused it, was swiftly carried away in the darkness without apparently uttering a single cry! For many nights in succession a similar scene was enacted, for he at whose door the dire summons came dared not refuse to answer it lest the whole household might perish. [Pg 260]

"Nothing more was ever seen of those thus strangely carried off, and the Kachyens, each of whom feared that his own end might come next, determined to consult some famous Buddhist priests who dwelt not far from them, and who held charge over the famous marble slabs which the great War Prince of Burmah had caused to be engraved concerning their illustrious traditions. The man whom ye saw me conversing with by the stockade was the one whom the tribe intrusted with the task; but the priests, after much consideration among themselves of the object of his visit, refused to have anything to do with such a tragic affair, and thereupon dismissed their suppliant.

"THE BUDDHIST PRIESTS."

"This Kachyen, when sorrowfully returning towards the hills, fearing that the tribe would destroy him because of his non-success, chanced to meet on his way a Mogul, to whom he repeated the story. The latter, laying his hand on his red-dyed and fierce-looking beard, advised the Kachyen to enter a hole in the mountain side and to consult a famous Maw-Sayah, or juggler, who dwelt there. This juggler promised assistance if the tribe would pay him a great reward in the event of his success, and when they agreed to this he entered the village and waited for dusk to arrive. Again the dreadful rattling was heard, and another Kachyen stepped out to meet his fate. None of the tribe dared to look at what transpired, except the juggler, and he too disappeared! The next morning, however, he came into the village and called its inhabitants together. When they had solemnly agreed to his conditions, he stated that the Nat was bent upon destroying them all, and that to attempt to escape by means of flight would only lead to quicker death. Then he told them what the result of his intercession for them had been.

"The Nat had been persuaded to destroy only one victim on each seventh evening at dusk, and had appointed him to see that certain conditions were not broken. He was to have a hut at his disposal, and into this the men were to go by lot, and thus the Nat would obtain a victim when the time came round. They were forbidden to wander about after sunset, and whatever noises were made not to hearken to them, since the Maw-Sayah would see that the others were unharmed. So long had this dreadful destruction lasted that more than one-half of the men in the Kachyen village, or town, as it might well be called from the large number who inhabited it, had perished, and yet the Nat still demanded a victim, and the Maw-Sayah is there to see that the compact is fulfilled. The man who told this story, sahibs, declares that the keeper of the Nat has by this means obtained sway over the Kachyens to such an extent that they have become his abject slaves, for the custom of drawing lots has been abolished, and he selects whom he will to sacrifice to the Nat. By some means this Kachyen offended the Maw-Sayah, who thereupon condemned him, but he, in terror of the sudden and silent death in store for him, fled to Bhamo, [Pg 261] where he lives in momentary fear of destruction. Such then, sahibs, is the story, and it is to see this Maw-Sayah and the Nat at their fell work to-night that even now our faces are turned to the high land before us, up which we must climb, for there is but one narrow pathway leading to the village."

Hassan ceased, and then Denviers turned to me as he said:—

"I think that this Maw-Sayah, as Hassan calls him, has about as much faith in Nats as we have. It suits his purpose to league himself with something mysterious; whatever it is we will try to find out," and he glanced at the weapons which we carried.

II.

"The sahibs must dismount here", said Hassan shortly afterwards, and following to the ground our guide, we began to climb the mountain path which stretched before us. The ascent was exceedingly steep, and several times we stopped to rest after pushing our way through the tangled masses which almost hid the path, which was itself cut here and there apparently through the rocky strata. When we had reached about three-fourths of our journey Hassan stopped and pointed out to us one of the thatched roofs of a hut, which seemed in the distance scarcely noticeable until his keen eyesight discovered it. The village, we found, lay a little to the left of the mountain path, for on nearing the summit we found ourselves passing through a peculiar avenue of trees interspersed with long bamboo poles. From the tops of the latter there were stretched across the approach strong, rough-looking cords, which supported various uncouth emblems, and among which were large triangles, circles, and stars, cut apparently out of the stems of huge bamboos. After traversing this avenue for nearly three hundred yards we saw the tree trunks which Hassan had mentioned, and which were deeply scarred with cabalistic messages to the fierce Nat, which we could not of course understand. Affixed to some of the trees farther on we saw a number of spears and dahs mingled with shorter weapons, the latter being made of some species of hard wood, and close to them we observed the skulls of several large animals, one of which we judged was that of an elephant.

In spite of the fact that the village was a large one, the buildings were of a very primitive construction, being made of bamboos with thatched coverings, reaching almost to the piles on which the huts were placed. We did not observe any openings made to serve as windows, the only ones noticeable being those by which the Kachyens entered, placed above a bamboo ladder, which seemed to, serve instead of steps. Although the sun had scarcely set, the village was wrapped in a strange silence, the sound of our footsteps alone being heard. The smoke that seemed to be forcing its way through stray holes in the thatch amply convinced us, however, that the inhabitants were within doors, and, turning to our Arab guide, I asked him if he could distinguish among the many huts the one in which we expected to find the Maw-Sayah. He seemed a little uncertain at first, but after wandering through the village together we returned, and then Hassan, who had been very observant the whole time, pointed to one of the rudely-constructed huts and said:— [Pg 262]

"THE AVENUE."

"I think that is the one into which we seek to enter; it is situated according to the position in which the Kachyen said it was, and, besides, it bears a strange proof of the story which ye have listened to with such ill-concealed disbelief."

"Why do you think that is the hut, Hassan?" I asked, for, to my eyes, no difference between that and the others close to it was distinguishable.

"If the sahib will look at the bamboo ladder and observe it carefully, he will see that it is unlike the others round," said the Arab.

"I suppose you refer to these deep scratches upon it, don't you, Hassan?" asked Denviers, as he pointed to some marks, a few of which were apparently fairly recent.

"The sahib guesses rightly," answered our guide. "You will remember that the Kachyen stated to me that the Nat is accustomed to obtain its victim now from the abode of the Maw-Sayah; those marks, then, have been made by it when it dragged its human prey out of the hut." We gazed curiously at the marks for a few minutes, then Denviers broke the silence by asking the Arab why it was that the Nat made marks at all.

"I should have thought that such a powerful spirit could prevent such evidences of its presence becoming observed," he continued. "My respect for it is certainly not increased by seeing those deep scars; they seem to be made by something which has sharp claws."

"That is because of the shape which it has assumed, sahib," said the Arab, "for the Nats have wondrous powers——"

"Very likely, Hassan," interposed Denviers; "I suppose they can do exactly what they like, can they not?" I was much surprised at the limit which was, however, placed upon their powers by our guide, for he responded quickly:—

"Not altogether, sahib. There is one thing that a Nat cannot do, according to the reports of these Kachyens, and that is, they are unable to move in a direction which is not straight, and hence they are careful to avoid rough ground, where tangled masses and boulders bar their progress, so they usually frequent the open avenues, such as the one which we have just passed through. The symbols above it and the writings and weapons are all for the Nat's benefit."

"And the elephant's skull?" asked Denviers, irreverently. "What is that put up for?" The Arab, however, had an explanation ready, for he promptly replied:—

"That indicates where the supplies of food are to be found when the Nat requires any." Denviers turned to me for a moment as he said:—

"I should have thought it a good plan, then, to have put it upon the hut of this Maw-Sayah whom we are about to interview. See that your weapons are in good order, Harold, we may soon need them." Giving a cautious look at my belt and the weapons thrust into it, I followed Denviers, who had mounted the short bamboo ladder, and was endeavouring to obtain admission to the hut. We heard a harsh sound within, then the cry of someone apparently terror-stricken, and a moment afterwards we had pushed past the Maw-Sayah, who by no means was willing to allow us to enter the rude dwelling.

The single room, which seemed to constitute the hut, was extremely low and bare of furniture entirely. A few bamboos were spread in one part of it, while at the far end was a fire, the light from which was partly obscured by the smoke, which almost suffocated us, so thickly did it roll up and then spread through the hut. Near the door stood a man scarcely clothed, upon whose face we saw a look of the most abject terror, for, as we surmised, the noise of our entry was mistaken by him for the approach of the fell thing to which he was condemned by the Maw-Sayah. We moved towards the latter as he threw himself down by the fire, which he had only left to see who it was that came unbidden to the hut where to enter was the preceding event to death. He was clothed in a long blue strip of linen, which wound round his waist and covered his body, partly leaving his dark chest uncovered. His features were stamped with an appearance of supreme cunning, his oblique eyes reminding us of a Chinaman, while the fierce look in them as they glared at us from either side of an aquiline nose, which betrayed his Burmese descent, did not increase our confidence in the man as he stretched out his bony hands over the fire as if for warmth, although outside the hut we had found the heat almost insupportable.

"What do ye seek?" he demanded, as he looked into our faces in turn and seemed astonished at our strange features.

"We are travellers who wished to see a Kachyen village," responded Denviers, "and we further desired to see some of its inhabitants; but as none were visible we entered this hut, even against your will. Where are the people who dwell here?" The man whom my companion addressed pointed to the Kachyen near the doorway, as he responded:— [Pg 263]

"There is one of them, and in a short time even he will never be seen again."

"WHAT DO YE SEEK?"

"Can you give us food?" hazarded Hassan, in order to get the man to continue his conversation, for the Arab evidently was expecting that the Nat would soon arrive upon the scene. The Maw-Sayah rose and pointed to the entrance as he cried:—

"That way ye came, that way shall ye depart. Food for ye I have not, nor would I give it if I had." I turned to Denviers and said in a low tone:—

"What shall we do, Frank? I don't think our opportunity of seeing what may transpire will be as good within the hut as without it. Whatever the solution is to this affair, if we are outside we shall see this Kachyen dragged away, and may further watch the approach of whatever caused those strange marks which we observed."

"One thing is clear," said my companion, "we will attempt to save this intended victim, at all events. I expect that if we tried we could get him away easily enough, but that plan would not be of much service. We must attack this being, whatever it is, with which this Maw-Sayah is leagued. How I should like to hand him over as a victim instead of that trembling captive by the door. It shows to what extent this juggler has acquired power over this tribe, for I notice that his captive is unbound, and is certainly a much finer built man than the other."

"It wants less than an hour to dusk, sahibs," said Hassan, who had listened carefully to our remarks; "if we were to station ourselves a little away from the hut we could see what took place, and if the Nat were mortal we might attack it."

Denviers shrugged his shoulders at the Arab's supposition as he responded:—

"There is little doubt, Hassan, that the Nat would smart if that keen blade of yours went a little too near it, but I think your plan is a good one, and we will adopt it, as it falls in with what has already been said." We gave a final look at the crafty face of the man who was still seated by the fire, and then brushing past the captive we made for the open village again.

"I feel sorry for this Kachyen," said Denviers. "He will have a dreadful five minutes of it, I expect; but it is our only way of preventing, if possible, such an affair from occurring again." On leaving the hut we stationed ourselves almost opposite to it, and then began to keep watch. What we should see pass up the avenue we could only surmise, but our suppositions certainly did not lead us to imagine in the faintest degree the sight which before long was destined to completely startle us.

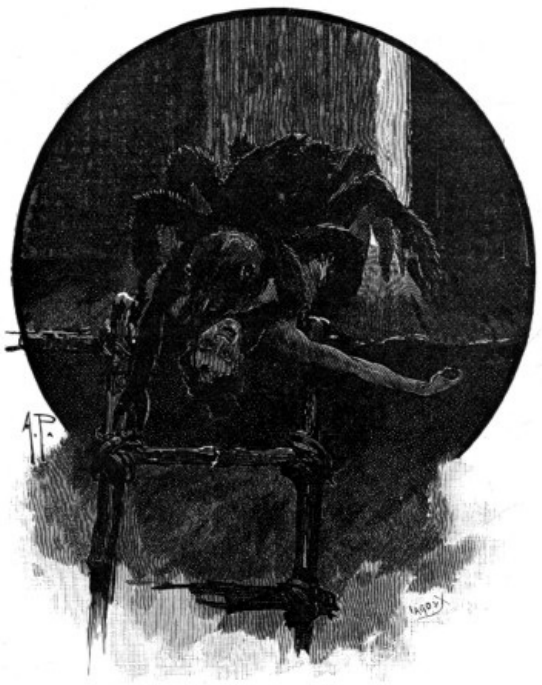
III.

The grey dusk was becoming night when among the dark stems of the trees we saw some black form move over the ground. We could scarcely distinguish it as it crawled over the bamboo logs and made a rasping noise as it clung to the ladder. The door of the hut yielded to it, and a minute after it again emerged and bore with it the terrified Kachyen. We crept after it as it dragged its captive down the avenue, striving our utmost to make out its shape. One thing we could tell, which was that the creature was not upright; but our movement behind it was apparently known, for it struggled to move quicker over the ground with its human burden. [Pg 264]

"Shall I shoot it?" I whispered to Denviers, as my nerves seemed to be almost unstrung at the unknowableness of the creeping thing.

"You would more likely kill the man," he responded. "Follow as noiselessly as you can—it will not let its prey escape, be sure of that. Once we track it to its haunt we will soon dispatch it, big and fierce as it seems."

We drew nearer and nearer to it, until it had passed half-way down the avenue, then it seemed to become lost to our view, although we were, as we knew, close to it. I felt Denviers' hand upon my shoulder, and then he whispered:—



"IT AGAIN EMERGED."

"The Kachyen is being dragged up a tree just in front—look!" I could just distinguish something moving up the trunk, when suddenly the captive, who had hitherto been apparently paralyzed with terror, uttered a cry and then must have succeeded in disengaging himself from the dreadful thing that had held him, for the noise of someone falling to the ground was heard, and a minute after we distinguished the form of a man rushing headlong back to the village for safety.

We did not anticipate such an event, and were contemplating a search for the captor of the Kachyen, when a cold sweat broke out upon me, for the clammy claws of the man-hunter had touched me! The sensation which seized me was only of short duration, for I felt myself released just as Denviers said:—

"Harold, the Kachyen has fled, and his captor, determined to secure its prey, has betaken its crawling body after him. If only we had a light! I saw something like a black shadow moving onwards; get your pistol ready and follow." I just distinguished Denviers as he passed on in front of me, Hassan coming last. When we reached the hut of the Maw-Sayah we stopped at once, for, from the cry which came from it, we rightly surmised that the terrible seeker for human prey had made for this place, thinking, in its dull intelligence, that its captive had returned. We thrust ourselves into the hut, and saw by the red firelight a sanguinary contest between the Maw-Sayah and the black object which we had endeavoured to track. Thinking that the Kachyen was being destroyed, the juggler had not fastened his door, and the enraged man-eater had seized him as he rested on the ground, quite at its mercy!

The Maw-Sayah was struggling with his bony hands to extricate himself from the clutches of a monstrous tree-spider! We had seen, on an island in the South Seas, several cocoa-nut crabs, and this reptile somewhat resembled them, but was even larger. Grasping the juggler with several of its long, furry-looking claws, it fixed its glaring red eyes in mad anger upon him as he grasped in each hand one of its front pair of legs, which were armed with strong, heavy-looking pincers. He besought us wildly to shoot, even if we killed him, held as he was by his relentless foe. [Pg 265]

"Harold," cried my companion, "keep clear, and look out for yourself when I fire at this reptile; most likely it will make for one of us." He drew right close to it, and thrusting the barrel of his pistol between its eyes touched the trigger. The explosion shook the hut, its effect upon the spider being to cause it to rush frantically about the floor, dragging the Maw-Sayah as if he were some slight burden scarcely observable.

"A RELENTLESS FOE."

"You missed it!" I cried. "Look out, Hassan, guard the doorway!" The Arab stood, sword in hand, waiting for it to make for the entrance, while Denviers exclaimed:—

"I shot it through the head!" and a minute afterwards the trueness of his aim was manifest, for the claws released, and the Maw-Sayah, wounded badly, but saved, stood free from the muscular twitchings of the dead spider.

"You scoundrel!" said Denviers to him, "I have a good mind to serve you the same. You deserve to die as so many of these simple-minded, credulous Kachyens have done." I thought for one brief second that my companion was about to kill the juggler, for through all our adventures I had never seen him so thoroughly roused. I stood between them; then, when Denviers quickly

recovered his self-command, I turned to the Maw-Sayah and asked:—

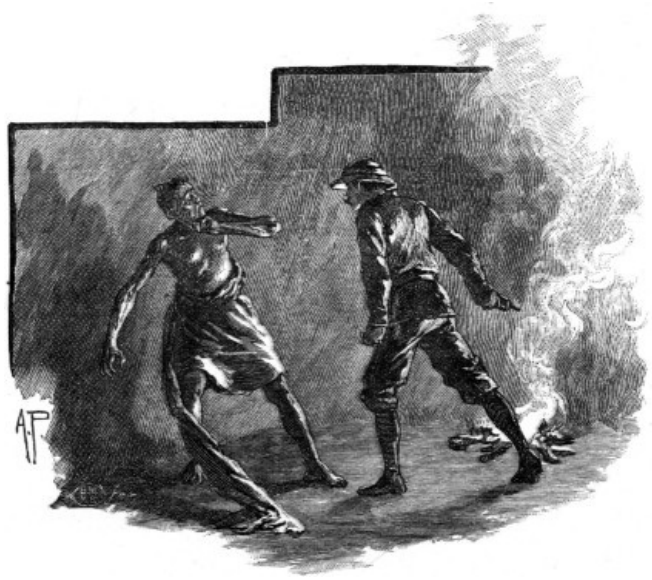
"If we spare your life, will you promise to leave this village and never to return?" He turned his evil-looking but scared face towards us eagerly as he replied:—

"I will do whatever you wish." Denviers motioned to him to rest upon the ground, which he did, then turning to me, said:—

"It is pretty apparent what this juggler has done. The man who first reported the discovery of this Nat, as the foolish Kachyens call it, simply disturbed a monstrous spider which had lived in the trees which he felled—that accounts for his seeing it. Finding animal food scarce, the reptile ventured into this village and tried to get into one of the huts. Its exertions were rewarded by the Kachyen coming to the door, whom it accordingly seized. To continue its plan, which proved so successful, needed very little reasoning power on the part of such a cunning creature. No doubt this Maw-Sayah purposely left the door of his hut unfastened each seventh night, and the spider thus became accustomed to seek for its victim there, I daresay it came the other nights, but the juggler was then careful enough to keep his hut well fastened."

"What do the sahibs propose to do?" interrupted Hassan. Denviers turned to him, as he responded:—

"We will wait for daybreak; then, having dragged the dead spider out where the Kachyens may see that it is no longer able to harm them, we will take this Maw-Sayah down the mountain path away from the village as poor as he came." [Pg 266]



"YOU SCOUNDREL!"

"A good plan," I assented, and we followed it out, eventually leaving the juggler, and climbing once more into the howdah upon the elephant, which we found close to the spot where we had left it, secured from wandering far away by the rope which Hassan had used to hinder its movements.

We entered Bhamo, and while we took a much-needed rest, our guide—as we afterwards learnt—searched for and found the fugitive Kachyen, who, on hearing that his safety was secured, hastily departed to the village to rejoice with the rest of his tribe that the so-called Nat would not do them any more injury.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair. [Pg 267]

III.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

"OBSTRUCTION."

It is thirteen years since a new Parliament last blithely started on its way with Mr. Gladstone sitting in the seat of the Premier. Since March, 1880, a great deal has happened, not least in the change of circumstances under which the business of the House of Commons is conducted. The majority of the House of Commons may be Liberal or Conservative, according to a passing flood of conviction on the part of the constituencies. When presumptuous hands are stretched forth to touch the Ark of its procedure, its instincts are all Tory. For more than two hundred years preceding the advent of a Tory Ministry in 1886, this was so. Mr. Gladstone, driven to desperation in the second Session of the Parliament of 1880-5, endeavoured to reform procedure so that obstruction might be fought on even terms. He was met by such resolute and persistent opposition from the Conservative side that, even with an overwhelming majority at his back, he succeeded only in tinkering the pot. Oddly enough, it was left for the Conservatives when they came into office to revolutionize the system upon which, through the ages, Parliamentary business had been carried on.

There was nothing in the reforms more startling to the old Parliamentarian than the proposal automatically to close debate at midnight. A dozen years ago members of the House of Commons assembled at four o'clock for prayers. Questions began at half-past four, and no one could say at what hour of the night or of the next morning the cry "Who goes home?" might echo through the lobby. In those days Mr. O'Donnell was master of the situation, and he had many imitators. A debate carried on through several nights might seem to be approaching a conclusion. The Leader of the Opposition, rising between eleven o'clock and midnight, spoke in a crowded House. The Premier, or his lieutenant, followed, assuming to wind up the debate. Members wearied of the long sitting were prepared to go forth to the division lobby; when from below the gangway on the left there uprose a familiar figure, and there was heard a well-known voice.

These usually belonged to Mr. O'Donnell bent upon vindicating the right of a private member to interpose when the constituted authorities of the House had agreed in the opinion that a debate had been continued long enough. A roar of execration from the fagged legislators greeted the intruder. He expected this, and was in no degree perturbed. In earliest practice he had a way of dropping his eye-glass as if startled by the uproar, and searched for it with puzzled, preoccupied expression, apparently debating with himself what this outburst might portend. He did not love the British House of Commons, and delighted in thwarting its purposes. But he knew what was due to it in the way of respect, and, however angry passions might rise, however turbulent the scene, he would never address it looking upon it with the naked eye. As his eye-glass was constantly tumbling out, and as search for it was preternaturally deliberate, it played an appreciable part in the prolongation of successive Sessions.

F. H. O'DONNELL.

"EYE-GLASS PLAY."

What has become of Frank Hugh now, I wonder? Vanishing from the House of Commons, he reappeared for a while on the scene, characteristically acting the part of the petrel that heralded the storm Mr. Pigott ineffectively tried to ride. It must be a consolation to Mr. O'Donnell, in his retirement, wherever it is passed, to reflect on the fact that it was he who directly brought about the appointment of the Parnell Commission, with all it effected. His action for libel brought against the *Times* preluded and inevitably led up to the formal investigation of the famous Charges and Allegations.

The member for Dungarvan was, in his day, the most thoroughly disliked man in the House of Commons, distaste for Mr. Parnell and for Mr. Biggar in his early prime being softened by contrast with his subtler provocation. An exceedingly clever debater, he was a phrase maker, some of whose epigrams Mr. Disraeli would not have disowned. He was a parliamentary type of ancient standing, and apparently ineradicable growth. In the present House of Commons fresh developments are presented by Mr. Seymour Keay and Mr. Morton. These are distinct varieties, but from the unmistakable root. Both are gifted with boundless volubility, unhampered by ordinary considerations of coherency and cogency. Neither is influenced by that sense of the dread majesty of the House of Commons which keeps some members dumb all through their parliamentary life, and to the last, as in the case of Mr. Bright, weighs upon even great orators. The difference between the older and the new development is that whilst over Mr. O'Donnell's intentional and deliberate vacuity of speech there gleamed frequent flashes of wit, Mr. Morton and Mr. Keay are only occasionally funny, and then the effect was undesigned.

Since we have these two gentlemen still with us, it would be rash to say that if Mr. O'Donnell could revisit the glimpses of Big Ben he would find his occupation gone. He would certainly

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY.

discover that his opportunities had been limited, and would have to recommence practice under greatly altered conditions. One of the former member for Dungarvan's famous achievements took place in the infancy of the Parliament of 1880-5, and, apart from its dramatic interest, is valuable as illustrating the change effected in parliamentary procedure by the New Rules. On that particular June night the paper was loaded with questions in a fashion unfamiliar in the last Parliament, though there are not lacking signs of renewed activity since political parties changed places. Question No. 23 stood in the name of Mr. O'Donnell, and contained in his best literary style a serious indictment of M. Challemel-Lacour, just nominated by the French Government as their representative at the Court of St. James.

O'DONNELL'S LAST APPEARANCE.

Sir Charles Dilke, then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made categorical reply, directly traversing all the points in the indictment. When he resumed his seat Mr. O'Donnell rose in his usual deliberate manner, captured his eye-glass, and having fixed it to his satisfaction, remarked in his drawling voice that it was "perfectly impossible to accept the explanation of the Government." Being interrupted with cries of "Order! Order!" he quietly played his trump card: "If I am not allowed to explain," he said, "I will conclude with a motion."

MR. A. C. MORTON.

SIR CHARLES DILKE.

The House howled again, but it was a cry of despair. Mr. O'Donnell, they knew, had the whip hand. In those good old days he, or any other member desiring to obstruct ordinary procedure, might, in the middle of questions, start a debate on any subject under the sun. This and other outrages were doubtless recalled by the House of Commons when revising its Rules. It then ordered that no member might, during the progress of questions, interpose with a motion on which to found debate. If, in this current month of March, Mr. O'Donnell, being a member of the House of Commons, had wanted to attack M. Challemel-Lacour, he must needs have waited till the last question on the paper was disposed of, and could then have moved the adjournment only if his description of the question—as one of urgent public importance—was approved by the Speaker, and if, thereafter, forty members rose to support the request for a hearing.

In June, 1880, all that was left for the crowded House to do was to roar with resentment. Mr. O'Donnell was used to this incentive, and had it been withheld would probably have shown signs of failing vigour. As it was, he produced a pocket-handkerchief, took down his eye-glass and carefully polished it, whilst members yelled and tossed about on their seats with impotent fury. Under the existing Rules this scene, if it had ever opened, would have been promptly blotted out. The closure would have been moved, probably a division taken, and the business of the evening would have gone forward. There was no closure in those days, and Mr. Gladstone, after hurried consultation with Sir Erskine May, hastily moved that Mr. O'Donnell be not heard.

A shout of savage exultation rising from every bench, save those on which the Irish members sat, hailed a stroke that promised to deliver the House from the thraldom of Mr. O'Donnell at the very moment when its chains had taken a final twist. In ordinary circumstances this resolution would have played the part of the as yet unconsecrated closure. A division would have followed, the motion carried by an overwhelming majority, and Mr. O'Donnell would have been temporarily shut up.

But those were not ordinary times. The Fourth Party was in the prime of its vigour. Lord Randolph Churchill's quick eye discovered an opening for irritating Mr. Gladstone and damaging the Government by making what should have been a business night one long turmoil. Mr. Parnell, whilst disclaiming any personal sympathy with Mr. O'Donnell, moved the adjournment of the debate, and poor, placid Sir Stafford Northcote, egged on by the young bloods below the

gangway, raised various points of order. Finally, at eight o'clock, the House dividing on Mr. Parnell's amendment, Sir Stafford Northcote voted with the Irish members, leading a hundred men of the Party of Law and Order into the same lobby.

Hour after hour the riot continued. At one time blameless Sir William Harcourt, then Home Secretary, appearing at the table, a Conservative member, amid tumultuous shouts, moved that he be not heard. When members grew tired of shouting at each other they divided on fresh motions for the adjournment, and it was not till one o'clock on the following morning that Mr. O'Donnell, grateful for a pleasant evening, was good enough to undertake that before he recurred to the question he would give due notice, so that the Speaker might exercise his discretion in revising its terms. At five minutes past one in the morning, after a wrangle full eight hours long, the Speaker, with a pretty assumption of nothing particular having happened, called on the next question on the paper, which was Number 24.

STIRRING UP SIR STAFFORD.

All this might happen again on any night of this month save for the beneficent action of the New Rules a long-suffering Parliament was finally induced to adopt. On the threshold of a new Parliament it is useful to recall the scene as an assistance in calculating what may be accomplished by the Parliament elected in 1892, as compared with that which began its history in 1880. On the face of it, Parliament to-day has much less time at its disposal for the accomplishment of work than it had a dozen years ago. Then, the duration of a sitting was indefinite. The House might, as it did in February, 1881, meet at four o'clock on a Monday afternoon and sit continuously till Wednesday morning. Now, the Speaker takes the Chair at three o'clock; public business commences at half-past three; and at midnight, save in cases where the Standing Order has been formally suspended, the Speaker leaves the Chair, and the House adjourns, whoever may be on his feet.

"DISGUST."

The influence of this automatic procedure is beneficially felt throughout the whole of debate. One wholesome influence works in the direction of using up the early hours of the sitting, an arrangement which carries comfort to countless printing offices and editorial sanctums. Some time before the New Rules came into operation, Mr. Gladstone discovered for himself the convenience and desirability of taking part in debate at the earliest possible hour of a sitting. His earlier associations drifted round a directly opposite course. In the good old days the champions of debate did not interpose till close upon midnight, when they had the advantage of audiences sustained and exhilarated by dinner. That was before the era of special wires to the provincial papers, early morning trams, and vastly increased circulation for the London journals. Mr. Gladstone discovered that he was more carefully reported and his observations more deliberately discussed if he [Pg 271] spoke between five and seven o'clock in the evening than if, following his earlier habit, he addressed the House between eleven and one in the morning. He has, accordingly, for some years been accustomed, when he has an important speech to deliver, to interpose in debate immediately after questions.

This habit has become general, even compulsory, with members who may, within certain limits, choose their own time for speaking. All the cream of debate is now skimmed before the dinner-hour. At the close of a pitched battle, the two Leaders of Party, as heretofore, wind up the debate. But their opportunity for orating is severely circumscribed. The audience in the House of Commons does not begin to reassemble after dinner till half-past ten. Rising at that hour, the Leader of the Opposition, if he fairly divides the available time with the right honourable gentleman opposite, must not speak more than three-quarters of an hour, and should not exceed forty minutes.

This is a necessity desirable not less in the orator's interest than in that of the audience. Except for the exposition of an intricate measure, twenty minutes is ample time for any man to say what is useful for his fellow-men to hear. All Mr. Disraeli's best speeches were made within half an hour, and if he thought it necessary, from a sense of the importance of his position, to prolong them, his stock of good things was exhausted in twenty minutes, the rest being what Carlyle disrespectfully described as thrice-boiled cole-wort. Mr. Gladstone can go on indefinitely, and in very recent times has been known to hold his audience spell-bound for three hours. But even he has profited by the beneficent tyranny that now rules the limit of debate, and, rising with the knowledge that he has but forty minutes to speak in, has excelled himself. For less exuberant

speakers not gifted with his genius, the new discipline is even more marked in its benefits.

MR. KEIR HARDIE.

It is too soon to endeavour to estimate the general characteristics of the *personnel* of the new Parliament. It will probably turn out to be very much of the same class as the innumerable army of its predecessors. When Mr. Keir Hardie came down on the opening day in a wagonette, with flags flying and accordions playing, it was cried aloud in some quarters that the end was at hand. This apprehension was strengthened when Mr. Hardie strolled about the House with a tweed travelling cap on his head, the Speaker at the time being in the chair. This, as Dr. Johnson explained, when the lady asked him why he had described the horse's pastern as its knee, was "ignorance, pure ignorance." Mr. Hardie is not a man of the quietest manners, as was testified to by the apparition in Palace Yard of the wagonette and its musical party; but in the much-talked-of incident of the cap he sinned inadvertently. Before the Speaker took the chair he had seen members walking about with their hats on. He had observed that even in his presence they remained seated with their heads covered. The shade of etiquette which approves this fashion whilst it sternly prohibits a member from keeping his hat on when in motion, even to the extent of leaning over to speak to a friend on the bench below him, was too fine to catch the eye of a new member.

Mr. Keir Hardie has done much worse things than this in his public appearances during the recess, and since the Session opened there has not been lacking evidence of resolve to keep himself in the front of the stage where the gallery may see him. But this is no new thing, to be cited in proof of the deterioration of the composition and style of the House of Commons. It has been done repeatedly in various fashions within recent memory, and always with the same result. No man, not even Mr. Biggar—and he may be cited as the most ruthless experimenter—has successfully struggled against the subtle disciplinary influence of the House of Commons.

From the first the member for Cavan set himself in deliberate fashion to outrage Parliamentary traditions and usages. He finished by becoming a punctilious practitioner of Parliamentary forms, a stickler for the minutest observation of order. Whilst Mr. Gladstone and other members of old standing were content to preface their speeches with the monosyllable "Sir," nothing less than "Mr. Speaker, sir," would satisfy Mr. Biggar. No one who has not heard the inflection of tone with which this was uttered, nor seen the oratorical sweep of the hand that launched it on its course, can realize how much of combined deference and authority the phrase is capable of. Mr. Biggar, having in his early Parliamentary days defied the Chair and affronted the sensibilities of the House, alike in the matter of dress and deportment, developed into a portly gentleman of almost smug appearance, a terror to new members. Woe to any who in his ignorance passed between the Chair and the member addressing it; who walked in from a division with his hat on; or who stood an inch or two within the Bar whilst debate was going forward. Mr. Biggar's strident cry of "Order! Order!" reverberated through the House. Others joined in the shout, and the abashed offender hastily withdrew into obscurity.

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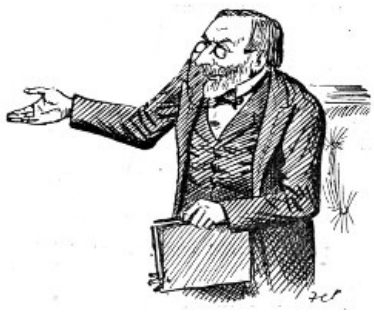


THE LATE MR. BIGGAR.

It is the same with others of less strongly marked character. Vanity or garrulity may force a new member into a position of notoriety. He may, according to his measure of determination, try a fall again and again with the House, and may sometimes, as in the case of Mr. O'Donnell, seem to win. But in the end the House of Commons proves victorious. It is a sort of whetstone on which blades of various temperature operate. In time, they either forego the practice or wear themselves away. In either case the whetstone remains.

This is a rule without exception, and is a reassuring reflection in view of the talk about the degeneracy of the House of Commons, and the decadence of its standard of manner. It would not be difficult to show that the House at present in Session will, from the point of view of manners, favourably compare with any that have gone before—though, to be just, the comparison should be sought with Parliaments elected under similar conditions, with the Liberals in office and the Conservatives in opposition. That is an arrangement always found to be more conducive to lively proceedings than when parties are disposed in the contrary order. The Parliament dissolved last year was decorously dull. Mr. Gladstone in opposition is not prone to show sport, and no encouragement was held out to enterprising groups below the gangway to bait the Government. It was very different in the Parliament of 1880-5, of which fact the Challemel-Lacour episode is an illustration, only a little more piquant in flavour than the average supply.

There are already signs that the new Parliament will not lie under the charge of deplorable dulness brought against its predecessor. But these varying moods are due to waves of political passion, and do not affect the question whether the House of Commons as a body of English gentlemen met for the discharge of public business has or has not deteriorated. I have an

engraving of a picture of the House of Commons in pre-Reform days. It was carefully drawn in the Session of 1842. A more respectable body of the gentlemen of England it would be difficult to gather together. With the possible exception of one or two political adventurers like the then member for Shrewsbury, there is probably not a man in the House who is not well born or at least rich. Mr. Keir Hardie would look strange indeed in these serried ranks of portly gentlemen with high coat collars, cravats up to their chin, short-bodied coats showing the waistcoat beneath, and the tightly trousered legs. Yet this House, and its equally prim successors, had its obstruction, its personal wrangles, and its occasional duel. Peel was attacked by Disraeli in a fashion and in language that would not be tolerated in the House of Commons now, even though the target were Mr. Gladstone.

It is not necessary to go back as far as the days of Peel or Parliamentary Reform to sustain the bold assertion that, so far from having degenerated, the manners of the House of Commons have improved. In the Parliament elected in 1874 there sat on the Conservative side a gentleman named Smollet, who early distinguished himself by bringing Parliamentary debate down to the level of conversation in "Roderick Random." In those days Mr. Gladstone was down after the General Election, and Mr. Smollet, to the uproarious delight of gentlemen near him, savagely kicked him. [Pg 273]

"MOBBING HIM."

It was in the second year of this same Parliament, less than twenty years ago, that Mr. Gladstone, issuing from a division lobby, was suddenly pounced upon by some fifty or sixty Conservative members, and howled at for the space of several moments. It is, happily, possible for Mr. Gladstone to forget, or at least to forgive, personal attacks made upon him through his long career. In this very month of the new Session he may be nightly seen working in cordial fashion with ancient adversaries from Ireland, describing as "my honourable friends" gentlemen who, ten years ago and for some time subsequently, heaped on his head the coarsest vituperation permitted by practised manipulation of Parliamentary forms. But this scene in the division lobby on the 12th of April, 1875, is burned into his recollection. I have heard him, within the last few months, refer to it in those tones of profound indignation and with that flashing fire in his eyes only seen when he is deeply moved. He mentioned, what I think was not known, that Lord Hartington happened to be walking with him at the time. But there was no mistake for whom the angry cries were meant. Mr. Gladstone spoke with the profounder indignation because, as he said, he had on this occasion gone out to vote on behalf of a man whose character he detested, because he saw in the action taken against him an attack upon one of the privileges of Parliament.

That scene was an outburst of political animosity; and the movements of political animosity, like the dicta of taste, are not to be disputed. But on the question of good manners, the only one here under consideration, it may be affirmed that the present House of Commons would be safe from lapse into such an exhibition. To this better state of things the operation of the New Rules has conspicuously contributed, and though, as we know, they have not operated to the absolute extinction of Parliamentary scenes, they have appreciably limited opportunity and incentive.

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives. [Pg 274]

LORD BATTERSEA.

Born 1843.

AGE 14.
From a Daguerreotype.

Lord Battersea, who was until recently known to the world as Mr. Cyril Flower, M.P., is a son of the late Mr. P. W. Flower, of Streatham, and was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge.

He was called to the Bar at the age of twenty-seven, and became Liberal Member for Brecknock in 1880, and for the Luton Division of Bedfordshire in 1885 and 1886, in which later year he was one of Mr. Gladstone's "Whips." He married the daughter of the late Sir Anthony Rothschild, and both he and his wife are much interested in the welfare of the lower classes of London. Lord Battersea was unanimously reputed the handsomest man in the House of Commons, and is now, in every sense of the word, an ornament of the House of Lords.

AGE 21.
From a Photo, by Mayland, Cambridge.

[Pg 275]

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photograph by Bassano, 35, Old Bond Street, W.

AGE 40.
From a Drawing.

W. Q. ORCHARDSON, R.A.

Born 1835.

Mr. William Quiller Orchardson was born in Edinburgh, and at the age of fifteen entered the Trustees' Academy of that city, his first pictures being exhibited in the Royal Scottish Academy. At the age of twenty-eight he came to London, and the same year exhibited at the Royal Academy for the first time, his contributions being entitled, "An Old English Song" and "Portraits," the latter a life-size composition of three young ladies. In 1865 he painted "The Challenge," which won a prize of £100 given by Mr. Wallace, and one of the very few Medals awarded to English painters at the Paris Universal Exhibition. In 1866 came "The Story of a Life"—an aged nun relating her experiences to a group of novices. Two years later, when he had only been four years in London, he was elected an A.R.A. Among his more recent pictures may be mentioned "Napoleon on Board the *Bellerophon*" (1880), "The Salon of Madame Recamier" (1885), "The Young Duke" (1889), and "St. Helena" (1892). Mr. Orchardson was elected an R.A. in 1877, and a D.C.L. of Oxford in 1890.

[Pg 276]

AGE 35.
From a Photograph by Walery, Marseilles.

AGE 16.
From an Oil Sketch by himself.

AGE 44.
From a Photograph.

PRESENT DAY. From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

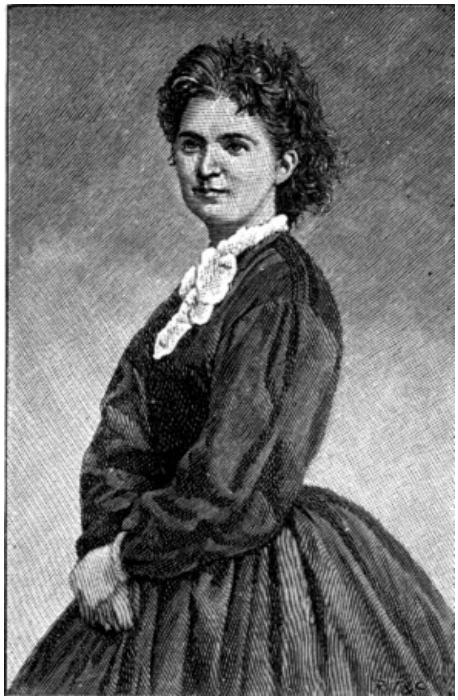
LADY HALLÉ.

Lady Hallé, whose maiden name was Wilhelmine Néruda, was born at Brünn, where her father was organist of the cathedral. She was a pupil of Jansa, and made her first appearance at Vienna at the age of six, and in London at the age of nine. After this she returned to the Continent, and in 1864 she married Ludwig Norman, a Swedish musician. Since 1869 she has been in England every winter, playing especially at the concerts of Sir Charles Hallé, whom she married in 1888.

AGE 10. From a Drawing.

AGE 35.

From a Photograph.



AGE 23. From a Photograph.

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo by Burraud.

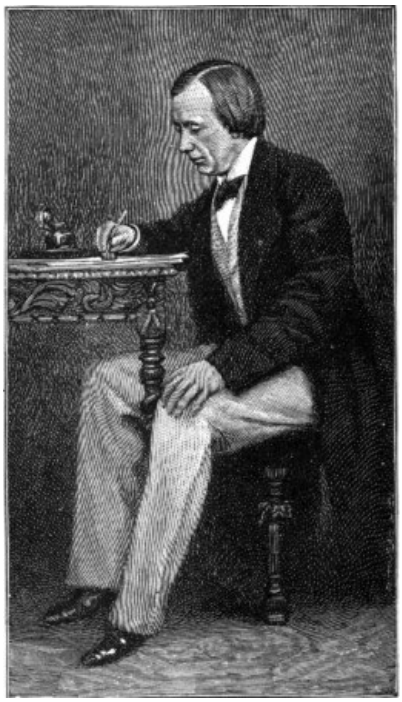
SIR CHARLES HALLÉ.

Sir Charles Hallé is a native of Germany, but at an early age he established himself in Paris, where he acquired a great reputation by his refined and classical rendering of the compositions of the great musicians; but the Revolution of 1843 drove him to England, where he has ever since resided. He soon established himself at Manchester, and as the founder of the annual series of orchestral and choral concerts there and in London, which have become, perhaps, the most important series in Europe, he has rendered the most valuable service to musical art.

AGE 31. From a Painting.

AGE 20.
From a Painting.

PRESENT DAY. From a Photo. by Mayall & Co., 164, New Bond Street, W.

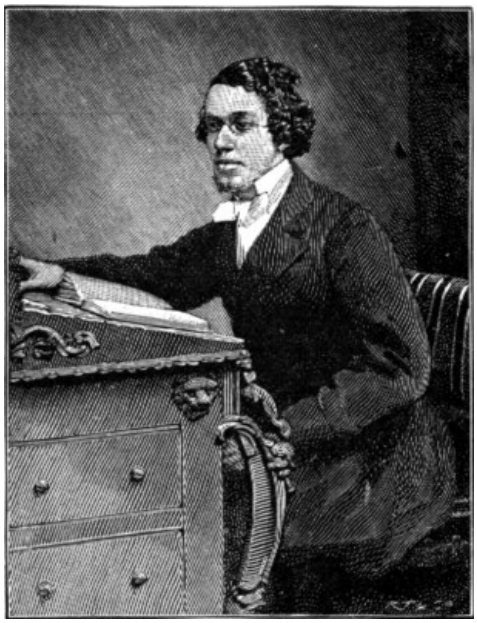


AGE 45. From a Photo, by H. Hering, Regent Street, W.

DR. HERMANN ADLER,

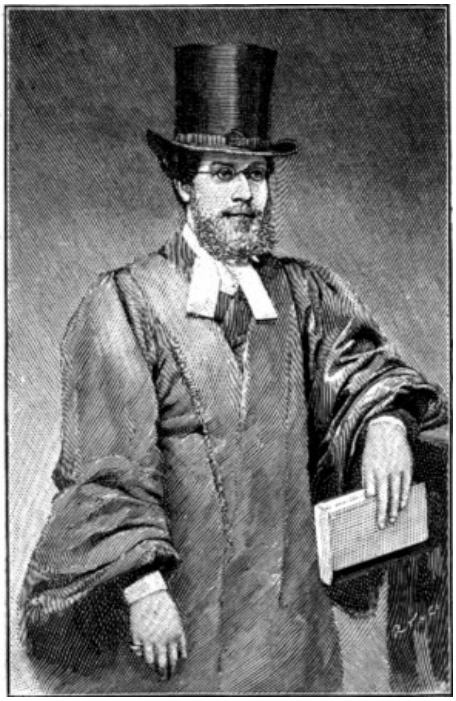
CHIEF RABBI.

Born 1839.

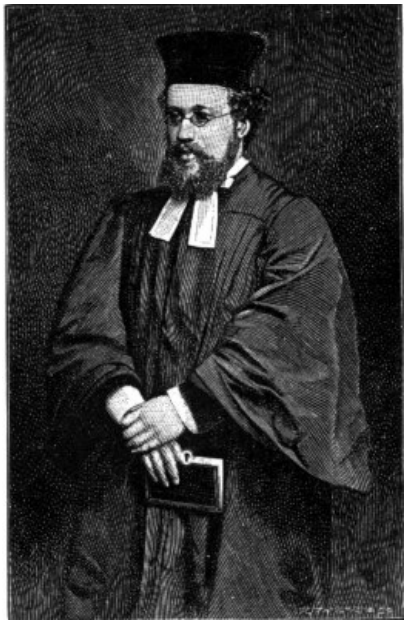


AGE 24. From a Photograph by McLean & Haes, Haymarket.

Dr. Adler, son of Dr. Nathan Marcus Adler, was born in Hanover, and came to London with his father at the age of six. He studied at University College, took his B. A. degree at the University of London at twenty, and that of Ph. D., at Leipzig, at twenty-two. In the following year he was ordained Rabbi by the famous Rapoport, Chief Rabbi of Prague, and became in succession Principal of the Jews' College in London and Chief Minister of the Bayswater Synagogue. In 1890 his father, the Chief Rabbi, died, and Dr. Adler was elected in his place. Dr. Adler is well known not only by his powerful and scholarly writings, but by his work among the poorer Jews of London.



AGE 37. From a Photograph by J. R. Sawyer, Norwich.



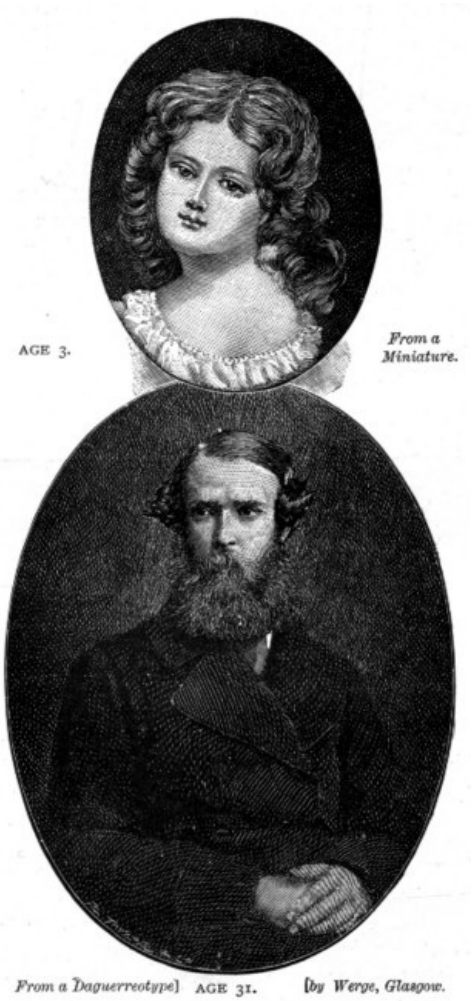
AGE 44. From a Photograph by Fradella, 216, Regent Street, W.

PRESENT DAY. From a Photograph by The Photographic Co.

SIR ARCHIBALD ALISON, BART., K.C.B.

Born 1826.

General Alison, son of Sir Archibald Alison, the first Baronet, who was the well-known author of "The History of Europe," was born at Edinburgh, and entered the Army at the age of twenty. He served in the Crimea, at the siege and fall of Sebastopol, at which date our second portrait represents him. During the Indian Mutiny he lost an arm at the relief of Lucknow. In 1882 he commanded the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, during the expedition to Egypt, and at the decisive battle of Tel-el-Kebir he led the Highland Brigade which fought so gallantly on that memorable occasion, and after Arabi's surrender he was left in Egypt with the command of the British army of 12,000 men to restore order and protect the Khedive. Sir Archibald was included in the thanks of Parliament for his energy and gallantry, and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General; he received his appointment as General in 1889. In 1869 Sir Archibald Alison published an able treatise, "On Army Organization."



AGE 3. *From a Miniature.*

From a Daguerreotype] AGE 31. *[by Werge, Glasgow.*

AGE 47. From a Photograph by Jacklett, Aldershot.

PRESENT DAY. From a Photo, by Barraud.

MADAME JANE HADING.

[Pg 280]

AGE 3.
From a Photo. by Chalot et Cie., Paris.

AGE 15.
From a Photo. by Fabre, Marseilles.

From a Photo. by] AGE 5. *[Chalot et Cie., Paris.*

From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Reutlinger, Paris.*

Madame Jane Hading, the well-known French actress, was born at Marseilles, in 1863, where her father was popular as a leading actor, with whom she appeared when only three years of age as little *Blanche de Caylus* in "Le Bossu." At the age of thirteen she began work in earnest, having won "le prix de solfège" at the Marseille Conservatoire, and her talent having come to the ears of Mr. Plunkett, the director of the Palais Royal, he engaged her for the Palais Royal in Paris, where she created the part of *La Chaste Suzanne*, by Paul Ferrier. Giving up comic opera for comedy, Jane Hading went to the Gymnase, where she created the part of *Claire de Beaulieu* in "Le Maître de Forges." London had the opportunity of seeing her in that and "Prince Zilah," by Jules Claretie, later on, and fully indorsed the Parisian verdict. These conspicuous successes were followed by others almost as notable, and her subsequent tour in America won her golden opinions, and was so successful that it was extended some months. Her latest Parisian success was "Le Prince d'Aurec," which added greatly to her laurels, putting her in the very front rank of great artists.

XVI.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE STOCKBROKER'S CLERK.

By A. Conan Doyle.

Shortly after my marriage I had bought a connection in the Paddington district. Old Mr. Farquhar, from whom I purchased it, had at one time an excellent general practice, but his age, and an affliction of the nature of St. Vitus' dance, from which he suffered, had very much thinned it. The public, not unnaturally, goes upon the principle that he who would heal others must himself be whole, and looks askance at the curative powers of the man whose own case is beyond the reach of his drugs. Thus, as my predecessor weakened, his practice declined, until when I purchased it from him it had sunk from twelve hundred to little more than three hundred a year. I had confidence, however, in my own youth and energy, and was convinced that in a very few years the concern would be as flourishing as ever.

For three months after taking over the practice I was kept very closely at work, and saw little of my friend Sherlock Holmes, for I was too busy to visit Baker Street, and he seldom went anywhere himself save upon professional business. I was surprised, therefore, when one morning in June, as I sat reading the *British Medical Journal* after breakfast, I heard a ring at the bell followed by the high, somewhat strident, tones of my old companion's voice.

"Ah, my dear Watson," said he, striding into the room. "I am very delighted to see you. I trust that Mrs. Watson has entirely recovered from all the little excitements connected with our adventure of the 'Sign of Four.'"

"Thank you, we are both very well," said I, shaking him warmly by the hand.

"And I hope also," he continued, sitting down in the rocking-chair, "that the cares of medical practice have not entirely obliterated the interest which you used to take in our little deductive problems."

"On the contrary," I answered; "it was only last night that I was looking over my old notes and classifying some of our past results."

"I trust that you don't consider your collection closed?"

"Not at all. I should wish nothing better than to have some more of such experiences."

"To-day, for example?"

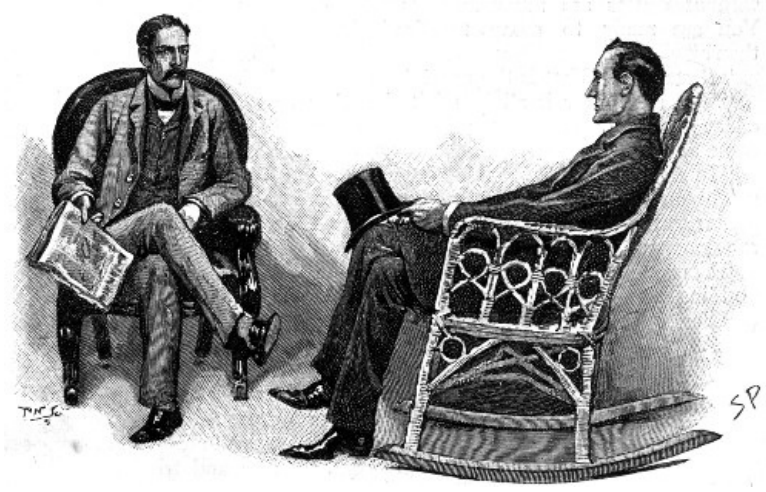
"Yes; to-day, if you like."

"And as far off as Birmingham?"

"Certainly, if you wish it."

"And the practice?"

"I do my neighbour's when he goes. He is always ready to work off the debt."



"'NOTHING COULD BE BETTER,' SAID HOLMES."

"Ha! Nothing could be better!" said Holmes, leaning back in his chair and looking keenly at me from under his half-closed lids. "I perceive that you have been unwell lately. Summer colds are always a little trying." [Pg 282]

"I was confined to the house by a severe chill for three days last week. I thought, however, that I had cast off every trace of it."

"So you have. You look remarkably robust."

"How, then, did you know of it?"

"My dear fellow, you know my methods."

"You deduced it, then?"

"Certainly."

"And from what?"

"From your slippers."

I glanced down at the new patent leathers which I was wearing. "How on earth——?" I began, but Holmes answered my question before it was asked.

"Your slippers are new," he said. "You could not have had them more than a few weeks. The soles which you are at this moment presenting to me are slightly scorched. For a moment I thought they might have got wet and been burned in the drying. But near the instep there is a small circular wafer of paper with the shopman's hieroglyphics upon it. Damp would of course have removed this. You had then been sitting with your feet outstretched to the fire, which a man would hardly do even in so wet a June as this if he were in his full health."

Like all Holmes's reasoning the thing seemed simplicity itself when it was once explained. He read the thought upon my features, and his smile had a tinge of bitterness.

"I am afraid that I rather give myself away when I explain," said he. "Results without causes are much more impressive. You are ready to come to Birmingham, then?"

"Certainly. What is the case?"

"You shall hear it all in the train. My client is outside in a four-wheeler. Can you come at once?"

"In an instant." I scribbled a note to my neighbour, rushed upstairs to explain the matter to my wife, and joined Holmes upon the doorstep.

"Your neighbour is a doctor?" said he, nodding at the brass plate.

"Yes. He bought a practice as I did."

"An old-established one?"

"Just the same as mine. Both have been ever since the houses were built."

"Ah, then you got hold of the best of the two."

"I think I did. But how do you know?"

"By the steps, my boy. Yours are worn three inches deeper than his. But this gentleman in the cab is my client, Mr. Hall Pycroft. Allow me to introduce you to him. Whip your horse up, cabby, for we have only just time to catch our train."

The man whom I found myself facing was a well-built, fresh-complexioned young fellow with a frank, honest face and a slight, crisp, yellow moustache. He wore a very shiny top-hat and a neat suit of sober black, which made him look what he was—a smart young City man, of the class who have been labelled Cockneys, but who give us our crack Volunteer regiments, and who turn out more fine athletes and sportsmen than any body of men in these islands. His round, ruddy face was naturally full of cheeriness, but the corners of his mouth seemed to me to be pulled down in a half-comical distress. It was not, however, until we were all in a first-class carriage and well started upon our journey to Birmingham, that I was able to learn what the trouble was which had driven him to Sherlock Holmes.

"We have a clear run here of seventy minutes," Holmes remarked. "I want you, Mr. Hall Pycroft, to tell my friend your very interesting experience exactly as you have told it to me, or with more detail if possible. It will be of use to me to hear the succession of events again. It is a case, Watson, which may prove to have something in it, or may prove to have nothing, but which at least presents those unusual and *outré* features which are as dear to you as they are to me. Now, Mr. Pycroft, I shall not interrupt you again."

Our young companion looked at me with a twinkle in his eye.

"The worst of the story is," said he, "that I show myself up as such a confounded fool. Of course, it may work out all right, and I don't see that I could have done otherwise; but if I have lost my crib and get nothing in exchange, I shall feel what a soft Johnny I have been. I'm not very good at telling a story, Dr. Watson, but it is like this with me.

"I used to have a billet at Coxon and Woodhouse, of Drapers' Gardens, but they were let in early in the spring through the Venezuelan loan, as no doubt you remember, and came a nasty cropper. I had been with them five years, and old Coxon gave me a ripping good testimonial when the smash came; but, of course, we clerks were all turned adrift, the twenty-seven of us. I tried here and tried there, but there were lots of other chaps on the same lay as myself, and it was a perfect [Pg 283] frost for a long time. I had been taking three pounds a week at Coxon's, and I had saved about seventy of them, but I soon worked my way through that and out at the other end. I was fairly at the end of my tether at last, and could hardly find the stamps to answer the advertisements or

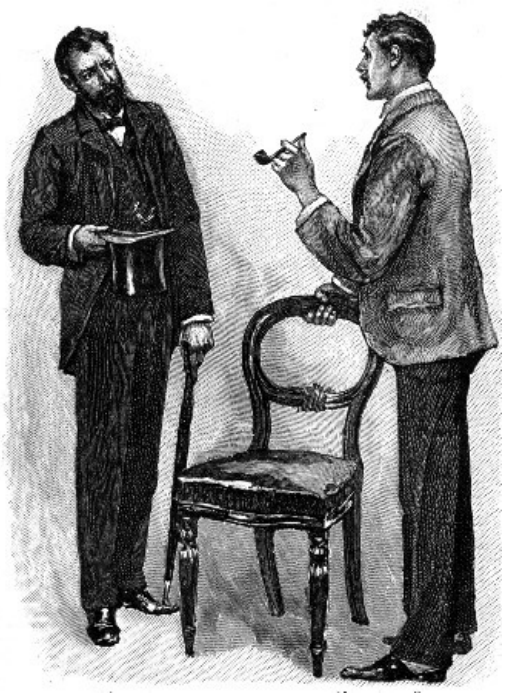
the envelopes to stick them to. I had worn out my boots padding up office stairs, and I seemed just as far from getting a billet as ever.

"At last I saw a vacancy at Mawson and Williams', the great stockbroking firm in Lombard Street. I daresay E. C. is not much in your line, but I can tell you that this is about the richest house in London. The advertisement was to be answered by letter only. I sent in my testimonial and application, but without the least hope of getting it. Back came an answer by return saying that if I would appear next Monday I might take over my new duties at once, provided that my appearance was satisfactory. No one knows how these things are worked. Some people say the manager just plunges his hand into the heap and takes the first that comes. Anyhow, it was my innings that time, and I don't ever wish to feel better pleased. The screw was a pound a week rise, and the duties just about the same as at Coxon's.

"And now I come to the queer part of the business. I was in diggings out Hampstead way—17, Potter's Terrace, was the address. Well, I was sitting doing a smoke that very evening after I had been promised the appointment, when up came my landlady with a card which had 'Arthur Pinner, financial agent,' printed upon it. I had never heard the name before, and could not imagine what he wanted with me, but of course I asked her to show him up. In he walked—a middle-sized, dark-haired, dark-eyed, black-bearded man, with a touch of the sheeny about his nose. He had a brisk kind of way with him and spoke sharply, like a man that knew the value of time.

"'Mr. Hall Pycroft, I believe?' said he.

"'Yes, sir,' I answered, and pushed a chair towards him.



"'MR. HALL PYCROFT, I BELIEVE?' SAID HE."

"'Lately engaged at Coxon and Woodhouse's?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"And now on the staff of Mawson's?'

"'Quite so.'

"'Well,' said he. 'The fact is that I have heard some really extraordinary stories about your financial ability. You remember Parker who used to be Coxon's manager? He can never say enough about it.'

"Of course I was pleased to hear this. I had always been pretty smart in the office, but I had never dreamed that I was talked about in the City in this fashion.

"'You have a good memory?' said he.

"'Pretty fair,' I answered, modestly.

"'Have you kept in touch with the market while you have been out of work?' he asked.

"'Yes; I read the Stock Exchange List every morning.'

"'Now, that shows real application!' he cried. 'That is the way to prosper! You won't mind my testing you, will you? Let me see! How are Ayrshires?'

"'One hundred and six and a quarter to one hundred and five and seven-eighths,' I answered.

"'And New Zealand Consolidated?' [Pg 284]

"'A hundred and four.'

"'And British Broken Hills?'

"'Seven to seven and six.'

"'Wonderful!' he cried, with his hands up. 'This quite fits in with all that I had heard. My boy, my boy, you are very much too good to be a clerk at Mawson's!'

"This outburst rather astonished me, as you can think. 'Well,' said I, 'other people don't think quite so much of me as you seem to do, Mr. Pinner. I had a hard enough fight to get this berth, and I am very glad to have it.'

"'Pooh, man, you should soar above it. You are not in your true sphere. Now I'll tell you how it stands with me. What I have to offer is little enough when measured by your ability, but when compared with Mawson's it is light to dark. Let me see! When do you go to Mawson's?'

"'On Monday.'

"'Ha! ha! I think I would risk a little sporting flutter that you don't go there at all.'

"'Not go to Mawson's?'

"'No, sir. By that day you will be the business manager of the Franco-Midland Hardware

Company, Limited, with one hundred and thirty-four branches in the towns and villages of France, not counting one in Brussels and one in San Remo.'

"This took my breath away. 'I never heard of it,' said I.

"'Very likely not. It has been kept very quiet, for the capital was all privately subscribed, and it is too good a thing to let the public into. My brother, Harry Pinner, is promoter, and joins the board after allotment as managing director. He knew that I was in the swim down here, and he asked me to pick up a good man cheap—a young, pushing man with plenty of snap about him. Parker spoke of you, and that brought me here to-night. We can only offer you a beggarly five hundred to start with——'

"'Five hundred a year!' I shouted.

"'Only that at the beginning, but you are to have an over-riding commission of 1 per cent, on all business done by your agents, and you may take my word for it that this will come to more than your salary.'

"'But I know nothing about hardware.'

"'Tut, my boy, you know about figures.'

"My head buzzed, and I could hardly sit still in the chair. But suddenly a little chill of doubt came over me.

"'I must be frank with you,' said I. 'Mawson only gives me two hundred, but Mawson is safe. Now, really, I know so little about your company that——'

"'Ah, smart, smart!' he cried, in a kind of ecstasy of delight. 'You are the very man for us! You are not to be talked over, and quite right too. Now, here's a note for a hundred pounds; and if you think that we can do business you may just slip it into your pocket as an advance upon your salary.'

"'That is very handsome,' said I. 'When should I take over my new duties?'

"'Be in Birmingham to-morrow at one,' said he. 'I have a note in my pocket here which you will take to my brother. You will find him at 126B, Corporation Street, where the temporary offices of the company are situated. Of course he must confirm your engagement, but between ourselves it will be all right.'

"'Really, I hardly know how to express my gratitude, Mr. Pinner,' said I.

"'Not at all, my boy. You have only got your deserts. There are one or two small things—mere formalities—which I must arrange with you. You have a bit of paper beside you there. Kindly write upon it, "I am perfectly willing to act as business manager to the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, Limited, at a minimum salary of £500."'

"I did as he asked, and he put the paper in his pocket.

"'There is one other detail,' said he. 'What do you intend to do about Mawson's?'

"I had forgotten all about Mawson's in my joy.

"'I'll write and resign,' said I.

"'Precisely what I don't want you to do. I had a row over you with Mawson's manager. I had gone up to ask him about you, and he was very offensive—accused me of coaxing you away from the service of the firm, and that sort of thing. At last I fairly lost my temper. "If you want good men you should pay them a good price," said I. "He would rather have our small price than your big one," said he. "I'll lay you a fiver," said I, "that when he has my offer you will never so much as hear from him again." "Done!" said he. "We picked him out of the gutter, and he won't leave us so easily." Those were his very words.'

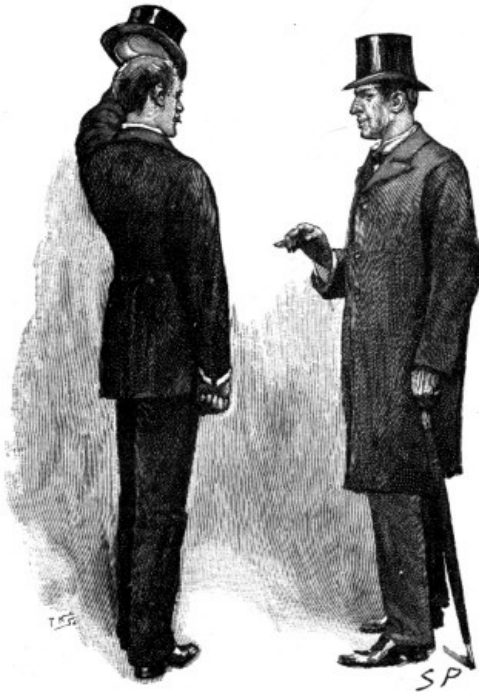
"'The impudent scoundrel!' I cried. 'I've never so much as seen him in my life. Why should I consider him in any way? I shall certainly not write if you would rather that I didn't.'

"'Good! That's a promise!' said he, rising from his chair. 'Well, I am delighted to have got so good a man for my brother. Here is your advance of a hundred pounds, and here is the letter. Make a note of the address, 126B, Corporation Street, and remember that one o'clock to-morrow is your appointment. Good-night, and may you have all the fortune that you deserve.' [Pg 285]

"That's just about all that passed between us as near as I can remember it. You can imagine, Dr. Watson, how pleased I was at such an extraordinary bit of good fortune. I sat up half the night hugging myself over it, and next day I was off to Birmingham in a train that would take me in plenty of time for my appointment. I took my things to an hotel in New Street, and then I made my way to the address which had been given me.

"It was a quarter of an hour before my time, but I thought that would make no difference. 126B was a passage between two large shops which led to a winding stone stair, from which there were many flats, let as offices to companies or professional men. The names of the occupants were painted up at the bottom on the wall, but there was no such name as the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, Limited. I stood for a few minutes with my heart in my boots, wondering whether the whole thing was an elaborate hoax or not, when up came a man and addressed me.

He was very like the chap that I had seen the night before, the same figure and voice, but he was clean shaven and his hair was lighter.



"UP CAME A MAN AND ADDRESSED ME."

"'Are you Mr. Hall Pycroft?' he asked.

"'Yes,' said I.

"'Ah! I was expecting you, but you are a trifle before your time. I had a note from my brother this morning, in which he sang your praises very loudly.'

"'I was just looking for the offices when you came.'

"'We have not got our name up yet, for we only secured these temporary premises last week. Come up with me and we will talk the matter over.'

"I followed him to the top of a very lofty stair, and there right under the slates were a couple of empty and dusty little rooms, uncarpeted and uncurtained, into which he led me. I had thought of a great office with shining tables and rows of clerks such as I was used to, and I daresay I stared rather straight at the two deal chairs and one little table, which, with a ledger and a waste-paper basket, made up the whole furniture.

"'Don't be disheartened, Mr. Pycroft,' said my new acquaintance, seeing the length of my face. 'Rome was not built in a day, and we have lots of money at our backs, though we don't cut much dash yet in offices. Pray sit down and let me have your letter.'

"I gave it to him, and he read it over very carefully.

"'You seem to have made a vast impression upon my brother, Arthur,' said he, 'and I know that he is a pretty shrewd judge. He swears by London, you know, and I by Birmingham, but this time I shall follow his advice. Pray consider yourself definitely engaged.'

"'What are my duties?' I asked.

"'You will eventually manage the great depôt in Paris, which will pour a flood of English crockery into the shops of one hundred and thirty-four agents in France. The purchase will be completed in a week, and meanwhile you will remain in Birmingham and make yourself useful.'

"'How?' [Pg 286]

"For answer he took a big red book out of a drawer. 'This is a directory of Paris,' said he, 'with the trades after the names of the people. I want you to take it home with you, and to mark off all the hardware sellers with their addresses. It would be of the greatest use to me to have them.'

"'Surely, there are classified lists?' I suggested.

"'Not reliable ones. Their system is different to ours. Stick at it and let me have the lists by Monday, at twelve. Good-day, Mr. Pycroft; if you continue to show zeal and intelligence, you will find the company a good master.'

"I went back to the hotel with the big book under my arm, and with very conflicting feelings in my breast. On the one hand I was definitely engaged, and had a hundred pounds in my pocket. On the other, the look of the offices, the absence of name on the wall, and other of the points which would strike a business man had left a bad impression as to the position of my employers. However, come what might, I had my money, so I settled down to my task. All Sunday I was kept hard at work, and yet by Monday I had only got as far as H. I went round to my employer, found him in the same dismantled kind of room, and was told to keep at it until Wednesday, and then come again. On Wednesday it was still unfinished, so I hammered away until Friday—that is, yesterday. Then I brought it round to Mr. Harry Pinner.

"'Thank you very much,' said he. 'I fear that I underrated the difficulty of the task. This list will be of very material assistance to me.'

"'It took some time,' said I.

"'And now,' said he, 'I want you to make a list of the furniture shops, for they all sell crockery.'

"'Very good.'

"'And you can come up to-morrow evening at seven, and let me know how you are getting on. Don't overwork yourself. A couple of hours at Day's Music-Hall in the evening would do you no harm after your labours.' He laughed as he spoke, and I saw with a thrill that his second tooth upon the left-hand side had been very badly stuffed with gold."

Sherlock Holmes rubbed his hands with delight, and I stared in astonishment at our client.

"You may well look surprised, Dr. Watson, but it is this way," said he. "When I was speaking to

the other chap in London at the time that he laughed at my not going to Mawson's, I happened to notice that his tooth was stuffed in this very identical fashion. The glint of the gold in each case caught my eye, you see. When I put that with the voice and figure being the same, and only those things altered which might be changed by a razor or a wig, I could not doubt that it was the same man. Of course, you expect two brothers to be alike, but not that they should have the same tooth stuffed in the same way. He bowed me out and I found myself in the street, hardly knowing whether I was on my head or my heels. Back I went to my hotel, put my head in a basin of cold water, and tried to think it out. Why had he sent me from London to Birmingham; why had he got there before me; and why had he written a letter from himself to himself? It was altogether too much for me, and I could make no sense of it. And then suddenly it struck me that what was dark to me might be very light to Mr. Sherlock Holmes. I had just time to get up to town by the night train, to see him this morning, and to bring you both back with me to Birmingham."

There was a pause after the stockbroker's clerk had concluded his surprising experience. Then Sherlock Holmes cocked his eye at me, leaning back on the cushions with a pleased and yet critical face, like a connoisseur who had just taken his first sip of a comet vintage.

"Rather fine, Watson, is it not?" said he. "There are points in it which please me. I think you will agree with me that an interview with Mr. Arthur Harry Pinner in the temporary offices of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, Limited, would be a rather interesting experience for both of us."

"But how can we do it?" I asked.

"Oh, easily enough," said Hall Pycroft, cheerily. "You are two friends of mine who are in want of a billet, and what could be more natural than that I should bring you both round to the managing director?"

"Quite so! Of course!" said Holmes. "I should like to have a look at the gentleman and see if I can make anything of his little game. What qualities have you, my friend, which would make your services so valuable? or is it possible that——" he began biting his nails and staring blankly out of the window, and we hardly drew another word from him until we were in New Street.

At seven o'clock that evening we were walking, the three of us, down Corporation Street to the company's offices. [Pg 287]

"It is of no use our being at all before our time," said our client. "He only comes there to see me apparently, for the place is deserted up to the very hour he names."

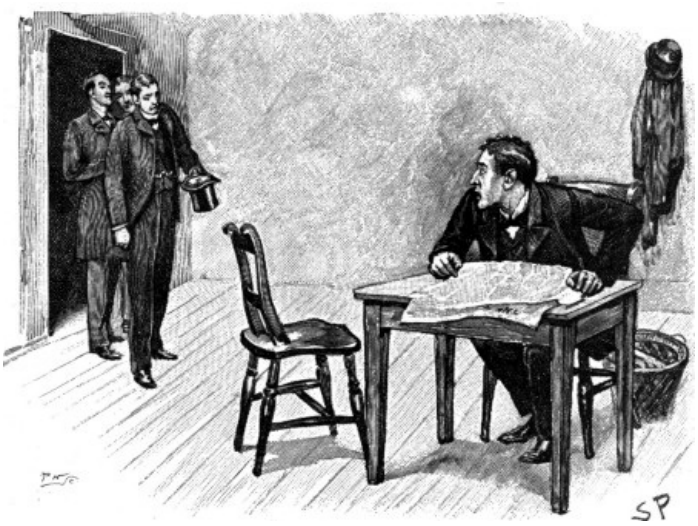
"That is suggestive," remarked Holmes.

"By Jove, I told you so!" cried the clerk. "That's he walking ahead of us there."

He pointed to a smallish, blonde, well-dressed man, who was bustling along the other side of the road. As we watched him he looked across at a boy who was bawling out the latest edition of the evening paper, and, running over among the cabs and 'buses, he bought one from him. Then clutching it in his hand he vanished through a doorway.

"There he goes!" cried Hall Pycroft. "Those are the company's offices into which he has gone. Come with me and I'll fix it up as easily as possible."

Following his lead we ascended five stories, until we found ourselves outside a half-opened door, at which our client tapped. A voice within bade us "Come in," and we entered a bare, unfurnished room, such as Hall Pycroft had described. At the single table sat the man whom we had seen in the street, with his evening paper spread out in front of him, and as he looked up at us it seemed to me that I had never looked upon a face which bore such marks of grief, and of something beyond grief—of a horror such as comes to few men in a lifetime. His brow glistened with perspiration, his cheeks were of the dull dead white of a fish's belly, and his eyes were wild and staring. He looked at his clerk as though he failed to recognise him, and I could see, by the astonishment depicted upon our conductor's face, that this was by no means the usual appearance of his employer.



"HE LOOKED UP AT US."

"You look ill, Mr. Pinner," he exclaimed.

"Yes, I am not very well," answered the other, making obvious efforts to pull himself together, and licking his dry lips before he spoke. "Who are these gentlemen whom you have brought with you?"

"One is Mr. Harris, of Bermondsey, and the other is Mr. Price, of this town," said our clerk, glibly. "They are friends of mine, and gentlemen of experience, but they have been out of a place for some little time, and they hoped that perhaps you might find an opening for them in the company's employment."

"Very possibly! Very possibly!" cried Mr. Pinner, with a ghastly smile. "Yes, I have no doubt that we shall be able to do something for you. What is your particular line, Mr. Harris?"

"I am an accountant," said Holmes.

"Ah, yes, we shall want something of the sort. And you, Mr. Price?"

"A clerk," said I.

"I have every hope that the company may accommodate you. I will let you know about it as soon as we come to any conclusion. And now I beg that you will go. For God's sake, leave me to myself!"

These last words were shot out of him, as though the constraint which he was evidently setting upon himself had suddenly and utterly burst asunder. Holmes and I glanced at each other, and Hall Pycroft took a step towards the table.

"You forget, Mr. Pinner, that I am here by appointment to receive some directions from you," said he. [Pg 288]

"Certainly, Mr. Pycroft, certainly," the other answered in a calmer tone. "You may wait here a moment, and there is no reason why your friends should not wait with you. I will be entirely at your service in three minutes, if I might trespass upon your patience so far." He rose with a very courteous air, and bowing to us he passed out through a door at the further end of the room, which he closed behind him.

"What now?" whispered Holmes. "Is he giving us the slip?"

"Impossible," answered Pycroft.

"Why so?"

"That door leads into an inner room."

"There is no exit?"

"None."

"Is it furnished?"

"It was empty yesterday."

"Then what on earth can he be doing? There is something which I don't understand in this matter. If ever a man was three parts mad with terror, that man's name is Pinner. What can have put the shivers on him?"

"He suspects that we are detectives," I suggested.

"That's it," said Pycroft.

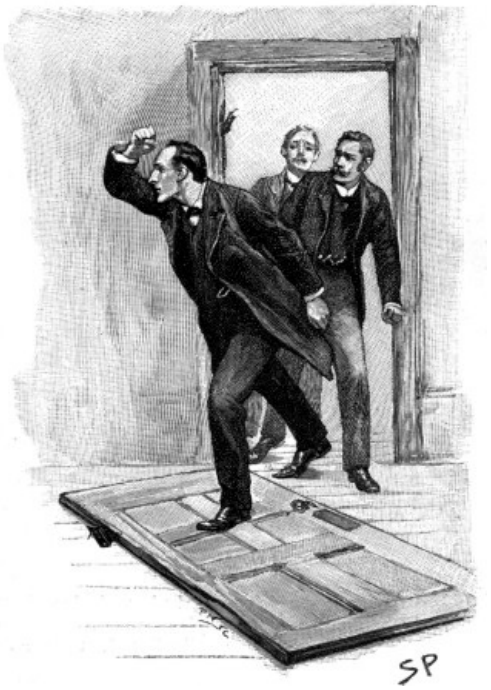
Holmes shook his head. "He did not turn pale. He *was* pale when we entered the room," said he. "It is just possible that——"

His words were interrupted by a sharp rat-tat from the direction of the inner door.

"What the deuce is he knocking at his own door for?" cried the clerk.

Again and much louder came the rat-tat-tat. We all gazed expectantly at the closed door. Glancing at Holmes I saw his face turn rigid, and he leaned forward in intense excitement. Then suddenly came a low gurgling, gargling sound and a brisk drumming upon woodwork. Holmes sprang frantically across the room and pushed at the door. It was fastened on the inner side. Following his example, we threw ourselves upon it with all our weight. One hinge snapped, then the other, and down came the door with a crash. Rushing over it we found ourselves in the inner room.

It was empty.



"WE FOUND OURSELVES IN THE INNER ROOM."

But it was only for a moment that we were at fault. At one corner, the corner nearest the room which we had left, there was a second door. Holmes sprang to it and pulled it open. A coat and waistcoat were lying on the floor, and from a hook behind the door, with his own braces round his neck, was hanging the managing director of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. His knees were drawn up, his head hung at a dreadful angle to his body, and the clatter of his heels against the door made the noise which had broken in upon our conversation. In an instant I had caught him round the waist and held him up, while Holmes and Pycroft untied the elastic bands which had disappeared between the livid creases of skin. Then we carried him into the other room, where he lay with a clay-coloured face, puffing his purple lips in and out with every breath—a dreadful wreck of all that he had been but five minutes before.

"What do you think of him, Watson?" asked Holmes.

I stooped over him and examined him. [Pg 289]

His pulse was feeble and intermittent, but his breathing grew longer, and there was a little shivering of his eyelids which showed a thin white slit of ball beneath.

"It has been touch and go with him," said I, "but he'll live now. Just open that window and hand me the water carafe." I undid his collar, poured the cold water over his face, and raised and sank his arms until he drew a long natural breath.

"It's only a question of time now," said I, as I turned away from him.

Holmes stood by the table with his hands deep in his trousers pockets and his chin upon his breast.

"I suppose we ought to call the police in now," said he; "and yet I confess that I like to give them a complete case when they come."

"It's a blessed mystery to me," cried Pycroft, scratching his head. "Whatever they wanted to bring me all the way up here for, and then——"

"Pooh! All that is clear enough," said Holmes, impatiently. "It is this last sudden move."

"You understand the rest, then?"

"I think that it is fairly obvious. What do you say, Watson?"

I shrugged my shoulders.

"I must confess that I am out of my depths," said I.

"Oh, surely, if you consider the events at first they can only point to one conclusion."

"What do you make of them?"

"Well, the whole thing hinges upon two points. The first is the making of Pycroft write a declaration by which he entered the service of this preposterous company. Do you not see how very suggestive that is?"

"I am afraid I miss the point."

"Well, why did they want him to do it? Not as a business matter, for these arrangements are usually verbal, and there was no earthly business reason why this should be an exception. Don't you see, my young friend, that they were very anxious to obtain a specimen of your handwriting, and had no other way of doing it?"

"And why?"

"Quite so. Why? When we answer that, we have made some progress with our little problem. Why? There can be only one adequate reason. Someone wanted to learn to imitate your writing, and had to procure a specimen of it first. And now if we pass on to the second point, we find that each throws light upon the other. That point is the request made by Pinner that you should not resign your place, but should leave the manager of this important business in the full expectation that a Mr. Hall Pycroft, whom he had never seen, was about to enter the office upon the Monday morning."

"My God!" cried our client, "what a blind beetle I have been!"

"Now you see the point about the handwriting. Suppose that someone turned up in your place who wrote a completely different hand from that in which you had applied for the vacancy, of course the game would have been up. But in the interval the rogue learnt to imitate you, and his position was therefore secure, as I presume that nobody in the office had ever set eyes upon you?"

"Not a soul," groaned Hall Pycroft.

"Very good. Of course, it was of the utmost importance to prevent you from thinking better of it, and also to keep you from coming into contact with anyone who might tell you that your double was at work in Mawson's office. Therefore they gave you a handsome advance on your salary, and ran you off to the Midlands, where they gave you enough work to do to prevent your going to London, where you might have burst their little game up. That is all plain enough."

"But why should this man pretend to be his own brother?"

"Well, that is pretty clear also. There are evidently only two of them in it. The other is personating you at the office. This one acted as your engager, and then found that he could not find you an employer without admitting a third person into his plot. That he was most unwilling to do. He changed his appearance as far as he could, and trusted that the likeness, which you could not fail to observe, would be put down to a family resemblance. But for the happy chance of the gold stuffing your suspicions would probably have never been aroused."

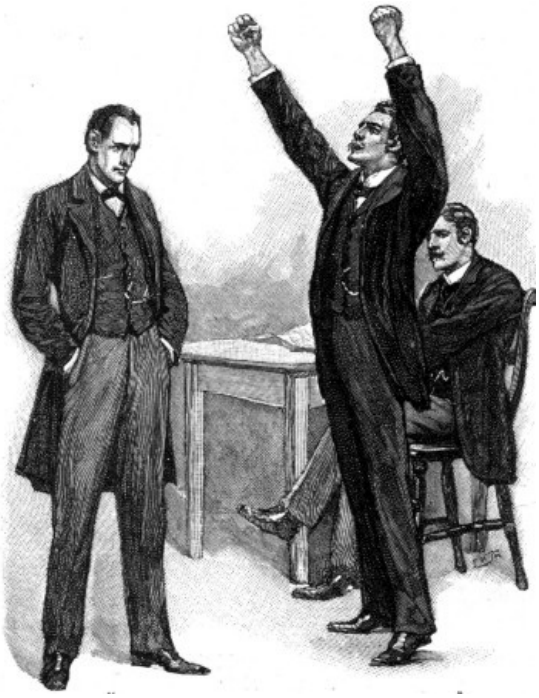
Hall Pycroft shook his clenched hands in the air. "Good Lord!" he cried. "While I have been fooled in this way, what has this other Hall Pycroft been doing at Mawson's? What should we do, Mr. Holmes? Tell me what to do!"

"We must wire to Mawson's."

"They shut at twelve on Saturdays."

"Never mind; there may be some doorkeeper or attendant——"

"Ah, yes; they keep a permanent guard there on account of the value of the securities that they hold. I remember hearing it talked of in the City." [Pg 290]



"PYCROFT SHOOK HIS CLENCHED HANDS IN THE AIR."

"Very good, we shall wire to him, and see if all is well, and if a clerk of your name is working there. That is clear enough, but what is not so clear is why at sight of us one of the rogues should instantly walk out of the room and hang himself."

"The paper!" croaked a voice behind us. The man was sitting up, blanched and ghastly, with returning reason in his eyes, and hands which rubbed nervously at the broad red band which still encircled his throat.

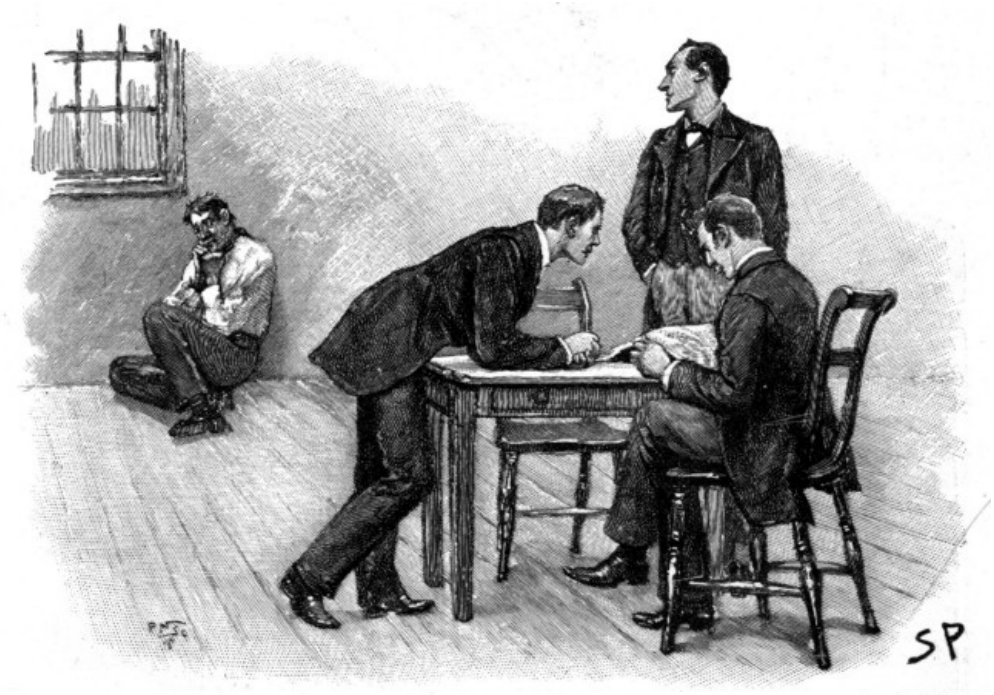
"The paper! Of course!" yelled Holmes, in a paroxysm of excitement. "Idiot that I was! I thought so much of our visit that the paper never entered my head for an instant. To be sure the secret must lie there." He flattened it out upon the table, and a cry of triumph burst from his lips.

"Look at this, Watson!" he cried. "It is a London paper, an early edition of the *Evening Standard*. Here is what we want. Look at the headlines—'Crime in the City. Murder at Mawson and Williams'. Gigantic Attempted Robbery; Capture of the Criminal.' Here, Watson, we are all equally anxious to hear it, so kindly read it aloud to us."

It appeared from its position in the paper to have been the one event of importance in town, and the account of it ran in this way:—

"A desperate attempt at robbery, culminating in the death of one man and the capture of the criminal, occurred this afternoon in the City. For some time back Mawson and Williams, the famous financial house, have been the guardians of securities which amount in the aggregate to a sum of considerably over a million sterling. So conscious was the manager of the responsibility which devolved upon him in consequence of the great interests at stake, that safes of the very latest construction have been employed, and an armed watchman has been left day and night in the building. It appears that last week a new clerk, named Hall Pycroft, was engaged by the firm. This person appears to have been none other than Beddington, the famous forger and cracksman, who, with his brother, has only recently emerged from a five years' spell of penal servitude. By some means, which are not yet clear, he succeeded in winning, under a false name, this official position in the office, which he utilized in order to obtain mouldings of various locks, and a thorough knowledge of the position of the strong room and the safes.

"It is customary at Mawson's for the clerks to leave at midday on Saturday. Sergeant Tuson, of the City Police, was somewhat surprised therefore to see a gentleman with a carpet bag come down the steps at twenty minutes past one. His suspicions being aroused, the sergeant followed the man, and with the aid of Constable Pollock succeeded, after a most desperate resistance, in arresting him. It was at once clear that a daring and gigantic robbery had been committed. Nearly a hundred thousand pounds worth of American railway bonds, with a large amount of scrip in other mines and companies, were discovered in the bag. On examining the premises the [Pg 291] body of the unfortunate watchman was found doubled up and thrust into the largest of the safes, where it would not have been discovered until Monday morning had it not been for the prompt action of Sergeant Tuson. The man's skull had been shattered by a blow from a poker, delivered from behind. There could be no doubt that Beddington had obtained entrance by pretending that he had left something behind him, and having murdered the watchman, rapidly rifled the large safe, and then made off with his booty. His brother, who usually works with him, has not appeared in this job, so far as can at present be ascertained, although the police are making energetic inquiries as to his whereabouts."



"GLANCING AT THE HAGGARD FIGURE."

"Well, we may save the police some little trouble in that direction," said Holmes, glancing at the haggard figure huddled up by the window. "Human nature is a strange mixture, Watson. You see that even a villain and a murderer can inspire such affection that his brother turns to suicide when he learns that his neck is forfeited. However, we have no choice as to our action. The doctor and I will remain on guard, Mr. Pycroft, if you will have the kindness to step out for the police."

Beauties.

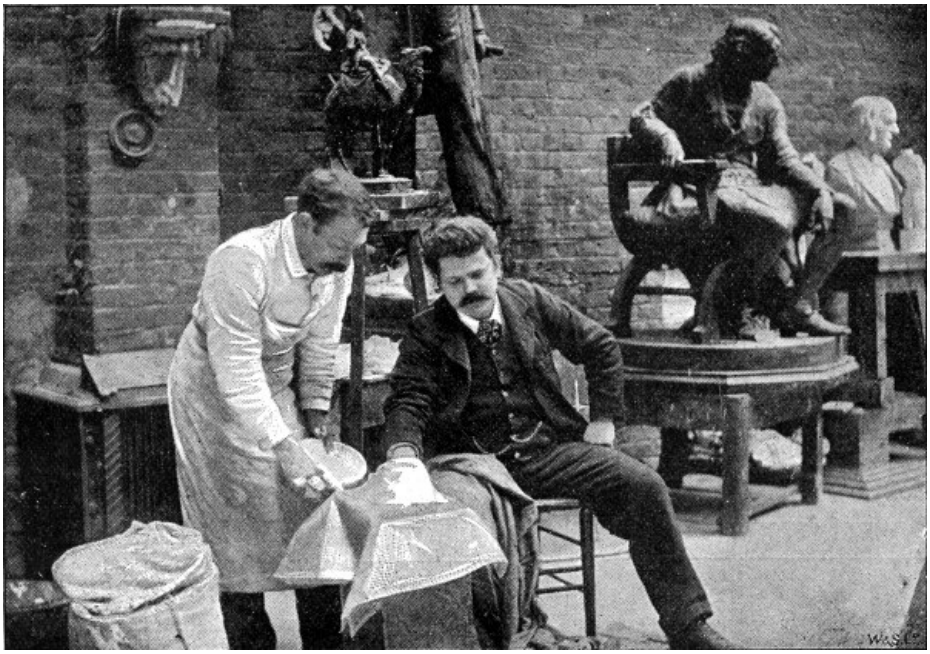

Miss Kingsley.
Miss Dorothy Dorr.
The Princess AHMADEE of the Royal House of Delhi


Miss Webster
Madame Schirmer-Mapleson
Madame Ingrid Arnoldson

Hands.

By Beckles Willson.

II.



CASTING A HAND FROM LIFE.
(*Studio of Mr. Onslow Ford, A.R.A.*)

The sculptor's practice of casting in plaster the hands of his client is of comparatively recent growth. The artist of the old school—and he is followed in this by many of the new—disdained so mechanical a means to fidelity. Very few, indeed, among the British painters and sculptors of the past will be found who took the pains to see that the hands or even the figures of their counterfeit presentments on canvas or in marble tallied with the originals. Sir Joshua Reynolds, as we know, would have regarded this as the essence of finical vulgarity.

The principal drawback in making casts from life is to be found in the discomfort, not to speak of the actual torment, it often causes the sitter by the adhesion of the plaster to the hairy growth of the skin. Various methods are resorted to with a view to obviate this, and in some cases successfully.

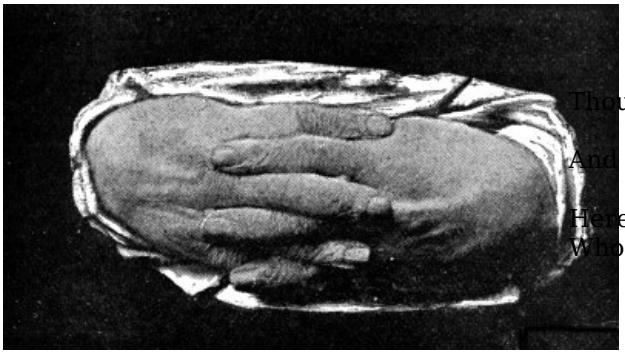
The hands of Thomas Carlyle—stubborn, combative, mystical—which appear in the present paper, will amply repay the closest scrutiny. These hands are unwontedly realistic, and emphasize their distinctiveness in every vein and wrinkle. They appear to be themselves endowed with each of those various qualities which caused their possessor to be regarded as one of the most puissant figures in the century's literature. The hand is not one, to use Charles Lamb's expressive phrase, to be looked at *standing on one leg*. It deserves a keener examination.

THOMAS CARLYLE'S HANDS.

Mention has been made of the hand of a distinguished prelate, Cardinal Manning. It will not be out of place to compare it with the hands of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, which were cast posthumously. Scarcely anything could be more antagonistic. The nervous personality of Manning is wanting here. The hands of the Archbishop seem more to belong to the order of the benevolent Bishop Myriel than to that of the enthusiast and ascetic. [Pg 296]

Plenty of opportunity to study the hands of statesmen is afforded in those of Lord Palmerston, Count Cavour, Sir Stratford Canning, and Lord Melbourne. The fallacy of attaching special qualities to any distinctive trait in the hand of an eminent person is most readily discernible here. One should avoid *à posteriori* reasoning. It would be the same for a physiognomist to argue a man a statesman from a facial resemblance to Mr. Gladstone, or that he is fit to write tragedies because he owns the exact facial proportions of Sardou.

Among these the hand of Lord Palmerston will stand forth most prominently to the reader. Its characteristics are, on the whole, sufficiently obvious, in the appended cast, to be thought accentuated. It might not unprofitably be noted in connection with those of Stratford Canning, Viscount de Redcliffe (for fifty years British



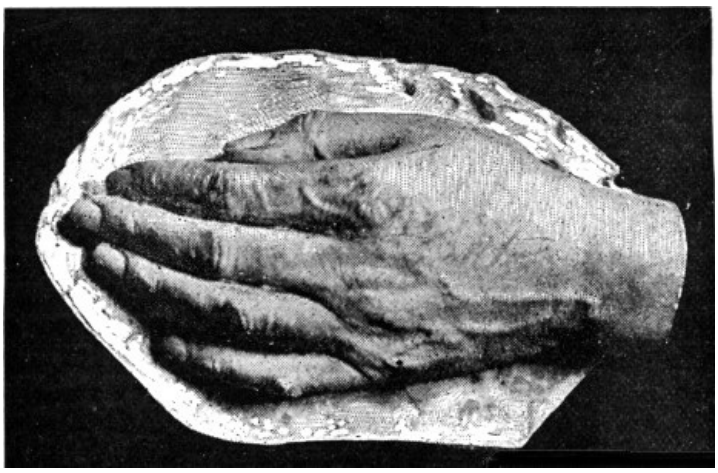
THE LATE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S HANDS.

Ambassador in India), whose statue by Boehm, with Tennyson's famous epitaph:

Thou third great Canning, stand among our best
And noblest, now thy long day's work hath ceased,
Here, silent in our Minster of the West,
Who wert the voice of England in the East!

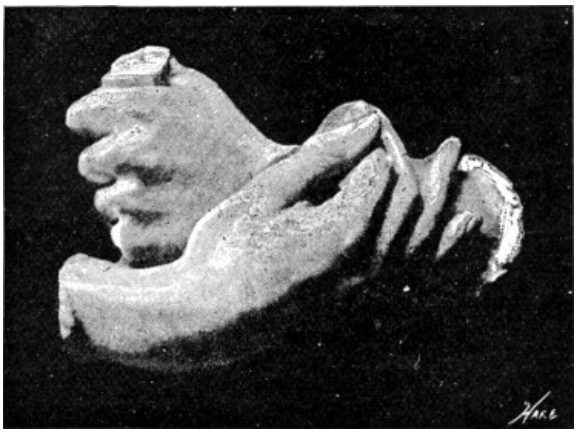
is in a nave of the Abbey. With these should be joined the hand of Viscount Melbourne, the predecessor of Sir Robert Peel in the Premiership, and the great statesman after whom the city of Melbourne was named, in order to range this British galaxy against the hands of the Italian patriots, Count Cavour and Joseph Garibaldi, whose labours resulted in that master stroke of latter-day politics, the unification of Italy. Those of the former were cast separately in different positions, it being the intention of the sculptor for the right hand to rest lightly upon a column and the left to grasp a roll of parchment. Garibaldi's hand may be described as both virile and nervous.

[Pg 297]



LORD PALMERSTON'S HAND.

Another type of hand is exemplified in the hands of Messrs. Joseph Arch and John Burns. Both of these belong to self-made men, accustomed to hard manual labour from childhood. Their powerful ruggedness is admirably set off by the exquisite symmetry and feminine proportions of the hand of John Jackson a Royal Academician and great painter of his time. For symmetry, combined with grace, this hand is not surpassed.

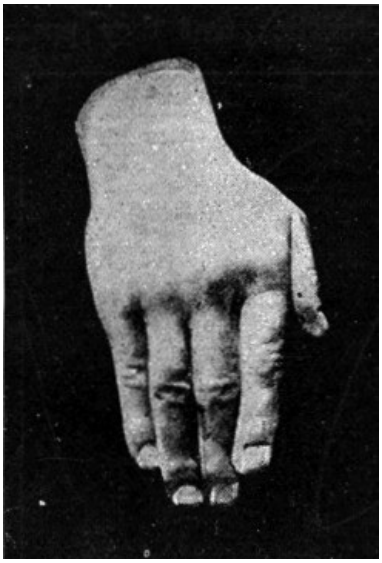


COUNT CAVOUR'S HANDS.

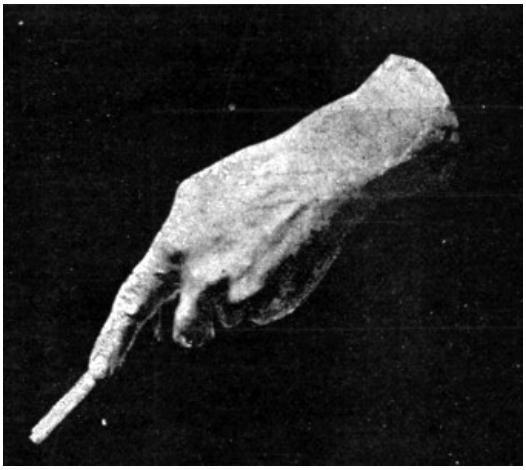
The hand of Sir Edgar Boehm was cast by his assistant, Professor Lantéri, for the former's statue of Sir Francis Drake. It will be observed that the fingers grasp a pair of compasses, the original of those which appear in the bronze at Plymouth.

[Pg 298]

SIR STRATFORD CANNING'S HANDS.



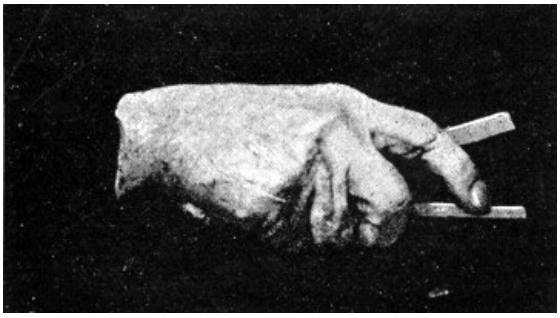
HAND OF JOHN BURNS, M.P.



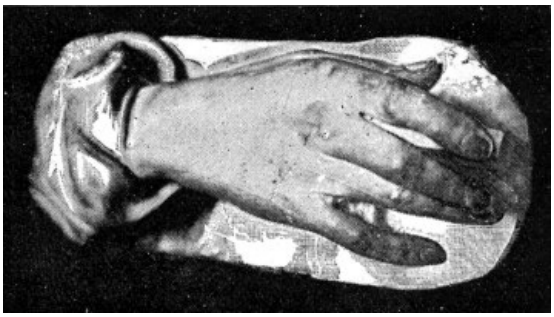
LORD MELBOURNE'S HAND.

GARIBALDI'S HAND.

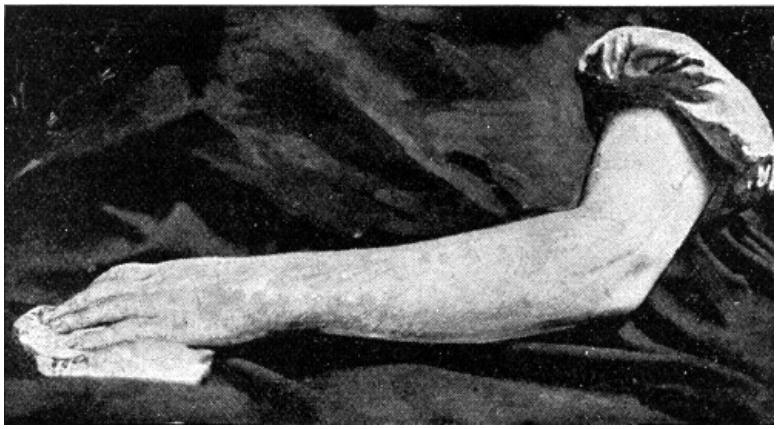
HAND OF JOSEPH ARCH, M.P.



SIR E. BOEHM'S HAND.



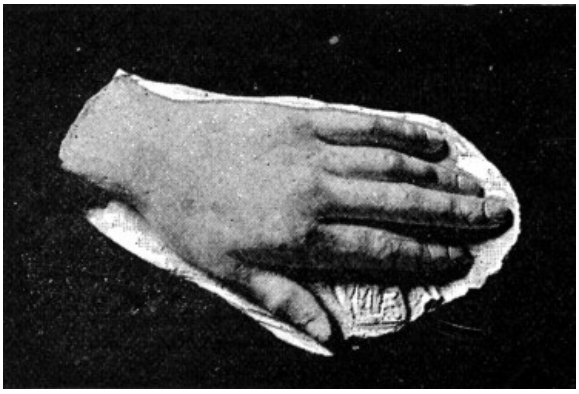
HAND OF JOHN JACKSON, R.A.



LADY BLESSINGTON'S HAND.

Reverting to the ladies again, interest will, no doubt, centre upon the hand of the celebrated Lady Blessington, accounted the wittiest hostess of her day; and not least attractive will appear Mrs. Carlyle's and those of Mrs. Thornycroft and the celebrated Madame Tussaud. The wife of the Chelsea sage was herself, as is known, an authoress of no mean repute.

A comparison of the hand of Mr. Bancroft with that of Mr. Irving, given last month, will prove



MRS. THORNYCROFT'S HAND.

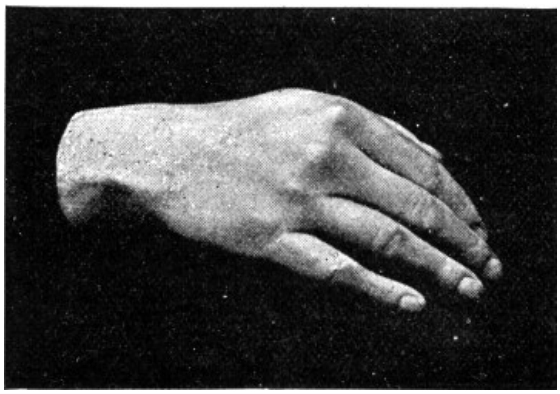
MRS. CARLYLE'S HAND.

interesting, if not instructive.

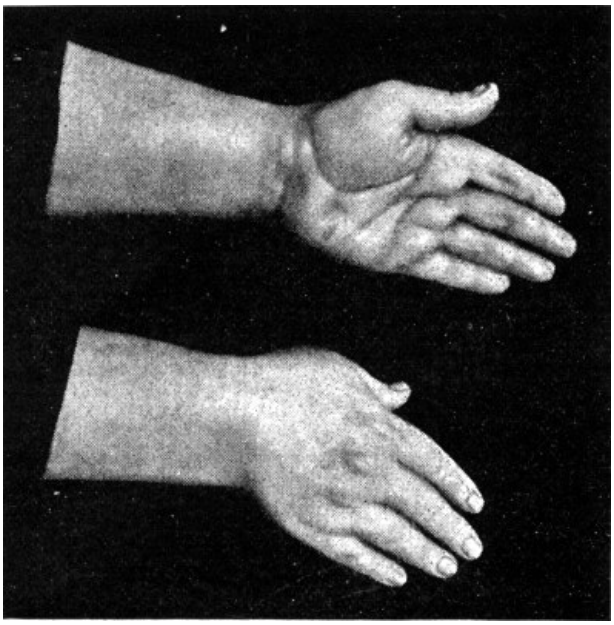
It has been said that the hands of Carlyle are characteristic; that they possess, with those of Wilkie Collins, the merit of being precisely the sort of hands one would expect to see so labelled. We now present a third candidate for this merit of candour in casts of the hands of the notorious Arthur Orton, better known under the sobriquet of the Claimant. They are pulseless, chubby, oblique: yet they are remarkable. In scrutinizing them, it is difficult not to feel that one looks upon hands very remote indeed from the ordinary.

[Pg 299]

MME. TUSSAUD'S HAND.



MR. BANCROFT'S HAND.

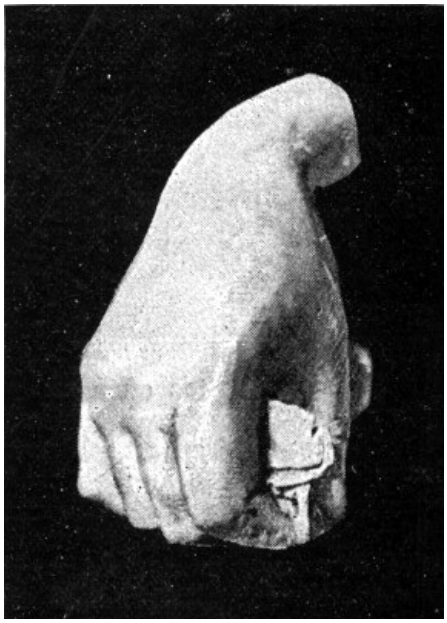


Next we look upon the hand of a giant even superior to Anak, in Loushkin, the Russian. But physically great as was the Muscovite, it is to be doubted if he really attained the world-wide celebrity of the little American, Charles Stratton (otherwise known as "Tom Thumb"), whose extremity serves as a foil to his rival for exhibition honours.

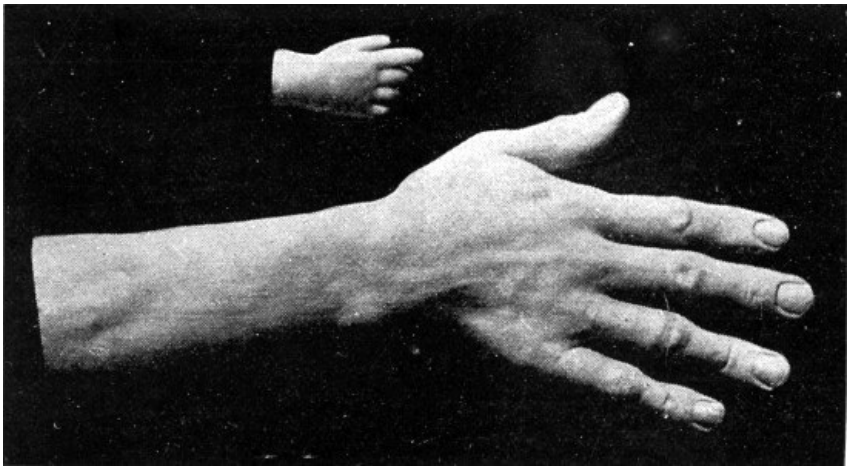
Another Boehm relic requires some explanation. Every visitor to the Metropolis has doubtless seen and admired the heroic equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington, opposite Apsley House. They may even have noticed the right hand, which is represented as lightly holding the rein of the animal. The appended was cast from the original model in clay of the hand of the Duke, no cast direct from life ever having been executed.

It is sufficient to say that the subjoined hand and arm

HANDS OF THE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT. of Lady Cardigan, wife of the noted Crimean warrior, was one greatly admired by Sir Edgar, in whose studio it hung for many years. In like manner will the hand of Lady Richard Grosvenor be found the possessor of many beautiful and interesting traits.

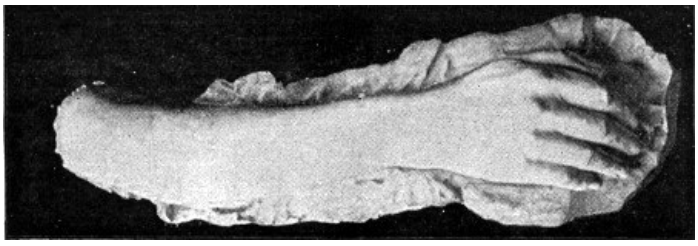


THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S HAND.



THE HANDS OF "TOM THUMB" AND LOUSHKIN, THE RUSSIAN GIANT.

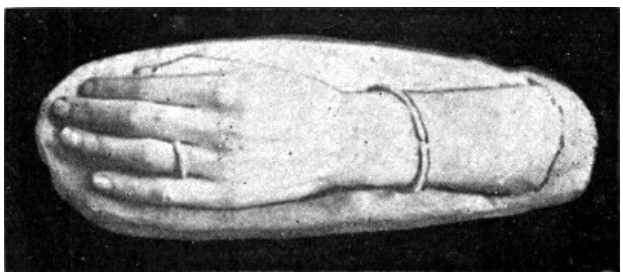
[Pg 300]



LADY CARDIGAN'S HAND.

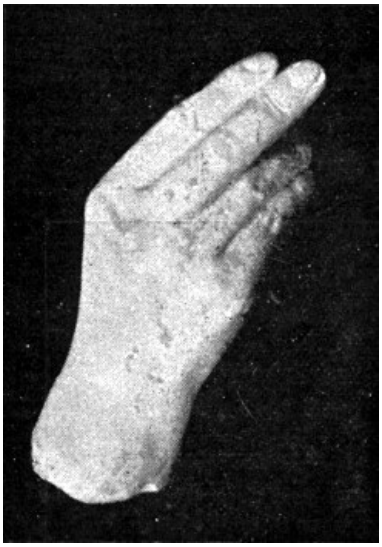
A member not altogether dissimilar to that of the musician Liszt is the hand of Carl von Angeli, Court painter to Her Majesty, and like that also in setting at naught the conclusions too often arrived at by the chirognomist. For there is here breadth without symmetry, and an utter absence of the poise which we look for in the ideal hand of the artist. It is instructive to compare it to the hand of the painter, John Jackson.

Observe the massive, masculine fingers and disproportionately small finger-nails in the hands of Professor Weekes, the sculptor. There is scarcely any perceptible tapering at the third joint, and the fingers all exhibit very little prominence of knuckle or contour. It is anything but an artistic hand, and yet its owner was a man of the keenest artistic perceptions.



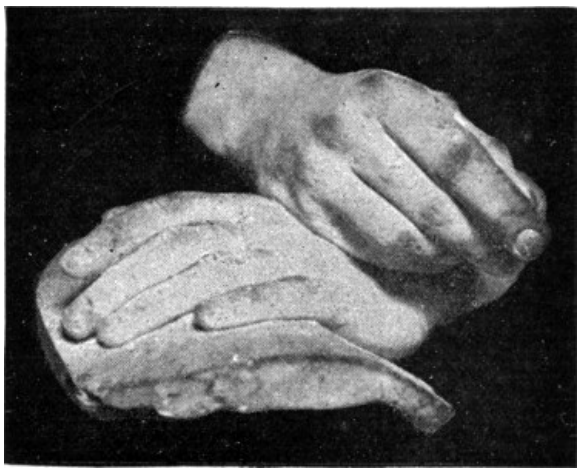
LADY RICHARD GROSVENOR'S HAND.

In Frederick Baring's (Lord Ashburton) we find the thick-set fingers, and what the chirognomist calls the "lack of manual repose," of the great financier. But as his lordship was statesman with a talent for debate as well as man of commerce, it will not unlikely be found that the hand presented combines the both temperaments.



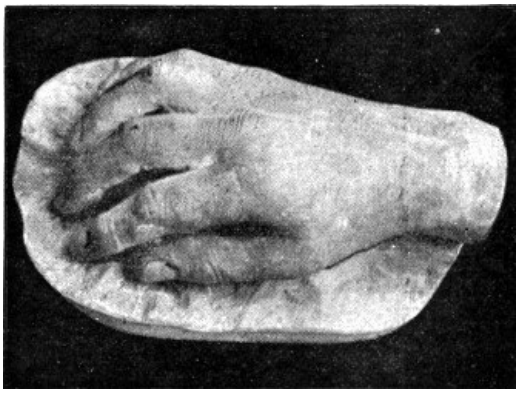
CARL ANGELI'S HAND.

I have been enabled, through the kindness of Mr. J. T. Tussaud, to embellish the present collection by an ancient cast of the hand of the Comte de Lorge, a famous prisoner in the Bastille. This cast was taken, together with a death mask, after death, by the great-grandmother of the sculptor, to whom both relics have descended.



PROFESSOR WEEKES' HANDS.

[Pg 301]



LORD ASHBURTON'S HAND.

The Queen's hands, which appeared in the last issue of this Magazine, were cast by John Francis, a famous sculptor of the day. Mr. Hamo Thorneycroft, R.A., writes me to say that "While the moulds were being made Her Majesty removed all the rings from her fingers *except* the wedding ring. This she was most anxious should not come off, and was in considerable fear lest the moulding process might remove it."

COMTE DE LORGE'S HAND.

[*The original drawings of the illustrations in this Magazine are always on view, and on sale, in the Art Gallery at these offices, which is open to the public without charge.*]

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From the French of Pitre Chevalier.

I.

It was harvest day at a house in the little village of Panola, in Castile, on the 25th of August, 1838. The great sheaves of corn had been borne, amidst universal rejoicing, to their resting-place in the granary. All the village inhabitants had shared in this pleasant task, and now, following an ancient custom, they had erected a trophy composed of a few last sheaves of corn, round which the young girls and men began to dance gaily, to the sound of guitars and castanets.

Within the house, in a room which overlooked this charming scene, were two men.

The first, seated at a table, was an old man over sixty, but enfeebled rather by cares than by age. His venerable head, crowned with white hair, drooped upon his breast with patriarchal dignity. The old man, who had been a soldier in the Spanish army, was Don Pedro de la Sarga, a Castilian as noble as he was poor. His companion was his son, Don Stephano, a young man of twenty, considered the most accomplished man in Panola. He was handsome; his warm, brown skin, his large, black eyes, the regular features, which wore that expression of national pride which distinguishes a Castilian from any other race, and his raven-black hair were eminently the Spanish type in all its grace and haughtiness. The young man wore the Spanish holiday costume, the richness of which has made travellers exclaim, more than once, that no European prince is clothed like a simple peasant of Castile. Stephano had on a short vest of black cloth, lined with yellow silk, ornamented with fringes and bunches of ribbons; an embroidered shirt with open collar revealing a waistcoat with gilt buttons, knee-breeches of black silk confined at the knees by bunches of ribbons, shoes and gaiters of fine brown leather, while a black felt hat with drooping plume completed his costume.

Stephano's gloomy face contrasted with his gay attire. He leant against the open window, carelessly holding in his hand a bouquet of faded jasmine, whilst he gazed with melancholy eyes upon the festive scene before him, and only by a shake of the head and a sad smile replied to the light badinage of the dancers as they passed the window. But now and then his eyes lighted up, and he sighed deeply as a certain dancer, prettier than the rest, approached him. [Pg 303]

"How pretty she is!" he murmured, as he followed her retreating form.

"Stephano!" called out the old man, who had been watching his son for some time.

"How gracefully she dances," continued the handsome dreamer, wrapt in his thoughts.

"Stephano!" repeated the old man.

"Yes, father," cried Stephano, with a start, and coming forward. "Do you wish to speak to me?"

"From your mysterious air and endless sighs these last few days, Stephano, I conclude that you are in love," said his father.

"In love!" stammered the young man. "You think I am in love?"

"I do not think, my son—I am sure of it; and I have only one reproach to make to you, and that is that you have not made me a confidant of your secret before."

"You shall know all, father," said Stephano, drawing a chair close to Don Pedro.

"For the last month," he continued, "I have had in my heart a love which nothing can subdue, and the object of my passion is a young girl here, a glance from whose eyes is worth more to me than all the world besides; but she shuns my love, and on every occasion strives to avoid me. She hardly permits me to speak to her for fear that the passion she reads in my eyes will break into words."

"Bah!" said the old man, merrily; "it is very likely that she shuns you for the reason of your not opening your mouth; you scare the young girl with your morose airs."

"Oh, if that were only true," sighed the disconsolate swain.

"Now," said the old man, "there only remains for me to know the name of my future daughter-in-law."

The young man was about to pronounce the name which already trembled on his lips when a sudden clamour interrupted the most interesting portion of this conversation. The peasants, followed by the partners, were rushing towards the house, and in the twinkling of an eye the room was filled with the animated and noisy throng. The new-comers wore rich costumes, more or less copies of Stephano's; some carried guitars, others castanets, while most of them leaned upon tall peeled rods, forked at the top, and ornamented with ribbons of all colours; each carried on the left side of his vest a bouquet similar to that of Stephano. The young girls in their silken bodices, short skirts, red stockings and mantillas, rattled their castanets as they entered with their partners. The joyous crowd surrounded Don Pedro, whilst cries of "Rosita! Rosita!" resounded from all sides.

"Well, well, my children, what is it you want?" demanded the village Nestor of his clamorous audience.

"We want Mlle. Rosita," they repeated.

"What, my niece? But is she not with you? I thought it was she whom you were leading just now round the corn sheaves."

"That is true," replied one of the foremost of the crowd; "everything went smoothly until we wished her to take part in our usual ceremony of 'The Maiden's Choice.'"

"Did you explain to her," asked the old man, "what is the ceremony?"

"Yes, we told her all that was necessary: that it is an old custom in Panola on harvest day, after having escorted the daughter of the house round the last sheaves of corn, for all her admirers in the village to present her, each in his turn, with a bouquet; that she must then choose the one she loves amongst them by retaining his bouquet, whilst the others are rejected. She answered us by saying that she had only been in Panola a few months, and was therefore not forced to adopt our customs, and leaving us with these words she fled from us and escaped through the little granary door."

"The little shrew!" Don Pedro exclaimed, who, like an amiable old man, was always on the side of the young folk. "But my friends," he added, "you are but poor Lotharios to be flouted by a young girl; you must follow her and bring her back."

"That is just what we have done; but one cannot catch a bird without also having wings. She seemed to fly as we followed her, and on reaching the granary she entered and slammed the door in our faces; so we have come, as a last resource, to you, Don Pedro, to ask her to comply with our wishes."

"You are right," replied the old man, with all the gravity of a judge, "you must be satisfied at once"; and he looked round for Don Stephano, who was standing more moody than ever behind a giggling group of young peasants.

"My son," he said, "go and bring your cousin here. If she refuses, tell her that I particularly wish her to come."

"I will go, father," said Stephano, after a second's hesitation; and he went out.

There was a slight pause; then shouts and acclamations and rattling of castanets burst forth, as Rosita, with downcast eyes, entered the room, led by Stephano. Well might they welcome with fervour such a charming creature. Rosita was just eighteen. She wore upon her golden brown hair a black lace mantilla, which contrasted with her creamy complexion and the liquid depth of her large brown eyes. A brown velvet bodice showed off to perfection her slight yet rounded figure; and her silk skirts just revealed her pretty ankles and small feet in their silk stockings and neat shoes. [Pg 304]

Rosita was a native of Navarre. She had quitted Tafalla, her native village, on the death of her father and mother, who had been victims of the Civil War which at this time desolated the country, and had been conducted not without peril to her uncle's house at Panola, in which she had since taken up her abode.

"Rosita," said Don Pedro to his niece, taking her hand, "I have made your apologies to your friends for the trick you have played them. It is your turn now to atone for your misdeed, by submitting to an old custom. Among the brave Castilians who surround you there are many

suitors for your hand. There must be one among them whom you secretly favour. Your choice is entirely free, and even the favoured one after the ceremony will then have only the right to please you and to merit your hand."

"But, uncle——" faltered the young girl.

"I will take no denial, my dear," interrupted the old man.

Rosita strove in vain to protest, but her imperturbable uncle would not listen, and gave a sign to the peasants to begin the ceremony, in which he seemed to take as keen an interest as they did themselves. Thereupon the majority of the young men, darting furious glances of jealousy at one another, prepared for the contest. Rosita, at her uncle's side, stood at one end of the room. At her right and left were grouped the young peasant girls, admiring without envy the queen of the *fête*, and forming her court. Stephano stood behind with dejected mien. Those with guitars touched their instruments lightly now and then, and upon this scene, worthy of the pencil of Leopold Roberts, the sun, now setting at the horizon, cast a calm and solemn light.

The first peasant who came forward was a tall young man, with a ruddy complexion.

"My name is Geronimo Caldaroz, and I am twenty-five. It has been the talk of the village why I did not marry, and it has been said it was because I had never yet seen a maiden beautiful enough to please me. But now I have found her; it is you, Rosita. Will you accept my bouquet?" He presented his bouquet to the young girl, who blushed as she received it, and then let it fall.

"Refused! Refused!" whispered the spectators, whilst the young man disappeared into the crowd, and a second one took his place. But the same thing occurred, and with the same result. Soon the jasmine bouquets covered the ground round the young girl's feet. The rejected suitors multiplied so fast that they could no longer hide their discomfiture amongst the others. Restless and smiling, Don Pedro wondered why his niece was so severe, and the remaining suitors seemed to hesitate whether to advance into the lists or not. Then the last three timidly advanced one by one toward Rosita. The two first were not even heard to the end of their speech, and then all eyes were fixed with interest upon the last. Rosita let him finish his discourse, took his bouquet, which she scrutinized demurely, and then uttering a deep sigh let it fall upon the amorous trophy piled at her feet.

A murmur rose amongst the stupefied villagers. Don Pedro approached his niece.

"Well, my child," he said, "have you thought of what you have done?"

"Yes, uncle," Rosita replied. "Did you not tell me yourself that I was perfectly free?"

"Free to choose, without doubt; but not to send all your suitors away."

Rosita cast down her eyes and made no reply.

"Pardon me, father, but there still remains one," said Stephano, breaking the silence.

"Where is he?" everyone asked at once.

"Here he is."

Rosita trembled so violently that she was compelled to lean for support upon her uncle's arm, and Don Pedro, more astonished than anyone, rushed towards his son.

"What, Stephano?" he said joyfully. "It is your cousin whom——"

"Yes, father," replied the young man. "It is she whom I love."

In the midst of such general interest Stephano, pale with emotion, advanced towards his cousin.

"Rosita, I love you," he said, simply. "Will you keep this bouquet which I offer to you?"

The young man pronounced these words with a voice so sweet and expressive, and the gesture with which he offered the symbolic flower was so imploring and passionate, that a sympathetic thrill ran through the spectators, and tears bedimmed Don Pedro's eyes. [Pg 305]

"'ROSITA, I LOVE YOU,' HE SAID."

Rosita, not less pale than her cousin, took the bouquet with a trembling hand, gazed upon it tenderly, then made a movement as if to throw it down, paused, and then at last, with head turned aside, let it fall.

"Santa Maria! He also!" cried the crowd, mournfully.

"Do not condemn me without hearing my justification," cried Rosita, turning to Don Pedro.

"Your justification?" repeated Stephano, with relief.

"Uncle," she said, after a pause, "there is a secret which I may have been wrong in concealing from you hitherto, but I must confide it to you alone."

"To me!" cried the astonished old man.

"I will come with you at once," and, seizing Rosita's hand, he led her away, making signs to the peasants as he did so to disperse.

Stephano strolled out to breathe the air upon the hills, whose shadows were beginning to slope down into the valley. The sky was lighted only by the afterglow of the red, sunken sun; the evening breeze carried along in the warm air the perfume of the jasmine flowers and orange groves in bloom, and no sound was heard but the music of guitars and castanets, mingled sometimes with the faint tinkle of sheep bells.

When Stephano re-entered he found his father and cousin in the lower hall. Rosita, on perceiving him, made a pretext for rising, and hurriedly left the room. Don Pedro and his son were left alone.

"One word, father," said Stephano. "Does Rosita love me, and will she also become my wife?"

"You must forget Rosita," replied the old man. "You must tear from your heart even the remembrance of your love."

The young man abandoned himself to despair.

"I shall never forget her," he said, passionately. "My love for Rosita will only cease with my life."

And he rushed from the room, leaving the old man wondering.

II.

For some weeks the inmates of Don Pedro's house were forced to remain prisoners, for rebel soldiers filled the neighbouring villages, and troops of guerillas were being mustered to put them to flight. It was a morning, early in September, just after the sun had peered above the horizon. A fine rain had fallen during the night, and the drops which rested on the foliage sparkled like myriads of diamonds. The streets were as yet deserted; some muleteers alone passed along them at intervals. Don Pedro's house was the only one astir. [Pg 306]

Don Stephano, according to his custom, had risen with the dawn, and was now alone in the lower hall, standing opposite the window which overlooked the high road. He was occupied in fixing an iron lance upon a wooden rod, at which he gazed abstractedly.

The sound of a voice filling the air with song attracted his attention; it was singing the Moorish romance of "Adlemar and Adalifa," and to the quick perception of a Spanish ear was marked with

a slight Ultramontaine accent, which Stephano discerned like a true Castilian. Without moving he listened to the song which awoke the echoes of the valley. The amorous words recalled to Stephano's mind the thought of Rosita, and he sighed deeply. Then he listened anew to the voice, which grew nearer and nearer, and in which, in spite of its strange accent, he seemed to hear an understrain of singular emotion. His conjectures were not long, however. A man enveloped in a large mantle peered in at the open window, and after throwing a rapid glance behind him leapt into the room. Stephano recoiled at the sight of such a strange visitor, and felt tempted to seize the man, whom he took at first for a robber. Then a troop of horsemen dashed past the house. The stranger gave a sigh of relief. Then for the first time he caught sight of Stephano.

"I must be careful," the soldier muttered, as he drew his cloak more carefully round him. "This Spaniard does not look over benevolent."

"Who can this man be?" thought Stephano, as he instinctively put his hand on his pistols; but on seeing the stranger advance towards him with a pleasant smile, he paused.

"Noble Castilian," said the stranger, "are you a man to oblige an enemy in peril, and who for a quarter of an hour wishes you no more harm than if you were his brother?"

Before replying, Stephano scrutinized his questioner. He saw before him a man of about twenty-eight, with a frank face and light hair and moustache. His accent, and the blue pantaloons which appeared under the brown mantle, proclaimed him a Frenchman.

"THE STRANGER."

"No unarmed man is my enemy," replied Stephano, "and from the moment my roof was over your head you became my guest."

"Shake hands on it! You are a fine fellow," cried the soldier, holding out his hand. At the same time he drew aside his mantle, and Stephano recognised the uniform worn by the French volunteers of Don Carlos's army. "Now, if you have a drop of anything to drink handy, I will tell you in a few words what has brought me here."

Stephano opened the sideboard, and brought out a bottle and glasses. The soldier wiped his moustache as he began.

"You see before you," he said, with frank abruptness, "Charles Dulaurier, a soldier by birth and profession, lieutenant in the Grenadiers of His Majesty Charles V. —pardon me, Don Carlos. Being stationed some few [Pg 307] miles from here, I asked for leave of absence this morning to join some troops which (pardon me) are going to make a raid upon this very village this morning. But, thanks to my foolhardiness in starting off alone, I soon found myself in the hands of guerillas. I escaped. They pursued me. But I, though alone in a strange country and unarmed, led them a nice dance for half an hour. I was just about to fall again into their hands when I came in sight of this house. I duped them by my ruse of pitching my voice in such a manner as to lead them to think I was beyond the village, whilst I at the same time took refuge here. To conclude, my worthy fellow, no doubt the guerillas are not blind, and not finding any trace of me upon the route, will return to Panola. Consequently, if you are a host to my liking you will——"

"Conceal you," said Stephano, quickly. "You are right!" and he glanced round with uneasiness. The lieutenant struck him on the shoulder. "One minute," he said; "the guerillas cannot reappear for half an hour. This little expedition, as you may imagine, was not my only motive for coming to Panola, and I must again abuse your patience in asking you some questions upon a certain subject which is the motive of my expedition."

"Go on," replied Stephano, with resignation.

"I came here to look for a young girl," said the Frenchman, twisting his moustache, "and as, perhaps, you will be so good as to give me some information on this point, it would be better for you to know the story. Last year my regiment, after a vigorous resistance, entered a village in Navarre."

"A village in Navarre?" repeated Stephano, and his brow darkened.

"One house had been so well defended, indeed, that it was found necessary to surround it, and our infuriated soldiers, drunk with carnage, determined to massacre everyone within. I luckily surprised them as they drew their sabres upon two poor old creatures and their young daughter. I threw myself between the victims and their butchers; the wretches turned upon me and I fell wounded by a bayonet thrust, but they were saved. The kind people who owed me their lives bore me to their house, and gave me every care. The young girl watched at my bedside for more than a fortnight. Briefly the beauty, the tenderness of the little girl, won my heart. Losing no time, I declared my passion. She whispered, blushing, that I might speak to her parents. As soon as I

was well enough to walk, I hastened to the worthy old man, who, after the shock he had received, became mortally ill, and felt his end approach. I had no sooner asked him for his daughter's hand than he exclaimed, 'God be praised! I shall not now die without having recompensed our deliverer.' At the same time he took the young girl's hand and mine, and, after making us exchange rings, clasped them together. Then he stretched forth his trembling hands above our heads to bless us, whilst on our knees by the bedside we swore eternal fidelity to each other. Three days after the good man died, and the same day my regiment left for Castile. Seven months passed without my hearing any news from my betrothed, and it was only by chance I learned that on her mother's death she had quitted Navarre to take up her abode in her uncle's house at Panola.

"But what is the matter?" said the lieutenant, as Stephano rose hurriedly.

"I know enough," replied the young man in a hollow voice. "The village was Tafalla, and the young girl's name is Rosita."

"But what is there in that?" cried the lieutenant, who understood nothing of Stephano's emotion. "You know Rosita? She is here? You are silent. Heavens! Is she dead—or married?"

"No, no," replied Stephano, with an effort. "Rosita is here. No doubt she loves you and watches for your return with impatience."

"Where, then, shall I find my betrothed?"

Stephano was about to reply to this question when the tramp of horses was heard. It was the troop returning.

"Softly!" whispered Dulaurier as he crept towards the window. "Yes, these are my friends. Where will you hide me?"

Stephano regarded him with a savage gleam in his eyes and muttered to himself, "This man comes here to blast my happiness, and I must protect his life at the peril of my own."

"What am I to do?" repeated Dulaurier.

"Take this dagger," said Stephano, "put on your mantle and follow me." He unfastened a little door which opened upon a staircase which led into the garden, and descended, followed by Dulaurier. They stole along behind a thick hedge of hawthorn until they came to the trees of a little orchard, from which rose the roof of a ruined summer-house. On reaching this spot [Pg 308] Stephano installed the lieutenant so that he could watch both the road and the garden; then having arranged upon the course they should take, Stephano hastened back to the house.

Don Pedro was in the lower hall, alone, when his son entered.

"I have a request to make to you," said the young man, clasping his father's hand convulsively. "I want you to let me start at once to join my brothers and to fight for Spain."

"Can you then leave your cousin?" said Don Pedro, sadly. "And you do not know ——"

"I know more than you, father, more than Rosita herself about this affair," interrupted Stephano. "Is not Rosita betrothed to a French volunteer in Don Carlos's army, and is this not the secret she confided to you on harvest day?"

"It is true. But how have you discovered it?"

"From a man flying from the pursuit of guerillas; no other than the man himself, Lieutenant Charles Dulaurier!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the stupefied old man.

"THEY STOLE ALONG."

"You see, father, that it is absolutely necessary for me to go," cried Stephano. "I cannot wait until Rosita and Dulaurier are united. Their happiness would be more than I could bear, and I have thought of a plan by which the lieutenant can be saved without putting off my departure. I shall join the troop of guerillas who are seeking Dulaurier in the village. Seeing me become one of themselves their suspicions will be lulled, and I shall save my rival by departing with his enemies."

"You are right," replied his father, after a painful pause, but he could not utter a word more.

The young man proceeded to take down from the wall his pistols and his gun; he placed the

former in his belt and the latter on his shoulder, took his hat and stepped forward to bid his father farewell. But as he threw himself into the arms of the weeping old man, the door opened and Rosita entered.

The young girl glanced quickly from one to the other, and then her eyes remained fixed on Stephano.

"What are you going to do?" she asked, examining his equipment.

"I am going away," replied Stephano. "Farewell, Rosita, be happy. Farewell, father," he added, embracing Don Pedro.

"He is going," said Rosita, her eyes dim with tears, "without one friendly smile, without one clasp of his hand. Oh! Stephano," she exclaimed, springing forward. "You cannot part from me thus!"

"You are keeping me!" said the bewildered young man.

"Yes," she replied, seizing his hand. "Stay, Stephano, do not go. I implore you!" [Pg 309]

"Remain!" cried the young man, passionately. "Remain to see you in the arms of another? Never!"

As he moved towards the door, Rosita sprang towards him with outstretched arms. "And what if it is you whom I love, Stephano? What if I have never loved anyone but you?" A thunderbolt would hardly have produced more effect than did these words.

"You love me?" he repeated, approaching his cousin. "Rosita, for mercy's sake, repeat those words once more, so that I may be sure of having heard aright."

"Yes, I love you," repeated the young girl, tenderly; "no one but you! Will you stay now?"

"For ever, if you wish it!" cried the enraptured youth, throwing down his gun and pistols. "Look at me, Rosita, that I may read in your eyes that word which gives me life, and which I have waited for so long. How blind and foolish I have been! But that will be all right now, will it not, my beloved?" As he spoke he embraced her passionately. By both of them the world was forgotten.

Through the open window came the clink of spurs and rattling of sabres. This sound, to which Stephano and Rosita were deaf, struck on the ear of Don Pedro and paralyzed him with terror.

"Stephano!" he cried at last. "Remember Lieutenant Dulaurier!"

"REMEMBER LIEUTENANT DULAURIER!"

"Ah!" groaned Stephano, rudely torn from his ecstasy of happiness; and he fixed his gaze upon his cousin.

The girl had not even heard Don Pedro.

"Rosita," said her lover, "you say you love me, but you have a *fiancé!*"

"Dulaurier!" cried the startled girl. "Great Heaven! pardon me, I had forgotten."

"If this man," continued Stephano, "came here to claim your promise, you would reply, would you not, that friendship alone, not love, had drawn you towards him, and that your hand, promised when you hardly knew what you did, would now be given without your heart?"

"Yes, that is what I should answer; but he is not likely to come here, Stephano."

"And what if he were here already?" asked an impressive voice.

Don Pedro at the same time stepped forward between the young people, and before the severe face of the Spaniard their eyes drooped.

"Father!" faltered the young man.

"Silence!" cried the old man. "Your duty is clear. What if Dulaurier were in the house, Rosita—what if, more faithful than you, he had come to claim his promise, made at the death-bed of your father? I ask you what you would answer." [Pg 310]

Trembling and submissive as a criminal before his judge, the young girl turned her eyes from Stephano to Don Pedro.

"I should reply to Lieutenant Dulaurier that, before God and man, I am his betrothed bride, and that while he lives no other can be my husband."

"Come then, my child, prepare to receive your *fiancé*," and Don Pedro held out his hand to his niece to lead her away.

"You are destroying my happiness!" cried Stephano.

"But in return I give you back your honour," replied Don Pedro. "Look after the lieutenant, for here come the guerillas!" and he went out.

"What a dream, and what an awakening!" murmured Stephano as he was left alone. "Rosita vows she loves me, and at the same time declares she will never be mine while Dulaurier lives. *While he lives!* And I must take upon myself the peril of saving him, when I have only to let him——Oh, how despair tempts us to horrible deeds! Is there time to fly, to quit this spot where each thought is torture: to hasten and join the guerillas before they enter the house? For, alas! if they enter now and demand where their enemy is—by Heaven! I shall not have the strength to resist—I must fly!"

Picking up his gun and pistols he rushed towards the door, but recoiled at the sight of a man in the uniform of a captain of guerillas, who by a gesture forced him to pause.

"IT IS TOO LATE!"

"Malediction—it is too late!" murmured the young man, as he dropped upon a chair, and let his unheeded weapons fall to the ground.

"Two sentinels before each door and window," called out the captain to the soldiers who followed him. "This is the last house in which our prisoner could take refuge," he continued, striking impatiently the butt end of his rifle upon the ground. "Search well, comrades; you know he who takes the Frenchman prisoner is to have the honour of firing the first shot upon him, and is also to receive twenty douros for reward." Thereupon he advanced into the room. "Well, my good fellow," he said to Stephano; "what are you going to do with these weapons? Are they to defend yourself or to protect the officer whom you have hidden here?"

"No one is hidden in this house," replied the young man, with the courage which peril bestows. "The La Sargas are known throughout the country to be devoted to Spain and the Queen. I have three brothers in the national army, and I have just picked up these weapons with the intention of joining your troops."

The captain looked at him with a sneering smile. Then he turned to his companions, who had just returned from searching the house.

"Well, have you found anything?"

"Only a young girl and an old man," was the reply.

"Bring the old man here," said the captain; then he turned to Stephano. "And you, sir, go with my lieutenant and these three men, and show them every room there is"; then he murmured in the lieutenant's ear, slipping at the same time a purse of gold into his hand: "Spare neither threats nor persuasion to gain this young man over to our side. Whatever it costs, I must recapture our prisoner." [Pg 311]

Stephano felt tempted to resist these orders, but he reflected that this would only draw suspicion upon him, and he led the way up the stairs, which were placed in a corner of the room.

At the same time Don Pedro entered, guarded by two soldiers and leaning on his staff. Then an interval ensued, and the minutes flew past. Suddenly a pistol shot was heard. Everyone gave a start of alarm. Then one of the guards who had gone out with Stephano came rushing down the stairs and into the room.

"The bird is snared, or will be in a few minutes," he cried. "Our prisoner," he continued, pointing through the window, "is in that building which you see at the bottom of the garden."

"How do you know this?" asked the captain.

"From the young man who is upstairs with the lieutenant."

"From Stephano!" cried the old man, growing pale with horror.

"Ah, ah!" laughed the captain, "your son does not seem very hard to persuade."

"The lieutenant having discovered nothing," the man went on, "told three of us to go and search the granary, and took advantage of the occasion to take the young man aside. I watched them. A purse of gold and the barrel of a pistol have been the principal inducements. The sly fellow at first was very obstinate, and it was then that the lieutenant fired the pistol at him to frighten him. The young man seemed to be moved in a singular manner by the shot. He gave way with good grace, and pointed the pavilion out to us."

Whilst the captain lent a joyful ear to this narrative, Don Pedro, on the contrary, listened with terror mingled with incredulity. At these last words he could contain himself no longer, and broke in violently:—

"Enough, wretch; enough!" he cried. "What you say is impossible! It is an infamous calumny! My son is quite incapable of such villainy!"

"Look, senor," replied the man, pointing to the stairs.

Stephano in truth was descending with the lieutenant, holding the purse in his hand. His pale and agitated face seemed to proclaim his guilt, and Don Pedro sank back fainting on a seat. Stephano crossed the room with a faltering step without observing his father, and, reaching the window, gazed out upon the road.

In recalling to mind his son's jealousy of Dulaurier, Don Pedro understood the facts of the matter —that he had sold his guest to get rid of a detested rival. Maddened by passion, he had without doubt lost all control over himself. After having exchanged some words in a low voice with his lieutenant, the captain made a sign to two of his men.

"Remain with this fellow," he said, in a tone of contempt, pointing to Stephano, "until we reach the pavilion; if he makes one movement shoot him, and when a volley announces to you that we are not deceived, join us to start upon our route."

"Very good, captain," answered the two soldiers, taking up their position on each side of Stephano, whilst the others went out softly.

A mournful silence reigned in the chamber.

Stephano stood erect before the window, with haggard eyes fixed upon the road; Don Pedro, mute and motionless in his chair, seemed like a man bereft of all at a single blow. Then, his misery overwhelming him, he covered his face with his hands and wept. Stephano turned round quickly, and for the first time saw his father.

"Great Heavens! He was there, and heard all!" he murmured. "Father!" he cried imploringly.

"Call me your father no more," cried the old man, with flaming eyes, "unless you can tell me that I am blind and deaf, or that I have dreamed that my son was a coward, a traitor, an assassin! Tell me so, Stephano, for pity's sake!"

The young man made an effort as if he were about to speak, but paused at the sight of his two guards; the strain was so painful that he was forced to lean for support on one of the guerilla's arms. Then he turned away; Don Pedro rose from his seat and came towards his son.

"His eye never quits this fatal window," he murmured to himself. "It looks as if he watched to see the success of his perfidy, that he wishes to assure himself that his rival does not escape. Wretch!" he burst forth, "if this is so, may you be——"

Suddenly a hand was laid softly upon the old man's arm. It was Rosita.

"Ah! it is you, Rosita!" said Don Pedro with a bewildered stare. "Wretched man that I am, what was I about to do?" he added, passing his hand over his forehead. [Pg 312]

Rosita came farther forward into the room.

"Stephano guarded by two soldiers!" she cried. "Holy Virgin! what does this mean, and what has happened?"

And she made an instinctive movement towards her cousin. Her uncle stopped her.

"Keep away from this wretched man!" he cried, "for he is a coward and a traitor; he has betrayed your betrothed!"

"Betrayed my betrothed!" cried the girl, with horror. "It is impossible!"

"Not only has he betrayed him," continued the old man, taking his niece's hand, "but he is watching for the success of his treason. Do you recognise my son, Rosita?" he added, with heartrending despair, "or the man whom you loved?"

Here the poor old man broke down completely, and sank back into his chair. The girl gazed at

him with consternation. Even the rough soldiers were touched by the scene, and turned their heads aside.

"THE POOR OLD MAN BROKE DOWN COMPLETELY."

At that instant a loud report shook the walls. It was the captain's volley. The two soldiers exchanged a meaning glance and disappeared. As soon as they went out Rosita threw herself in Don Pedro's arms.

"Dulaurier is dead!" said the old man, gloomily.

"He is saved!" cried Stephano, coming forward, and throwing from him as he did so the purse of gold. "Yes, father, yes, Rosita, the lieutenant is safe and sound, and will be with us in a few seconds."

"How can that be?" cried Don Pedro, passing from despair to joy.

"Before leaving Dulaurier in the pavilion we had arranged that he was to be informed by a pistol shot when he must leave his hiding-place for the granary whilst his enemies were searching the pavilion. You understand now how the guerilla's shot agitated me. For, of course, Dulaurier, taking the report for the signal agreed upon, would leave the pavilion for the granary, and would then fall into the hands of his pursuers. The only plan to save him was to get the soldiers away from the granary, which I did by feigning to betray Dulaurier, by accepting the purse, and pointing out the pavilion as his hiding-place. For a quarter of an hour I have endured the tortures of hell, but I have saved the man who confided in me, and I am still worthy of you both!"

The young man had hardly finished his narrative when his father and Rosita were at his feet begging for forgiveness. Then Stephano hastened to the granary, and called the lieutenant's name, but there was no response, and soon Stephano's surprise was changed to uneasiness. He rushed into the granary. It was empty. Stephano reappeared, pale, tottering and breathless.

"Dulaurier is not in the granary," he cried. "He cannot have taken the pistol shot for my signal. He must have remained, and that report we heard was his death-shot."

He paused abruptly. Don Pedro and Rosita understood, and burst forth into an exclamation of horror. [Pg 313]

"Victory! Victory!" cried a hundred voices.

Their despair and consternation were changed to the most lively astonishment, when a detachment of Don Carlos's volunteers entered the house, led by Dulaurier himself.

"Dulaurier!" exclaimed Stephano, Don Pedro, and Rosita at the same time.

"Our enemies!" said the old Castilian, whilst his niece shrank behind him.

"Say rather friends," replied Dulaurier, pressing Stephano's hand warmly.

"But how has all this happened?" began the bewildered Stephano.

"One minute's attention. For half an hour I waited patiently after your departure in the little pavilion, when I heard the signal we arranged on of the pistol shot. I quitted my hiding-place at once, and was preparing to creep towards the granary, when, casting a glance upon the road, I recognised the uniforms of the volunteers of my regiment. Briefly," continued Dulaurier, showing the soldiers who surrounded him, "here are the gentlemen, whom I have the honour of presenting

to you. Like good comrades, they determined to avenge me, and we caught the guerillas in an ambush as they were searching the pavilion. Bang! a general discharge, and thirty men were lying on the ground, and the rest running away for their lives."

"The volley of which we believed you the victim!" interrupted Stephano.

"You understand the rest. Not wishing to quit Panola without thanking you, and also wishing to see about that little matter which I mentioned to you this morning, we came on here. And now," he added to Stephano, with the air of a man who has no time to lose, "I must thank you most warmly for all you have done for me."

There was such a tone of kindness in these words that Stephano could do nothing but grasp his hand cordially in return.

"Anyone else?" cried the effusive officer, looking quickly round. "You have a father, a mother, a wife, perhaps? Where are they? This noble old man must be your father," and upon Stephano's making an affirmative sign he grasped the old man's hand, and wrung it with force.

"Are there no ladies in your family?" asked Dulaurier with a gallant air.

It was then that in spite of Rosita's efforts to avoid his attention he caught sight of her as she hid behind Don Pedro's high-backed chair.

"Ah! here is one!" he said, without recognising his betrothed. He stepped forward towards her.

"Most amiable senora," he began politely, "permit me——" He paused, gazing with stupefied eyes upon the young girl, and then made a sign to his soldiers to leave them.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, "if I am not deceived it is Rosita, my pretty *fiancée*!"

"You are right; it is I, Monsieur Dulaurier," faltered the young girl.

The light of happiness vanished from all the faces in the room except the lieutenant's.

"You can easily understand, my pretty one, what has led me to Panola," said Dulaurier.

"I presume you have come to remind Rosita," answered Don Pedro, "of the promise that she gave you at her dying father's bedside. She has not forgotten it, senor. She recognises her duty, and you have only one word to say——"

"Will you answer me yourself, Rosita?" interrupted Dulaurier, marking her extreme pallor and agitation. "You know what I have the right of claiming; are you still able to give it me freely?"

"Without doubt," she murmured; "if I give you my hand, my heart will go with it."

"Words, nothing but words!" thought the lieutenant, who grew pale in his turn. "All women are weathercocks. It is clear I am superseded," and he bit his lip until it bled. "But I should like to know who is my substitute," and he turned mechanically to Stephano. He found him as mute and as troubled as Rosita. The truth flashed across him. "I cannot blame the brave young man," he murmured to himself, "for falling in love with his cousin. It has not prevented him from saving my life at the expense of his love and honour, and as I have no wish for a heart not wholly mine, I have now to render sacrifice for sacrifice, and to keep the reputation of France equal to that of Spain." He turned to Rosita with a smile.

"Mademoiselle," he began, "when we plighted our troth, and I told you that I loved you devotedly, I was as sincere as I am to-day, only I took upon myself too much, and have contracted several other engagements, more or less similar to yours." He gave a forced laugh as he pronounced these words.

"That is enough, senor," said Don Pedro. "But why have you then come to Panola to claim her promise?"

"Who said that I was here for that purpose?" asked Dulaurier, abruptly. Stephano, indeed, recollected that the Frenchman had not said a single word which implied that he came to claim Rosita's hand. "I implore Mademoiselle Rosita to pardon me," pursued Dulaurier, "and I propose that we exchange rings again." [Pg 314]

"I PROPOSE THAT WE EXCHANGE RINGS AGAIN."

It was no sooner said than done. Dulaurier turned and clasped Stephano's hand again, and now the young man saw with apprehension that Dulaurier's eyes were dim with tears. Dulaurier could keep up the farce no longer, and his heart was breaking behind the smile upon his lips.

"Dulaurier!" said the young man, "you weep: you are unhappy! What you have said has been only a sublime falsehood! You love Rosita—you wish to marry her—and if you have the generosity to renounce all for me, it must not be at the expense of your happiness."

"Hush!" said Dulaurier, as he took him aside. "Do not undo my work. But since you have found it out, you are right. I did come back to claim Rosita. I have always loved her, and have loved none but her. But do not breathe a word of this. Let no thought of my unhappiness cast a shadow on her life. Sacrifice for sacrifice, young man. France is equal to Spain, and we are quits.

"Farewell, brave Castilians," he cried aloud, "celebrate the marriage merrily: and let us hope that we shall never meet upon the battlefield of this unhappy country."

"Farewell!" replied Stephano, huskily.

Dulaurier pressed Don Pedro's and Stephano's hands, kissed that of Rosita, and joined his comrades outside.

"Wheel to the right—forward!" he shouted, at the head of his battalion.

Then came the roll of the drum, and they all marched past the window.

"Rosita," said Stephano to his cousin, "you are free, and we are going to be happy; but never let us forget Lieutenant Dulaurier!"

The Queer Side of Things.

Let us return for a space to the two spirits William and James, whose conversations we described in past numbers. Some readers may possibly recall how the spirit James, while wandering through the darkness of unoccupied Space (about five-and-twenty billions of eons before the commencement of Eternity), conceived a wild idea of the possibility of the existence of worlds—worlds occupied by an impracticability called "man." It will be recollected how the wiser spirit William cast well-merited ridicule upon this insanely impossible phantasy of a disordered mind; nay, even condescended to crush, by perspicuous and irrefutable logic, the grotesque and preposterous idea.

Very well; it is now William's turn.

"James," he said one day as they chanced to sight each other in the awful solitude of Space, "I have been thinking over that world of yours, and your crowning absurdity, 'man.' Pray do not become too inflated with weak conceit at my condescending to think about such trivialities; for the fact is, any subject of thought—however hopelessly foolish—is a relief amid the tediousness of Space. Well, I have been reflecting upon that characteristic which you conceive as distinguishing your puppet 'man'—I allude to *intelligence*. I think you suggested that he would possess intelligence?"

James only fidgeted uneasily, and made a feeble sign of affirmation.

"Very well," continued William. "Now, I have been putting two and two together, and have found out the nature of that quality which you mistake for intelligence; its true name is 'low cunning.' Every fresh piece of absurdity which you have told me touching the tricks of your queer creatures has supplied new evidence of this. Your creatures were to feed upon the substance of the 'world' on which they lived, and, ever increasing in numbers, would logically in course of time find there was not a mouthful apiece. I think we agreed about that? Well, let us consider that period, some time before the creatures should actually become exterminated by the natural evolution of events—the time when all the eatable products of their world would be growing scarce. You went so far as to imagine a great many products——"

"Yes!" said James, gazing afar off in the absorption of his imagination. "Yes—there were eggs, and oysters, and poultry, and mushrooms, and——"

"Ah!—the very things I've been reflecting about. Well, I've been dreaming that, at the period of which I speak, when all the commodities were becoming scarce, your human beings would agree to make poisonous artificial articles of consumption with which to poison themselves by degrees, and thus reduce the population to convenient limits." [Pg 316]

"No!" cried James, pondering deeply. "Their idea would be to poison not *themselves*, but *each other*!"

"Ah! I see. Then they would make some sort of effort to prevent themselves being poisoned?"

"Oh, yes; they would pass Adulteration Acts for the purpose."

"I see; and any creature who did not wish to be poisoned could take advantage of these Acts to protect himself?"

"Certainly. The Acts would be very stringent. Let us suppose, for example, that a certain man suspected that the butter supplied to him was not butter at all, but a deleterious compound—well, all he would have to do would be to go to the shop, accompanied by a guardian of the peace, and, standing on one leg, with both hands on the counter and one eye shut, order a pound of the butter in certain words prescribed by the Act. He would then say to the tradesman, 'I am about to divide this pound of butter into three equal portions for the purposes of analysis'; and, taking the butter-man's knife in his left hand, and

"POISON."

passing it to his right, would cut the butter into three portions exactly equal.

"After this, hermetically sealing the three portions in three jars provided for the purpose, he would hand one jar to the tradesman, the second to the guardian of the peace, and retain the third. Then he would bring an action; and (provided that all the conditions had been accurately fulfilled, without the slightest flaw) the erring tradesman would be told by the Court not to do it again; while the complainant would have to pay all costs, and possibly a fine; and would be sneered at by the magistrate as a fussy idiot and a common informer.

"If, on the other hand, the complainant should omit to secure the company of a custodian of the peace, or fail to stand on one leg with both hands on the counter, or take the knife in his right hand first, or should leave out the prescribed words, or blink his eye, or stammer, or sneeze, or in any other way fail to observe the regulations of the Act; he would, of course, have no case or remedy. The Adulteration Acts would be extremely stringent——"

"Against the victim of adulteration?"

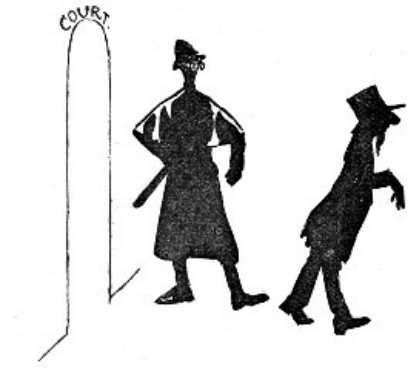
"Ye—es," murmured James, a little nonplussed.

"Ah—well, then, I think we can afford to ignore these Adulteration Acts—like the adulterators and the public authorities would—and proceed with the question of the adulteration. I had a most vivid vision or dream of the details of this adulteration as they would be carried out on your world at the period we are now considering. I imagined that I was actually in a part of your world called 'America,' and that one of your human beings politely invited me to walk through his factory and see how things were made. I think you mentioned 'oysters'——"

"THE SHOP."

[Pg 317]

"Yes," said James, "that's one name the article of food would possess; newspaper writers, however, would not recognise them by that name—they would only know them as 'the succulent bivalve.'"



"NO CASE."

"The very idea!" exclaimed William. "That's exactly what I seemed to have become—a newspaper writer. I fancied I went to see the factory, and then sent in the following account:—

"One of the most interesting factories in America is the stately building of the Ephraim Q. Knickerbocker Natural Products Manufacturing Corporation, of Spread Eagle Springs, N.J. That the structure is itself an imposing one may well be imagined in view of the vast productive energy expended within its walls; and the feebleness and inefficiency of the productive operations of Nature are never so fully realized as after a visit to this marvellous factory, and a comparison of the two systems.

"It was, therefore, with no little satisfaction that we lately received a courteous invitation from the able and energetic managing director General Sardanapalus J. Van Biene to inspect the operations of the Corporation at its factory. Accordingly, we proceeded to the New York terminus of the Natural Products Manufacturing Corporation's New York, Sumner Ferry, Thanksgiving

Flats, and Spread Eagle Springs Railroad, along which a special train speedily whirled us to the front door of the works. On the steps stood the genial managing director, supported by the principal manager Colonel Exodus V. Rooster, the head chemist Major Madison B. Jefferson, and the assistant chemists Judge Vansittart J. Sumner and Admiral Hudson W. Killigrew.

"They received us with open arms, and, after entertaining us at a *recherché* lunch, conducted us to the chemistry and analysis section occupying a little over seventeen acres and employing a permanent staff of thirteen thousand four hundred and thirty-two, assistants, among whom are chemists, microscopists, sub-inventors, etc., etc. There it is that the productive operations of Nature are studied and improved upon.

"'You must not imagine that we have any kind of sympathy or admiration for Nature's system,' explained General S. J. Van Biene, hastening to sweep away any false impression which we might have formed.

"'On the contrary, we just entirely despise her and her ways, and should have discarded her way back but for the prejudices of the consuming public. It's just like this—the consumers still believe in natural products, and so we have to go on reproducing them instead of starting right away on our own lines and bringing out new and original commodities far in advance of anything Nature can do. How we're stultified you'll see as we work through. We just have to copy, anyway, in place of originating. We make oysters, for example. Now quite a while ago, our head chemist Major Madison B. Jefferson invented a new edible way, finer in every essential than the oyster; but the consumers wouldn't have it: they shied at it, and declared it wasn't wholesome; and we had the whole stock on our hands, and had to vat it down again, and recolour it, and make tomatoes of it. Then they took it down and just chaired it round. Of course, we have to say we *grow* the products—that's another effect of popular prejudice; if we had said we made those tomatoes, the public would have started right off again, and talked of "adulteration," although our tomatoes whip Nature's by 50 per cent, in all the elements of nutrition and flavour. Just taste this one.'

[Pg 318]

"THEY RECEIVED US WITH OPEN ARMS."

"We hesitated, and the director, perceiving it, promptly consumed another from the same case. Thus reassured, we ventured to nibble at the artificial vegetable, and found it excellent in every respect—decidedly superior to the natural product, as he had stated.

"'But,' we asked, 'do you not suffer considerable losses when these products—necessarily perishable in the natural course of things—begin to decay?'

"JUST TASTE THIS ONE."

"'That's just another point where we show our superiority to Nature. *Our* products *don't* decay; on the contrary, they improve by keeping. Here is a tomato seven years old,' he continued, taking down another case. 'Try it.'

"We did. The other was not to be compared with it. The older tomato had matured and mellowed, the skin having a finer colour and lovelier gloss, the flesh possessing a firmer body and more delicate flavour; it was far in advance of any tomato we had ever conceived.

"'Wonderful!' we exclaimed.

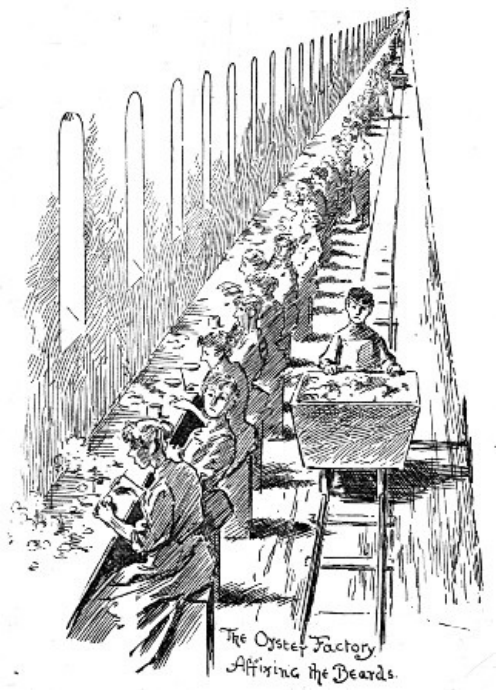
"'A very simple matter,' said the director. 'All that is required is a thorough mastery of chemistry. In all our goods we employ a special patent preservative of our own, which is naturally a secret. We calculate it to be worth one hundred and fifty quadrillions of dollars.

"'But let us show you how we make oysters! See, these are the tanks which contain the mixture—the compound which forms the body of the bivalve. This tank contains the beard-mixture; and this one the gristle.'

"'And what are the principal ingredients?'

"'Glue, made from horses' heels. This is a very important factor in our products. This glue, after undergoing a peculiar treatment which prevents its hardening and losing its elasticity in the course of years, is flavoured and coloured in various ways. This great tank contains the composition for the internal parts of the oyster—nearly black, you perceive; that tank over there contains the compound for the flesh that covers the internal parts; that tank farther along holds the beard mixture; and the one beyond that the gristle which attaches the oyster to the shell. First, the flesh of the oyster is run into moulds, each oyster being in two parts; then the inside of the animal is run into another mould, and the two halves of the body are automatically placed around it and cemented together.

"'Meanwhile the beards have been rolled, stamped, frilled, and coloured along the edge by special automatic machinery. The body of the oyster then passes to the fixing-up room, where the beard is cemented to it by hand, and finishing touches of colour added; and then it passes along and has the gristle attached: and the oyster itself is complete.' [Pg 319]



The Oyster Factory Affixing the Beards.

"'But it wants a shell!'

"'Just so. As far as the supply will go, we buy up old shells from dustyards and use them; but most of them are damaged by previous opening, so we make the bulk of our shells, and they're a good deal more natural than the real ones. They're made of lime.'

"'All alike?'

"'Not in the least. You see, we have some thousands of moulds, every one differing slightly from the rest. There's a special department for hingeing the two shells together. We had some trouble to find a substance for the hinge; but at last one of our chemists hit on a way of subjecting old hide-scraps to a peculiar process, and that did the thing. The mother-of-pearl is made of a sort of soft glass, somewhat after the appearance of Venetian glass, and put on the shell hot. Lastly, the oyster is attached to the shells by its cartilage; a little liquor is put in, and the shells are closed up.'

"'But surely people must observe that they are not alive?' we said. 'For instance, they can't open their shells!'

"'That's just where you're astray,' replied the General. 'Owing to the mechanical action of salt upon the composition of the cartilage, the oyster opens when placed in salt water. Iron, however, exercises an electro-magnetic influence upon the composition forming the body of the bivalve, causing a sudden contraction—so that, on a knife being introduced into the shell, the latter closes in the most natural way. We manufacture pearls on the premises, and advertise that one oyster in every gross taken from our beds contains a pearl of more or less value; and there's a greater demand for our oysters than for any others in the world. Our oyster beds are way down along the coast, about ten miles off; and are inspected by thousands yearly. Taste this egg.'

"He took up a fine specimen of a new-laid egg, and proceeded to break it into a glass. It was a delightful egg. 'That's our latest pattern of egg,' explained the General, 'You perceive that it has three lines around it, where the substance of the shell is weaker than elsewhere; the lines near each end enable a person about to consume the egg in a boiled state to easily cut off the top or bottom with a knife, or run his nail around it; while the line about the middle greatly assists cooks in breaking it into a basin. There is also a thin spot at either end, to facilitate sucking. These eggs are always new-laid; we send tons to Europe, particularly to Great Britain, where ours are the only fresh eggs they ever get.' [Pg 320]

"'But you must find some difficulty in making an egg?'

"'Just as easy as smiling. The white is simply jelly-fish subjected to a chemical process—jelly-fish aren't costly. This tank is full of the liquor. The main ingredient of the yolk is the horse-heel glue mentioned before; we also boil down vast quantities of rats—they come cheap, too; it's only the cost of catching them; and then there's a vegetable colouring, and the preservative, and a few other trifles. First, the two halves of the white are made in two moulds, and frozen; then the two frozen halves are frozen together, and the yolk-mixture poured in through a small hole, which is then closed. Then comes the skin; and that is the most expensive part, for it contains a certain quantity of rubber. We have tried in vain to find a substitute for rubber, but failed hitherto. The rubber is mixed with a gum from a South American tree, and the mixture is applied with a brush over the frozen egg; and then the egg, still frozen, is dipped in a lime composition very nearly identical with the oyster-shell mixture; and, lastly, the whole thing is passed through the finishing machine, which turns the three thin lines and the two thin spots, imitates the pores of the shell, and delivers the finished egg to the warehouse.'

"'Marvellous!' we involuntarily exclaimed.

"'Oh, that's nothing at all,' said the director. 'We're meditating turning out eggs that will hatch and become fowls. At present we have to manufacture fowls; but we calculate to make a great saving by producing them from the eggs we make. That building over yonder is the terrapin factory; we turn out eleven tons of terrapin weekly. We make clams, of course—in the oyster department. In this next house we make kidneys and sweetbreads. Fruit? Oh, yes, we turn out masses of fruit; peaches pay best, but we do very well with nuts.'

"We were then conducted to the show-room, where we tasted a number of other products of the wonderful factory; and we had just said a grateful farewell to our courteous guide, when we were seized with pains of the most acute description.

The Pearl.

The London Egg

"The arrangements of the hospital were admirable. The kindliness and attention we received made our five years' sojourn there a time to look back upon with feelings of gratitude. We are assured that, with strict diet and unremitting care, we may last some time yet—possibly even three months."

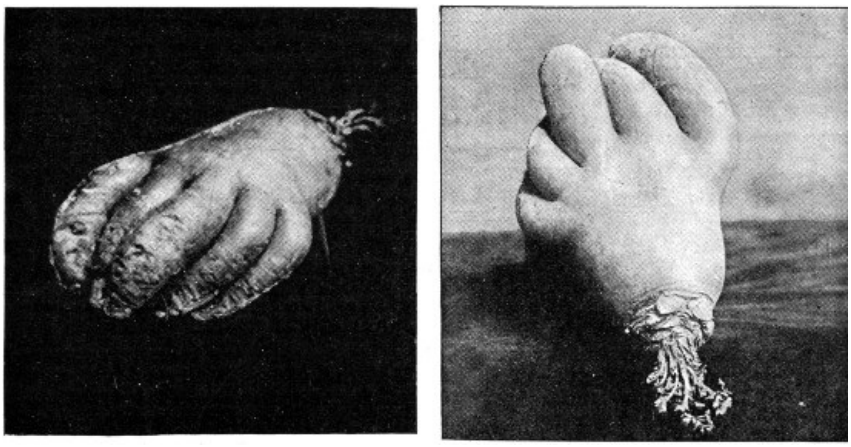
The Pain.

"It was a marvellous vision," said James, fervently, as the voice of William ceased. "Surely after that you must think better of those beings of mine?"

But William merely sniffed.

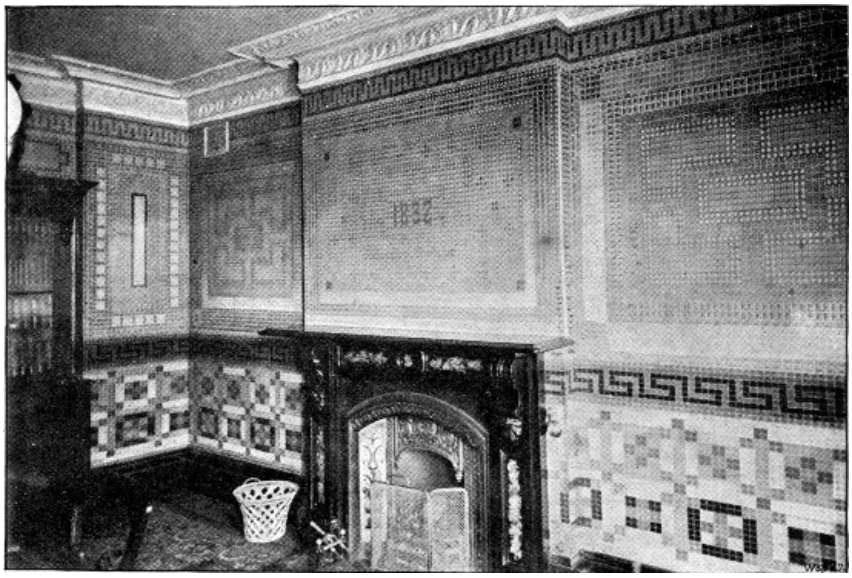
J. F. Sullivan.

[Pg 321]



A TURNIP RESEMBLING A HUMAN HAND.

The above photographs represent two views of an extraordinary turnip grown by Alderman David Evans, Llangennech Park, Carmarthenshire. We are indebted for the photographs to Mr. Morgan W. James, of Llanelly.

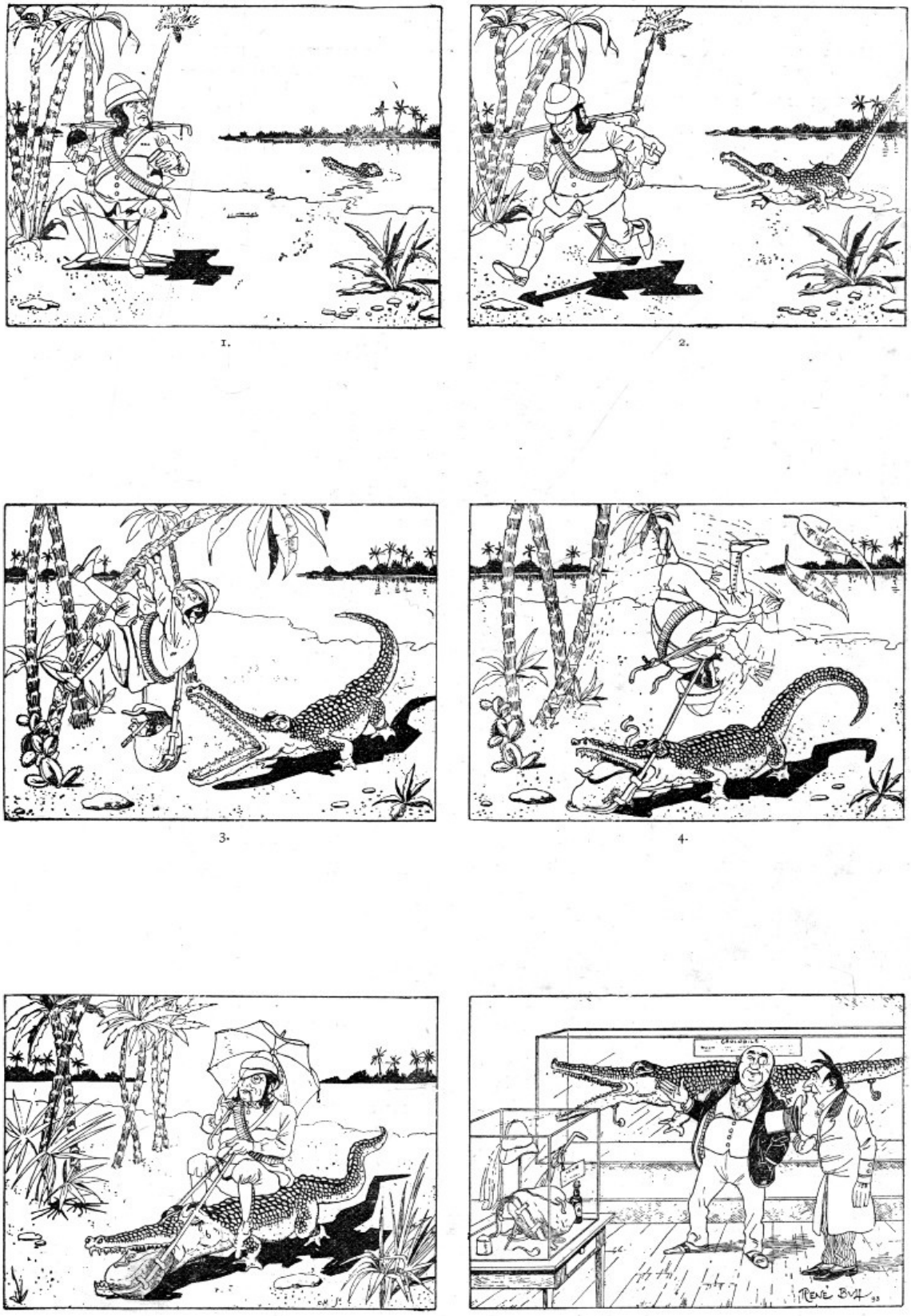


A ROOM PAPERED WITH STAMPS.

The above photograph represents the study of Mr. C. Whitfield King, of Morpeth House, Ipswich, which he has papered with 44,068 *unused* foreign postage stamps, bearing the value of £699 16s. 9d., and containing 48 varieties of different sizes and colours, presenting an example of mosaic work which is altogether unique of its kind. [Pg 322]

Drinking

VESSELS OF ALL



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