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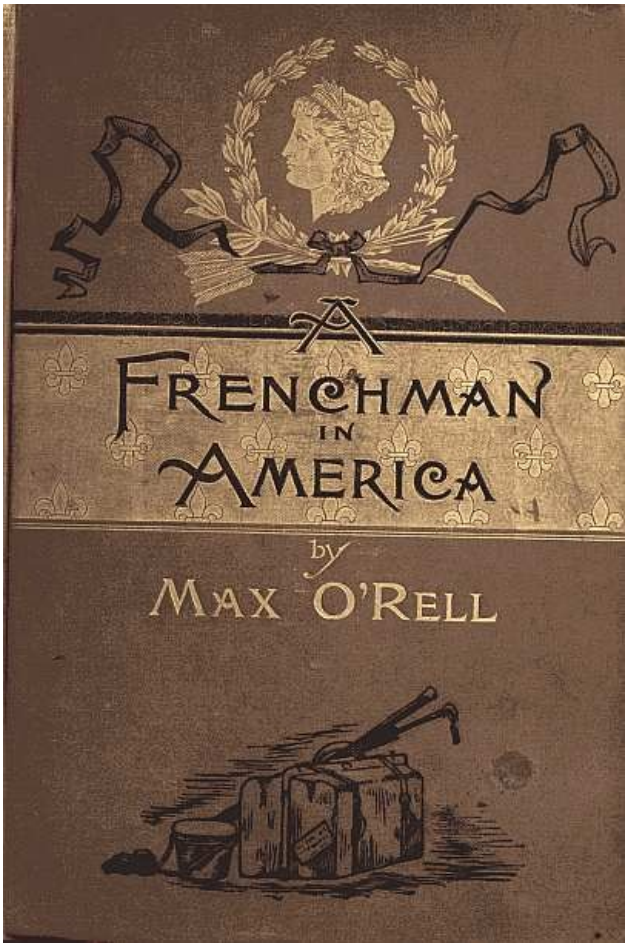

A FRENCHMAN IN AMERICA.

A FRENCHMAN IN AMERICA

Recollections of Men and Things

BY

MAX O'RELL

AUTHOR OF "JONATHAN AND HIS CONTINENT," "JOHN BULL, JUNIOR," "JACQUES BONHOMME," "JOHN BULL AND HIS ISLAND," ETC.

WITH OVER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY ILLUSTRATIONS BY E. W. KEMBLE

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CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE—THE ATLANTIC—DEMORALIZATION OF THE "BOARDERS"—BETTING—THE AUCTIONEER—AN INQUISITIVE YANKEE.

On board the "Celtic," Christmas Week, 1889.

IN the order of things the *Teutonic* was to have sailed to-day, but the date is the 25th of December, and few people elect to eat their Christmas dinner on the ocean if they can avoid it; so there are only twenty-five saloon passengers, and they have been committed to the brave little *Celtic*, while that huge floating palace, the *Teutonic*, remains in harbor.

Little *Celtic*! Has it come to this with her and her companions, the *Germanic*, the *Britannic*, and the rest that were the wonders and the glory of the ship-building craft a few years ago? There is something almost sad in seeing these queens of the Atlantic dethroned, and obliged to rank below newer and grander ships. It was even pathetic to hear the remarks of the sailors, as we passed the *Germanic* who, in her day, had created even more wondering admiration than the two famous armed cruisers lately added to the "White Star" fleet.

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I know nothing more monotonous than a voyage from Liverpool to New York.

Nine times out of ten—not to say ninety-nine times out of a hundred—the passage is bad. The Atlantic Ocean has an ugly temper; it has forever got its back up. Sulky, angry, and terrible by turns, it only takes a few days' rest out of every year, and this always occurs when you are not crossing.

And then, the wind is invariably against you. When you go to America, it blows from the west; when you come back to Europe, it blows from the east. If the captain steers south to avoid icebergs, it is sure to begin to blow southerly.

Doctors say that sea-sickness emanates from the brain. I can quite believe them. The blood rushes to your head, leaving your extremities cold and helpless. All the vital force flies to the brain, and your legs refuse to carry you. It is with sea-sickness as it is with wine. When people say that a certain wine goes up in the head, it means that it is more likely to go down to the feet.

There you are, on board a huge construction that rears and kicks like a buck-jumper. She lifts you up bodily, and, after well shaking all your members in the air several seconds, lets them down higgledy-piggledy, leaving to Providence the business of picking them up and putting them together again. That is the kind of thing one has to go through about sixty times an hour. And there is no hope for you; nobody dies of it.

3

“YOUR LEGS REFUSE TO CARRY YOU.”

Under such conditions, the mental state of the boarders may easily be imagined. They 4
smoke, they play cards, they pace the deck like bruin pacing a cage; or else they read, and forget at the second chapter all they have read in the first. A few presumptuous ones try to think, but without success. The ladies, the American ones more especially, lie on their deck chairs swathed in rugs and shawls like Egyptian mummies in their sarcophagi, and there they pass from ten to twelve hours a day motionless, hopeless, helpless, speechless. Some few incurables keep to their cabins altogether, and only show their wasted faces when it is time to debark. Up they come, with cross, stupefied, pallid, yellow-green-looking physiognomies, and seeming to say: “Speak to me, if you like, but don’t expect me to open my eyes or answer you, and above all, don’t shake me.”

Impossible to fraternize.

The crossing now takes about six days and a half. By the time you have spent two in getting your sea legs on, and three more in reviewing, and being reviewed by your fellow-passengers, you will find yourself at the end of your troubles—and your voyage.

No, people do not fraternize on board ship, during such a short passage, unless a rumor runs from cabin to cabin that there has been some accident to the machinery, or that the boat is in imminent danger. At the least scare of this kind, every one looks at his neighbor with eyes that are alarmed, but amiable, nay, even amicable. But as soon as one can say: “We have come off with a mere scare this time,” all the facial traits stiffen once more, and 5
nobody knows anybody.

“LIKE EGYPTIAN MUMMIES.”

Universal grief only will bring about universal brotherhood. We must wait till the Day of Judgment. When the world is passing away, oh! how men will forgive and love one another! What outpourings of good-will and affection there will be! How touching, how edifying will be the sight! The universal republic will be founded in the twinkling of an eye, distinctions of creed and class forgotten. The author will embrace the critic and even the publisher, the socialist open his arms to the capitalist. The married men will be seen “making it up” with their mothers-in-law, begging them to forgive and forget, and admitting that they had not been always quite so-so, in fact, as they might have been. If the Creator of all is a philosopher, or enjoys humor, how he will be amused to see all the various sects of Christians, who have passed their lives in running one another down, throw themselves into one another’s arms. It will be a scene never to be forgotten.

Yes, I repeat it, the voyage from Liverpool to New York is monotonous and wearisome in the extreme. It is an interval in one’s existence, a week more or less lost, decidedly more than less.

One grows gelatinous from head to foot, especially in the upper part of one’s anatomy.

In order to see to what an extent the brain softens, you only need look at the pastimes the poor passengers go in for.

A state of demoralization prevails throughout.

They bet. That is the form the disease takes.

THE AUCTIONEER.

They bet on anything and everything. They bet that the sun will or will not appear next day at eleven precisely, or that rain will fall at noon. They bet that the number of miles made by the boat at twelve o'clock next day will terminate with 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9. Each draws one of these numbers and pays his shilling, half-crown, or even sovereign. Then these numbers are put up at auction. An improvised auctioneer, with the gift of the gab, puts his talent at the service of his fellow-passengers. It is really very funny to see him swaying about the smoking-room table, and using all his eloquence over each number in turn for sale. A 7
good auctioneer will run the bidding so smartly that the winner of the pool next day often pockets as much as thirty and forty pounds. On the eve of arrival in New York harbor, everybody knows that twenty-four pilots are waiting about for the advent of the liner, and that each boat carries her number on her sail. Accordingly, twenty-four numbers are rolled 8
up and thrown into a cap, and betting begins again. He who has drawn the number which happens to be that of the pilot who takes the steamer into harbor pockets the pool.

I, who have never bet on anything in my life, even bet with my traveling companion, when the rolling of the ship sends our portmanteaus from one side of the cabin to the other, that mine will arrive first. Intellectual faculties on board are reduced to this ebb.

. . . . . .

The nearest approach to a gay note, in this concert of groans and grumblings, is struck by some humorous and good-tempered American. He will come and ask you the most impossible questions with an ease and impudence perfectly inimitable. These catechisings are all the more droll because they are done with a *naïveté* which completely disarms you. The phrase is short, without verb, reduced to its most concise expression. The intonation alone marks the interrogation. Here is a specimen.

We have on board the *Celtic* an American who is not a very shrewd person, for it has actually taken him five days to discover that English is not my native tongue. This morning (December 30) he found it out, and, being seated near me in the smoke-room, has just had the following bit of conversation with me:

“Foreigner?” said he.

“Foreigner,” said I, replying in American.

“German, I guess.”

“Guess again.”

“French?”

“Pure blood.” 9

“GOING TO AMERICA?”

“Married?” 10

“Married.”

“Going to America?”

“Yes—evidently.”

“Pleasure trip?”

“No.”

“On business?”

“On business, yes.”

“What’s your line?”

“H’m—French goods.”

“Ah! what class of goods?”

“*L’article de Paris.*”

“The what?”

“The *ar-ti-cle de Pa-ris.*”

“Oh! yes, the *arnticle of Pahrriss*.”

“Exactly so. Excuse *my* pronunciation.”

This floored him.

“Rather impertinent, your smoke-room neighbor!” you will say.

Undeceive yourself at once upon that point. It is not impertinence, still less an intention to offend you, that urges him to put these incongruous questions to you. It is the interest he takes in you. The American is a good fellow; good fellowship is one of his chief characteristic traits. Of that I became perfectly convinced during my last visit to the United States.

CHAPTER II.

ARRIVAL OF THE PILOT—FIRST LOOK AT AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS.

Saturday, January 4, 1890.

WE shall arrive in New York Harbor to-night, but too late to go on shore. After sunset, the Custom House officers are not to be disturbed. We are about to land in a country where, as I remember, everything is in subjection to the paid servant. In the United States, he who is paid wages commands.

We make the best of it. After having mercilessly tumbled us about for nine days, the wind has graciously calmed down, and our last day is going to be a good one, thanks be. There is a pure atmosphere. A clear line at the horizon divides space into two immensities, two sheets of blue sharply defined.

Faces are smoothing out a bit. People talk, are becoming, in fact, quite communicative. One seems to say to another: “Why, after all, you don’t look half as disagreeable as I thought. If I had only known that, we might have seen more of each other, and killed time more quickly.”

The pilot boat is in sight. It comes toward us, and sends off in a rowing-boat the pilot who will take us into port. The arrival of the pilot on board is not an incident. It is an event. Does he not bring the New York newspapers? And when you have been ten days at sea, cut off from the world, to read the papers of the day before is to come back to life again, and once more take up your place in this little planet that has been going on its jog-trot way during your temporary suppression.

PILOT WITH PAPERS.

I run through the papers.

The first article which meets my eyes, as I open the New York *World*, is headed “High time for Mr. Nash to put a stop to it!” This is the paragraph:

> Ten days ago, Mrs. Nash brought a boy into existence. Three days afterward she presented her husband with a little girl. Yesterday the lady was safely delivered of a third baby.

“Mrs. Nash takes her time over it” would have been another good heading.

Here we are in America. Old World ways don’t obtain here. In Europe, Mrs. Nash would have ushered the little trio into this life in one day; but in Europe we are out of date, *rococo*, and if one came over to find the Americans doing things just as they are done on the other side, one might as well stay at home.

America, I see, is split into two camps. Two young ladies, Miss Nelly Bly and Miss Elizabeth Bisland, have left New York by opposite routes to go around the world, the former sent by the New York *World*, the latter by the *Cosmopolitan*. Which will be back first? is what all America is conjecturing upon. Bets have been made, and the betting is even. I do not know Miss Bly, but last time I came over I had the pleasure of making Miss Bisland's acquaintance. Naturally, as soon as I get on shore, I shall bet on Miss Bisland. You would do the same yourself, would you not?

I pass the day reading the papers. All the bits of news, insignificant or not, given in the shape of crisp, lively stories, help pass the time. They contain little information, but much amusement. The American newspaper always reminds me of a shop window with all the goods ticketed in a marvelous style, so as to attract and tickle the eye. You cannot pass over anything. The leading article is scarcely known across the "wet spot"; the paper is a collection of bits of gossip, hearsay, news, scandal, the whole served *à la sauce piquante*.

Nine o'clock.

We are passing the bar, and going to anchor. New York is sparkling with lights, and the Brooklyn Bridge is a thing of beauty. I will enjoy the scene for an hour, and then turn in.

We land to-morrow morning at seven.

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL—THE CUSTOM HOUSE—THINGS LOOK BAD—THE INTERVIEWERS—FIRST VISITS—THINGS LOOK BRIGHTER—"O VANITY OF VANITIES."

New York Harbor; January 5.

AT seven o'clock in the morning the Custom House officers came on board. One of them at once recognizing me, said, calling me by name, that he was glad to see me back, and inquired if I had not brought Madame with me this time. It is extraordinary the memory of many of these Americans! This one had seen me for a few minutes two years before, and probably had had to deal with two or three hundred thousand people since.

All the passengers came to the saloon and made their declarations one after another, after which they swore in the usual form that they had told the truth, and signed a paper to that effect. This done, many a poor pilgrim innocently imagines that he has finished with the Custom House, and he renders thanks to Heaven that he is going to set foot on a soil where a man's word is not doubted. He reckons without his host. In spite of his declaration, sworn and signed, his trunks are opened and searched with all the dogged zeal of a policeman who believes he is on the track of a criminal, and who will only give up after perfectly convincing himself that the trunks do not contain the slightest dutiable article. Everything is taken out and examined. If there are any objects of apparel that appear like new ones to that scrutinizing eye, look out for squalls.

CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICERS.

I must say that the officer was very kind to me. For that matter, the luggage of a man who travels alone, without Madame and her *impedimenta*, is soon examined. 16

Before leaving the ship, I went to shake hands with Captain Parsell, that experienced sailor whose bright, interesting conversation, added to the tempting delicacies provided by the cook, made many an hour pass right cheerily for those who, like myself, had the good fortune to sit at his table. I thanked him for all the kind attentions I had received at his hands. I should have liked to thank all the employees of the “White Star” line company. Their politeness is above all praise; their patience perfectly angelical. Ask them twenty times a day the most absurd questions, such as, “Will the sea soon calm down?” “Shall we get into harbor on Wednesday?” “Do you think we shall be in early enough to land in the evening?” and so on. You find them always ready with a kind and encouraging answer. “The barometer is going up and the sea is going down,” or, “We are now doing our nineteen knots an hour.” Is it true, or not? It satisfies you, at all events. In certain cases it is so sweet to be deceived! Better to be left to nurse a beloved illusion than have to give it up for a harsh reality that you are powerless against. Every one is grateful to those kind sailors and stewards for the little innocent fibs that they are willing to load their consciences with, in order that they may brighten your path across the ocean a little.

. . . . . .

Everett House. Noon.

17

CAPTAIN PARSELL, R. M. S. “MAJESTIC.”

My baggage examined, I took a cab to go to the hotel. Three dollars for a mile and a half. A mere trifle.

EVERY ONE HAS THE GRIPPE.

It was pouring with rain. New York on a Sunday is never very gay. To-day the city seemed to me horrible: dull, dirty, and dreary. It is not the fault of New York altogether. I have the spleen. A horribly stormy passage, the stomach upside down, the heart up in the throat, the thought that my dear ones are three thousand miles away, all these things help to make everything look black. It would have needed a radiant sun in one of those pure blue skies that North America is so rich in to make life look agreeable and New York passable to-day.

In ten minutes cabby set me down at the Everett House. After having signed the register, I went and looked up my manager, whose bureau is on the ground floor of the hotel. 18

The spectacle which awaited me was appalling.

There sat the unhappy Major Pond in his office, his head bowed upon his chest, his arms hanging limp, the very picture of despair.

The country is seized with a panic. Everybody has the influenza. Every one does not die of it, but every one is having it. The malady is not called influenza over here, as it is in Europe. It is called “Grippe.” No American escapes it. Some have *la grippe*, others have *the grippe*, a few, even, have *the la grippe*. Others, again, the lucky ones, think they have it. Those who have not had it, or do not think they have it yet, are expecting it. The nation is in a complete state of demoralization. Theaters are empty, business almost suspended, doctors on their backs or run off their legs.

At twelve a telegram is handed to me. It is from my friend, Wilson Barrett, who is playing in Philadelphia. “Hearty greetings, dear friend. Five grains of quinine and two tablets of antipyrine a day, or you get *grippe*.” Then came many letters by every post. “Impossible to go and welcome you in person. I have *la grippe*. Take every precaution.” Such is the tenor of them all.

The outlook is not bright. What to do? For a moment I have half a mind to call a cab and get on board the first boat bound for Europe.

I go to my room, the windows of which overlook Union Square. The sky is somber, the street is black and deserted, the air is suffocatingly warm, and a very heavy rain is beating against the windows. 19

Shade of Columbus, how I wish I were home again!

. . . . . .

Cheer up, boy, the hand-grasps of your dear New York friends will be sweet after the frantic grasping of stair-rails and other ship furniture for so many days.

I will have lunch and go and pay calls.

. . . . . .

Excuse me if I leave you for a few minutes. The interviewers are waiting for me downstairs in Major Pond’s office. The interviewers! a gay note at last. The hall porter hands me their cards. They are all there: representatives of the *Tribune*, the *Times*, the *Sun*, the *Herald*, the *World*, the *Star*.

What nonsense Europeans have written on the subject of interviewing in America, to be sure! To hear them speak, you would believe that it is the greatest nuisance in the world.

A Frenchman writes in the *Figaro*: “I will go to America if my life can be insured against that terrific nuisance, interviewing.”

An Englishman writes to an English paper, on returning from America: “When the reporters called on me, I invariably refused to see them.”

Trash! Cant! Hypocrisy! With the exception of a king, or the prime minister of one of the great powers, a man is only too glad to be interviewed. Don’t talk to me about the nuisance, tell the truth, it is always such a treat to hear it. I consider that interviewing is a compliment, a great compliment paid to the interviewed. In asking a man to give you his views, so as to enlighten the public on such and such a subject, you acknowledge that he is an important man, which is flattering to him; or you take him for one, which is more flattering still. 20

I maintain that American interviewers are extremely courteous and obliging, and, as a rule, very faithful reporters of what you say to them.

Let me say that I have a lurking doubt in my mind whether those who have so much to say against interviewing in America have ever been asked to be interviewed at all, or have even ever run such a danger.

I object to interviewing as a sign of decadence in modern journalism; but I do not object to being interviewed, I like it; and, to prove it, I will go down at once, and be interviewed.

. . . . . .

Midnight.

The interview with the New York reporters passed off very well. I went through the operation like a man.

After lunch, I went to see Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, who had shown me a great deal of kindness during my first visit to America. I found in him a friend ready to welcome me.

The poet and literary critic is a man of about fifty, rather below middle height, with a beautifully chiseled head. In every one of the features you can detect the artist, the man of delicate, tender, and refined feelings. It was a great pleasure for me to see him again. He has finished his "Library of American Literature," a gigantic work of erudite criticism and judicious compilation, which he undertook a few years ago in collaboration with Miss Ellen Mackay Hutchinson. These eleven volumes form a perfect national monument, a complete cyclopædia of American literature, giving extracts from the writings of every American who has published anything for the last three hundred years (1607-1890). 21

THE INTERVIEWERS.

On leaving him, I went to call on Mrs. Anna Bowman Dodd, the author of "Cathedral Days," "Glorinda," "The Republic of the Future," and other charming books, and one of the brightest conversationalists it has ever been my good fortune to meet. After an hour's chat with her, I had forgotten all about the *grippe*, and all other more or less imaginary miseries. 22

I returned to the Everett House to dress, and went to the Union League Club to dine with General Horace Porter.

The general possesses a rare and most happy combination of brilliant flashing Parisian wit and dry, quiet, American humor. This charming *causeur* and *conteur* tells an anecdote as nobody I know can do; he never misses fire. He assured me at table that the copyright bill will soon be passed, for, he added, "we have now a pure and pious Administration. At the White House they open their oysters with prayer." The conversation fell on American society, or, rather, on American Societies. The highest and lowest of these can be distinguished by the use of *van*. "The blue blood of America put it before their names, as *Van Nicken*; political society puts it after, as *Sullivan*."

O VAN-ITAS VAN-ITATUM!

Time passed rapidly in such delightful company.

I finished the evening at the house of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll. If there had been any cloud of gloom still left hanging about me, it would have vanished at the sight of his sunny face. There was a small gathering of some thirty people, among them Mr. Edgar Fawcett,

whose acquaintance I was delighted to make. Conversation went on briskly with one and the other, and at half-past eleven I returned to the hotel completely cured. 23

To-morrow morning I leave for Boston at ten o'clock to begin the lecture tour in that city, or, to use an Americanism, to "open the show."

. . . . . .

There is a knock at the door.

HALL PORTER.

It is the hall porter with a letter: an invitation to dine with the members of the Clover Club at Philadelphia on Thursday next, the 16th.

I look at my list of engagements and find I am in Pittsburg on that day. 24

I take a telegraph form and pen the following, which I will send to my friend, Major M. P. Handy, the president of this lively association:

Many thanks. Am engaged in Pittsburg on the 16th. Thank God, cannot attend your dinner.

I remember how those "boys" cheeked me two years ago, laughed at me, sat on me. That's my telegram to you, dear Cloverites, with my love.

CHAPTER IV. 25

IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICAN HOTELS.

Boston, January 6.

ARRIVED here this afternoon, and resumed acquaintance with American hotels.

American hotels are all alike.

Some are worse.

Describe one and you have described them all.

On the ground floor, a large entrance hall strewed with cuspidores for the men, and a side

entrance provided with a triumphal arch for the ladies. On this floor the sexes are separated as at the public baths.

THE SAD-EYED CLERK.

In the large hall, a counter behind which solemn clerks, whose business faces relax not a muscle, are ready with their book to enter your name and assign you a number. A small army of colored porters ready to take you in charge. Not a salute, not a word, not a smile of welcome. The negro takes your bag and makes a sign that your case is settled. You follow him. For the time being you lose your personality and become No. 375, as you would in jail. Don't ask questions; theirs not to answer; don't ring the bell to ask for a favor, if you set any value on your time. All the rules of the establishment are printed and posted in your bedroom; you have to submit to them. No question to ask—you know everything. Henceforth you will have to be hungry from 7 to 9 A.M.; from 1 to 3 P.M.; from 6 to 8 P.M. The slightest 26
infringement of the routine would stop the wheel, so don't ask if you could have a meal at four o'clock; you would be taken for a lunatic, or a crank (as they call it in America). 27

Between meals you will be supplied with ice-water *ad libitum*.

No privacy. No coffee-room, no smoking-room. No place where you can go and quietly sip a cup of coffee or drink a glass of beer with a cigar. You can have a drink at the bar, and then go and sit down in the hall among the crowd.

Life in an American hotel is an alternation of the cellular system during the night and of the gregarious system during the day, an alternation of the penitentiary systems carried out at Philadelphia and at Auburn.

It is not in the bedroom, either, that you must seek anything to cheer you. The bed is good, but only for the night. The room is perfectly nude. Not even "Napoleon's Farewell to his Soldiers at Fontainebleau" as in France, or "Strafford walking to the Scaffold" as in England. Not that these pictures are particularly cheerful, still they break the monotony of the wall paper. Here the only oases in the brown or gray desert are cautions.

First of all, a notice that, in a cupboard near the window, you will find some twenty yards of coiled rope which, in case of fire, you are to fix to a hook outside the window. The rest is guessed. You fix the rope, and—you let yourself go. From a sixth, seventh, or eighth story, the prospect is lively. Another caution informs you of all that you must not do, such as your own washing in the bedroom. Another warns you that if, on retiring, you put your boots outside the door, you do so at your own risk and peril. Another is posted near the door, close to an electric bell. With a little care and practice, you will be able to carry out the instructions printed thereon. The only thing wonderful about the contrivance is that the

servants never make mistakes.

THE HOTEL FIRE ESCAPE.

Press once	for ice-water.
Press twice	for hall boy.
Press three times	for fireman.
Press four times	for chambermaid.
Press five times	for hot water.
Press six times	for ink and writing materials.
Press seven times	for baggage.
Press eight times	for messenger.

In some hotels I have seen the list carried to number twelve.

Another notice tells you what the proprietor’s responsibilities are, and at what time the meals take place. Now this last notice is the most important of all. Woe to you if you forget it! For if you should present yourself one minute after the dining-room door is closed, no human consideration would get it open for you. Supplications, arguments would be of no avail. Not even money.

“What do you mean?” some old-fashioned European will exclaim. “When the *table d’hôte* is over, of course you cannot expect the *menu* to be served to you; but surely you can order a steak or a chop.”

No, you cannot, not even an omelette or a piece of cold meat. If you arrive at one minute past three (in small towns, at one minute past two) you find the dining-room closed, and you must wait till six o’clock to see its hospitable doors open again.

. . . . . .

When you enter the dining-room, you must not believe that you can go and sit where you like. The chief waiter assigns you a seat, and you must take it. With a superb wave of the hand, he signs to you to follow him. He does not even turn round to see if you are behind

him, following him in all the meanders he describes, amid the sixty, eighty, sometimes hundred tables that are in the room. He takes it for granted you are an obedient, submissive traveler who knows his duty. Altogether I traveled in the United States for about ten months, and I never came across an American so daring, so independent, as to actually take any other seat than the one assigned to him by that tremendous potentate, the head waiter. Occasionally, just to try him, I would sit down in a chair I took a fancy to. But he would come and fetch me, and tell me that I could not stay there. In Europe, the waiter asks you where you would like to sit. In America, you ask him where you may sit. He is a paid servant, therefore a master in America. He is in command, not of the other waiters, but of the guests. Several times, recognizing friends in the dining-room, I asked the man to take me to their tables (I should not have dared go by myself), and the permission was granted with a patronizing sign of the head. I have constantly seen Americans stop on the threshold of the dining-room door, and wait until the chief waiter had returned from placing a guest to come and fetch them in their turn. I never saw them venture alone, and take an empty seat, without the sanction of the waiter.

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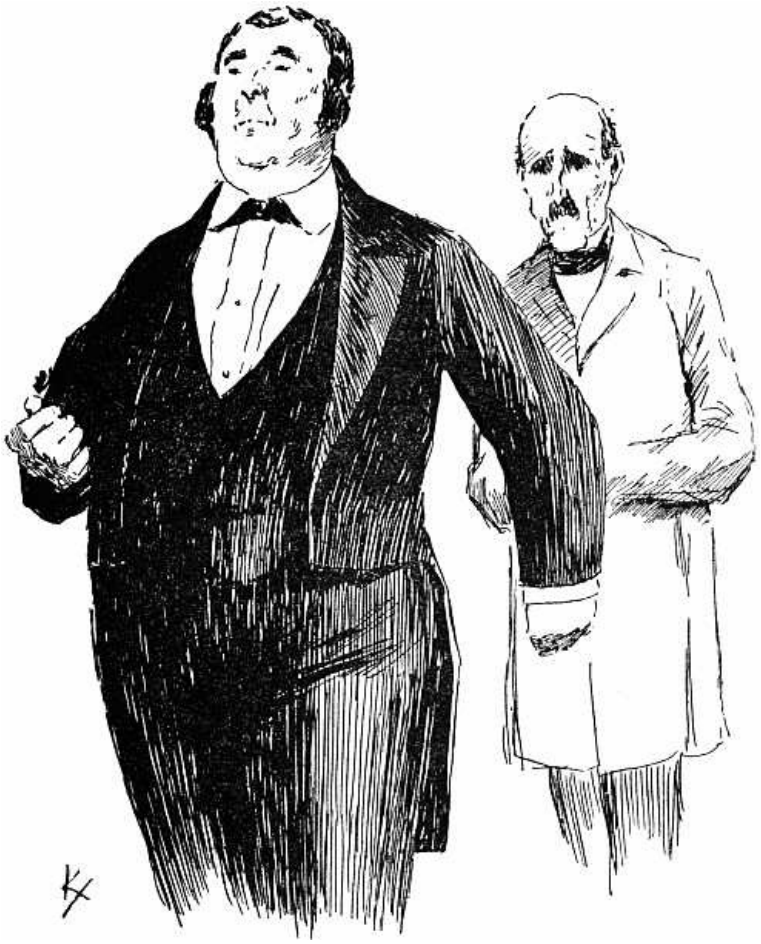


THE HEAD MAN.

The guests feel struck with awe in that dining-room, and solemnly bolt their food as quickly as they can. You hear less noise in an American hotel dining-room containing five hundred people, than you do at a French *table d'hôte* accommodating fifty people, at a German one containing a dozen guests, or at a table where two Italians are dining *tête-à-tête*.

32

The head waiter, at large Northern and Western hotels, is a white man. In the Southern ones, he is a mulatto or a black; but white or black, he is always a magnificent specimen of his race. There is not a ghost of a savor of the serving man about him; no whiskers and shaven upper lips reminding you of the waiters of the Old World; but always a fine mustache, the twirling of which helps to give an air of *nonchalant* superiority to its wearer. The mulatto head-waiters in the South really look like dusky princes. Many of them are so

"LOOK LIKE DUSKY PRINCES."

handsome and carry themselves so superbly that you find them very impressive at first and would fain apologize to them. You feel as if you wanted to thank them for kindly condescending to concern themselves about anything so commonplace as your seat at table. 33

In smaller hotels, the waiters are all waitresses. The "waiting" is done by damsels entirely—or rather by the guests of the hotel.

If the Southern head waiter looks like a prince, what shall we say of the head-waitress in the East, the North, and the West? No term short of queenly will describe her stately bearing as she moves about among her bevy of reduced duchesses. She is evidently chosen for her appearance. She is "divinely tall," as well as "most divinely fair," and, as if to add to her importance, she is crowned with a gigantic mass of frizzled hair. All the waitresses have this coiffure. It is a livery, as caps are in the Old World; but instead of being a badge of servitude it looks, and is, alarmingly emancipated—so much so that, before making close acquaintance with my dishes, I always examine them with great care. A beautiful mass of hair looks lovely on the head of a woman, but *one* in your soup, even if it had strayed from the tresses of your beloved one, would make the corners of your mouth go down, and the tip of your nose go up.

"SHE IS CROWNED WITH A GIGANTIC MASS OF FRIZZLED HAIR." 34

A regally handsome woman always "goes well in the landscape," as the French say, and I have seen specimens of these waitresses so handsome and so commanding-looking that, if they cared to come over to Europe and play the queens in London pantomimes, I feel sure they would command quite exceptional prices, and draw big salaries and crowded houses.

. . . . . .

The thing which strikes me most disagreeably, in the American hotel dining-room, is the sight of the tremendous waste of food that goes on at every meal. No European, I suppose, can fail to be struck with this; but to a Frenchman it would naturally be most remarkable. In France, where, I venture to say, people live as well as anywhere else, if not better, there is a horror of anything like waste of good food. It is to me, therefore, a repulsive thing to see the wanton manner in which some Americans will waste at one meal enough to feed several hungry fellow-creatures. 35

In the large hotels, conducted on the American plan, there are rarely fewer than fifty different dishes on the *menu* at dinner-time. Every day, and at every meal, you may see people order three times as much of this food as they could under any circumstances eat, and, after picking it and spoiling one dish after another, send the bulk away uneaten. I am bound to say that this practice is not only to be observed in hotels where the charge is so much per day, but in those conducted on the European plan, that is, where you pay for every item you order. There I notice that people proceed in much the same wasteful fashion. It is evidently not a desire to have more than is paid for, but simply a bad and ugly habit. I hold that about five hundred hungry people could be fed out of the waste that is going on at such large hotels as the Palmer House or the Grand Pacific Hotel of Chicago—and I have no doubt

that such five hundred hungry people could easily be found in Chicago every day.

. . . . . .

I think that many Europeans are prevented from going to America by an idea that the expense of traveling and living there is very great. This is quite a delusion. For my part I find that hotels are as cheap in America as in England at any rate, and railway traveling in Pullman cars is certainly cheaper than in European first-class carriages, and incomparably more comfortable. Put aside in America such hotels as Delmonico's, the Brunswick in New York; the Richelieu in Chicago; and in England such hotels as the Metropôle, the Victoria, the Savoy; and take the good hotels of the country, such as the Grand Pacific at Chicago; the 36
West House at Minneapolis, the Windsor at Montreal, the Cadillac at Detroit. I only mention those I remember as the very best. In these hotels, you are comfortably lodged and magnificently fed for from three to five dollars a day. In no good hotel of England, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, would you get the same amount of comfort, or even luxury, at the same price, and those who require a sitting-room get it for a little less than they would have to pay in a European hotel.

The only very dear hotels I have come across in the United States are those of Virginia. There I have been charged as much as two dollars a day, but never in my life did I pay so dear for what I had, never in my life did I see so many dirty rooms or so many messes that were unfit for human food.

But I will just say this much for the American refinement of feeling to be met with, even in the hotels of Virginia, even in the "lunch" rooms in small stations, you are supplied, at the end of each meal, with a bowl of water—to rinse your mouth.

CHAPTER V. 37

My Opening Lecture—Reflections on Audiences I Have Had—The Man who Won't Smile—The One who Laughs too Soon, and Many Others.

Boston, January 7.

BEGAN my second American tour under most favorable auspices last night, in the Tremont Temple. The huge hall was crowded with an audience of about 2500 people—a most kind, warm, keen, and appreciative audience. I was a little afraid of the Bostonians; I had heard so much about their power of criticism that I had almost come to the conclusion that it was next to impossible to please them. The Boston newspapers this morning give full reports of my lecture. All of them are kind and most favorable. This is a good start, and I feel hopeful.

The subject of my lecture was "A National Portrait Gallery of the Anglo-Saxon Races," in which I delineated the English, the Scotch, and the American characters. Strange to say, my Scotch sketches seemed to tickle them most. This, however, I can explain to myself. Scotch "wut" is more like American humor than any kind of wit I know. There is about it the same dryness, the same quaintness, the same preposterousness, the same subtlety. 38

My Boston audience also seemed to enjoy my criticisms of America and the Americans, which disposes of the absurd belief that the Americans will not listen to the criticism of their country. There are Americans and Americans, as there is criticism and criticism. If you can speak of people's virtues without flattery; if you can

BOSTON.

speak of their weaknesses and failings with kindness and good humor, I believe you can criticise to your heart's content without ever fearing to give offense to intelligent and fair-minded people. I admire and love the Americans. How could they help seeing it through all the little criticisms that I indulged in on the platform? On the whole, I was delighted with my Boston audience, and, to judge from the reception they gave me, I believe I succeeded in pleasing them. I have three more engagements in Boston, so I shall have the pleasure of meeting the Bostonians again.

39

. . . . . .

I have never been able to lecture, whether in England, in Scotland, in Ireland or in America, without discovering, somewhere in the hall, after speaking for five minutes or so, an old gentleman who will not smile. He was there last night, and it is evident that he is going to favor me with his presence every night during this second American tour. He generally sits near the platform, and not unfrequently on the first row. There is a horrible fascination about that man. You cannot get your eyes off him. You do your utmost to "fetch him"—you feel it to be your duty not to send him home empty-headed; your conscience tells you that he has not to please you, but that *you* are paid to please him, and you struggle on. You would like to slip into his pocket the price of his seat and have him removed, or throw the water bottle at his face and make him show signs of life. As it is, you try to look the other way, but you know he is there, and that does not improve matters.

Now this man, who will not smile, very often is not so bad as he looks. You imagine that you bore him to death, but you don't. You wonder how it is he does not go, but the fact is he actually enjoys himself—inside. Or, maybe, he is a professional man himself, and no conjuror has ever been known to laugh at another conjuror's tricks. A great American humorist relates that, after speaking for an hour and a half without succeeding in getting a smile from a certain man in the audience, he sent some one to inquire into the state of his mind.

40

"Excuse me, sir, did you not enjoy the lecture that has been delivered to-night?"

"Very much indeed," said the man, "it was a most clever and entertaining lecture."

"But you never smiled——"

"Oh, no—I'm a liar myself."

. . . . . .

Sometimes there are other reasons to explain the unsmiling man's attitude.

One evening I had lectured in Birmingham. On the first row there sat the whole time an old gentleman, with his umbrella standing between his legs, his hands crossed on the handle, and his chin resting on his hands. Frowning, his mouth gaping, and his eyes perfectly vacant, he remained motionless, looking at me, and for an hour and twenty minutes seemed to say to me: "My poor fellow, you may do what you like, but you won't 'fetch' me to-night, I can tell you." I looked at him, I spoke to him, I winked at him, I aimed at him; several times even I paused so as to give him ample time to see a point. All was in vain. I had just returned, after the lecture, to the secretary's room behind the platform, when he entered.

"Oh, that man again!" I cried, pointing to him.

He advanced toward me, took my hand, and said:

"Thank you very much for your excellent lecture, I have enjoyed it very much."

“Have you?” said I. 41

THE OLD GENTLEMAN WHO WILL NOT SMILE.

“Would you be kind enough to give me your autograph?” And he pulled out of his pocket a beautiful autograph book. 42

“Well,” I said to the secretary in a whisper, “this old gentleman is extremely kind to ask for my autograph, for I am certain he has not enjoyed my lecture.”

“What makes you think so?”

“Why, he never smiled once.”

“Oh, poor old gentleman,” said the secretary; “he is stone deaf.”

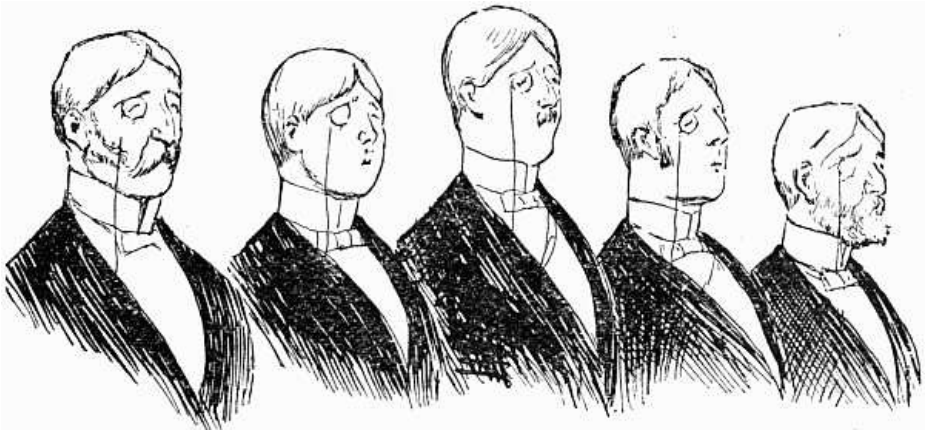
Many a lecturer must have met this man.

It would be unwise, when you discover that certain members of the audience will not laugh, to give them up at once. As long as you are on the platform there is hope.

I was once lecturing in the chief town of a great hunting center in England. On the first row sat half a dozen hair-parted-in-the-middle, single-eye-glass young swells. They stared at me unmoved, and never relaxed a muscle except for yawning. It was most distressing to see how the poor fellows looked bored. How I did wish I could do something for them! I had spoken for nearly an hour when, by accident, I upset the tumbler on my table. The water trickled down the cloth. The young men laughed, roared. They were happy and enjoying themselves, and I had “fetched” them at last. I have never forgotten this trick, and when I see in the audience an apparently hopeless case, I often resort to it, generally with success.

. . . . . .

There are other people who do not much enjoy your lecture: your own. 43



THE CHAPPIES WHO WOULD NOT LAUGH.

Of course you must forgive your wife. The dear creature knows all your lectures by heart; she has heard your jokes hundreds of times. She comes to your lectures rather to see how you are going to be received than to listen to you. Besides, she feels that for an hour and a half you do not belong to her. When she comes with you to the lecture hall, you are both ushered into the secretary's room. Two or three minutes before it is time to go on the platform, it is suggested to her that it is time she should take her seat among the audience. She looks at the secretary and recognizes that for an hour and a half her husband is the property of this official, who is about to hand him over to the tender mercies of the public. As she says, "Oh, yes, I suppose I must go," she almost feels like shaking hands with her husband, as Mrs. Baldwin takes leave of the Professor before he starts on his aerial trip. But, though she may not laugh, her heart is with you, and she is busy watching the audience, ever ready to tell them, "Now, don't you think this is a very good point? Well, then, if you do, why don't you laugh and cheer?" She is part and parcel of yourself. She is not jealous of your success, for she is your helpmate, your kind and sound counselor, and I can assure you that if an audience should fail to be responsive, it would never enter her head to lay the blame on her husband; she would feel the most supreme contempt for "that stupid audience that was unable to appreciate you." That's all.

But your other own folk! You are no hero to them. To judge the effect of anything, you must be placed at a certain distance, and your own folks are too near you.

One afternoon I had given a lecture to a large and fashionable audience in the South of England. A near relative of mine, who lived in the neighborhood, was in the hall. He never smiled. I watched him from the beginning to the end. When the lecture was over he came to the little room behind the platform to take me to his house. As he entered the room I was settling the money matters with my *impresario*. I will let you into the secret. There was fifty-two pounds in the house, and my share was two-thirds of the gross receipts, that is about thirty-four pounds. My relative heard the sum. As we drove along in his dog-cart he nudged me and said:

"Did you make thirty-four pounds this afternoon?"

"Oh, did you hear?" I said. "Yes, that was my part of the takings. For a small town I am quite satisfied."

"I should think you were!" he replied. "If you had made thirty-four shillings you would have been well paid for your work!"

Nothing is more true to life than the want of appreciation the successful man encounters from relatives and also from former friends. Nothing is more certain than when a man has lived on terms of perfect equality and familiarity with a certain set of men, he can never hope to be anything but "plain John" to them, though by his personal efforts he may have obtained the applause of the public. Did he not rub shoulders with them for years in the same walk of life? Why these bravos? What was there in him more than in them? Even though they may have gone so far as to single him out as a "rather clever fellow," while he was one of theirs, still the surprise at the public appreciation is none the less keen, his advance toward the front an unforgivable offense, and they are immediately seized with a desire to rush out in the highways and proclaim that he is only "Jack," and not the "John" that his admirers think him. I remember that, in the early years of my life in England, when I

had not the faintest idea of ever writing a book on John Bull, a young English friend of mine did me the honor of appreciating highly all my observations on British life and manners, and for years urged me hard and often to jot them down to make a book of. One day the book was finished and appeared in print. It attracted a good deal of public attention, but no one was more surprised than this man, who, from a kind friend, was promptly transformed into the most severe and unfriendly of my critics, and went about saying that the book and the amount of public attention bestowed upon it were both equally ridiculous. He has never spoken to me since. 46

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS.

A successful man is very often charged with wishing to turn his back on his former friends. No accusation is more false. Nothing would please him more than to retain the friends of more modest times, but it is they who have changed their feelings. They snub him, and this 47
man, who is in constant need of moral support and *pick-me-up*, cannot stand it.

. . . . . .

But let us return to the audience.

The man who won’t smile is not the only person who causes you some annoyance.

There is the one who laughs too soon; who laughs before you have made your points, and who thinks, because you have opened your lecture with a joke, that everything you say afterward is a joke. There is another rather objectionable person; it is the one who explains your points to his neighbor, and makes them laugh aloud just at the moment when you require complete silence to fire off one of your best remarks.

There is the old lady who listens to you frowning, and who does not mind what you are saying, but is all the time shaking for fear of what you are going to say next. She never laughs before she has seen other people laugh. Then she thinks she is safe.

All these I am going to have in America again; that is clear. But I am now a man of experience. I have lectured in concert rooms, in lecture halls, in theaters, in churches, in schools. I have addressed embalmed Britons in English health resorts, petrified English mummies at hydropathic establishments, and lunatics in private asylums.

I am ready for the fray.

CHAPTER VI.

A Connecticut Audience—Merry Meriden—A Hard Pull.

From Meriden, January 8.

A CONNECTICUT audience was a new experience to me. Yesterday I had a crowded room at the Opera House in Meriden; but if you had been behind the scenery, when I made my appearance on the stage, you would not have suspected it, for not one of the audience treated me to a little applause. I was frozen, and so were they. For a quarter of an hour I proceeded very cautiously, feeling the ground, as it were, as I went on. By that time, the thaw set in, and they began to smile. I must say that they had been very attentive from the beginning, and seemed very interested in the lecture. Encouraged by this, I warmed too. It was curious to watch that audience. By twos and threes the faces lit up with amusement till, by and by, the house wore quite an animated aspect. Presently there was a laugh, then two, then laughter more general. All the ice was gone. Next, a bold spirit in the stalls ventured some applause. At his second outburst he had company. The uphill work was nearly over now, and I began to feel better. The infection spread up to the circles and the gallery, and at 49
last there came a real good hearty round of applause. I had “fetched” them after all. But it was tough work. When once I had them in hand, I took good care not to let them go.

. . . . . .

I visited several interesting establishments this morning. Merry Meriden is famous for its manufactories of electro-plated silverware. Unfortunately I am not yet accustomed to the heated rooms of America, and I could not stay in the show-rooms more than a few minutes. I should have thought the heat was strong enough to melt all the goods on view. This town looks like a bee-hive of activity, with its animated streets, its electric cars. Dear old Europe! With the exception of a few large cities, the cars are still drawn by horses, like in the time of Sesostris and Nebuchadnezzar.

. . . . . .

On arriving at the station a man took hold of my bag and asked to take care of it until the arrival of the train. I do not know whether he belonged to the hotel where I spent the night, or to the railroad company. Whatever he was, I felt grateful for this wonderful show of courtesy.

“I heard you last night at the Opera House,” he said to me.

“Why, were you at the lecture?”

“Yes, sir, and I greatly enjoyed it.”

“Well, why didn’t you laugh sooner?” I said.

“I wanted to very much!”

“Why didn’t you?” 50

“I WAS AT YOUR LECTURE LAST NIGHT.”

“Well, sir, I couldn’t very well laugh before the rest.”

“Why didn’t you give the signal?”

“You see, sir,” he said, “we are in Connecticut.”

“Is laughter prohibited by the Statute Book in Connecticut?” I remarked.

“No, sir, but if you all laugh at the same time, then——”

“I see, nobody can tell who is the real criminal.”

The train arrived. I shook hands with my friend, after offering him half a dollar for holding my bag—which he refused—and went on board.

In the parlor car, I met my kind friend Colonel Charles H. Taylor, editor of that very successful paper, the Boston *Globe*. We had luncheon together in the dining car, and time passed delightfully in his company till we reached the Grand Central station, New York, when we parted. He was kind enough to make me promise to look him up in Boston in a fortnight’s time, when I make my second appearance in the City of Culture.

CHAPTER VII.

A Tempting Offer—The Thursday Club—Bill Nye—Visit to Young Ladies' Schools—The Players' Club.

New York, *January* 9.

On returning here, I found a most curious letter awaiting me. I must tell you that in Boston, last Monday, I made the following remarks in my lecture:

"The American is, I believe, on the road to the possession of all that can contribute to the well-being and success of a nation, but he seems to me to have missed the path that leads to real happiness. To live in a whirl is not to live well. The little French shopkeeper who locks his shop-door from half-past one, so as not to be disturbed while he is having his dinner with his wife and family, has come nearer to solving the great problem of life, 'How to be happy,' than the American who sticks on his door: 'Gone to dinner, shall be back in five minutes.' You eat too fast, and I understand why your antidyspeptic pill-makers cover your walls, your forests even, with their advertisements."

And I named the firm of pill-makers.

The letter is from them. They offer me $1000 if I will repeat the phrase at every lecture I give during my tour in the United States.

WHERE INDIGESTION IS MANUFACTURED.

You may imagine if I will be careful to abstain in the future.

. . . . . .

I lectured to-night before the members of the Thursday Club—a small, but very select audience, gathered in the drawing-room of one of the members. The lecture was followed by a *conversazione*. A very pleasant evening.

I left the house at half-past eleven. The night was beautiful. I walked to the hotel, along Fifth Avenue to Madison Square, and along Broadway to Union Square.

What a contrast to the great thoroughfares of London! Thousands of people here returning from the theaters and enjoying their walks, instead of being obliged to rush into vehicles to escape the sights presented at night by the West End streets of London. Here you can walk at night with your wife and daughter, without the least fear of their coming into contact with flaunting vice.

. . . . . .

Excuse a reflection on a subject of a very domestic character. My clothes have come from the laundress with the bill.

Now let me give you a sound piece of advice.

When you go to America, bring with you a dozen shirts. No more. When these are soiled, buy a new dozen, and so on. You will thus get a supply of linen for many years to come, and save your washing bills in America, where the price of a shirt is much the same as the cost of washing it.

. . . . . .

January 10.

I was glad to see Bill Nye again. He turned up at the Everett House this morning. I like to gaze at his clean-shaven face, that is seldom broken by a smile, and to hear his long, melancholy drawl. His lank form, and his polished dome of thought, as he delights in calling 55
his joke box, help to make him so droll on the platform. When his audience begins to scream with laughter, he stops, looks at them in astonishment; the corners of his mouth drop and an expression of sadness comes over his face. The effect is irresistible. They shriek for mercy. But they don't get it. He is accompanied by his own manager, who starts with him for the north to-night. This manager has no sinecure. I don't think Bill Nye has ever been found in a depot ready to catch a train. So the manager takes him to the station, puts him in the right car, gets him out of his sleeping berth, takes him to the hotel, sees that he is behind the platform a few minutes before the time announced for the beginning of the lecture, and generally looks after his comfort. Bill is due in Ohio to-morrow night, and leaves New York to-night by the Grand Central Depot.

"Are you sure it's by the Grand Central?" he said to me.

"Why, of course, corner of Forty-second Street, a five or ten minutes' ride from here."

You should have seen the expression on his face, as he drawled away:

"How—shall—I—get—there, I—wonder?"

. . . . . .

This afternoon I paid a most interesting visit to several girls' schools. The pupils were ordered by the head-mistress, in each case, to gather in the large room. There they arrived, two by two, to the sound of a march played on the piano by one of the under-mistresses. 56
When they had all reached their respective places, two chords were struck on the instrument, and they all sat down with the precision of the best drilled Prussian regiment. Then some sang, others recited little poems, or epigrams—mostly at the expense of men. When, two years ago, I visited the Normal School for girls in the company of the President of the Education Board and Colonel Elliott F. Shepard, it was the anniversary of George Eliot's birth. The pupils, one by one, recited a few quotations from her works, choosing all she had written against man.

When the singing and the recitations were over, the mistress requested me to address a few words to the young ladies. An American is used from infancy to deliver a speech on the least provocation. I am not. However, I managed to congratulate these young American girls on their charming appearance, and to thank them for the pleasure they had afforded me. Then two chords were struck on the piano and all stood up; two more chords, and all marched off in double file to the sound of another march. Not a smile, not a giggle. All these young girls, from sixteen to twenty, looked at me with modesty, but complete self-assurance, certainly with far more assurance than I dared look at them.

Then the mistress asked me to go to the gymnasium. There the girls arrived and, as solemnly as before, went through all kinds of muscular exercises. They are never allowed to sit down in the class rooms more than two hours at a time. They have to go down to the gymnasium every two hours. 57

I was perfectly amazed to see such discipline. These young girls are the true daughters of a great Republic: self-possessed, self-confident, dignified, respectful, law-abiding.

I also visited the junior departments of those schools. In one of them, eight hundred little girls from five to ten years of age were gathered together, and, as in the other departments, sang and recited to me. These young children are taught by the girls of the Normal School, under the supervision of mistresses. Here teaching is learned by teaching. A good method. Doctors are not allowed to practice before they have attended patients in hospitals. Why should people be allowed to teach before they have attended schools as apprentice teachers?

I had to give a speech to these dear little ones. I wish I had been able to give them a kiss instead.

In my little speech I had occasion to remark that I had arrived in America only a week before. After I left, it appears that a little girl, aged about six, went to her mistress and said to her:

“He’s only been here a week! And how beautifully he speaks English already!”

. . . . . .

I have been “put up” at the Players’ Club by Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, and dined with him there to-night.

“HOW BEAUTIFULLY HE SPEAKS ENGLISH.”

This club is the snuggest house I know in New York. Only a few months old, it possesses treasures such as few clubs a hundred years old possess. It was a present from Mr. Edwin Booth, the greatest actor America has produced. He bought the house in Twentieth Street, 58
facing Gramercy Park, furnished it handsomely and with the greatest taste, and filled it with all the artistic treasures that he has collected during his life: portraits of celebrated actors, most valuable old engravings, photographs with the originals’ autographs, china, curios of 59
all sorts, stage properties, such as the sword used by Macready in *Macbeth*, and hundreds of such beautiful and interesting souvenirs. On the second floor is the library, mostly composed of works connected with the drama.

This club is a perfect gem.

When in New York, Mr. Booth occupies a suite of rooms on the second floor, which he has reserved for himself; but he has handed over the property to the trustees of the club, who, after his death, will become the sole proprietors of the house and of all its priceless contents. It was a princely gift, worthy of the prince of actors. The members are all connected with literature, art, and the drama, and number about one hundred.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FLOURISHING OF COATS-OF-ARMS IN AMERICA—REFLECTIONS THEREON—FOREFATHERS MADE TO ORDER—THE PHONOGRAPH AT HOME—THE WEALTH OF NEW YORK—DEPARTURE FOR BUFFALO.

New York, *January* 11.

THERE are in America, as in many other countries of the world, people who have coats-of-arms, and whose ancestors had no arms to their coats.

This remark was suggested by the reading of the following paragraph in the New York *World* this morning:

> There is growing in this country the rotten influence of rank, pride of station, contempt for labor, scorn of poverty, worship of caste, such as we verily believe is growing in no country in the world. What are the ideals that fill so large a part of the day and generation? For the boy it is riches; for the girl the marrying of a title. The ideal of this time in America is vast riches and the trappings of rank. It is good that proper scorn should be expressed of such ideals.

American novelists, journalists, and preachers are constantly upbraiding and ridiculing their countrywomen for their love of titled foreigners; but the society women of the great Republic only love the foreign lords all the more; and I have heard some of them openly express their contempt of a form of government whose motto is one of the clauses of the great Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal.” I really believe that if the society women of America had their own way, they would set up a monarchy to-morrow, in the hope of seeing an aristocracy established as the sequel of it.

A TITLE.

President Garfield once said that the only real coats-of-arms in America were shirt-sleeves. The epigram is good, but not based on truth, as every epigram should be. Labor in the States is not honorable for its own sake, but only if it brings wealth. President Garfield’s epigram “fetched” the crowd, no doubt, as any smart democratic or humanitarian utterance will anywhere, whether it be emitted from the platform, the stage, the pulpit, or the hustings; but if any American philosopher heard it, he must have smiled.

A New York friend who called on me this morning, and with whom I had a chat on this subject, assured me that there is now such a demand in the States for pedigrees, heraldic insignia, mottoes, and coronets, that it has created a new industry. He also informed me that almost every American city has a college of heraldry, which will provide unbroken lines of ancestors, and make to order a new line of forefathers "of the most approved pattern, with suitable arms, etc."

Addison's prosperous foundling, who ordered at the second-hand picture-dealer's "a complete set of ancestors," is, according to my friend, a typical personage to be met with in the States nowadays.

. . . . . .

Bah! after all, every country has her snobs. Why should America be an exception to the rule? When I think of the numberless charming people I have met in this country, I may as well leave it to the Europeans who have come in contact with American snobs to speak about them, inasmuch as the subject is not particularly entertaining.

What amuses me much more here is the effect of democracy on what we Europeans would call the lower classes.

A few days ago, in a hotel, I asked a porter if my trunk had arrived from the station and had been taken to my room.

"I don't know," he said majestically; "you ask that gentleman." 63

The gentleman pointed out to me was the negro who looks after the luggage in the establishment.

In the papers you may read in the advertisement columns: "Washing wanted by a lady at such and such address."

The cabman will ask, "If you are the *man* as wants a *gentleman* to drive him to the *deepo*."

During an inquiry concerning the work-house at Cambridge, Mass., a witness spoke of the "ladies' cells," as being all that should be desired.

Democracy, such is thy handiwork!

THE NEW YORK CABMAN.

. . . . . .

I went to the Stock Exchange in Wall Street at one o'clock. I thought that Whitechapel, on Saturday night, was beyond competition as a scene of rowdyism. I have now altered this opinion. I am still wondering whether I was not guyed by my pilot, and whether I was not shown the playground of a madhouse, at the time when all the most desperate lunatics are let loose.

After lunch I went to Falk's photograph studio to be taken, and read the first page of "Jonathan and His Continent," into his phonograph. Marvelous, this phonograph! I imagine 64
Mr. Falk has the best collection of cylinders in the world. I heard a song by Patti, the piano played by Von Bülow, speeches, orchestras, and what not! The music is reproduced most faithfully. With the voice the instrument is not quite so successful. Instead of your own voice, you fancy you hear an imitation of it by Punch. All the same, it seems to me to be the wonder of the age.

After paying a few calls, and dining quietly at the Everett House, I went to the Metropolitan Opera House, and saw "The Barber of Bagdad." Cornelius's music is

Wagnerian in aim, but I did not carry away with me a single bar of all I heard. After all, this is perhaps the aim of Wagnerian music.

What a sight is the Metropolitan Opera House, with its boxes full of lovely women, arrayed in gorgeous garments, and blazing with diamonds! What luxury! What wealth is gathered there!

How interesting it would be to know the exact amount of wealth of which New York can boast! In this morning's papers I read that land on Fifth Avenue has lately sold for $115 a square foot. In an acre of land there are 43,560 square feet, which at $115 a foot would be $5,009,400 an acre. Just oblige me by thinking of it!

. . . . . .

January 12.

Went to the Catholic Cathedral at eleven. A mass by Haydn was splendidly rendered by full orchestra and admirable chorus. The altar was a blaze of candles. The yellow of the lights and the plain mauve of two windows, one on each side of the candles, gave a most beautiful crocus-bed effect. I enjoyed the service. 65

In the evening I dined with Mr. Lloyd Bryce, editor of the *North American Review*, at the splendid residence of his father-in-law, Mr. Cooper, late Mayor of New York. Mrs. Lloyd Bryce is one of the handsomest American women I have met, and a most charming and graceful hostess. I reluctantly left early so as to prepare for my night journey to Buffalo.

CHAPTER IX. 66

DIFFERENT WAYS OF ADVERTISING A LECTURE—AMERICAN IMPRESARIOS AND THEIR METHODS.

Buffalo, *January* 13.

WHEN you intend to give a lecture anywhere, and you wish it to be a success, it is a mistake to make a mystery of it.

On arriving here this morning, I found that my coming had been kept perfectly secret.

Perhaps my impresario wishes my audience to be very select, and has sent only private circulars to the intelligent, well-to-do inhabitants of the place—or, I said to myself, perhaps the house is all sold, and he has no need of any further advertisements.

I should very much like to know.

. . . . . .

Sometimes, however, it is a mistake to advertise a lecture too widely. You run the risk of getting the wrong people.

A few years ago, in Dundee, a little corner gallery, placed at the end of the hall where I was to speak, was thrown open to the public at sixpence. I warned the manager that I was no attraction for the sixpenny public; but he insisted on having his own way.

The hall was well filled, but not the little gallery, where I counted about a dozen people. Two of these, however, did not remain long, and, after the lecture, I was told that they had 67

gone to the box-office and asked to have their money returned to them. “Why,” they said, “it’s a d—— swindle; it’s only a man talking.”

The man at the box-office was a Scotchman, and it will easily be understood that the two sixpences remained in the hands of the management.

. . . . . .

I can well remember how startled I was, two years ago, on arriving in an American town where I was to lecture, to see the walls covered with placards announcing my lecture thus: “He is coming, ah, ha!” And after I had arrived, new placards were stuck over the old ones: “He has arrived, ah, ha!”

In another American town I was advertised as “the best paying platform celebrity in the world.” In another, in the following way: “If you would grow fat and happy, go and hear Max O’Rell to-night.”

One of my Chicago lectures was advertised thus: “Laughter is restful. If you desire to feel as though you had a vacation for a week, do not fail to attend this lecture.”

I was once fortunate enough to deal with a local manager who, before sending it to the newspapers, submitted to my approbation the following advertisement, of which he was very proud. I don’t know whether it was his own literary production, or whether he had borrowed it of a showman friend. Here it is:

TWO HOURS OF UNALLOYED FUN AND HAPPINESS

Will put two inches of solid fat even upon the ribs of the most cadaverous old miser. Everybody shouts peals of laughter as the rays of fun are emitted from this famous son of merry-makers. 68

AS JOHN BULL.

I threatened to refuse to appear if the advertisement was inserted in the papers. This 69

manager later gave his opinion that, as a lecturer, I was good, but that as a man, I was a little bit “stuck-up.”

When you arrive in an American town to lecture, you find the place flooded with your pictures, huge lithographs stuck on the walls, on the shop windows, in your very hotel entrance hall. Your own face stares at you everywhere, you are recognized by everybody. You have to put up with it. If you love privacy, peace, and quiet, don’t go to America on a lecturing tour. That is what your impresario will tell you.

. . . . . .

In each town where you go, you have a local manager to “boss the show”; as he has to pay you a certain fee, which he guarantees, you cannot find fault with him for doing his best to have a large audience. He runs risks; you do not. Suppose, for instance, you are engaged, not by a society for a fee, but by a manager on sharing terms, say sixty per cent. of the gross receipts for you and forty for himself. Suppose his local expenses amount to $200; he has to bring $500 into the house before there is a cent for himself. You must forgive him if he goes about the place beating the big drum. If you do not like it, there is a place where you can stay—home.

. . . . . .

An impresario once asked me if I required a piano, and if I would bring my own accompanist. Another wrote to ask the subject of my “entertainment.” 70

AS SANDY.

I wrote back to say that my lecture was generally found entertaining, but that I objected to its being called an entertainment. I added that the lecture was composed of four character sketches, viz., John Bull, Sandy, Pat, and Jonathan. 71

In his answer to this, he inquired whether I should change

my dress four times during the performance, and whether it would not be a good thing to have a little music during the intervals.

Just fancy my appearing on the platform successively dressed as John, Sandy, Pat, and Jonathan!

AS PAT.

. . . . . .

A good impresario is constantly on the look out for anything that may draw the attention of the public to his entertainment. Nothing is sacred for him. His eyes and ears are always open, all his senses on the alert.

One afternoon I was walking with my impresario over the beautiful Clifton Suspension Bridge. I was to lecture at the Victoria Hall, Bristol, in the evening. We leaned on the railings, and grew pensive as we looked at the scenery and the abyss under us.

My impresario sighed.

“What are you thinking about?” I said to him. 72

AS JONATHAN.

“Last year,” he replied, “a girl tried to commit suicide and jumped over this bridge; but the wind got under her skirt, made a parachute of it, and she descended to the bottom of the valley perfectly unhurt.” 73

THE WOULD-BE SUICIDE.

And he sighed again.

“Well,” said I, “why do you sigh?”

“Ah! my dear fellow, if you could do the same this afternoon, there would be ‘standing room only’ in the Victoria Hall to-night.”

I left that bridge in no time.

CHAPTER X.

BUFFALO—THE NIAGARA FALLS—A FROST—ROCHESTER TO THE RESCUE OF BUFFALO—CLEVELAND—I MEET JONATHAN—PHANTASMAGORIA.

Buffalo, January 14.

THIS town is situated twenty-seven miles from Niagara Falls. The Americans say that the Buffalo people can hear the noise of the water-fall quite distinctly. I am quite prepared to believe it. However, an hour’s journey by rail and then a quarter of an hour’s sleigh ride will take you from Buffalo within sight of this, perhaps the grandest piece of scenery in the world. Words cannot describe it. You spend a couple of hours visiting every point of view. You are nailed, as it were, to the ground, feeling like a pigmy, awestruck in the presence of nature at her grandest. The snow was falling thickly, and though it made the view less clear, it added to the grandeur of the scene.

I went down by the cable car to a level with the rapids and the place where poor Captain Webb was last seen alive; a presumptuous pigmy, he, to dare such waters as these. His widow keeps a little bazaar near the falls and sells souvenirs to the visitors.

It was most thrilling to stand within touching distance of that great torrent of water, called the Niagara Falls, in distinction to the Horseshoe Falls, to hear the roar of it as it fell. The idea of force it gives one is tremendous. You stand and wonder how many ages it has been roaring on, what eyes besides your own have gazed awestruck at its mighty rushing, and wonder if the pigmies will ever do what they say they will; one day make those columns of water their servants to turn wheels at their bidding.

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

We crossed the bridge over to the Canadian side, and there we had the whole grand panorama before our eyes. 76

It appears that it is quite a feasible thing to run the rapids in a barrel. Girls have done it, and it may become the fashionable sport for American girls in the near future. It has been safely accomplished plenty of times by young fellows up for an exciting day's sport.

On the Canadian shore was a pretty villa where Princess Louise stayed while she painted the scene. Some of the pretty houses were fringed all round the roofs and balconies in the loveliest way, with icicles a yard long, and loaded with snow. They looked most beautiful.

On the way back we called at Prospect House, a charming hotel which I hope, if ever I go near Buffalo again, I shall put up at for a day or two, to see the neighborhood well.

Two years ago I was lucky enough to witness a most curious sight. The water was frozen under the falls, and a natural bridge, formed by the ice, was being used by venturesome people to cross the Niagara River on. This occurs very seldom.

. . . . . .

I have had a fizzle to-night. I almost expected it. In a hall that could easily have accommodated fifteen hundred people, I lectured to an audience of about three hundred. Fortunately they proved so intelligent, warm, and appreciative that I did not feel at all depressed; but my impresario did. However, he congratulated me on having been able to do justice to the *causerie*, as if I had had a bumper house.

I must own that it is much easier to be a tragedian than a light comedian before a $200 house.

. . . . . .

Cleveland, O., January 15. 77

The weather is so bad that I shall be unable to see anything of this city, which, people tell me, is very beautiful.

On arriving at the Weddell House, I met a New York friend.

"Well," said he, "how are you getting on? Where do you come from?"

"From Buffalo," said I, pulling a long face.

“What is the matter? Don’t you like the Buffalo people?”

“Yes; I liked those I saw. I should have liked to extend my love to a larger number. I had a fizzle; about three hundred people. Perhaps I drew all the brain of Buffalo.”

“How many people do you say you had in the hall?” said my friend.

“About three hundred.”

“Then you must have drawn a good many people from Rochester, I should think,” said he quite solemnly.

In reading the Buffalo newspapers this morning, I noticed favorable criticisms of my lecture; but while my English was praised, so far as the language went, severe comments were passed on my pronunciation. In England, where the English language is spoken with a decent pronunciation, I never once read a condemnation of my pronunciation of the English language.

I will not appear again in Buffalo until I feel much improved.

. . . . . .

78

“GOING TO PITTSBURG, I GUESS.”

En route to Pittsburg, *January* 16.

The American railway stations have special waiting rooms for ladies—not, as in England, places furnished with looking-glasses, where they can go and arrange their bonnets, etc. No, no. Places where they can wait for the trains, protected against the contamination of man, and where they are spared the sight of that eternal little round piece of furniture with which the floors of the whole of the United States are dotted.

79

At Cleveland Station, this morning, I met Jonathan, such as he is represented in the comic papers of the world. A man of sixty, with long straight white hair falling over his shoulders; no mustache, long imperial beard, a razor-blade-shaped nose, small keen eyes, and high prominent cheek-bones, the whole smoking the traditional cigar; the Anglo-Saxon indianized —Jonathan. If he had had a long swallow-tail coat on, a waistcoat ornamented with stars, and trowsers with stripes, he might have sat for the cartoons of *Puck* or *Judge*.

In the car, Jonathan came and sat opposite me. A few minutes after the train had started, he said:

“Going to Pittsburg, I guess.”

“Yes,” I replied.

“To lecture?”

“Oh, you know I lecture?”

“Why, certainly; I heard you in Boston ten days ago.”

He offered me a cigar, told me his name—I mean his three names—what he did, how much he earned, where he lived, how many children he had; he read me a poem of his own composition, invited me to go and see him, and entertained me for three hours and a half, telling me the history of his life, etc. Indeed, it was Jonathan.

. . . . . .

All the Americans I have met have written a poem (pronounced *pome*). Now I am not generalizing. I do not say that all the Americans have written a poem, I say *all the Americans I have met*. 80

. . . . . .

Pittsburg (*same day later*).

I lecture here to-night under the auspices of the Press Club of the town. The president of the club came to meet me at the station, in order to show me something of the town.

I like Pittsburg very much. From the top of the hill, which you reach in a couple of minutes by the cable car, there is a most beautiful sight to contemplate: one never to be forgotten.

On our way to the hotel, my kind friend took me to a fire station, and asked the man in command of the place to go through the performance of a fire-call for my own edification.

Now, in two words, here is the thing.

You touch the fire bell in your own house. That causes the name of your street and the number of your house to appear in the fire station; it causes all the doors of the station to open outward. Wait a minute—it causes whips which are hanging behind the horses, to lash them and send them under harnesses that fall upon them and are self-adjusting; it causes the men, who are lying down on the first floor, to slide down an incline and fall on the box and steps of the cart. And off they gallop. It takes about two minutes to describe it as quickly as possible. It only takes fourteen seconds to do it. It is the nearest approach to phantasmagoria that I have yet seen in real life.

CHAPTER XI. 81

A Great Admirer—Notes on Railway Traveling—Is America a Free Nation?—A Pleasant Evening in New York.

In the vestibule train from Pittsburg to New York, January 17.

THIS morning, before leaving the hotel in Pittsburg, I was approached by a young man who, after giving me his card, thanked me most earnestly for my lecture of last night. In fact, he nearly embraced me.

“I never enjoyed myself so much in my life,” he said.

I grasped his hand.

“I am glad,” I replied, “that my humble effort pleased you so much. Nothing is more gratifying to a lecturer than to know he has afforded pleasure to his audience.”

“Yes,” he said, “it gave me immense pleasure. You see, I am engaged to be married to a girl in town. All her family went to your show, and I had the girl at home all to myself. Oh! I had such a good time! Thank you so much! Do lecture here again soon.”

And, after wishing me a pleasant journey, he left me. I was glad to know I left at least one 82

friend and admirer behind me in Pittsburg.

. . . . . .

I had a charming audience last night, a large and most appreciative one. I was introduced by Mr. George H. Welshons, of the Pittsburg *Times*, in a neat little speech, humorous and very gracefully worded. After the lecture, I was entertained at supper in the rooms of the Press Club, and thoroughly enjoyed myself with the members. As I entered the Club, I was amused to see two journalists, who had heard me at the lecture discourse on chewing, go to a corner of the room, and there get rid of their *wads*, before coming to shake hands with me.

. . . . . .

If you have not journeyed in a vestibule train of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, you do not know what it is to travel in luxurious comfort. Dining saloon, drawing room, smoking room, reading room with writing tables, supplied with the papers and a library of books, all furnished with exquisite taste and luxury. The cookery is good and well served.

The day has passed without adventures, but in comfort. We left Pittsburg at seven in the morning. At nine we passed Johnstown. The terrible calamity that befell that city two years ago was before my mind's eye; the town suddenly inundated, the people rushing on the bridge, and there caught and burnt alive. America is the country for great disasters. Everything here is on a huge scale. Toward noon, the country grew hilly, and, for an hour before we reached Harrisburg, it gave me great enjoyment, for in America, where there is so 83
much sameness in the landscapes, it is a treat to see the mountains of Central Pennsylvania breaking the monotony of the huge flat stretch of land.

The employees (I must be careful not to say "servants") of the Pennsylvania Railroad are polite and form an agreeable contrast to those of the other railway companies. Unhappily, the employees whom you find on board the Pullman cars are not in the control of the company.

. . . . . .

The train will reach Jersey City for New York at seven to-night. I shall dine at my hotel.

About 5.30 it occurred to me to go to the dining-room car and ask for a cup of tea. Before entering the car I stopped at the lavatory to wash my hands. Some one was using the basin. It was the conductor, the autocrat in charge of the dining car, a fat, sleek, chewing, surly, frowning, snarling cur.

He turned round.

"What do you want?" said he.

"I should very much like to wash my hands," I timidly ventured.

"You see very well I am using the basin. You go to the next car."

I came to America this time with a large provision of philosophy, and quite determined to even enjoy such little scenes as this. So I quietly went to the next lavatory, returned to the dining-car, and sat down at one of the tables.

"Will you, please, give me a cup of tea?" I said to one of the colored waiters. 84

"I can't do dat, sah," said the negro. "You can have dinnah."

"But I don't want *dinnah*," I replied; "I want a cup of tea."

"Den you must ask dat gem'man if you can have it," said he, pointing to the above mentioned "gentleman."

I went to him.

"Excuse me," said I, "are you the nobleman who runs this show?"

He frowned.

“I don’t want to dine; I should like to have a cup of tea.”

He frowned a little more, and deigned to hear my request to the end.

“Can I?” I repeated.

He spoke not; he brought his eyebrows still lower down, and solemnly shook his head.

“Can’t I really?” I continued.

At last he spoke.

“You can,” quoth he, “for a dollar.”

And, taking the bill of fare in his hands, without wasting any more of his precious utterances, he pointed out to me:

“Each meal one dollar.”

The argument was unanswerable.

I went back to my own car, resumed my seat, and betook myself to reflection.

What I cannot, for the life of me, understand is why, in a train which has a dining car and a kitchen, a man cannot be served with a cup of tea, unless he pays the price of a dinner for it, and this notwithstanding the fact of his having paid five dollars extra to enjoy the extra luxury of this famous vestibule train. 85

“WELL, WHAT DO YOU WANT?”

After all, this is one out of the many illustrations one could give to show that whatever Jonathan is, he is not the master in his own house. 86

The Americans are the most docile people in the world. They are the slaves of their servants, whether these are high officials, or the “reduced duchesses” of domestic service. They are so submitted to their lot that they seem to find it quite natural.

The Americans are lions governed by bull-dogs and asses.

They have given themselves a hundred thousand masters, these folks who laugh at monarchies, for example, and scorn the rule of a king, as if it were better to be bullied by a

crowd than by an individual.

In America, the man who pays does not command the paid. I have already said it; I will maintain the truth of the statement that, in America, the paid servant rules. Tyranny from above is bad; tyranny from below is worse.

Of my many first impressions that have deepened into convictions, this is one of the firmest.

When you arrive at an English railway station, all the porters seem to say: “Here is a customer, let us treat him well.” And it is who shall relieve you of your luggage, or answer any questions you may be pleased to ask. They are glad to see you.

In America, you may have a dozen parcels, not a hand will move to help you with them. So Jonathan is obliged to forego the luxury of hand baggage, so convenient for long journeys. 87

When you arrive at an American station, the officials are all frowning and seem to say: “Why the deuce don’t you go to Chicago by some other line instead of coming here to bother us?”

ENGLISH RAILWAY STATION.

This subject reminds me of an interesting fact, told me by Mr. Chauncey M. Depew on board the *Teutonic*. When tram-cars were first used in the States, it was a long time before the drivers and conductors would consent to wear any kind of uniform, so great is the horror 88 of anything like a badge of paid servitude. Now that they do wear some kind of uniform, they spend their time in standing sentry at the door of their dignity, and in thinking that, if they were polite, you would take their affable manners for servility.

. . . . . .

Everett House, New York. (*Midnight.*)

So many charming houses have opened their hospitable doors to me in New York that, when I am in this city, I have soon forgotten the little annoyances of a railway journey or the hardships of a lecture tour.

After dining here, I went to spend the evening at the house of Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, the poet, and editor of the *Century Magazine*, that most successful of all magazines in the world. A circulation of nearly 300,000 copies—just think of it! But it need not excite wonder in any one who knows this beautiful and artistic periodical,

THE RAILWAY PORTER.

to which all the leading *littérateurs* of America lend their pens, and the best artists their pencils. 89

Mrs. Richard Watson Gilder is one of the best and most genial hostesses in New York. At her Fridays, one meets the cream of intellectual society, the best known names of the American aristocracy of talent.

To-night I met Mr. Frank R. Stockton, the novelist, Mr. Charles Webb, the humorist, Mr. Frank Millet, the painter, and his wife, and a galaxy of celebrities and beautiful women, all most interesting and delightful people to meet. Conversation went on briskly all over the rooms till late.

The more I see of the American women, the more confirmed I become in my impression that they are typical; more so than the men. They are like no other women I know. The brilliancy of their conversation, the animation of their features, the absence of affectation in their manners, make them unique. There are no women to compare to them in a drawing-room. There are none with whom I feel so much at ease. Their beauty, physically speaking, is great; but you are still more struck by their intellectual beauty, the frankness of their eyes, and the naturalness of their bearing.

I returned to the Everett House, musing all the way on the difference between the American women and the women of France and England. The theme was attractive, and, remembering that to-morrow would be an off-day for me, I resolved to spend it in going more fully into this fascinating subject with pen and ink.

CHAPTER XII. 90

NOTES ON AMERICAN WOMEN—COMPARISONS—HOW MEN TREAT WOMEN AND VICE VERSA—SCENES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

New York, January 18.

A MAN was one day complaining to a friend that he had been married twenty years without being able to understand his wife. “You should not complain of that,” remarked the friend. “I have been married to my wife two years only, and I understand her perfectly.”

The leaders of thought in France have long ago proclaimed that woman was the only problem it was not given to man to solve. They have all tried, and they have all failed. They all acknowledge it—but they are trying still.

Indeed, the interest that woman inspires in every Frenchman is never exhausted. Parodying Terence, he says to himself, “I am a man, and all that concerns woman interests me.” All the French modern novels are studies, analytical, dissecting studies, of woman’s heart.

To the Anglo-Saxon mind, this may sometimes appear a trifle puerile, if not also ridiculous. But to understand this feeling, one must remember how a Frenchman is brought up. 91

In England, boys and girls meet and play together; in America and Canada, they sit side by side on the same benches at school, not only as children of tender age, but at College and in the Universities. They get accustomed to each other’s company; they see nothing strange in being in contact with one another, and this naturally tends to reduce the interest or curiosity one sex takes in the other. But in France they are apart, and the ball-room is the only place where they can meet when they have attained the age of twenty!

Strange to reflect that young people of both sexes can meet in ball-rooms without exciting their parents’ suspicions, and that they cannot do so in class-rooms!

When I was a boy at school in France, I can well remember how we boys felt on the subject. If we heard that a young girl, say the sister of some school-fellow, was with her mother in the common parlor to see her brother, why, it created a commotion, a perfect revolution in the whole establishment. It was no use trying to keep us in order. We would climb on the top of the seats or of the tables to endeavor to see something of her, even if it were but the top of her hat, or a bit of her gown across the recreation yard at the very end of the building. It was an event. Many of us would even immediately get inspired and compose verses addressed to the unknown fair visitor. In these poetical effusions we would imagine the young girl carried off by some miscreant, and we would fly to her rescue, save her, and throw ourselves at her feet to receive her hand as our reward. Yes, we would get quite romantic or, in plain English, quite silly. We could not imagine that a woman was a 92
reasoning being with whom you can talk on the topics of the day, or have an ordinary conversation on any ordinary subject. To us a woman was a being with whom you can only talk of love, or fall in love, or, maybe, for whom you may die of love.

This manner of training young men goes a long way toward explaining the position of woman in France as well as her ways. It explains why a Frenchman and a Frenchwoman, when they converse together, seldom can forget that one is a man and the other a woman. It does not prove that a Frenchwoman must necessarily be, and is, affected in her relations with men; but it explains why she does not feel, as the American woman does, that a man and woman can enjoy a *tête-à-tête* free from all those commonplace flatteries, compliments, and platitudes that badly-understood gallantry suggests. Many American ladies have made me forget, by the easiness of their manner and the charm and naturalness of their conversation, that I was speaking with women, and with lovely ones, too. This I could never have forgotten in the company of French ladies.

On account of this feeling, and perhaps also of the difference which exists between the education received by a man and that received by a woman in France, the conversation will always be on some light topics, literary, artistic, dramatic, social, or other. Indeed, it would be most unbecoming for a man to start a very serious subject of conversation with a French lady to whom he had just been introduced. He would be taken for a pedant or a man of bad breeding. 93

In America, men and women receive practically the same education, and this of course enlarges the circle of conversation between the sexes. I shall always remember a beautiful American girl, not more than twenty years of age, to whom I was once introduced in New York, as she was giving to a lady sitting next to her a most detailed description of the latest bonnet invented in Paris, and who, turning toward me, asked me point-blank if I had read M. Ernest Renan’s “History of the People of Israel.” I had to confess that I had not yet had time to read it. But she had, and she gave me, without the remotest touch of affectation or pedantry, a most interesting and learned analysis of that remarkable work. I related this incident in “Jonathan and his Continent.” On reading it, some of my countrymen, critics and others, exclaimed: “We imagine the fair American girl had a pair of gold spectacles on.”

“No, my dear compatriots, nothing of the sort. No gold spectacles, no guy. It was a beautiful girl, dressed with most exquisite taste and care, and most charming and womanly.”

An American woman, however learned she may be, is a sound politician, and she knows that the best thing she can make of herself is a woman, and she remains a woman. She will always make herself as attractive as she possibly can. Not to please men—I believe she has a great contempt for them—but to please herself. If, in a French drawing-room, I were to remark to a lady how clever some woman in the room looked, she would probably closely examine that woman’s dress to find out what I thought was wrong about it. It would 94
probably be the same in England, but not in America.

A Frenchwoman will seldom be jealous of another woman’s cleverness. She will far more readily forgive her this qualification than beauty. And in this particular point, it is probable that the Frenchwoman resembles all the women in the Old World.

. . . . . .

Of all the ladies I have met, I have no hesitation in declaring that the American ones are the least affected. With them, I repeat it, I feel at ease as I do with no other women in the world.

With whom but an *Américaine* would the following little scene have been possible?

I was in Boston. It was Friday, and knowing it to be the reception day of Mrs. X., an old friend of mine and my wife's, I thought I would call upon her early, before the crowd of visitors had begun to arrive. So I went to the house about half-past three in the afternoon. Mrs. X. received me in the drawing-room, and we were soon talking on the hundred and one topics that old friends have on their tongue tips. Presently the conversation fell on love and lovers. Mrs. X. drew her chair up a little nearer to the fire, put the toes of her little slippers on the fender stool, and with a charmingly confidential, but perfectly natural, manner, said:

"You are married and love your wife; I am married and love my husband; we are both artists, let's have our say out."

And we proceeded to have our say out.

But all at once I noticed that about half an inch of the seam of her black silk bodice was 95
unsewn. We men, when we see a lady with something awry in her toilette, how often do we long to say to her: "Excuse me, madam, but perhaps you don't know that you have a hairpin sticking out two inches just behind your ear," or "Pardon me, Miss, I'm a married man, there is something wrong there behind, just under your waist belt."

Now I felt for Mrs. X., who was just going to receive a crowd of callers with a little rent in one of her bodice seams, and tried to persuade myself to be brave and tell her of it. Yet I hesitated. People take things so differently. The conversation went on unflagging. At last I could not stand it any longer.

"Mrs. X.," said I, all in a breath, "you are married and love your husband; I am married and love my wife; we are both artists; there is a little bit of seam come unsewn, just there by your arm, run and get it sewn up!"

The peals of laughter that I heard going on upstairs, while the damage was being repaired, proved to me that there was no resentment to be feared, but, on the contrary, that I had earned the gratitude of Mrs. X.

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In many respects I have often been struck with the resemblance which exists between French and American women. When I took my first walk on Broadway, New York, on a fine afternoon some two years and a half ago, I can well remember how I exclaimed: "Why, this is Paris, and all these ladies are *Parisiennes*!" It struck me as being the same type of face, 96
the same animation of features, the same brightness of the eyes, the same self-assurance, the same attractive plumpness in women over thirty. To my mind, I was having a walk on my own Boulevards (every Parisian *owns* that place). The more I became acquainted with American ladies, the more forcibly this resemblance struck me. This was not a mere first impression. It has been, and is still, a deep conviction; so much so that whenever I returned to New York from a journey of some weeks in the heart of the country, I felt as if I was returning home.

After a short time, a still closer resemblance between the women of the two countries will strike a Frenchman most forcibly. It is the same *finesse*, the same suppleness of mind, the same wonderful adaptability. Place a little French milliner in a good drawing-room for an hour, and at the end of that time she will behave, talk, and walk like any lady in the room. Suppose an American, married below his *status* in society, is elected President of the United States, I believe, at the end of a week, this wife of his would do the honors of the White House with the ease and grace of a highborn lady.

In England it is just the contrary.

Of course good society is good society everywhere. The ladies of the English aristocracy are perfect queens; but the Englishwoman, who was not born a lady, will seldom become a lady, and I believe this is why *mésalliances* are more scarce in England than in America, and especially in France. I could name many Englishmen at the head of their professions, who cannot produce their wives in society because these women have not been able to raise 97
themselves to the level of their husbands' station in life. The Englishwoman, as a rule, has no faculty for fitting herself for a higher position than the one she was born in; like a rabbit, she will often taste of the cabbage she fed on. And I am bound to add that this is perhaps a quality, and proves the truthfulness of her character. She is no actress.

In France, the *mésalliance*, though not relished by parents, is not feared so much, because they know the young woman will observe and study, and very soon fit herself for her new

position.

And while on this subject of *mésalliance*, why not try to destroy an absurd prejudice that exists in almost every country on the subject of France?

It is, I believe, the firm conviction of foreigners that Frenchmen marry for money, that is to say, that all Frenchmen marry for money. As a rule, when people discuss foreign social topics, they have a wonderful faculty for generalization.

The fact that many Frenchmen do marry for money is not to be denied, and the explanation of it is this: We have in France a number of men belonging to a class almost unknown in other countries, small *bourgeois* of good breeding and genteel habits, but relatively poor, who occupy posts in the different Government offices. Their name is legion and their salary something like two thousand francs ($400). These men have an appearance to keep up, and, unless a wife brings them enough to at least double their income, they cannot marry. These young men are often sought after by well-to-do parents for their daughters, because they are steady, cultured, gentlemanly, and occupy an honorable 98
position, which brings them a pension for their old age. With the wife's dowry, the couple can easily get along, and lead a peaceful, uneventful, and happy jog-trot life, which is the great aim of the majority of the French people.

But, on the other hand, there is no country where you will see so many cases of *mésalliance* as France, and this alone should dispose of the belief that Frenchmen marry for money. Indeed, it is a most common thing for a young Frenchman of good family to fall in love with a girl of a much lower station of life than his own, to court her, at first with perhaps only the idea of killing time or of starting a *liaison*, to soon discover that the girl is highly respectable, and to finally marry her. This is a most common occurrence. French parents frown on this sort of thing, and do their best to discourage it, of course; but rather than cross their son's love, they give their consent, and trust to that adaptability of Frenchwomen, of which I was speaking just now, to raise herself to her husband's level and make a wife he will never be ashamed of.

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The Frenchman is the slave of his womankind, but not in the same way as the American is. The Frenchman is brought up by his mother, and remains under her sway till she dies. When he marries, his wife leads him by the nose (an operation which he seems to enjoy), and when, besides, he has a daughter, on whom he generally dotes, this lady soon joins the other two in ruling this easy-going, good-humored man. As a rule, when you see a Frenchman, you behold a man who is kept in order by three generations of women: mother, wife, and 99
daughter.

The American will lavish attention and luxury on his wife and daughters, but he will save them the trouble of being mixed in his affairs. His business is his, his office is private. His womankind is the sun and glory of his life, whose company he will hasten to enjoy as soon as he can throw away the cares of his business. In France, a wife is a partner, a cashier who takes care of the money, even an adviser on stock and speculations. In the mercantile class, she is both cashier and bookkeeper. Enter a shop in France, Paris included, and behind "Pay Here," you will see Madame, smiling all over as she pockets the money for the purchase you have made. When I said she is a partner, I might safely have said that she is the active partner, and, as a rule, by far the shrewder of the two. She brings to bear her native suppleness, her fascinating little ways, her persuasive manners, and many a customer whom her husband was allowing to go away without a purchase, has been brought back by the wife, and induced to part with his cash in the shop. Last year I went to Paris, on my way home from Germany, to spend a few days visiting the Exposition. One day I entered a shop on the Boulevards to buy a white hat. The new-fashioned hats, the only hats which the man showed me, were narrow-brimmed, and I declined to buy one. I was just going to leave, when the wife, who, from the back parlor, had listened to my conversation with her husband, stepped in and said: "But, Adolphe, why do you let Monsieur go? Perhaps he does not care to follow the fashion. We have a few white broad-brimmed hats left from last year 100
that we can let Monsieur have *à bon compte*. They are upstairs, go and fetch them." And, sure enough, there was one which fitted and pleased me, and I left in that shop a little sum of twenty-five francs, which the husband was going to let me take elsewhere, but which the wife managed to secure for the firm.

MADAM IS THE CASHIER.

No one who has lived in France has failed to be struck with the intelligence of the women, 101
and there exist few Frenchmen who do not readily admit how intellectually inferior they are to their countrywomen, chiefly among the middle and lower classes. And this is not due to any special training, for the education received by the women of that class is of the most limited kind; they are taught to read, write, and reckon, and their education is finished. Shrewdness is inborn in them, as well as a peculiar talent for getting a hundred cents' worth for every dollar they spend. How to make a house look pretty and attractive with small outlay; how to make a dress or turn out a bonnet with a few knick-knacks; how to make a savory dish out of a small remnant of beef, mutton, and veal; all that is a science not to be despised when a husband, in receipt of a four or five hundred dollar salary, wants to make a good dinner, and see his wife look pretty. No doubt the aristocratic inhabitants of Mayfair and Belgravia in London, and the plutocracy of New York, may think all this very small, and these French people very uninteresting. They can, perhaps, hardly imagine that such people may live on such incomes and look decent. But they do live, and live very happy lives, too. And I will go so far as to say that happiness, real happiness, is chiefly found among people of limited income. The husband, who perhaps for a whole year has put quietly by a dollar every week, so as to be able to give his dear wife a nice present at Christmas, gives her a far more valuable, a far better appreciated present, than the millionaire who orders Tiffany to send a diamond *rivière* to his wife. That quiet young French couple, whom you see at the upper 102
circle of a theater, and who have saved the money to enable them to come and hear such and such a play, are happier than the occupants of the boxes on the first tier. If you doubt it, take your opera glasses, and "look on this picture, and on this."

THE UPPER CIRCLE.

In observing nations, I have always taken more interest in the "million," who differ in every country, than in the "upper ten," who are alike all over the world. People who have plenty of money at their disposal generally discover the same way of spending it, and adopt the same mode of living. People who have only a small income show their native instincts in the intelligent use of it. All these differ, and these only are worth studying, unless you belong to the staff of a "society" paper. (As a Frenchman, I am glad to say we have no "society" papers. England and America are the only two countries in the world where these official organs of Anglo-Saxon snobbery can be found, and I should not be surprised to hear that Australia possessed some of these already.)

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THE SAD-EYED OCCUPANTS OF THE BOX.

The source of French happiness is to be found in the thrift of the women, from the best middle class to the peasantry. This thrift is also the source of French wealth. A nation is really wealthy when the fortunes are stable, however small. We have no railway kings, no oil kings, no silver kings, but we have no tenement houses, no Unions, no Work-houses. Our lower classes do not yet ape the upper class people, either in their habits or dress. The wife of a peasant or of a mechanic wears a simple snowy cap, and a serge or cotton dress. The 104
wife of a shopkeeper does not wear any jewelry because she cannot afford to buy real stones, and her taste is too good to allow of her wearing false ones. She is not ashamed of her husband's occupation; she does not play the fine lady while he is at work. She saves him the expense of a cashier or of an extra clerk by helping him in his business. When the shutters are up, she enjoys life with him, and is the companion of his pleasures as well as of his hardships. Club life is unknown in France, except among the upper classes. Man and wife are constantly together, and France is a nation of Darbys and Joans. There is, I believe, no country where men and women go through life on such equal terms as in France.

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In England (and here again I speak of the masses only), the man thinks himself a much superior being to the woman. It is the same in Germany. In America, I should feel inclined to believe that a woman looks down upon a man with a certain amount of contempt. She receives at his hands attentions of all sorts, but I cannot say, as I have remarked before, that I have ever discovered in her the slightest trace of gratitude to man.

I have often tried to explain to myself this gentle contempt of American ladies for the male sex; for, contrasting it with the lovely devotion of Jonathan to his womankind, it is a curious enigma. Have I found the solution at last? Does it begin at school? In American schools, boys and girls, from the age of five, follow the same path to learning, and sit side by side on the same benches. Moreover, the girls prove themselves capable of keeping pace with the boys. 105
Is it not possible that those girls, as they watched the performances of the boys in the study, learned to say, "Is that all?" While the young lords of creation, as they have looked on at what "those girls" can do, have been fain to exclaim: "Who would have thought it!" And does not this explain the two attitudes: the great respect of men for women, and the mild contempt of women for men?

Very often, in New York, when I had time to saunter about, I would go up Broadway and wait until a car, well crammed with people, came along. Then I would jump on board and stand near the door. Whenever a man wanted to get out, he would say to me "Please," or "Excuse me," or just touch me lightly to warn me that I stood in his way. But the women! Oh, the women! why, it was simply lovely. They would just push me away with the tips of their fingers, and turn up such disgusted and haughty noses! You would have imagined it was a heap of dirty rubbish in their way.

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Would you have a fair illustration of the respective positions of woman in France, in England, and in America?

Go to a hotel, and watch the arrival of couples in the dining-room.

Now don’t go to the Louvre, the Grand Hotel, or the Bristol, in Paris. Don’t go to the Savoy, the Victoria, or the Metropole, in London. Don’t go to the Brunswick, in New York, because in all these hotels you will see that all behave alike. Go elsewhere and, I say, watch. 106

In France, you will see the couples arrive together, walk abreast toward the table assigned to them, very often arm in arm, and smiling at each other—though married.

IN FRANCE.

In England, you will see John Bull leading the way. He does not like to be seen eating in public, and thinks it very hard that he should not have the dining-room all to himself. So he enters, with his hands in his pockets, looking askance at everybody right and left. Then, meek and demure, with her eyes cast down, follows Mrs. John Bull. 107

In America, behold the dignified, nay, the majestic entry of Mrs. Jonathan, a perfect queen going toward her throne, bestowing a glance on her subjects right and left—and Jonathan behind! 108

IN AMERICA.

They say in France that Paris is the paradise of women. If so, there is a more blissful place than paradise; there is another word to invent to give an idea of the social position enjoyed by American ladies. 109

If I had to be born again, and might choose my sex and my birthplace, I would shout at the top of my voice:

“Oh, make me an American woman!”

CHAPTER XIII. 110

More about Journalism in America—A Dinner at Delmonico’s—My First Appearance in an American Church.

New York, Sunday Night, January 19.

HAVE been spending the whole day in reading the Sunday papers.

I am never tired of reading and studying the American newspapers. The whole character of the nation is there: Spirit of enterprise, liveliness, childishness, inquisitiveness, deep interest in everything that is human, fun and humor, indiscretion, love of gossip, brightness.

Speak of electric light, of phonographs and graphophones, if you like; speak of those thousand and one inventions which have come out of the American brain; but if you wish to mention the greatest and most wonderful achievement of American activity, do not hesitate for a moment to give the palm to American journalism; it is simply the *ne plus ultra*.

You will find some people, even in America, who condemn its loud tone; others who object to its meddling with private life; others, again, who have something to say of its contempt for statements which are not in perfect accordance with strict truth. I even believe that a French writer, whom I do not wish to name, once said that very few statements to be found 111
in an American paper were to be relied upon—beyond the date. People may say this and may say that about American journalism; I confess that I like it, simply because it will supply you with twelve—on Sundays with thirty—pages that are readable from the first line to the last. Yes, from the first line to the last, including the advertisements.

The American journalist may be a man of letters, but, above all, he must possess a bright and graphic pen, and his services are not wanted if he cannot write a racy article or paragraph out of the most trifling incident. He must relate facts, if he can, but if he cannot, so much the worse for the facts; he must be entertaining and turn out something that is readable.

Suppose, for example, a reporter has to send to his paper the account of a police-court proceeding. There is nothing more important to bring to the office than the case of a servant girl who has robbed her mistress of a pair of diamond earrings. The English reporter will bring to his editor something in the following style:

> Mary Jane So-and-So was yesterday charged before the magistrate with stealing a pair of diamond earrings from her mistress. It appears [always *it appears*, that is the formula] that, last Monday, as Mrs. X. went to her room to dress for dinner, she missed a pair of diamond earrings, which she usually kept in a little drawer in her bedroom. On questioning her maid on the subject, she received incoherent answers. Suspicion that the maid was the thief arose in her mind, and——

A long paragraph in this dry style will be published in the *Times*, or any other London morning paper. 112

Now, the American reporter will be required to bring something a little more entertaining if he hopes to be worth his salt on the staff of his paper, and he will probably get up an account of the case somewhat in the following fashion:

> Mary Jane So-and-so is a pretty little brunette of some twenty summers. On looking in the glass at her dainty little ears, she fancied how lovely a pair of diamond earrings would look in them. So one day she thought she would try on those of her mistress. How lovely she looked! said the looking-glass, and the Mephistopheles that is hidden in the corner of every man or woman's breast suggested that she should keep them. This is how Mary Jane found herself in trouble, etc., etc.

The whole will read like a little story, probably entitled something like "Another Gretchen gone wrong through the love of jewels."

The heading has to be thought of no less than the paragraph. Not a line is to be dull in a paper sparkling all over with eye-ticklers of all sorts. Oh! those delicious headings that would resuscitate the dead, and make them sit up in their graves!

A Tennessee paper which I have now under my eyes announces the death of a townsman with the following heading:

"At ten o'clock last night Joseph W. Nelson put on his angel plumage."

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"Racy, catching advertisements supplied to the trade," such is the announcement that I see in the same paper. I understand the origin of such literary productions as the following,

which I cull from a Colorado sheet:

> This morning our Saviour summoned away the jeweler William T. Sumner, of our city, from his shop to another and a better world. The undersigned, his widow, will weep upon his tomb, as will also his two daughters, Maud and Emma, the former of whom is married, and the other is open to an offer. The funeral will take place to-morrow. Signed. His disconsolate widow, Mathilda Sumner.
>
> *P. S.*—This bereavement will not interrupt our business, which will be carried on as usual, only our place of business will be removed from Washington Street to No. 17 St. Paul Street, as our grasping landlord has raised our rent.—M. S.

The following advertisement probably emanates from the same firm:

> Personal—His Love Suddenly Returned.—Recently they had not been on the best of terms, owing to a little family jar occasioned by the wife insisting on being allowed to renovate his wearing apparel, and which, of course, was done in a bungling manner; in order to prevent the trouble, they agreed to send all their work hereafter to D., the tailor, and now everything is lovely, and peace and happiness again reign in their household.

All this is lively. Never fail to read the advertisements of an American paper, or you will not have got out of it all the fun it supplies.

Here are a few from the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, which tell different stories:

> 1. The young Madame J. C. Antonia, just arrived from Europe, will remain a short time; tells past, present, and future; tells by the letters in hand who the future husband or wife will be; brings back the husband or lover in so many days, and guarantees to settle family troubles; can give good luck and success; ladies call at once; also cures corns and bunions. Hours 10 A. M. and 9 P. M.

"Also cures corns and bunions" is a poem!

> 2. The acquaintance desired of lady passing along Twelfth Street at three o'clock Sunday afternoon, by blond gent standing at corner. Address Lou K., 48, *Enquirer* Office.
>
> 3. Will the three ladies that got on the electric car at the Zoo Sunday afternoon favor three gents that got off at Court and Walnut Streets with their address? Address Electric Car, *Enquirer* Office.
>
> 4. Will two ladies on Clark Street car, that noticed two gents in front of Grand Opera House about seven last evening, please address Jands, *Enquirer* Office.

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A short time ago a man named Smith was bitten by a rattlesnake and treated with whisky at a New York hospital. An English paper would have just mentioned the fact, and have the paragraph headed: "A Remarkable Cure"; or, "A Man Cured of a Rattlesnake Bite by Whisky"; but a kind correspondent sends me the headings of this bit of intelligence in five New York papers. They are as follows:

1. "Smith Is All Right!"
2. "Whisky Does It!"
3. "The Snake Routed at all Points!"
4. "The Reptile is Nowhere!"
5. "Drunk for Three Days and Cured."

Let a batch of officials be dismissed. Do not suppose that an American editor will accept the news with such a heading as "Dismissal of Officials." The reporter will have to bring some label that will fetch the attention. "Massacre at the Custom House," or, "So Many Heads in the Basket," will do. Now, I maintain that it requires a wonderful imagination—something little short of genius, to be able, day after day, to hit on a hundred of such headings. But the American journalist does it.

SMITH CURED OF RATTLESNAKE BITE.

An American paper is a collection of short stories. The Sunday edition of the New York *World*, the New York *Herald*, the Boston *Herald*, the Boston *Globe*, the Chicago *Tribune*, the Chicago *Herald*, and many others, is something like ten volumes of miscellaneous literature, and I do not know of any achievement to be compared to it.

I cannot do better than compare an American paper to a large store, where the goods, the articles, are labeled so as to immediately strike the customer. 116

A few days ago, I heard my friend, Colonel Charles H. Taylor, editor of the Boston *Globe*, give an interesting summary of an address on journalism which he is to deliver next Saturday before the members of the New England Club of Boston. He maintained that the proprietor of a newspaper has as much right to make his shop-window attractive to the public as any tradesman. If the colonel is of opinion that journalism is a trade, and the journalist a mere tradesman, I agree with him. If journalism is not to rank among the highest and noblest of professions, and is to be nothing more than a commercial enterprise, I agree with him.

Now, if we study the evolution of journalism for the last forty or fifty years, we shall see that daily journalism, especially in a democracy, has become a commercial enterprise, and that journalism, as it was understood forty years ago, has become to-day monthly journalism. The dailies have now no other object than to give the news—the latest—just as a tradesman that would succeed must give you the latest fashion in any kind of business. The people of a democracy like America are educated in politics. They think for themselves, and care but little for the opinions of such and such a journalist on any question of public interest. They want news, not literary essays on news. When I hear some Americans say that they object to their daily journalism, I answer that journalists are like other people who supply the public—they keep the article that is wanted.

A free country possesses the government it deserves, and the journalism it wants. A people active and busy as the Americans are, want a journalism that will keep their interest 117
awake and amuse them; and they naturally get it. The average American, for example, cares not a pin for what his representatives say or do in Washington; but he likes to be acquainted with what is going on in Europe, and that is why the American journalist will give him a far more detailed account of what is going on in the Palace at Westminster than of what is being said in the Capitol.

In France, journalism is personal. On any great question of the day, domestic or foreign, the Frenchman will want to read the opinion of John Lemoinne in the *Journal des Débats*, or the opinion of Edouard Lockroy in the *Rappel*, or maybe that of Paul de Cassagnac or Henri Rochefort. Every Frenchman is more or less led by the editor of the newspaper which he patronizes. But the Frenchman is only a democrat in name and aspirations, not in fact. France made the mistake of establishing a republic before she made republicans of her sons.

A French journalist signs his articles, and is a leader of public opinion, so much so that every successful journalist in France has been, is now, and ever will be, elected a representative of the people.

In America, as in England, the journalist has no personality outside the literary classes. Who, among the masses, knows the names of Bennett, Dana, Whitelaw Reid, Medill, Childs, in the United States? Who, in England, knows the names of Lawson, Mudford, Robinson, and other editors of the great dailies? If it had not been for his trial and imprisonment, Mr. W. T. Stead himself, though a most brilliant journalist, would never have seen his name on 118
anybody's lips.

A leading article in an American or an English newspaper will attract no notice at home. It will only be quoted on the European Continent.

It is the monthly and the weekly papers and magazines that now play the part of the dailies of bygone days. An article in the *Spectator* or *Saturday Review*, or especially in one of the great monthly magazines, will be quoted all over the land, and I believe that this relatively new journalism, which is read only by the cultured, has now for ever taken the place of the old one.

In a country where everybody reads, men as well as women; in a country where nobody takes much interest in politics outside of the State and the city in which he lives, the journalist has to turn out every day all the news he can gather, and present them to the reader in the most readable form. Formerly daily journalism was a branch of literature; now it is a news store, and is so not only in America. The English press shows signs of the same tendency, and so does the Parisian press. Take the London *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Star*, and the Paris *Figaro*, as illustrations of what I advance.

As democracy makes progress in England, journalism will become more and more American, although the English reporter will have some trouble in succeeding to compete with his American *confrère* in humor and liveliness.

Under the guidance of political leaders, the newspapers of Continental Europe direct public opinion. In a democracy, the newspapers follow public opinion and cater to the public 119
taste; they are the servants of the people. The American says to his journalists: "I don't care a pin for your opinions on such a question. Give me the news and I will comment on it myself. Only don't forget that I am an overworked man, and that before, or after, my fourteen hours' work, I want to be entertained."

So, as I have said elsewhere, the American journalist must be spicy, lively, and bright. He must know how, not merely to report, but to relate in a racy, catching style, an accident, a trial, a conflagration, and be able to make up an article of one or two columns upon the most insignificant incident. He must be interesting, readable. His eyes and ears must be always open, every one of his five senses on the alert, for he must keep ahead in this wild race for news. He must be a good conversationalist on most subjects, so as to bring back from his interviews with different people a good store of materials. He must be a man of courage, to brave rebuffs. He must be a philosopher, to pocket abuse cheerfully.

He must be a man of honor, to inspire confidence in the people he has to deal with. Personally I can say this of him, that wherever I have begged him, for instance, to kindly abstain from mentioning this or that which might have been said in conversation with him, I have invariably found that he kept his word.

But if the matter is of public interest, he is, before and above all, the servant of the public; so, never challenge his spirit of enterprise, or he will leave no stone unturned until he has 120
found out your secret and exhibited it in public.

I do not think that American journalism needs an apology.

It is the natural outcome of circumstances and the democratic times we live in. The Théâtre-Français is not now, under a Republic, and probably never again will be, what it was when it was placed under the patronage and supervision of the French Court. Democracy is the form of government least of all calculated to foster literature and the fine arts. To that purpose, Monarchy, with its Court and its fashionable society, is the best. This is no reason to prefer a monarchy to a republic. Liberty, like any other luxury, has to be paid for.

Journalism cannot be now what it was when papers were read by people of culture. In a democracy, the stage and journalism have to please the masses of the people. As the people become better and better educated, the stage and journalism will rise with them. What the people want, I repeat it, is news, and journals are properly called *news* papers.

Speaking of American journalism, no man need use apologetic language.

Not when the proprietor of an American paper will not hesitate to spend thousands of dollars to provide his readers with the minutest details about some great European event.

Not when an American paper will, at its own expense, send Henry M. Stanley to Africa in search of Livingstone.

Not so long as the American press is vigilant, and keeps its thousand eyes open on the interests of the American people. 121

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Midnight.

Dined this evening with Richard Mansfield at Delmonico's. I sat between Mr. Charles A. Dana, the first of American journalists, and General Horace Porter, and had what my American friends would call "a mighty elegant time." The host was delightful, the dinner excellent, the wine "extra dry," the speeches quite the reverse. "Speeches" is rather a big word for what took place at dessert. Every one supplied an anecdote, a story, a reminiscence, and contributed to the general entertainment of the guests.

The Americans have too much humor to spoil their dinners with toasts to the President, the Senate, the House of Representatives, the army, the navy, the militia, the volunteers, and the reserved forces.

I once heard Mr. Chauncey M. Depew referring to the volunteers, at some English public dinner, as "men invincible—in peace, and invisible—in war." After dinner I remarked to an English peer:

"You have heard to-night the great New York after-dinner speaker; what do you think of his speech?"

"Well," he said, "it was witty; but I think his remark about our volunteers was not in very good taste."

I remained composed, and did not burst.

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Newburgh, N. Y., January 21.

I lectured in Melrose, near Boston, last night, and had the satisfaction of pleasing a Massachusetts audience for the second time. After the lecture, I had supper with Mr. Nat Goodwin, a very good actor, who is now playing in Boston in a new play by Mr. Steele Mackaye. Mr. Nat Goodwin told many good stories at supper. He can entertain his friends in private as well as he can the public. 122

. . . . . .

To-night I have appeared in a church, in Newburgh. The minister, who took the chair, had the good sense to refrain from opening the lecture with prayer. There are many who have not the tact necessary to see that praying before a humorous lecture is almost as irreverent as praying before a glass of grog. It is as an artist, however, that I resent that prayer. After the audience have said *Amen*, it takes them a full quarter of an hour to realize that the lecture is not a sermon; that they are in a church, but not at church; and the whole time their minds are in that undecided state, all your points fall flat and miss fire. Even without the preliminary prayer, I dislike lecturing in a church. The very atmosphere of a church is against the success of a light, humorous lecture, and many a point, which would bring down the house in a theater, will be received only with smiles in a lecture hall, and in respectful silence in a church. An audience is greatly influenced by surroundings.

Now, I must say that the interior of an American church, with its lines of benches, its galleries, and its platform, does not inspire in one such religious feelings as the interior of a European Catholic church. In many American towns, the church is let for meetings, concerts, exhibitions, bazaars, etc., and so far as you can see, there is nothing to distinguish 123

it from an ordinary lecture hall.

Yet it is a church, and both lecturer and audience feel it.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARCUS AURELIUS IN AMERICA—CHAIRMEN I HAVE HAD—AMERICAN, ENGLISH, AND SCOTCH CHAIRMEN—ONE WHO HAD BEEN TO BOULOGNE—TALKATIVE AND SILENT CHAIRMEN—A TRYING OCCASION—THE LORD IS ASKED TO ALLOW THE AUDIENCE TO SEE MY POINTS.

New York, January 22.

THERE are indeed very few Americans who have not either tact or a sense of humor. They make the best of chairmen. They know that the audience have not come to hear them, and that all that is required of them is to introduce the lecturer in very few words, and to give him a good start. Who is the lecturer that would not appreciate, nay, love, such a chairman as Dr. R. S. MacArthur, who introduced me yesterday to a New York audience in the following manner?

"Ladies and Gentlemen," said he, "the story goes that, last summer, a party of Americans staying in Rome paid a visit to the famous Spithöver's bookshop in the Piazza di Spagna. Now Spithöver is the most learned of bibliophiles. You must go thither if you need artistic and archæological works of the profoundest research and erudition. But one of the ladies in this tourists' party only wanted the lively travels in America of Max O'Rell, and she asked for the book at Spithöver's. There came in a deep guttural voice—an Anglo-German voice—from a spectacled clerk behind a desk, to this purport: 'Marcus Aurelius vos neffer in te Unided Shtaates!' But, ladies and gentlemen, he is now, and here he is."

With such an introduction, I was immediately in touch with my audience.

What a change after English chairmen!

A few days before lecturing in any English town, under the auspices of a Literary Society or Mechanics' Institute, the lecturer generally receives from the secretary a letter running somewhat as follow:

> DEAR SIR:
>
> I have much pleasure in informing you that our Mr. Blank, one of our vice-presidents and a well-known resident here, will take the chair at your lecture.

Translated into plain English, this reads:

> My poor fellow, I am much grieved to have to inform you that a chairman will be inflicted upon you on the occasion of your lecture before the members of our Society.

In my few years' lecturing experience, I have come across all sorts and conditions of chairmen, but I can recollect very few that "have helped me." Now, what is the office, the duty, of a chairman on such occasions? He is supposed to introduce the lecturer to the audience. For this he needs to be able to make a neat speech. He has to tell the audience who the lecturer is, in case they should not know it, which is seldom the case. I was once introduced to an audience who knew me, by a chairman who, I don't think, had ever heard of me in his life. Before going on the platform he asked me whether I had written anything,

next whether I was an Irishman or a Frenchman, etc.

“MARCUS AURELIUS VOS NEFFER IN TE UNIDED SHTAATES!”

Sometimes the chairman is nervous; he hems and haws, cannot find the words he wants, and only succeeds in fidgeting the audience. Sometimes, on the other hand, he is a wit. There is danger again. I was once introduced to a New York audience by General Horace Porter. Those of my readers who know the delightful general and have heard him deliver one of those little gems of speeches in his own inimitable manner, will agree with me that certainly there was danger in that; and they will not be surprised when I tell them that after his delightfully witty and graceful little introduction, I felt as if the best part of the show was over.

Sometimes the chair has to be offered to a magnate of the neighborhood, though he may be noted for his long, prosy orations—which annoy the public; or to a very popular man in the locality who gets all the applause—which annoys the lecturer.

“Brevity is the soul of wit,” should be the motto of chairmen, and I sympathize with a friend of mine who says that chairmen, like little boys and girls, should be seen and not heard.

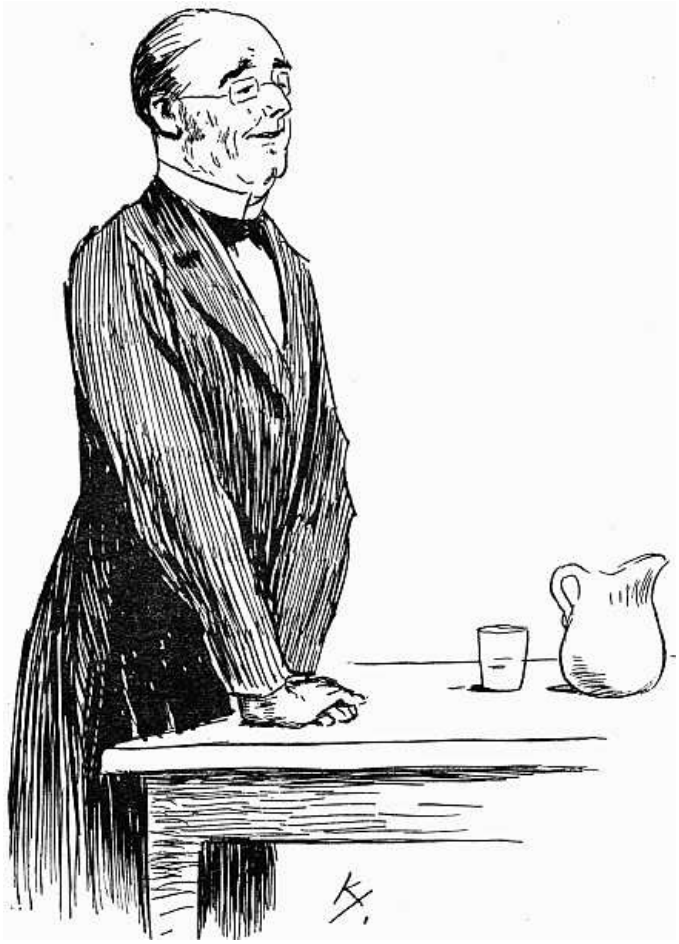
Of those chairmen who can and do speak, the Scotch ones are generally good. They have a knack of starting the evening with some droll Scotch anecdote, told with that piquant and picturesque accent of theirs, and of putting the audience in a good humor. Occasionally they will also make *apropos* and equally droll little speeches at the close. One evening, in talking of America, I had mentioned the fact that American banquets were very lively, and that I thought the fact of Americans being able to keep up such a flow of wit for so many hours, was perhaps due to their drinking Apollinaris water instead of stronger things after dessert. At the end of the lecture, the chairman rose and said he had greatly enjoyed it, but that he must take exception to one statement the lecturer had made, for he thought it “fery deeficult to be wutty on Apollinaris watter.”

Another kind of chairman is the one who kills your finish, and stops all the possibility of your being called back for applause, by coming forward, the very instant the last words are out of your mouth, to inform the audience that the next lecture will be given by Mr. So-and-So, or to make a statement of the Society’s financial position, concluding by appealing to the

members to induce their friends to join.

Then there is the chairman who does not know what you are going to talk about, but thinks it his duty to give the audience a kind of summary of what he imagines the lecture is going to be. He is terrible. But he is nothing to the one who, when the lecture is over, will persist in summing it up, and explaining your own jokes, especially the ones he has not quite seen through. This is the dullest, the saddest chairman yet invented.

Some modest chairmen apologize for standing between the lecturer and the audience, and declare they cannot speak, but do. Others promise to speak a minute only, but don't. 129



THE CHAIRMAN.

"What shall I speak about?" said a chairman to me one day, after I had been introduced to him in the little back room behind the platform. 130

"If you will oblige me, sir," I replied, "kindly speak about—one minute."

Once I was introduced to the audience as the promoter of good feelings between France and England.

"Sometimes," said the chairman, "we see clouds of misunderstanding arise between the French—between the English—between the two. The lecturer of this evening makes it his business to disperse these clouds—these clouds—to—to—— But I will not detain you any longer. His name is familiar to all of us. I'm sure he needs no introduction to this audience. We all know him. I have much pleasure in introducing to you Mr.—Mosshiay—Mr. ——" Then he looked at me in despair.

It was evident he had forgotten my name.

"Max O'Rell is, I believe, what you are driving at," I whispered to him.

. . . . . .

The most objectionable chairmen in England are, perhaps, local men holding civic honors. Accustomed to deliver themselves of a speech whenever and wherever they get a chance,

aldermen, town councilors, members of local boards, and school boards, never miss an opportunity of getting upon a platform to address a good crowd. Not long ago, I was introduced to an audience in a large English city by a candidate for civic honors. The election of the town council was to take place a fortnight afterward, and this gentleman profited by the occasion to air all his grievances against the sitting council, and to assure the 131
citizens that if they would only elect him, there were bright days in store for them and their city. This was the gist of the matter. The speech lasted twenty minutes.

"HOW DO YOU PRONOUNCE YOUR NAME?"

Once the chair was taken by an alderman in a Lancashire city, and the hall was crowded. "What a fine house!" I remarked to the chairman as we sat down on the platform.

"Very fine indeed," he said; "everybody in the town knew I was going to take the chair."

I was sorry I had spoken. 132

More than once, when announced to deliver a lecture on France and the French, I have been introduced by a chairman who, having spent his holidays in that country once or twice, opened the evening's proceedings by himself delivering a lecture on France. I have felt very tempted to imitate a *confrère*, and say to the audience: "Ladies and Gentlemen, as one lecture on France is enough for an evening, perhaps you would rather I spoke about something else now." The *confrère* I have just mentioned was to deliver a lecture on Charles Dickens one evening. The chairman knew something of Charles Dickens and, for quite a quarter of an hour, spoke on the great English novelist, giving anecdotes, extracts of his writings, etc. When the lecturer rose, he said: "Ladies and Gentlemen, two lectures on Charles Dickens are perhaps more than you expected to hear to-night. You have just heard a lecture on Charles Dickens. I am now going to give you one on Charles Kingsley."

Sometimes I get a little amusement, however (as in the country town of X.), out of the usual proceedings of the society before whose members I am engaged to appear. At X., the audience being assembled and the time up, I was told to go on the platform alone and, being there, to immediately sit down. So I went on, and sat down. Some one in the room then rose and proposed that Mr. N. should take the chair. Mr. N., it appeared, had been to Boulogne (*to B'long*), and was particularly fitted to introduce a Frenchman. In a speech of about five minutes duration, all Mr. N.'s qualifications for the post of chairman that evening were duly set forth. Then some one else rose and seconded the proposition, re-enumerating most of 133
these qualifications. Mr. N. then marched up the hall, ascended the platform, and proceeded to return thanks for the kind manner in which he had been proposed for the chair and for the enthusiasm (a few friends had applauded) with which the audience had sanctioned the choice. He said it was true that he had been in France, and that he greatly admired the country and the people, and he was glad to have this opportunity to say so before a Frenchman. Then he related some of his traveling impressions in France. A few people coughed, two or three more bold stamped their feet, but he took no heed and, for ten

minutes, he gave the audience the benefit of the information he had gathered in Boulogne. These preliminaries over, I gave my lecture, after which Mr. N. called upon a member of the audience to propose a vote of thanks to the lecturer “for the most amusing and interesting discourse, etc.”

Now a paid lecturer wants his check when his work is over, and although a vote of thanks, when it is spontaneous, is a compliment which he greatly appreciates, he is more likely to feel awkwardness than pleasure when it is a mere red-tape formality. The vote of thanks, on this particular occasion, was proposed in due form. Then it was seconded by some one who repeated two or three of my points and spoiled them. By this time I began to enter into the fun of the thing, and, after having returned thanks for the vote of thanks and sat down, I stepped forward again, filled with a mild resolve to have the last word:

“Ladies and Gentlemen,” I said, “I have now much pleasure in proposing that a hearty vote 134
of thanks be given Mr. N. for the able manner in which he has filled the chair. I am proud to have been introduced to you by an Englishman who knows my country so well.” I went again through the list of Mr. N.’s qualifications, not forgetting the trip to Boulogne and the impressions it had left on him. Somebody rose and seconded this. Mr. N. delivered a speech to thank the audience once more, and then those who had survived went home.

Some Nonconformist societies will engage a light or humorous lecturer, put him in their chapel, and open his mouth with prayer. Prayer is good, but I would as soon think of saying grace before dancing as of beginning my lecture with a prayer. This kind of experience has been mine several times. A truly trying experience it was, on the first occasion, to be accompanied to the platform by the minister, who, motioning me to sit down, advanced to the front, lowered his head, and said in solemn accents: “Let us pray.” After I got started, it took me fully ten minutes to make the people realize that they were not at church. This experience I have had in America as well as in England. Another experience in this line was still worse, for the prayer was supplemented by the singing of a hymn of ten or twelve verses. You may easily imagine that my first remark fell dead flat.

I have been introduced to audiences as Mossoo, Meshoe, and Mounzeer O’Reel, and other British adaptations of our word *Monsieur*, and found it very difficult to bear with equanimity
a chairman who maltreated a name which I had taken some care to keep correctly spelt 135
before the public. Yet this man is charming when compared with the one who, in the midst of his introductory remarks, turns to you, and in a stage whisper perfectly audible all over the hall, asks: “How do you pronounce your name?”

Passing over chairman chatty and chairman terse, chairman eloquent and chairman the reverse, I feel decidedly most kindly toward the silent chairman. He is very rare, but he does exist and, when met with, is exceedingly precious. Why he exists, in some English Institutes, I have always been at a loss to imagine. Whether he comes on to see that the lecturer does not run off before his time is up, or with the water bottle, which is the only portable thing on the platform generally; whether he is a successor to some venerable deaf and dumb founder of his Society; or whether he goes on with the lecturer to give a lesson in modesty to the public, as who should say: “I could speak an if I would, but I forbear.” Be his *raison d’être* what it may, we all love him. To the nervous novice he is a kind of quiet support, to the old stager he is as a picture unto the eye and as music unto the ear.

. . . . . .

Here I pause. I want to collect my thoughts. Does my memory serve me? Am I dreaming, or worse still, am I on the point of inventing? No, I could not invent such a story, it is beyond my power.

I was once lecturing to the students of a religious college in America. Before I began, a professor stepped forward, and offered a prayer, in which he asked the Lord to allow the audience to see my points.

Now, I duly feel the weight of responsibility attaching to such a statement, and in justice 136
to myself I can do no less than give the reader the petition just as it fell on my astonished ears:

“Lord, Thou knowest that we work hard for Thee, and that recreation is necessary in order that we may work with renewed vigor. We have to-night with us a gentleman from France [excuse my recording a compliment too flattering], whose criticisms are witty and refined, *but subtle*, and we pray Thee to so prepare our minds that we may thoroughly understand

and enjoy them.”

“*But subtle!*”

I am still wondering whether my lectures are so subtle as to need praying over, or whether that audience was so dull that they needed praying for.

Whichever it was, the prayer was heard, for the audience proved warm, keen, and thoroughly appreciative.

CHAPTER XV.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE TYPICAL AMERICAN.

New York, January 23.

I WAS asked to-day by the editor of the *North American Review* to write an article on the typical American.

The typical American!

In the eyes of my beloved compatriots, the typical American is a man with hair falling over his shoulders, wearing a sombrero, a red shirt, leather leggings, a pair of revolvers in his belt, spending his life on horseback, and able to shoot a fly off the tip of your nose without for a moment endangering your olfactory organ; and, since Buffalo Bill has been exhibiting his Indians and cowboys to the Parisians, this impression has become a deep conviction.

I shall never forget the astonishment I caused to my mother when I first broke the news to her that I wanted to go to America. My mother had practically never left a lovely little provincial town of France. Her face expressed perfect bewilderment.

“You don’t mean to say you want to go to America?” she said. “What for?”

“I am invited to give lectures there.”

“Lectures? in what language?”

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“Well, mother, I will try my best in English.”

“Do they speak English out there?”

“H’m—pretty well, I think.”

We did not go any further on the subject that time. Probably the good mother thought of the time when the Californian gold-fields attracted all the scum of Europe, and, no doubt, she thought that it was strange for a man who had a decent position in Europe, to go and “seek fortune” in America.

Later on, however, after returning to England, I wrote to her that I had made up my mind to go.

Her answer was full of gentle reproaches, and of sorrow at seeing that she had lost all her influence over her son. She signed herself “always your loving mother,” and indulged in a postscript. Madame de Sévigné said that the gist of a woman’s letter was to be found in the postscript.

My mother’s was this:

“P.S.—I shall not tell any one in the town that you have gone to America.”

This explains why I still dare show my face in my little native town.

. . . . . .

The typical American!

First of all, does he exist? I do not think so. As I have said elsewhere, there are Americans in plenty, but *the* American has not made his appearance yet. The type existed a hundred years ago in New England. He is there still; but he is not now a national type, he is only a local one. 139

THE TYPICAL AMERICAN.

I was talking one day with two eminent Americans on the subject of the typical American, real or imaginary. One of them was of opinion that he was a taciturn being; the other, on the contrary, maintained that he was talkative. How is a foreigner to dare decide, where two eminent natives find it impossible to agree? 140

In speaking of the typical American, let us understand each other. All the civilized nations of the earth are alike in one respect; they are all composed of two kinds of men, those that are gentlemen, and those that are not. America is no exception to this rule. Fifth Avenue does not differ from Belgravia and Mayfair. A gentleman is everywhere a gentleman. As a type, he belongs to no particular country, he is universal.

When the writer of some “society” paper, English or American, reproaches a sociologist for writing about the masses instead of the classes, suggesting that “he probably never frequented the best society of the nation he describes,” that writer writes himself down an ass.

In the matters of feeling, conduct, taste, culture, I have never discovered the least difference between a gentleman from America and a gentleman from France, England, Russia, or any other country of Europe—including Germany. So, if we want to find a typical American, it is not in good society that we must search for him, but among the mass of the population.

Well, it is just here that our search will break down. We shall come across all sorts and conditions of Americans, but not one that is really typical.

THE AMERICAN OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

A little while ago, the *Century Magazine* published specimens of composite photography. 142
First, there was the portrait of one person, then that of this same face with another superposed, then another containing three faces blended, and so on up to eight or nine. On the last page the result was shown. I can only compare the typical American to the last of those. This appears to me the process of evolution through which the American type is now going. What it will be when this process of evolution is over, no one, I imagine, can tell. The evolution will be complete when immigration shall have ceased, and all the different types have been well mixed and assimilated. While the process of assimilation is still going on, the result is suspended, and the type is incomplete.

But, meanwhile, are there not certain characteristic traits to be found throughout almost all America? That is a question much easier to answer.

Is it necessary to repeat that I put aside good society and confine myself merely to the people?

Nations are like individuals: when they are young, they have the qualities and the defects of children. The characteristic trait of childhood is curiosity. It is also that of the American. I have never been in Australia, but I should expect to find this trait in the Australian.

Look at American journalism. What does it live on? Scandal and gossip. Let a writer, an artist, or any one else become popular in the States, and the papers will immediately tell the public at what time he rises and what he takes for breakfast. When any one of the least importance arrives in America, he is quickly beset by a band of reporters who ask him a host 143
of preposterous questions and examine him minutely from head to foot, in order to tell the public next day whether he wears laced, buttoned, or elastic boots, enlighten them as to the cut of his coat and the color of his trowsers, and let them know if he parts his hair in the middle or not.

CURIOSITY IN AUSTRALIA.

Every time I went into a new town to lecture I was interviewed, and the next day, besides an account of the lecture, there was invariably a paragraph somewhat in this style: 144

> The lecturer is a man of about forty, whose cranium is getting visible through his hair. He wears a double eye-glass, with which he plays while talking to his audience. His handkerchief was black-bordered. He wore the regulation patent leather shoes, and his shirt front was fastened with a single stud. He spoke without effort or pretension, and often with his hands in his pockets, etc.

A few days ago, on reading the morning papers in a town where I had lectured the night before, I found, in one of them, about twenty lines consecrated to my lecture, and half a column to my hat.

I must tell you that this hat was brown, and all the hats in America are black. If you wear anything that is not exactly like what Americans wear, you are gazed at as if you were a curious animal. The Americans are as great *badauds* as the Parisians. In London, you may go down Regent Street or Piccadilly got up as a Swiss admiral, a Polish general, or even a Highlander, and nobody will take the trouble to look at you. But, in America, you have only to put on a brown hat or a pair of light trowsers, and you will become the object of a curiosity which will not fail very promptly to bore you, if you are fond of tranquility, and like to go about unremarked.

I was so fond of that poor brown hat, too! It was an incomparably obliging hat. It took any shape, and adapted itself to any circumstances. It even went into my pocket on occasions. I had bought it at Lincoln & Bennett's, if you please. But I had to give it up. To my great regret, I saw that it was imperative: its popularity bid fair to make me jealous. Twenty lines 145 about me, and half a column about that hat! It was time to come to some determination. It was not to be put up with any longer. So I took it up tenderly, smoothed it with care, and laid it in a neat box which was then posted to the chief editor of the paper with the following note:

> DEAR SIR:
>
> I see by your estimable paper that my hat has attracted a good deal of public attention during its short sojourn in your city. I am even tempted to think that it has attracted more of it than my lecture. I send you the interesting headgear, and beg you will accept it as a souvenir of my visit, and with my respectful compliments.

A citizen of the Great Republic knows how to take a joke. The worthy editor inserted my letter in the next number of his paper, and informed his readers that my hat fitted him to a nicety, and that he was going to have it dyed and wear it. He further said, "Max O'Rell evidently thinks the song, 'Where did you get that hat?' was specially written to annoy him,"

and went on to the effect that “Max O’Rell is not the only man who does not care to tell where he got his hat.”

Do not run away with the idea that such nonsense as this has no interest for the American public. It has.

American reporters have asked me, with the most serious face in the world, whether I worked in the morning, afternoon, or evening, and what color paper I used (*sic*). One actually asked me whether it was true that M. Jules Claretie used white paper to write his novels on, and blue paper for his newspaper articles. Not having the honor of a personal acquaintance with the director of the Comédie-Française, I had to confess my inability to 146
gratify my amiable interlocutor.

Look at the advertisements in the newspapers. There you have the bootmaker, the hatter, the traveling quack, publishing their portraits at the head of their advertisements. Why are those portraits there, if it be not to satisfy the curiosity of customers?

The mass of personalities, each more trumpery than the other, those details of people’s private life, and all the gossip daily served up in the newspapers, are they not proof enough that curiosity is a characteristic trait of the American?

This curiosity, which often shows itself in the most impossible questions, gives immense amusement to Europeans. Unhappily, it amuses them at the expense of well-bred Americans —people who are as innocent of it as the members of the stiffest aristocracy in the world could be. The English, especially, persist in not distinguishing Americans who are gentlemen from Americans who are not.

. . . . . .

And even that easy-going American *bourgeois*, with his childish but good-humored nature, they often fail to do justice to. They too often look at his curiosity as impertinence and ill-breeding, and will not admit that, in nine cases out of ten, the freedom he uses with you is but a show of good feeling, an act of good-fellowship.

Take, for instance, the following little story:

An American is seated in a railway carriage, and opposite him is a lady in deep mourning, and looking a picture of sadness; a veritable *mater dolorosa*. 147

“Lost a father?” begins the worthy fellow.

“No, sir.”

“A mother, maybe?”

“No, sir.”

“Ah! a child then?”

“No, sir; I have lost my husband.”

“Your husband! Ah! Left you comfortable?”

The lady, rather offended, retires to the other end of the car, and cuts short the conversation.

“Rather stuck up, this woman,” remarks the good Yankee to his neighbor.

The intention was good, if the way of showing it was not. He had but wanted to show the poor lady the interest he took in her.

After having seen you two or three times, the American will suppress “Mr.” and address you by your name without any handle to it. Do not say that this is ill placed familiarity; it is meant as an act of good-fellowship, and should be received by you as such.

If you are stiff, proud, and stuck-up, for goodness’ sake, never go to America; you will never get on there. On the contrary, take over a stock of simple, affable manners and a good temper, and you will be treated as a friend everywhere, fêted, and well looked after.

In fact, try to deserve a certificate of good-fellowship, such as the Clover Club, of Philadelphia, awards to those who can sit at its hospitable table without taking affront at the little railleries leveled at them by the members of that lively association. With people of

refinement who have humor, you can indulge in a joke at their expense. So says La Bruyère. Every visitor to America, who wants to bring back a pleasant recollection of his stay there, should lay this to heart. 148

Such are the impressions that I formed of the American during my first trip to his country, and the more I think over the matter, the more sure I am that they were correct. Curiosity is his chief little failing, and good-fellowship his most prominent quality. This is the theme I will develop and send to the Editor of the *North American Review*. I will profit by having a couple of days to spend in New York to install myself in a cosy corner of that cosiest of clubs, the "Players," and there write it.

It seems that, in the same number of this magazine, the same subject is to be treated by Mr. Andrew Lang. He has never seen Jonathan at home, and it will be interesting to see what impressions he has formed of him abroad. In the hands of such a graceful writer, the "typical American" is sure to be treated in a pleasant and interesting manner.

CHAPTER XVI. 149

I am Asked to Express Myself Freely on America—I Meet Mrs. Blank and for the First Time Hear of Mr. Blank—Beacon Street Society—The Boston Clubs.

Boston, January 25.

It amuses me to notice how the Americans to whom I have the pleasure of being introduced, refrain from asking me what I think of America. But they invariably inquire if the impressions of my first visit are confirmed.

This afternoon, at an "At Home," I met a lady from New York, who asked me a most extraordinary question.

"I have read 'Jonathan and His Continent,'" she said to me. "I suppose that is a book of impressions written for publication. But now, tell me *en confidence*, what do you think of us?"

"Is there anything in that book," I replied, "which can make you suppose that it is not the faithful expression of what the author thinks of America and the Americans?"

"Well," she said, "it is so complimentary, taken altogether, that I must confess I had a lurking suspicion of your having purposely flattered us and indulged our national weakness for hearing ourselves praised, so as to make sure of a warm reception for your book." 150

"No doubt," I replied, "by writing a flattering book on any country, you would greatly increase your chance of a large sale in that country; but, on the other hand, you may write an abusive book on any country and score a great success among that nation's neighbors. For my part, I have always gone my own quiet way, philosophizing rather than opinionating, and when I write, it is not with the aim of pleasing any particular public. I note down what I see, say what I think, and people may read me or not, just as they please. But I think I may boast, however, that my pen is never bitter, and I do not care to criticise unless I feel a certain amount of sympathy with the subject of my criticism. If I felt that I could only honestly say hard things of people, I would always abstain altogether."

"Now," said my fair questioner, "how is it that you have so little to say about our Fifth Avenue folks? Is it because you have seen very little of them, or is it because you could only have said hard things of them?"

"On the contrary," I replied; "I saw a good deal of them, but what I saw showed me that to describe them would be only to describe polite society, as it exists in London and elsewhere.

Society gossip is not in my line; boudoir and club smoking-room scandal has no charm for me. Fifth Avenue resembles too much Mayfair and Belgravia to make criticism of it worth attempting."

I knew this answer would have the effect of putting me into the lady's good graces at once, and I was not disappointed. She accorded to me her sweetest smile, as I bowed to her to go and be introduced to another lady by the mistress of the house. 151

FIFTH AVENUE FOLK.

The next lady was a Bostonian. I had to explain to her why I had not spoken of Beacon Street people, using the same argument as in the case of Fifth Avenue society, and with the same success.

. . . . . .

At the same "At Home," I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Blank, whom I had met many times in London and Paris. 152

She is one of the crowd of pretty and clever women whom America sends to brighten up European society, and who reappear in London and Paris with the regularity of the swallows. You meet them everywhere, and conclude that they must be married, since they are styled Mrs. and not Miss. But whether they are wives, widows, or *divorcées*, you rarely think of inquiring, and you may enjoy their friendship for years without knowing whether they have a living lord or not.

A TELEPHONE AND TICKER.

Mrs. Blank, as I say, is a most fascinating specimen of America's daughters, and to-day I find that Mr. Blank is also very much alive, but that the companions of his joys and sorrows 153
are the telephone and the ticker; in fact it is thanks to his devotion to these that the wife of his bosom is able to adorn European society during every recurring season.

American women have such love for freedom and are so cool-headed that their visits to Europe could not arouse suspicion even in the most malicious. But, nevertheless, I am glad to have heard of Mr. Blank, because it is comfortable to have one's mind at rest on these subjects. Up to now, whenever I had been asked, as sometimes happened, though seldom: "Who is Mr. Blank, and where is he?" I had always answered: "Last puzzle out!"

. . . . . .

Lunched to-day in the beautiful Algonquin Club, as the guest of Colonel Charles H. Taylor, and met the editors of the other Boston papers, among whom was John Boyle O'Reilly,[1] the lovely poet, and the delightful man. The general conversation turned on two subjects most interesting to me, viz., American journalism, and American politics. All these gentlemen seemed to agree that the American people take an interest in local politics only, but not in imperial politics, and this explains why the papers of the smaller towns give detailed accounts of what is going on in the houses of legislature of both city and State, but do not concern themselves about what is going on in Washington. I had come to that conclusion myself, seeing that the great papers of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago devoted columns to the sayings and doings of the political world in London and Paris, and seldom a 154
paragraph to the sittings of Congress in Washington.

In the morning, before lunch, I had called on Mr. John Holmes, the editor of the Boston *Herald*, and there met a talented lady who writes under the *nom de plume* of "Max Eliot," and with whom I had a delightful half-hour's chat.

I have had to-day the pleasure of meeting the editors of all the Boston newspapers.

. . . . . .

In the evening, I dined with the members of the New England Club, who meet every month to listen, at dessert, to some interesting debate or lecture. The wine is supplied by bets. You bet, for instance, that the sun will shine on the following Friday at half-past two. If you lose, you are one of those who will have to supply one, two, or three bottles of champagne at the next dinner, and so on. This evening the lecture, or rather the short address, was given by Colonel Charles H. Taylor on the history of American journalism. I was particularly interested to hear the history of the foundation of the New York *Herald*, by James Gordon Bennett, and that of the New York *World*, by Mr. Pulitzer, a Hungarian emigrant, who, some years ago, arrived in the States, unable to speak English, became jack-of-all-trades, then a

reporter on a German paper, proprietor of a Western paper, and then bought the *World*, which is now one of the best paying concerns in the whole of the United States. This man, who, to maintain himself, not in health, but just alive, is obliged to be constantly traveling, directs the paper by telegraph from Australia, from Japan, from London, or wherever he happens to be. It is nothing short of marvelous. 155

. . . . . .

I finished the evening in the St. Botolph Club, and I may say that I have to-day spent one of the most delightful days of my life, with those charming and highly cultured Bostonians, who, a New York witty friend of mine declares, “are educated beyond their intellects.”

1 J. B. O’Reilly died in 1890.

CHAPTER XVII. 156

A Lively Sunday in Boston—Lecture in the Boston Theater—Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes—The Booth-Modjeska Combination.

Boston, January 26.

“Max Eliot” devotes a charming and most flattering article to me in this morning’s *Herald*, embodying the conversation we had together yesterday in the Boston *Herald’s* office. Many thanks, Max.

A reception was given to me this afternoon by Citizen George Francis Train, and I met many artists, journalists, and a galaxy of charming women.

The Citizen is pronounced to be the greatest crank on earth. I found him decidedly eccentric, but entertaining, witty, and a first-rate *raconteur*. He shakes hands with you in the Chinese fashion—he shakes his own. He has taken a solemn oath that his body shall never come in contact with the body of any one.

A charming programme of music and recitations was gone through.

The invitation cards issued for the occasion speak for themselves. 157

THE CITIZEN SHAKES HANDS.

CITIZEN

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN'S

RECEPTION

To

CITOYEN MAX O'RELL.

P.S.—"Demons" have checkmated "Psychos"! Invitations canceled! "Hub" Boycotts Sunday Receptions! Boston half century behind New York and Europe's Elite Society. (Ancient Athens still Ancient!) Regrets and Regards! Good-by, Tremont! (The Proprietors not to blame.)

Vide some of his "Apothegmic Works"! (Reviewed in Pulitzer's New York *World* and Cosmos Press!)

. . . . . .

John Bull et Son Ile! Les Filles de John Bull! Les Chers Voisins! L'Ami Macdonald! John Bull, Junior! Jonathan et Son Continent! L'Eloquence Française! etc.

YOU ARE INVITED TO MEET

this distinguished French Traveler, Author, and Lecturer (From the land of Lafayette, Rochambeau, and De Grasse),

AT MY SIXTH "POP-CORN RECEPTION"!

SUNDAY, JANUARY TWENTY-SIXTH, From 2 to 7 P. M. (Tremont House!)

Private Banquet Hall! *Fifty "Notables"!*

Talent from Dozen Operas and Theaters! All Stars! No Airs! No “Wall Flowers”! No Amens! No Selahs! But “MUTUAL ADMIRATION CLUB OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP”! No Boredom! No Formality! (Dress as you like!) No Programme! (Pianos! Cellos! Guitars! Mandolins! Banjos! Violins! Harmonicas! Zithers!) Opera, Theater and Press Represented! 159

Succeeding Receptions: To Steele Mackaye! Nat Goodwin! Count Zubof (St. Petersburg)! Prima Donna Clementina De Vere (Italy)! Albany Press Club! (Duly announced printed invitations!)

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN,

Tremont House for Winter!

Psychic Press thanks for friendly

notices of Sunday Musicales!

It will be seen from the “P. S.” that the reception could not be held at the Tremont House; but the plucky Citizen did not allow himself to be beaten, and the reception took place at the house of a friend.

. . . . . .

In the evening I lectured in the Boston Theater to a beautiful audience.

If there is a horrible fascination about “the man who won’t smile,” as I mentioned in a foregoing chapter, there is a lovely fascination about the lady who seems to enjoy your lecture thoroughly. You watch the effects of your remarks on her face, and her bright, intellectual eyes keep you in good form the whole evening; in fact, you give the lecture to her. I perhaps never felt the influence of that face more powerfully than to-night. I had spoken for a few minutes, when Madame Modjeska, accompanied by her husband, arrived and took a seat on the first row of the orchestra stalls. To be able to entertain the great *tragédienne* became my sole aim, and as soon as I perceived that I was successful, I felt 160 perfectly proud and happy. I lectured to her the whole evening. Her laughter and applause encouraged me, her beautiful, intellectual face cheered me up, and I was able to introduce a little more acting and by-play than usual.

I had had the pleasure of making Madame Modjeska’s acquaintance two years ago, during my first visit to the United States, and it was a great pleasure to be able to renew it after the lecture.

I will go and see her *Ophelia* to-morrow night.

. . . . . .

January 27.

Spent the whole morning wandering about Boston, and visiting a few interesting places. Beacon Street, the public gardens, and Commonwealth Avenue are among the finest thoroughfares I know. What enormous wealth is contained in those miles of huge mansions!

The more I see Boston, the more it strikes me as a great English city. It has a character of its own, as no other American city has, excepting perhaps Washington and Philadelphia. The solidity of the buildings, the parks, the quietness of the women’s dresses, the absence of the twang in most of the voices, all remind you of England.

After lunch I called on Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. The “Autocrat of the Breakfast Table” is now over eighty, but he is as young as ever, and will die with a kind smile on his face and a merry twinkle in his eyes. I know no more delightful talker than this delightful man. You may say of him that every time he talks he says something. When he asked me what it was I had 161 found most interesting in America, I wished I could have answered: “Why, my dear doctor, to see and to hear such a man as you, to be sure!” But the doctor is so simple, so unaffected, that I felt an answer of that kind, though perfectly sincere, would not have been one calculated to please him. The articles “Over the Tea Cups,” which he writes every month for the *Atlantic Monthly*, and which will soon appear in book form, are as bright, witty, humorous, and philosophic as anything he ever wrote. Long may he live to delight his native land!

. . . . . .

In the evening I went to see Mr. Edwin Booth and Madame Modjeska in “Hamlet.” By far the two greatest tragedians of America in Shakespeare’s greatest tragedy. I expected great things. I had seen Mounet-Sully in the part, Henry Irving, Wilson Barrett; and I remembered the witty French *quatrain*, published on the occasion of Mounet-Sully attempting the part:

Sans Fechter ni Rivière
Le cas était hasardeux;
Jamais, non jamais sur terre,
On n’a fait d’Hamlet sans eux.

I had seen Mr. Booth three times before. As *Brutus*, I thought he was excellent. As *Richelieu* he was certainly magnificent; as *Iago* ideally superb.

His *Hamlet* was a revelation to me. After seeing the raving *Hamlet* of Mounet-Sully, the somber *Hamlet* of Irving, and the dreamy *Hamlet* of Wilson Barrett, I saw this evening *Hamlet* the philosopher, the rhetorician. 162

Mr. Booth is too old to play *Hamlet* as he does, that is to say, without any attempt at making-up. He puts on a black wig, and that is all, absolutely all. It is, however, a most remarkable, subtle piece of acting in his hands.

Madame Modjeska was beautiful as *Ophelia*. No *tragédienne* that I have ever seen weeps more naturally. In all sad situations she makes the chords of one’s heart vibrate, and that without any trick or artifice, but simply by the modulations of her singularly sympathetic voice and such like natural means.

It is very seldom that you can see in America, outside of New York, more than one very good actor or actress playing together. So you may imagine the success of such a combination as Booth-Modjeska.

Every night the theater is packed from floor to ceiling, although the prices of admission are doubled.

CHAPTER XVIII. 163

St. Johnsbury—The State of Maine—New England Self-Control—Cold Climates and Frigid Audiences—Where is the Audience?—All Drunk!—A Reminiscence of a Scotch Audience on a Saturday Night.

St. Johnsbury (Vt.), January 28.

St. Johnsbury is a charming little town perched on the top of a mountain, from which a lovely scene of hills and woods can be enjoyed. The whole country is covered with snow, and as I looked at it in the evening by the electric light, the effect was very beautiful. The town has only six thousand inhabitants, eleven hundred of whom came to hear my lecture to-night. Which is the European town of six thousand inhabitants that would supply an audience of eleven hundred people to a literary *causerie*?

St. Johnsbury has a dozen churches, a public library of 15,000 volumes, with a reading-room beautifully fitted with desks and perfectly adapted for study. A museum, a Young Men’s Christian Association, with gymnasium, school-rooms, reading-rooms, play-rooms, and a lecture hall capable of accommodating over 1000 people. Who, after that, would consider himself an exile if he had to live in St. Johnsbury? There is more intellectual life in it than in 164

any French town outside of Paris and about a dozen more large cities.

. . . . . .

Portsea, January 30.

I have been in the State of Maine for two days; a strange State to be in, let me tell you.

After addressing the Connecticut audience in Meriden a few days ago, I thought I had had the experience of the most frigid audience that could possibly be gathered together. Last Tuesday night, at Portsea, I was undeceived.

Half-way between St. Johnsbury and Portsea, the day before yesterday, I was told that the train would be very late, and would not arrive at Portsea before half-past eight. My lecture in that city was to begin at eight. The only thing to do was to send a telegram to the manager of the lecture. At the next station I sent the following:

"Train late. If possible, keep audience waiting half an hour. Will dress on board."

I dressed in the state-room of the parlor-car. At forty minutes past eight the train arrived at Portsea. I immediately jumped into a cab and drove to the City Hall, where the lecture was to take place. The building was lighted, but, as I ascended the stairs, there was not a person to be seen or a sound to be heard. "The place is deserted," I thought; "and if anybody came to hear me, they have all gone."

I opened the door of the private room behind the platform and there found the manager, who expressed his delight to see me. I excused myself, and was going to enter into a detailed explanation when he interrupted: 165

"Oh, that's all right."

"What do you mean?" said I. "Have you got an audience there, on the other side of that door?"

"Why, we have got fifteen hundred people."

"There?" said I, pointing to the door.

"Yes, on the other side of that door."

"But I can't hear a sound."

"I guess you can't. But that's all right; they are there."

"I suppose," I said, "I had better apologize to them for keeping them waiting three-quarters of an hour."

"Well, just as you please," said the manager. "I wouldn't."

"Wouldn't you?"

"No; I guess they would have waited another half-hour without showing any sign of impatience." 166

I TIP-TOED OUT.

I opened the door trembling. My desk was far, far away. My manager was right; the audience was there. I stepped on the platform, shut the door after me, making as little noise as I could, and, walking on tiptoe so as to wake up as few people as possible, proceeded toward the table. Not one person applauded. A few people looked up unconcernedly, as if to say, "I guess that's the show." The rest seemed asleep, although their eyes were open.

Arrived at the desk, I faced the audience, and ventured a little joke, which fell dead flat.

I began to realize the treat that was in store for me that night.

I tried another little joke, and—missed fire.

"Never mind, old fellow," I said to myself; "it's two hundred and fifty dollars; go ahead."

And I went on.

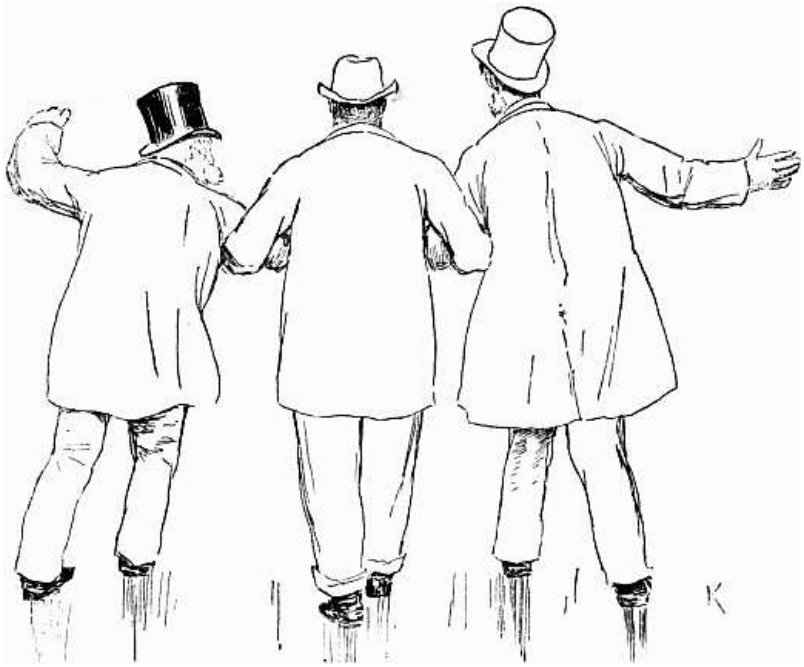
I saw a few people smile, but not one laughed, although I noticed that a good many were holding their handkerchiefs over their mouths, probably to stifle any attempt at such a

frivolous thing as laughter. The eyes of the audience, which I always watch, showed signs of interest, and nobody left the hall until the conclusion of the lecture. When I had finished, I made a small bow, when certainly fifty people applauded. I imagined they were glad it was all over.

“Well,” I said to the manager, when I had returned to the little back room, “I suppose we must call this a failure.”

“A failure!” said he; “it’s nothing of the sort. Why, I have never seen them so enthusiastic in my life!”

I went to the hotel, and tried to forget the audience I had just had by recalling to my mind 167
a joyous evening in Scotland. This happened about a year ago, in a mining town in the neighborhood of Glasgow, where I had been invited to lecture, on a Saturday night, to the members of a popular—very popular—Institute.



I AM ESCORTED TO THE HALL.

I arrived at the station from Glasgow at half-past seven, and there found the secretary and the treasurer of the Institute, who had been kind enough to come and meet me. We shook hands. They gave me a few words of welcome. I thought my friends looked a little bit queer. They proposed that we should walk to the lecture hall. The secretary took my right arm, the treasurer took my left, and, abreast, the three of us proceeded toward the hall. They did not 168
take me to that place; *I* took them, holding them fast all the way—the treasurer especially.

We arrived in good time, although we stopped once for light refreshment. At eight punctually, I entered the hall, preceded by the president, and followed by the members of the committee. The president introduced me in a most queer, incoherent speech. I rose, and was vociferously cheered. When silence was restored, I said in a calm, almost solemn manner: “Ladies and Gentlemen.” This was the signal for more cheering and whistling. In France whistling means hissing, and I began to feel uneasy, but soon I bore in mind that whistling, in the North of Great Britain, was used to express the highest pitch of enthusiasm.

So I went on.

The audience laughed at everything I said, and even before I said it. I had never addressed such keen people. They seemed so anxious to laugh and cheer in the right place that they laughed and cheered all the time—so much so that in an hour and twenty minutes, I had only got through half my lecture, which I had to bring to a speedy conclusion.

The president rose and proposed a vote of thanks in another most queer speech, which was a new occasion for cheering.

When we had retired in the committee room, I said to the secretary: “What’s the matter with the president? Is he quite right?” I added, touching my forehead.

“Oh!” said the secretary, striking his chest as proudly as possible, “he is drunk—and so am I.” 169

“HE’S DRUNK, AND SO AM I.”

The explanation of the whole strange evening dawned upon me. Of course they were drunk, and so was the audience. 170

That night, I believe I was the only sober person on the premises.

. . . . . .

Yesterday, I had an interesting chat with a native of the State of Maine on the subject of my lecture at Portsea.

“You are perfectly wrong,” he said to me, “in supposing that your lecture was not appreciated. I was present, and I can assure you that the attentive silence in which they listened to you from beginning to end is the proof that they appreciated you. You would also be wrong in supposing that they do not appreciate humor. On the contrary, they are very keen of it, and I believe that the old New Englander was the father of American humor, through the solemn manner in which he told comic things, and the comic manner in which he told the most serious ones. Yes, they are keen of humor, and their apparent want of appreciation is only due to reserve, to self-control.”

And, as an illustration of it, my friend told me the following anecdote which, I have no doubt, a good many Americans have heard before:

Mark Twain had lectured to a Maine audience without raising a single laugh in his listeners, when, at the close, he was thanked by a gentleman who came to him in the green-room, to tell him how hugely every one had enjoyed his amusing stories. When the lecturer 171
expressed his surprise at this announcement, as the audience had not laughed, the gentleman added:

“Yes, we never were so amused in our lives, and if you had gone on five minutes more, upon my word I don’t think we could have held out any longer.”

Such is New England self-control.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Lovely Ride to Canada—Quebec, a Corner of Old France Strayed up and Lost in the Snow—The French Canadians—The Parties in Canada—Will the Canadians Become Yankees?

Montreal, February 1.

The ride from the State of Maine to Montreal is very picturesque, even in the winter. It offers you four or five hours of Alpine scenery through the American Switzerland. The White Mountains, commanded by Mount Washington, are, for a distance of about forty miles, as wild and imposing as anything the real Switzerland can supply the tourist. Gorges, precipices, torrents, nothing is wanting.

Nearly the whole time we journeyed across pine forests, coming, now and then, across saw mills, and little towns looking like bee-hives of activity. Now there was an opening, and frozen rivers, covered with snow, formed, with the fields, a huge uniform mass of dazzling whiteness. The effect, under a pure blue sky and in a perfectly clear atmosphere, was very beautiful. Now the country became hilly again. On the slopes, right down to the bottom of the valley, we saw Berlin Falls, bathing its feet in the river. The yellow houses with their red roofs and gables, rest the eyes from that long stretch of blue and white. How beautiful this 173
town and its surroundings must be in the fall, when Dame Nature in America puts on her cloak of gold and scarlet! All the country on the line we traveled is engaged in the lumber trade.

For once I had an amiable conductor in the parlor car; even more than amiable—quite friendly and familiar. He put his arms on my shoulders and got quite patronizing. I did not mind that a bit. I hate anonymous landscapes, and he explained and named everything to me. My innocence of American things in general touched him. He was a great treat after those “ill-licked bears” that you so often come across in the American cars. He went further than that: he kindly recommended me to the Canadian custom-house officers, when we arrived at the frontier, and the examination of my trunk and valise did not last half a minute.

THE AMIABLE CONDUCTOR. 174

Altogether, the long journey passed rapidly and agreeably. We were only two people in the parlor car, and my traveling companion proved a very pleasant man. First, I did not care for the look of him. He had a new silk hat on, a multicolored satin cravat with a huge diamond pin fixed in it; a waistcoat covered with silk embroidery work, green, blue, and pink; a coat with silk facings, patent-leather boots. Altogether, he was rather dressed for a garden party (in more than doubtful taste) than for a fifteen hours’ railway journey. But in America the cars are so luxurious and kept so warm that traveling dresses are not known in the country. Ulsters, cloaks, rugs, garments made of tweed and rough materials, all these things are unnecessary and therefore unknown. I soon found out, however, that this quaintly got-up man was interesting to speak to. He knew every bit of the country we passed, and, being easily drawn out, he poured into my ears information that was as rapid as it was valuable.

He was well read and had been to Europe several times. He spoke of France with great enthusiasm, which enrolled my sympathy, and he had enjoyed my lecture, which, you may imagine, secured for his intelligence and his good taste my boundless admiration. When we arrived at Montreal, we were a pair of friends.

. . . . . .

I begin my Canadian tour here on Monday and then shall go West. I was in Quebec two years ago; but the dear old place is not on my list this time. No words could express my regret. I shall never forget my feelings on landing under the great cliff on which stands the citadel, and on driving, bumped along in a sleigh over the half-thawed snow, in the street that lies under the fortress, and on through the other quaint winding steep streets, and again under the majestic archways to the upper town, where I was set down at the door of 175
the Florence, a quiet, delightful little hotel that the visitor to Quebec should not fail to stop at, if he like home comforts and care to enjoy magnificent scenery from his window. It seemed as though I was in France, in my dear old Brittany. It looked like St. Malo strayed up here and lost in the snow. The illusion became complete when I saw the gray houses, heard the people talk with the Breton intonation, and saw over the shops Langlois, Maillard, Clouet, and all the names familiar to my childhood. But why say “illusion”? It was a fact: I was in France. These folks have given their faith to England, but, as the Canadian poet says, they have kept their hearts for France. Not only their hearts, but their manners and their language. Oh, there was such pleasure in it all! The lovely weather, the beautiful scenery, the kind welcome given to me, the delight of seeing these children of Old France, more than three thousand miles from home, happy and thriving—a feast for the eyes, a feast for the heart. And the drive to Montmorency Falls in the sleigh, gliding smoothly along on the hard snow! And the sleighs laden with wood for the Quebec folks, the carmen stimulating their horses with a *hue là* or *hue donc*! And the return to the Florence, where a good dinner served in a private room awaited us! And that polite, quiet, attentive French girl who waited on us, the antipodes of the young Yankee lady who makes you sorry that breakfasting and dining are necessary, in some American hotels, and whose waiting is like taking sand and vinegar with your food!

The mere spanking along through the cold, brisk air, when you are well muffled in furs is exhilarating, especially when the sun is shining in a cloudless blue sky. The beautiful 176
scenery at Quebec was, besides, a feast for eyes tired with the monotonous flatness of America. The old city is on a perfect mountain, and as we came bumping down its side in our sleigh over the roads which were there in a perfect state of sherbet, there was a lovely picture spread out in front of us. In the distance the bluest mountains I ever saw (to paint them one must use pure cobalt); away to the right the frozen St. Lawrence and the Isle of Orléans, all snow-covered, of course, but yet distinguishable from the farm lands of Jacques Bonhomme, whose cosy, clean cottages we soon began to pass. The long, ribbon-like strips of farm were indicated by the tops of the fences peeping through the snow, and told us of French thrift and prosperity.

“THAT QUIET, ATTENTIVE FRENCH GIRL.”

Yes, it was all delightful. When I left Quebec I felt as much regret as I do every time that I 177

leave my little native town.

. . . . . .

I have been told that the works of Voltaire are prohibited in Quebec, not so much because they are irreligious as because they were written by a man who, after the loss of Quebec to the French Crown, exclaimed: “Let us not be concerned about the loss of a few acres of snow.” The memory of Voltaire is execrated, and for having made a flattering reference to him on the platform in Montreal two years ago, I was near being “boycotted” by the French population.

The French Canadians take very little interest in politics—I mean in outside politics. They are steady, industrious, saving, peaceful, and so long as the English leave them alone, in the safe enjoyment of their belongings, they will not give them cause for any anxiety. Among the French Canadians there is no desire for annexation to the United States. Indeed, during the War of Independence, Canada was saved to the English Crown by the French Canadians, not because the latter loved the English, but because they hated the Yankees. When Lafayette took it for granted that the French Canadians would rally round his flag, he made a great mistake; they would have, if compelled to fight, used their bullets against the Americans. If they had their own way, the French in Canada would set up a little country of their own under the rule of the Catholic Church, a little corner of France two hundred years old. 178

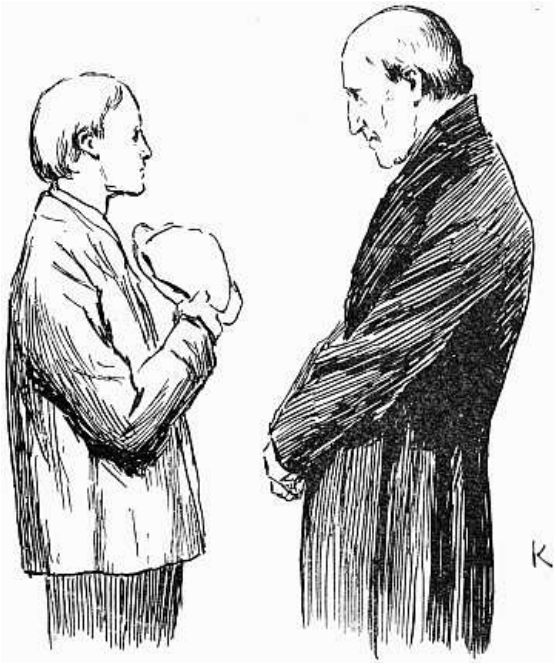
The education of the lower classes is at a very low stage; thirty per cent. of the children of school age in Quebec do not attend school. The English dare not introduce gratuitous and compulsory education. They have an understanding with the Catholic Church, which insists upon exercising entire control over public education. The Quebec schools are little more than branches of the confessional box. The English shut their eyes, for part of the understanding with the Church is that the latter will keep loyalty to the English Crown alive among her submissive flock.

The tyranny exercised by the Catholic Church may easily be imagined from the following newspaper extract:

> A well-to-do butcher of Montreal attended the Catholic Church at Ile Perrault last Sunday. He was suffering at the time with acute cramps, and when that part of the service arrived during which the congregation kneel, he found himself unable to do more than assume a reclining devotional position, with one knee on the floor. His action was noticed, and the church-warden, in concert with others, had him brought before the court charged with an act of irreverence, and he was fined $8 and costs.

Such a judgment does not only expose the tyranny of the Catholic Church, but the complicity of the English, who uphold Romanism in the Province of Quebec as they uphold Buddhism in India, so as not to endanger the security of their possessions.

The French Canadians are multiplying so rapidly that in a very few years the Province of Quebec will be as French as the town of Quebec itself. Every day they push their advance from east to west. They generally marry very young. When a lad is seen in the company of a 179
girl, he is asked by the priest if he is courting that girl. In which case he is bidden to go straightway to the altar, and these young couples rear families of twelve and fifteen children, none of whom leave the country. The English have to make room for them.



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIEST.

The average attendance in Catholic churches on Sundays in Montreal is 111,483; in the 180
sixty churches that belong to the different Protestant denominations, the average attendance is 34,428. The former number has been steadily increasing, the latter steadily decreasing.

. . . . . .

What is the future reserved to French Canada, and indeed to the whole Dominion?

There are only two political parties, Liberals and Conservatives, but I find the population divided into four camps: Those in favor of Canada, an independent nation; those in favor of the political union of Canada and the United States; those in favor of Canada going into Imperial Federation, and those in favor of Canada remaining an English colony, or in other words, in favor of the actual state of things.

Of course the French Canadians are dead against going into Imperial Federation, which would simply crush them, and Canadian “society” is in favor of remaining English. The other Canadians seem pretty equally divided.

It must be said that the annexation idea has been making rapid progress of late years, among prominent men as well as among the people. The Americans will never fire one shot to have the idea realized. If ever the union becomes an accomplished fact, it will become so with the assent of all parties. The task will be made easy through Canada and the United States having the same legislature. The local and provincial governments are the same in the Canadian towns and provinces as they are in the American towns and States—a House of 181
Representatives, a Senate, and a Governor, with this difference, this great difference, to the present advantage of Canada: whereas every four years the Americans elect a new master, who appoints a ministry responsible to himself alone, the Canadians have a ministry responsible to their parliament, that is, to themselves. The representation of the American people at Washington is democratic, but the government is autocratic. In Canada, both legislature and executive are democratic, as in England, that greatest and truest of all democracies.

The change in Canada would have to be made on the American plan.

With the exception of Quebec and parts of Montreal, Canada is built like America; the country has the same aspect, the currency is the same. Suppress the Governor-General in Ottawa, who is there to remind Canada that she is a dependency of the English Crown, strew the country with more cuspidores, and you have part of Jonathan’s big farm.

CHAPTER XX.

MONTREAL—THE CITY—MOUNT ROYAL—CANADIAN SPORTS—OTTAWA—THE GOVERNMENT—RIDEAU HALL.

Montreal, February 2.

MONTREAL is a large and well-built city, containing many buildings of importance, mostly churches, of which about thirty are Roman Catholic, and over sixty are devoted to Protestant worship, in all its branches and variations, from the Anglican church to the Salvation Army.

I arrived at a station situated on a level with the St. Lawrence River. From it, we mounted in an omnibus up, up, up, through narrow streets full of shops with Breton or Norman names over them, as in Quebec; on through broader ones, where the shops grew larger and the names became more frequently English; on, on, till I thought Montreal had no end, and, at last alighted on a great square, and found myself at the door of the Windsor Hotel, an enormous and fine construction, which has proved the most comfortable, and, in every respect the best hotel I have yet stopped at on the great American continent. It is about a quarter of a mile from my bedroom to the dining-hall, which could, I believe, accommodate nearly a thousand guests.

My first visit was to an afternoon “At Home,” given by the St. George’s Club, who have a club-house high up on Mount Royal. It was a ladies’ day, and there was music, dancing, etc. We went in a sleigh up the very steep hill, much to my astonishment. I should have thought the thing practically impossible. On our way we passed a toboggan slide down the side of Mount Royal. It took my breath away to think of coming down it at the rate of over a mile a minute. The view from the club-house was splendid, taking in a great sweep of snow-covered country, the city and the frozen St. Lawrence. There are daily races on the river, and last year they ran tram-cars on it.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN AND THE TOBOGGAN SLIDE.

It was odd to hear the phrase, “after the flood.” When I came to inquire into it, I learned that when the St. Lawrence ice breaks up, the lower city is flooded, and this is yearly spoken of as “the flood.”

I drove back from the club with my manager and two English gentlemen, who are here on a visit. As we passed the toboggan slide, my manager told me of an old gentleman over sixty, who delights in those breathless passages down the side of Mount Royal. One may see him out there “at it,” as early as ten in the morning. Plenty of people, however, try one ride and never ask for another. One gentleman my manager told me of, after having tried it, expressed pretty well the feelings of many others. He said, “I wouldn’t do it again for two thousand dollars, but I wouldn’t have missed it for three.” I asked one of the two Englishmen who accompanied us, whether he had had a try. He was a quiet, solemn, middle-aged Englishman. “Well,” he said, “yes, I have. It had to be done, and I did it.”

Last night I was most interested in watching the members of the Snowshoe Club start from the Windsor, on a kind of a picnic over the country. Their costumes were very picturesque; a short tunic of woolen material fastened round the waist by a belt, a sort of woolen nightcap, with tassel falling on the shoulder, thick woolen stockings, and knickerbockers.

In Russia and the northern parts of the United States, the people say: “It’s too cold to go out.” In

A SNOWSHOER.

Canada, they say: “It’s very cold, let’s all go out.” Only rain keeps them indoors. In the coldest weather, 185
with a temperature of many degrees below zero, you have great difficulty in finding a closed carriage. All, or nearly all, are open sleighs. The driver wraps you up in furs, and as you go, gliding on the snow, your face is whipped by the cold air, you feel glowing all over with warmth, and altogether the sensation is delightful.

This morning, Joseph Howarth, the talented American actor, breakfasted with me and a few friends. Last night, I went to see him play in Steele Mackaye’s “Paul Kauvar.” Canada has no actors worth mentioning, and the people here depend on American artists for all their entertainments. It is wonderful how the feeling of independence engenders and develops the activity of the mind in a country. Art and literature want a home of their own, and do not flourish in other people’s houses. Canada has produced nothing in literature: the only two poets she can boast are French, Louis Fréchette and Octave Crémazie. It is not because Canada has no time for brain productions. America is just as busy as she is, felling forests and reclaiming the land; but free America, only a hundred years old as a nation, possesses already a list of historians, novelists, poets, and essayists, that would do honor to any nation in the world.

. . . . . .

February 4.

I had capital houses in the Queen’s Hall last night and to-night.

The Canadian audiences are more demonstrative than the American ones, and certainly quite as keen and appreciative. When you arrive on the platform they are glad to see you, 186
and they let you know it; a fact which in America, in New England especially, you have to find out for yourself.

Montreal possesses a very wealthy and fashionable community, and what strikes me most, coming as I do from the United States, is the stylish simplicity of the women. I am told that Canadian women in their tastes and ways have always been far more English than American, and that the fashions have grown more and more simple since Princess Louise gave the example of always dressing quietly when occupying Rideau Hall in Ottawa.

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Ottawa, *February* 5.

One of the finest sights I have yet seen in this country was from the bridge on my way from the station to the Russell this morning. On the right the waterfalls, on the left, on the top of a high and almost perpendicular rock, the Houses of Parliament, a grand pile of buildings in gray stone, standing out clear against a cloudless, intense blue sky. The Russell is one of those huge babylonian hotels so common on the American continent, where unfortunately the cookery is not on a level with the architectural pretensions; but most of the leading Canadian politicians are boarding here while Parliament is sitting, and I am interested to see them.

After visiting the beautiful library and other parts of the government buildings, I had the good luck to hear, in the House of Representatives, a debate between Mr. Chapleau, a minister and one of the leaders of the Conservatives now in office, and Mr. Laurier, one of 187
the chiefs of the Opposition. Both gentlemen are French. It was a fight between a tribune and a scholar; between a short, thickset, long-maned lion, and a tall, slender, delicate fox.

“THE RADIANT, LOVELY CANADIENNE.”

After lunch, I went to Rideau Hall, the residence of the Governor-General, Lord Stanley of Preston. The executive mansion stands in a pretty park well wooded with firs, a mile out of the town. His Excellency was out, but his aid-de-camp, to whom I had a letter of introduction, most kindly showed me over the place. Nothing can be more simple and unpretentious than the interior of Rideau Hall. It is furnished like any comfortable little provincial hotel patronized by the gentry of the neighborhood. The panels of the drawing-room were painted by Princess Louise, when she occupied the house with the Marquis of 188
Lorne some eight or ten years ago. This is the only touch of luxury about the place. In the time of Lord Dufferin, a ball-room and a tennis court were added to the building, and these are among the many souvenirs of his popular rule. As a diplomatist, as a viceroy, and as an ambassador, history will one day record that this noble son of Erin never made a mistake.

In the evening, I lectured in the Opera House to a large audience.

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Kingston, February 6.

This morning, at the Russell, I was called at the telephone. It was His Excellency, who was asking me to lunch at Rideau Hall. I felt sorry to be obliged to leave Ottawa, and thus forego so tempting an invitation.

Kingston is a pretty little town on the border of Lake Ontario, possessing a university, a penitentiary, and a lunatic asylum, in neither of which I made my appearance to-night. But as soon as I had started speaking on the platform of the Town Hall, I began to think the doors of the lunatic asylum had been carelessly left open that night, for close under the window behind the platform, there began a noise which was like Bedlam let loose. Bedlam with trumpets and other instruments of torture. It was impossible to go on with the lecture, so I stopped. On inquiry, the unearthly din was found to proceed from a detachment of the Salvation Army outside the building. After some parleying, they consented to move on and 189
storm some other citadel.

But it was a stormy evening, and peace was not yet.

A SALVATIONIST.

As soon as I had fairly restarted, a person in the audience began to show signs of disapproval, and twice or thrice he gave vent to his disapproval rather loudly. 190

I was not surprised to learn, at the close of the evening, that this individual had come in with a free pass. He had been admitted on the strength of his being announced to give a “show” of some sort himself a week later in the hall.

If a man is inattentive or creates a disturbance at any performance, you may take it for granted that his ticket was given to him. He never paid for it.

To-morrow I go to Toronto, where I am to give two lectures. I had not time to see that city properly on my last visit to Canada, and all my friends prophesy that I shall have a good time.

So does the advance booking, I understand.

CHAPTER XXI. 191

TORONTO—THE CITY—THE LADIES—THE SPORTS—STRANGE CONTRASTS—THE CANADIAN SCHOOLS.

Toronto, February 9.

HAVE passed three very pleasant days in this city, and had two beautiful audiences in the Pavilion.

Toronto is a thoroughly American city in appearance, but only in appearance, for I find the inhabitants British in heart, in tastes, and habits. When I say that it is an American city, I mean to say that Toronto is a large area, covered with blocks of parallelograms and dirty

streets, overspread with tangles of telegraph and telephone wires. The hotels are perfectly American in every respect.

The suburbs are exceedingly pretty. Here once more are fine villas standing in large gardens, a sight rarely seen near an American city. It reminds me of England. I admire many buildings, the University[2] especially.

English-looking, too, are the rosy faces of the Toronto ladies whom I passed in my drive. How charming they are with the peach-like bloom that their outdoor exercise gives them!

I should like to be able to describe, as it deserves, the sight of these Canadian women in 192
their sleighs, as the horses fly along with bells merrily jingling, the coachman in his curly black dogskin and huge busby on his head. Furs float over the back of the sleigh, and, in it, muffled up to the chin in sumptuous skins and also capped in furs, sits the radiant, lovely Canadienne, the milk and roses of her complexion enhanced by the proximity of the dark furs. As they skim past over the white snow, under a glorious sunlit blue sky, I can call to mind no prettier sight, no more beautiful picture, to be seen on this huge continent, so far as I have got yet.

One cannot help being struck, on coming here from the United States, at the number of lady pedestrians in the streets. They are not merely shopping, I am assured, nor going straight from one point to another of the town, but taking their constitutional walks in true English fashion. My impresario took me in the afternoon to a club for ladies and gentlemen, and there I had the, to me, novel sight of a game of hockey. On a large frozen pond there was a party of young people engaged in this graceful and invigorating game, and not far off was a group of little girls and boys imitating their elders very sensibly and, as it seemed to me, successfully. The clear, healthy complexion of the Canadian women is easy to account for, when one sees how deep-rooted, even after transplantation, is the good British love of exercise in the open air.

Last evening I was taken to a ball, and was able to see more of the Canadian ladies than is possible in furs, and on further acquaintance I found them as delightful in manners as in 193
appearance; English in their coloring and in their simplicity of dress, American in their natural bearing and in their frankness of speech.

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A HOCKEY PLAYER.

Churches, churches, everywhere. In my drive this afternoon, I counted twenty-eight in a quarter of an hour. They are of all denominations, Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, 194
Methodist, etc., etc. The Canadians must be still more religious—I mean still more church-going—than the English.

From seven in the evening on Saturday, all the taverns are closed, and remain closed throughout Sunday. In England the Bible has to compete with the gin bottle, but here the Bible has all its own way on Sundays. Neither tram-car, omnibus, cab, nor hired carriage of any description is to be seen abroad. Scotland itself is outdone completely; the land of John Knox has to take a back seat.

The walls of this city of churches and chapels are at the present moment covered with huge coarse posters announcing in loud colors the arrival of a company of performing women. Of these posters, one represents Cleopatra in a bark drawn through the water by nude female slaves. Another shows a cavalcade of women dressed in little more than a fig-leaf. Yet another represents the booking-office of the theater stormed by a crowd of *blasé*-looking, single eye-glassed old *beaux*, grinning with pleasure in anticipation of the show within. Another poster displays the charms of the proprietress of the undertaking. You must not, however, imagine any harm of the performers whose attractions are so liberally placarded. They are taken to their cars in the depot immediately after the performance and locked up; there is an announcement to that effect. These placards are merely eye-ticklers. But this mixture of churches, strict sabbatarianism, and posters of this kind, is part of the eternal history of the Anglo-Saxon race—violent contrast.

. . . . . .

A school inspector has kindly shown me several schools in the town. 195

The children of rich and poor alike are educated together in the public schools, from which they get promoted to the high schools. All these schools are free. Boys and girls sit on the same benches and receive the same education, as in the United States. This enables the women in the New World to compete with men for all the posts that we Europeans consider the monopoly of man; it also enables them to enjoy all the intellectual pleasures of life. If it does not prevent them, as it has yet to be proved that it does, from being good wives and mothers, the educational system of the New World is much superior to the European one. It is essentially democratic. Europe will have to adopt it.

Society in the Old World will not stand long on its present basis. There will always be rich and poor, but every child that is born will require to be given a chance, and, according as he avails himself of it or not, will be successful or a failure. But give him a chance, and the greatest and most real grievance of mankind in the present day will be removed.

Every child that is born in America, whether in the United States or in Canada, has that chance.

2 Destroyed by fire three days after I left Toronto.

CHAPTER XXII. 196

WEST CANADA—RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITISH AND INDIANS—RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY—ENCOUNTER WITH AN AMERICAN CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER.

In the train from Canada to Chicago, February 15.

LECTURED in Bowmanville, Ont., on the 12th, in Brantford on the 13th, and in Sarnia on the 14th, and am now on my way to Chicago, to go from there to Wisconsin and Minnesota.

From Brantford I drove to the Indian Reservation, a few miles from the town. This visit explained to me why the English are so successful with their colonies: they have inborn in them the instinct of diplomacy and government.

Whereas the Americans often swindle, starve, and shoot the Indians, the English keep

them in comfort. England makes paupers and lazy drunkards of them, and they quietly and gradually disappear. She supplies them with bread, food, Bibles, and fire-water, and they become so lazy that they will not even take the trouble to sow the land of their reservations. Having a dinner supplied to them, they give up hunting, riding, and all their native sports, 197
and become enervated. They go to school and die of attacks of civilization. England gives them money to celebrate their national fêtes and rejoicings, and the good Indians shout at the top of their voices, *God save the Queen!* that is—*God save our pensions!*

THE BRITISH INDIAN.

England, or Great Britain, or again, if you prefer, Greater Britain, goes further than that. In Brantford, in the middle of a large square, you can see the statue of the Indian chief Brant, erected to his memory by public subscriptions collected among the British Canadians.

198 Here lies the secret of John Bull's success as a colonizer. To erect a statue to an Indian chief is a stroke of genius.

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What has struck me as most American in Canada is, perhaps, journalism.

Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Quebec possess excellent newspapers, and every little town can boast one or two journals.

The tone of these papers is thoroughly American in its liveliness—I had almost said, in its loudness. All are readable and most cleverly edited. Each paragraph is preceded by a neat and attractive heading. As in the American papers, the editorials, or leading articles, are of secondary importance. The main portion of the publication is devoted to news, interviews, stories, gossip, jokes, anecdotes, etc.

The Montreal papers are read by everybody in the Province of Quebec, and the Toronto papers in the Province of Ontario, so that the newspapers published in small towns are content with giving all the news of the locality. Each of these has a "society" column. Nothing is more amusing than to read of the society doings in these little towns. "Miss Brown is visiting Miss Smith." "Miss Smith had tea with Miss Robinson yesterday." When Miss Brown, or Miss Smith, or Miss Robinson has given a party, the names of all the guests are inserted as well as what they had for dinner, or for supper, as the case may be. So I take it for granted that when anybody gives a party, a ball, a dinner, a reporter receives an 199
invitation to describe the party in the next issue of the paper.

. . . . . .

At nine o'clock this evening, I left Sarnia, on the frontier of Canada, to cross the river and

pass into the United States. The train left the town, and, on arriving on the bank of the River St. Clair, was divided into two sections which were run on board the ferry-boat and made the crossing side by side. The passage across the river occupied about twenty minutes. On arriving at the other bank, at Port Huron, in the State of Michigan, the train left the boat in the same fashion as it had gone on board, the two parts were coupled together, and the journey on *terra firma* was smoothly resumed.

There is something fascinating about crossing a river at night, and I had promised myself some agreeable moments on board the ferry-boat, from which I should be able to see Port Huron lit up with twinkling lights. I was also curious to watch the train boarding the boat. But, alas, I had reckoned without my host. Instead of star-gazing and *rêverie*, there was in store for me a "bad quarter of an hour."

No sooner had the train boarded the ferry-boat than there came to the door of the parlor car a surly-looking, ill-mannered creature, who roughly bade me come to the baggage van, in the other section of the train, and open my trunks for him to inspect.

As soon as I had complied, he went down on his knees among my baggage, and it was plain to see that he meant business. 200

The first thing he took out was a suit of clothes, which he threw on the dirty floor of the van.

"Have these been worn?" he said.

"They have," I replied.

Then he took out a blue jacket which I used to cross the Atlantic.

"HAVE YOU WORN THIS?"

"Have you worn this?"

"Yes, for the last two years."

"Is that all?" he said, with a low sardonic grin.

My trunk was the only one he had to examine, as I was the only passenger in the parlor car; and I saw that he meant to annoy me, which, I imagined, he could do with perfect impunity. 201

The best thing, in fact, the only thing to do was to take the misadventure good-humoredly.

He took out my linen and examined it in detail.

"Have these shirts all been worn?"

"Well, I guess they have. But how is it that you, an official of the government, seem to ignore the law of your own country? Don't you know that if all these articles are for my own

private use, they are not dutiable, whether new or not?”

The man did not answer.

He took out more linen, which he put on the floor, and spreading open a pair of unmentionables, he asked again:

“Have you worn this? It looks quite new.”

I nodded affirmatively.

He then took out a pair of socks.

“Have you worn these?”

“I don’t know,” I said. “Have a sniff at them.”

He continued his examination, and was about to throw my evening suit on the floor. I had up to now been *almost* amused at the proceedings, but I felt my good-humor was going, and the lion began to wag its tail. I took the man by the arm, and looking at him sternly, I said:

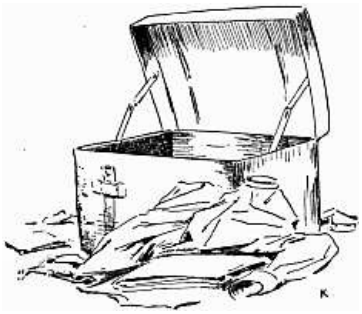
“Now, you put this carefully on the top of some other clothes.”

He looked at me and complied.

By this time all the contents of my large trunk were spread on the floor.

He got up on his feet and said: 202

“Have I looked everywhere?”



THE CONTENTS.

“No,” I said, “you haven’t. Do you know how the famous Regent diamond, worn by the last kings of France on their crowns, was smuggled into French territory?”

The creature looked at me with an air of impudence.

“No, I don’t,” he replied.

I explained to him, and added:

“You have not looked *there*.”

The lion, that lies dormant at the bottom of the quietest man, was fairly roused in me, and on the least provocation, I would have given this man a first-class hiding.

He went away, wondering whether I had insulted him or not, and left me in the van to repack my trunk as best I could, an operation which, I understand, it was his duty to perform himself.

CHAPTER XXIII. 203

CHICAGO (FIRST VISIT)—THE “NEIGHBORHOOD” OF CHICAGO—THE HISTORY OF CHICAGO—PUBLIC SERVANTS—A VERY DEAF MAN.

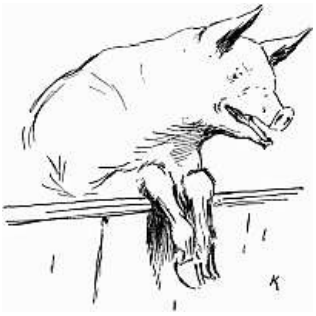
Chicago, February 17.

OH! a lecturing tour in America!

I am here on my way to St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Just before leaving New York, I saw in a comic paper that Bismarck must really now be considered as a great man, because, since his departure from office, there had been no rumor of his having applied to Major Pond to get up a lecturing tour for him in the United States.

It was not news to me that there are plenty of people in America who laugh at the European author's trick of going to the American platform as soon as he has made a little name for himself in his own country. The laugh finds an echo in England, especially from some journalists who have never been asked to go, and from a few men who, having done one tour, think it wise not to repeat the experience. For my part, when I consider that Emerson, Holmes, Mark Twain, have been lecturers, that Dickens, Thackeray, Matthew Arnold, Sala, Stanley, Archdeacon Farrar, and many more, all have made their bow to 204
American audiences, I fail to discover anything very derogatory in the proceeding.



A PIG SQUEALING.

Besides, I feel bound to say that there is nothing in a lecturing tour in America, even in a highly successful one, that can excite the envy of the most jealous "failure" in the world. Such work is about the hardest that a man, used to the comforts of this life, can undertake. Actors, at all events, stop a week, sometimes a fortnight, in the cities they visit; but a lecturer is on the road every day, happy when he has not to start at night.

No words can picture the monotony of journeys through an immense continent, the sameness of which strikes you as almost unbearable. Everything is made on one pattern. All the towns are alike. To be in a railroad car for ten or twelve hours day after day can hardly be called luxury, or even comfort. To have one's poor brain matter thus shaken in the cranium is terrible, especially when the cranium is not quite full. Constant traveling softens the brain, liquefies it, churns it, evaporates it, and it runs out of you through all the cracks of your head. I own that traveling is comfortable in America, even 205
luxurious; but the best fare becomes monotonous and unpalatable when the dose is repeated every day.

To-morrow night I lecture in Minneapolis. The next night I am in Detroit. Distance about seven hundred miles.

"Can I manage it?" said I to my impresario, when he showed me my route.

"Why, certn'ly," he replied; "if you catch a train after your lecture, I guess you will arrive in time for your lecture in Detroit the next day."

These remarks, in America, are made without a smile.

On arriving at Chicago this morning, I found awaiting me at the Grand Pacific Hotel, a letter from my impresario. Here is the purport of it:

> I know you have with you a trunk and a small portmanteau. I would advise you to leave your trunk at the Grand Pacific, and to take with you only the portmanteau, while you are in the neighborhood of Chicago. You will thus save trouble, expense, etc.

On looking at my route, I found that the "neighborhood of Chicago" included St. Paul, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis: something like a little two-thousand-mile tour "in the neighborhood of Chicago," to be done in about one week.

When I confided my troubles to my American friends, I got little sympathy from them.

"That's quite right," they would say; "we call the neighborhood of a city any place which, by starting after dinner, you can reach at about breakfast time the next day. You dine, you 206
go on board the car, you have a smoke, you go to bed, you sleep, you wake up, you dress—and there you are. Do you see?"

After all you may be of this opinion, if you do not reckon sleeping time. But I do reckon it, when I have to spend the night in a closed box, six feet long, and three feet wide, and about two feet high, and especially when the operation has to be repeated three or four times a week.

. . . . . .

And the long weary days that are not spent in traveling, how can they be passed, even tolerably, in an American city, where the lonely lecturer knows nobody, and where there is absolutely nothing to be seen beyond the hotels and the dry-goods stores? Worse still: he sometimes has the good luck to make the acquaintance of some charming people: but he has hardly had time to fix their features in his memory, when he has to go, probably never to see them again.

The lecturer speaks for an hour and a half on the platform every evening, the rest of his time is exclusively devoted to keeping silence. Poor fellow! how grateful he is to the hotel clerk who sometimes—alas, very seldom—will chat with him for a few minutes. As a rule the hotel clerk is a mute, who assigns a room to you, or hands you the letters waiting for you in the box corresponding to your number. His mouth is closed. He may have seen you for half a minute only; he will remember you. Even in a hotel accommodating over a thousand guests, he will know you, he will know the number of your room, but he won't speak. He is not the only American that won't speak. Every man in America who is attending to some duty of other, has his mouth closed. I have tried the railroad conductor, and found him mute. I have had a shot at the porter in the Pullman car, and found him mute. I have endeavored to draw out the janitors of the halls where I was to speak in the evening, and I have failed. Even the negroes won't speak. You would imagine that speaking was prohibited by the statute-book. When my lecture was over, I returned to the hotel, and like a culprit crept to bed. 207

THE SLEEPING CAR.

How I do love New York! It is not that it possesses a single building that I really care for; it is because it contains scores and scores of delightful people, brilliant, affable, hospitable, warm-hearted friends, who were kind enough to welcome me when I returned from a tour, and in whose company I could break up the cobwebs that had had time to form in the corners of my mouth. 208

THE JANITOR.

. . . . . .

The history of Chicago can be written in a few lines. So can the history of the whole of America.

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In about 1830 a man called Benjamin Harris, with his family, moved to Chicago, or Fort Dearborn, as it was then called. Not more than half a dozen whites, all of whom were Indian traders, had preceded them. In 1832 they had a child, the first white female born in Chicago —now married, called Mrs. S. A. Holmes, and the mother of fourteen children. In 1871 Chicago had over 100,000 inhabitants, and was burned to the ground. To-day Chicago has over 1,200,000 inhabitants, and in ten years' time will have two millions.

The activity in Chicago is perfectly amazing. And I don't mean commercial activity only. Compare the following statistics: In the great reading rooms of the British Museum, there was an average of 620 readers daily during the year 1888. In the reading-room of the Chicago Public Library, there was an average of 1569 each day in the same year. Considering that the population of London is nearly five times that of Chicago, it shows that the reading public is ten times more numerous in Chicago than in London.

. . . . . .

It is a never failing source of amusement to watch the ways of public servants in this country.

I went to pay a visit to a public museum this afternoon.

In Europe, the keepers, that is to say, the servants of the public, have cautions posted in the museums, in which "the public are requested not to touch." In France, they are "begged," which is perhaps a more suitable expression, as the museums, after all, belong to the public.

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In America, the notice is "Hands off!" This is short and to the point. The servants of the public allow you to enter the museums, charge you twenty-five cents, and warn you to behave well. "Hands off" struck me as rather off-handed.

THE “BRUSH-UP.”

I really admire the independence of all the servants in this country. You may give them a tip, you will not run the risk of making them servile or even polite. 211

The railway conductor says “ticket!” The word *please* does not belong to his vocabulary any more than the words “thank you.” He says “ticket” and frowns. You show it to him. He looks at it suspiciously, and gives it back to you with a haughty air that seems to say: “I hope you will behave properly while you are in my car.”

The tip in America is not *de rigueur* as in Europe. The cabman charges you so much, and expects nothing more. He would lose his dignity by accepting a tip (many run the risk). He will often ask you for more than you owe him; but this is the act of a sharp man of business, not the act of a servant. In doing so, he does not derogate from his character.

The negro is the only servant who smiles in America, the only one who is sometimes polite and attentive, and the only one who speaks English with a pleasant accent.

The negro porter in the sleeping cars has seldom failed to thank me for the twenty-five or fifty cent piece I always give him after he has brushed—or rather, swept—my clothes with his little broom.

. . . . . .

A few minutes ago, as I was packing my valise for a journey to St. Paul and Minneapolis to-night, the porter brought in a card. The name was unknown to me; but the porter having said that it was the card of a gentleman who was most anxious to speak to me, I said, “Very well, bring him here.”

The gentleman entered the room, saluted me, shook hands, and said:

“I hope I am not intruding.” 212

“Well,” said I, “I must ask you not to detain me long, because I am off in a few minutes.”

“I understand, sir, that some time ago you were engaged in teaching the French language in one of the great public schools of England.”

“I was, sir,” I replied.

“Well, I have a son whom I wish to speak French properly, and I have come to ask for your views on the subject. In other words, will you be good enough to tell me what are the best methods for teaching this language? Only excuse me, I am very deaf.”

LEFT.

He pulled out of his back pocket two yards of gutta-percha tube, and, applying one end to his ear and placing the other against my mouth, he said, “Go ahead.”

“Really?” I shouted through the tube. “Now please shut your eyes; nothing is better for increasing the power of hearing.” 213

The man shut his eyes and turned his head sideways, so as to have the listening ear in front of me. I took my valise and ran to the elevator as fast as I could.

That man may still be waiting for aught I know and care.

. . . . . .

Before leaving the hotel, I made the acquaintance of Mr. George Kennan, the Russian traveler. His articles on Russia and Siberia, published in the *Century Magazine*, attracted a great deal of public attention, and people everywhere throng to hear him relate his terrible experiences on the platform. He has two hundred lectures to give this season. He struck me as a most remarkable man—simple, unaffected in his manner, with unflinching resolution written on his face; a man in earnest, you can see. I am delighted to find that I shall have the pleasure of meeting him again in New York in the middle of April. He looks tired. He, too, is lecturing in the “neighborhood of Chicago,” and is off now to the night train for Cincinnati.

CHAPTER XXIV. 214

ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS, THE SISTER CITIES—RIVALRIES AND JEALOUSIES BETWEEN LARGE AMERICAN CITIES—MINNEHAHA FALLS—WONDERFUL INTERVIEWERS—MY HAT GETS INTO TROUBLE AGAIN—ELECTRICITY IN THE AIR—FOREST ADVERTISEMENTS—RAILWAY SPEED IN AMERICA.

St. Paul, Minn., February 20.

ARRIVED at St. Paul the day before yesterday to pay a professional visit to the two great sister cities of the north of America.

Sister cities! Yes, they are near enough to shake hands and kiss each other, but I am afraid they avail themselves of their proximity to scratch each other’s faces.

If you open Bouillet’s famous Dictionary of History and Geography (edition 1880), you will find in it neither St. Paul nor Minneapolis. I was told yesterday that in 1834 there was one

white inhabitant in Minneapolis. To-day the two cities have about 200,000 inhabitants each. Where is the dictionary of geography that can keep pace with such wonderful phantasmagoric growth? The two cities are separated by a distance of about nine miles, but they are every day growing up toward each other, and to-morrow they will practically have become one.

Nothing is more amusing than the jealousies which exist between the different large cities of the United States, and when these rival places are close to each other, the feeling of jealousy is so intensified as to become highly entertaining.

St. Paul charges Minneapolis with copying into the census names from tombstones, and it is affirmed that young men living in either one of the cities will marry girls belonging to the other so as to decrease its population by one. The story goes that once a preacher having announced, in a Minneapolis church, that he had taken the text of his sermon from St. Paul, the congregation walked out *en masse*.

New York despises Philadelphia, and pokes fun at Boston. On the other hand, Boston hates Chicago, and *vice versa*. St. Louis has only contempt for Chicago, and both cities laugh heartily at Detroit and Milwaukee. San Francisco and Denver are left alone in their prosperity. They are so far away from the east and north of America, that the feeling they inspire is only one of indifference.

“Philadelphia is a city of homes, not of lodging-houses,” once said a Philadelphian to a New Yorker; “and it spreads over a far greater area than New York, with less than half the inhabitants.” “Ah,” replied the New Yorker, “that’s because it has been so much sat upon.”

“You are a city of commerce,” said a Bostonian to a New York wit; “Boston is a city of culture.” “Yes,” replied the New Yorker. “You spell culture with a big C, and God with a small g.”

Of course St. Paul and Minneapolis accuse each other of counting their respective citizens twice over. All that is diverting in the highest degree. This feeling does not exist only between the rival cities of the New World, it exists in the Old. Ask a Glasgow man what he thinks of Edinburgh, and an Edinburgh man what he thinks of Glasgow!

. . . . . .

On account of the intense cold (nearly thirty degrees below zero), I have not been able to see much either of St. Paul or of Minneapolis, and I am unable to please or vex either of these cities by pointing out their beauties and defects. Both are large and substantially built, with large churches, schools, banks, stores, and all the temples that modern Christians erect to Jehovah and Mammon. I may say that the Ryan Hotel at St. Paul and the West House at Minneapolis are among the very best hotels I have come across in America, the latter especially. When I have added that, the day before yesterday, I had an immense audience in the People’s Church at St. Paul, and that to-night I have had a crowded house at the Grand Opera House in Minneapolis, it is hardly necessary for me to say that I shall have enjoyed myself in the two great towns, and that I shall carry away with me a delightful recollection of them.

. . . . . .

Soon after arriving in Minneapolis yesterday, I went to see the Minnehaha Falls, immortalized by Longfellow. The motor line gave me an idea of rapid transit. I returned to the West House for lunch and spent the afternoon writing. Many interviewers called.

“WHAT YEARLY INCOME DOES YOUR BOOKS AND LECTURES BRING IN?”

The first who came sat down in my room and point-blank asked me my views on contagious diseases. Seeing that I was not disposed to talk on the subject, he asked me to discourse on republics and the prospects of General Boulanger. In fact, anything for copy. 218

The second one, after asking me where I came from and where I was going, inquired whether I had exhausted the Anglo-Saxons and whether I should write on other nations. After I had satisfied him, he asked me what yearly income my books and lectures brought in.

Another wanted to know why I had not brought my wife with me, how many children I had, how old they were, and other details as wonderfully interesting to the public. By and by I saw he was jotting down a description of my appearance, and the different clothes I had on! “I will unpack this trunk,” I said, “and spread all its contents on the floor. Perhaps you would be glad to have a look at my things.” He smiled: “Don’t trouble any more,” he said; “I am very much obliged to you for your courtesy.”

This morning, on opening the papers, I see that my hat is getting into trouble again. I thought that, after getting rid of my brown hat and sending it to the editor in the town where it had created such a sensation, peace was secured. Not a bit. In the Minneapolis *Journal* I read the following:

> The attractive personality of the man [allow me to record this for the sake of what follows], heightened by his négligé sack coat and vest, with a background of yellowish plaid trowsers, occasional glimpses of which were revealed from beneath the folds of a heavy ulster, which swept the floor [I was sitting of course] and was trimmed with fur collar and cuffs. And then that hat! On the table, carelessly thrown amid a pile of correspondence, was his nondescript headgear. One of those half-sombreros affected by the wild Western cowboy when on dress parade, an impossible combination of dark-blue and bottle-green.

Fancy treating in this off-handed way a $7.50 soft black felt hat bought of the best hatter in New York! No, nothing is sacred for those interviewers. Dark-blue and bottle-green! Why, did that man imagine that I wore my hat inside out so as to show the silk lining? 219

. . . . . .

The air here is perfectly wonderful, dry and full of electricity. If your fingers come into contact with anything metallic, like the hot-water pipes, the chandeliers, the stopper of your washing basin, they draw a spark, sharp and vivid. One of the reporters who called here, and to whom I mentioned the fact, was able to light my gas with his finger, by merely obtaining an electric spark on the top of the burner. When he said he could thus light the gas, I thought he was joking.

I had observed this phenomenon before. In Ottawa, for instance.

Whether this air makes you live too quickly, I do not know; but it is most bracing and healthy. I have never felt so well and hearty in my life as in these cold, dry climates.

. . . . . .

I was all the more flattered to have such a large and fashionable audience at the Grand Opera House to-night, that my *causerie* was not given under the auspices of any society, or as one of any course of lectures.

I lecture in Detroit the day after to-morrow. I shall have to leave Minneapolis to-morrow morning at six o'clock for Chicago, which I shall reach at ten in the evening. Then I shall have to run to the Michigan Central Station to catch the night train to Detroit at eleven. Altogether, twenty-three hours of railway traveling—745 miles. 220

And still in "the neighborhood of Chicago!"

. . . . . .

AN ADVERTISEMENT.

In the train to Chicago, February 21.

Have just passed a wonderful advertisement. Here, in the midst of a forest, I have seen a huge wide board nailed on two trees, parallel to the railway line. On it was written, round a daub supposed to represent one of the loveliest English ladies: "If you would be as lovely as the beautiful Lady de Gray, use Gray perfumes." 221

Soyez donc belle, to be used as an advertisement in the forests of Minnesota!

. . . . . .

My lectures have never been criticised in more kind, flattering, and eulogistic terms than in the St. Paul and the Minneapolis papers, which I am reading on my way to Chicago. I find newspaper reading a great source of amusement in the trains. First of all because these papers always are light reading, and also because reading is a possibility in a well lighted carriage going only at a moderate speed. Eating is comfortable, and even writing is possible *en route*. With the

exception of a few trains, such as are run from New York to Boston, Chicago, and half a dozen other important cities, railway traveling is slower in America than in England and France; but I have never found fault with the speed of an American train. On the contrary, I have always felt grateful to the driver for running slowly. And every time that the car reached the other side of some of the many rotten wooden bridges on which the train had to pass, I returned thanks.

"I RETURNED THANKS."

CHAPTER XXV.

222

DETROIT—THE TOWN—THE DETROIT "FREE PRESS"—A LADY INTERVIEWER—THE "UNCO GUID" IN DETROIT—REFLECTIONS ON THE ANGLO-SAXON "UNCO GUID."

Detroit, February 22.

AM delighted with Detroit. It possesses beautiful streets, avenues, and walks, and a fine square in the middle of which stands a remarkably fine monument. I am also grateful to this city for breaking the monotony of the eternal parallelograms with which the whole of the United States are built. My national vanity almost suggests to me that this town owes its gracefulness to its French origin. There are still, I am told, about 25,000 French people settled in Detroit.

I have had to-night, in the Church of Our Father, a crowded and most brilliant audience, whose keenness, intelligence, and kindness were very flattering.

I was interviewed, both by a lady and a gentleman, for the Detroit *Free Press*, that most witty of American newspapers. The charming young lady interviewer came to talk on social topics, I remarked that she was armed with a copy of "Jonathan and his Continent," and I came to the conclusion that she would probably ask for a few explanations about that book. I was not mistaken. She took exception, she informed me, to many statements concerning the American girl in the book. I made a point to prove to her that all was right, and all was truth, and I think I persuaded her to abandon the prosecution.

223

THE LADY INTERVIEWER.

To tell the truth, now the real truth, mind you, I am rather tired of hearing about the 224
American girl. The more I see of her the more I am getting convinced that she is—like the other girls in the world.

. . . . . .

A friend, who came to have a chat with me after this lecture, has told me that the influential people of the city are signing a petition to the custodians of the museum calling upon them to drape all the nude statues, and intimating their intention of boycotting the institution, if the Venuses and Apollos are not forthwith provided with tuckers and togas.

It is a well-known fact in the history of the world, that young communities have no taste for fine art—they have no time to cultivate it. If I had gone to Oklahoma, I should not have expected to find any art feeling at all; but that in a city like Detroit, where there is such evidence of intellectual life and high culture among the inhabitants, a party should be found numerous and strong enough to issue such a heathen dictate as this seems scarcely credible. I am inclined to think it must be a joke. That the “unco guid” should flourish under the gloomy sky of Great Britain I understand, but under the bright blue sky of America, in that bracing atmosphere, I cannot.

It is most curious that there should be people who, when confronted with some glorious 225
masterpiece of sculpture, should not see the poetry, the beauty of the human form divine. This is beyond me, and beyond any educated Frenchman.

THE DRAPED STATUES.

Does the “unco guid” exist in America, then? I should have thought that these people, of the earth earthy, were not found out of England and Scotland. 226

When I was in America two years ago, I heard that an English author of some repute, talking one day with Mr. Richard Watson Gilder about the Venus of Milo, had remarked that, as he looked at her beautiful form, he longed to put his arms around her and kiss her. Mr. Gilder, who, as a poet, as an artist, has felt only respect mingled with his admiration of the matchless divinity, replied: “I hope she would have grown a pair of arms for the occasion, so as to have slapped your face.”

It is not so much the thing that offends the “unco guid”; it is the name, the reflection, the idea. Unhealthy-minded himself, he dreads a taint where there is none, and imagines in others a corruption which exists only in himself.

Yet the One, whom he would fain call Master, but whose teachings he is slow in following, said: “Woe be to them by whom offense cometh.” But the “unco guid” is a Christian failure, a *parvenu*.

. . . . . .

The *parvenu* is a person who makes strenuous efforts to persuade other people that he is entitled to the position he occupies.

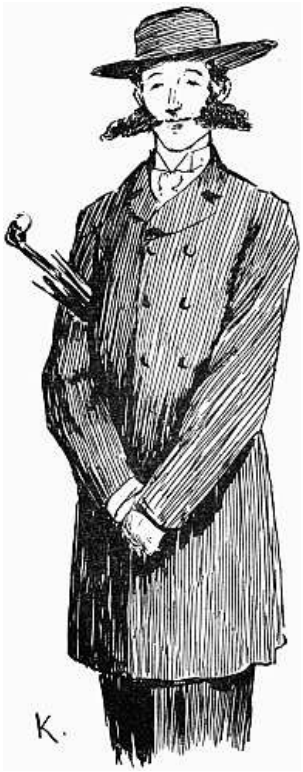
There are *parvenus* in religion, as there are *parvenus* in the aristocracy, in society, in literature, in the fine arts, etc.

The worst type of the French *parvenu* is the one whose father was a worthy, hard-working man called *Dubois* or *Dumont*, and who, at his father’s death, dubs himself *du Bois* or *du Mont*, becomes a clericalist and the stanchest monarchist, and runs down the great Revolution which made one of his grand-parents a man. M. *du Bois* or *du Mont* outdoes the genuine nobleman, who needs make no noise to attract attention to a name which everybody knows, and which, in spite of what may be said on the subject, often recalls the memory of some glorious event in the past. 227

The worst type of Anglo-Saxon *parvenu* is probably the “unco guid,” or religious *parvenu*.

The Anglo-Saxon “unco guid” is seldom to be found among Roman Catholics; that is, among the followers of the most

ancient Christian religion. He is to be found among the followers of the newest forms of “Christianity.” This is quite natural. He has to try to eclipse his fellow-Christians by his piety, in order to show that the new religion to which he belongs was a necessary invention.



THE PARVENU.

The Anglo-Saxon “unco guid” is easily recognized. He is dark (all bigots and fanatics are). He is dressed in black, shiny broadcloth raiment. A wide-brimmed felt hat covers his head. He walks with light, short, jaunty steps, his head a little inclined on one side. He never carries a stick, which might give a rather fast appearance to his turn-out. He invariably carries an umbrella, even in the brightest weather, as being more respectable—and this umbrella he never rolls, for he would avoid looking in the distance as if he had a stick. He casts right and left little grimaces that are so many forced smiles of self-satisfaction. “Try to be as good as I am,” he seems to say to all who happen to look at him, “and you will be as happy.” And he “smiles, and smiles, and smiles.”

He has a small soul, a small heart, and a small brain.

As a rule, he is a well-to-do person. It pays better to have a narrow mind than to have broad sympathies.

He drinks tea, but prefers cocoa, as being a more virtuous beverage.

He is perfectly destitute of humor, and is the most inartistic creature in the world. Everything suggests to him either profanity or indecency. The “Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character,” by Dean Ramsay, would strike him as profane, and if placed in the Musée du Louvre, before the Venus of Milo, he would see nothing but a woman who has next to no clothes on.

His distorted mind makes him take everything in ill part. His hands get pricked on every thorn that he comes across on the road, and he misses all the roses.

If I were not a Christian, the following story, which is not as often told as it should be, would have converted me long ago:

> Jesus arrived one evening at the gates of a certain city, and he sent his disciples forward to prepare supper, while he himself, intent on doing good, walked through the streets into the marketplace. And he saw at the corner of the market some people gathered together, looking at an object on the ground; and he drew near to see what it might be. It was a dead dog, with a halter round his neck, by which he appeared to have been dragged through the dirt; and a viler, a more abject, a more unclean thing, never met the eyes of man. And those who stood by looked on with abhorrence. “Faugh!” said one, stopping his nose, “it pollutes the air.” “How long,” said another, “shall this foul beast offend our sight?” “Look at his torn hide,” said a third; “one could not even cut a shoe out of it!” “And his ears,” said a fourth, “all draggled and bleeding!” “No doubt,” said a fifth, “he has been hanged for thieving!” And Jesus heard them, and looking down compassionately on the dead creature, he said: “Pearls are not equal to the whiteness of his teeth!”

If I understand the Gospel, the gist of its teachings is contained in the foregoing little story. Love and forgiveness: finding something to pity and admire even in a dead dog. Such is the religion of Christ.

The “Christianity” of the “unco guid” is as like this religion as are the teachings of the Old Testament.

Something to condemn, the discovery of wickedness in the most innocent, and often elevating, recreations, such is the favorite occupation of the Anglo-Saxon “unco guid.” Music is licentious, laughter wicked, dancing immoral, statuary almost criminal, and, by and by, the “Society for the Suggestion of Indecency,” which is placed under his immediate patronage and supervision, will find fault with our going out in the streets, on the plea that under our garments we carry our nudity.

The Anglo-Saxon “unco guid” is the successor of the Pharisee. In reading Christ’s description of the latter, you are immediately struck with the likeness. The modern “unco guid” “loves to pray standing in the churches and chapels and in the corners of the streets, that he may be seen of men.” “He uses vain repetitions, for he thinks that he shall be heard

for his much speaking." "When he fasts, he is of sad countenance; for he disfigures his face, that he may appear unto men to fast." There is not one feature of the portrait that does not fit in exactly.

The Jewish "unco guid" crucified Christ. The Anglo-Saxon one would crucify Him again if He should return to earth and interfere with the prosperous business firms that make use of His name.

The "unco guid's" Christianity consists in extolling his virtues and ignoring other people's. He spends his time in "pulling motes out of people's eyes," but cannot see clearly to do it, "owing to the beams that are in his own." He overwhelms you, he crushes you, with his virtue, and one of the greatest treats is to catch him tripping, a chance which you may occasionally have, especially when you meet him on the Continent of Europe.

The Anglo-Saxon "unco guid" calls himself a Christian, but the precepts of the Gospel are the very opposite of those he practices. The gentle, merciful, forgiving, Man-God of the 231
Gospel has not for him the charms and attractions of the Jehovah who commanded the cowardly, ungrateful, and bloodthirsty people of his choice to treat their women as slaves, and to exterminate their enemies, sparing neither old men, women, nor children. This cruel, revengeful, implacable deity is far more to the Anglo-Saxon "unco guid's" liking than the Saviour who bade His disciples love their enemies and put up their swords in the presence of his persecutors. The "unco guid" is not a Christian, he is a Jew in all but name. And I will say this much for him, that the Commandments given on Mount Sinai are much easier to follow than the Sermon on the Mount. It is easier not to commit murder than to hold out your right cheek after your left one has been slapped. It is easier not to steal than to run after the man who has robbed us, in order to offer him what he has not taken. It is easier to honor our parents than to love our enemies.

The teachings of the Gospel are trying to human nature. There is no religion more difficult to follow; and this is why, in spite of its beautiful, but too lofty, precepts, there is no religion in the world that can boast so many hypocrites—so many followers who pretend that they follow their religion, but who do not, and very probably cannot.

Being unable to love man, as he is bidden in the Gospel, the "unco guid" loves God, as he is bidden in the Old Testament. He loves God in the abstract. He tells Him so in endless prayers and litanies.

For him Christianity consists in discussing theological questions, whether a minister shall 232
preach with or without a white surplice on, and in singing hymns more or less out of tune.

As if God could be loved to the exclusion of man! You love God, after all, as you love anybody else, not by professions of love, but by deeds.

When he prays, the "unco guid" buries his face in his hands or in his hat. He screws up his face, and the more fervent the prayer is (or the more people are looking at him), the more grimaces he makes. Heinrich Heine, on coming out of an English church, said that "a blaspheming Frenchman must be a more pleasing object in the sight of God than many a praying Englishman." He had, no doubt, been looking at the "unco guid."

If you do not hold the same religious views as he does, you are a wicked man, an atheist. He alone has the truth. Being engaged in a discussion with an "unco guid" one day, I told him that if God had given me hands to handle, surely He had given me a little brain to think. "You are right," he quickly interrupted; "but, with the hands that God gave you you can commit a good action, and you can also commit murder." Therefore, because I did not think as he did, I was the criminal, for, of course, he was the righteous man. For all those who, like myself, believe in a future life, there is, I believe, a great treat in store: the sight of the face he will make, when his place is assigned to him in the next world. *Qui mourra, verra.*

Anglo-Saxon land is governed by the "unco guid." Good society cordially despises him; the aristocracy of Anglo-Saxon intelligence—philosophers, scientists, men of letters, artists— 233
simply loathe him; but all have to bow to his rule, and submit their works to his most incompetent criticism, and all are afraid of him.

THE POOR MAN’S SABBATH.

In a moment of wounded national pride, Sydney Smith once exclaimed: “What a pity it is we have no amusements in England except vice and religion!” The same exclamation might be uttered to-day, and the cause laid at the Anglo-Saxon “unco guid’s” door. It is he who is 234
responsible for the degradation of the British lower classes, by refusing to enable them to elevate their minds on Sundays at the sight of the masterpieces of art which are contained in the museums, or at the sound of the symphonies of Beethoven and Mozart, which might be given to the people at reduced prices on that day. The poor people must choose between vice and religion, and as the wretches know they are not wanted in the churches, they go to the taverns.

It is this same “unco guid” who is responsible for the state of the streets in the large cities of Great Britain by refusing to allow vice to be regulated. If you were to add the amount of immorality to be found in the streets of Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and the other capitals of Europe, no fair-minded Englishman “who knows” would contradict me, if I said that the total thus obtained would be much below the amount supplied by London alone; but the “unco guid” stays at home of an evening, advises you to do the same, and ignoring, or pretending to ignore, what is going on round his own house, he prays for the conversion—of the French.

The “unco guid” thinks that his own future safety is assured, so he prays for his neighbors’. He reminds one of certain Scots, who inhabit two small islands on the west coast of Scotland. Their piety is really most touching. Every Sunday in their churches, they commend to God’s care “the puir inhabitants of the two adjacent islands of Britain and Ireland.”

A few weeks ago, there appeared in a Liverpool paper a letter, signed “A Lover of Reverence,” in which this anonymous person complained of a certain lecturer, who had 235
indulged in profane remarks. “I was not present myself,” he or she said, “but have heard of what took place,” etc. You see, this person was not present, but as a good “Christian,” he hastened to judge. However, this is nothing. In the letter, I read: “Fortunately, there are in Liverpool, a few Christians, like myself, always on the watch, and ever looking after our Maker’s honor.”

Fortunate Liverpool! What a proud position for the Almighty, to be placed in Liverpool under the protection of the “Lover of Reverence!”

Probably this “unco guid” and myself would not agree on the definition of the word *profanity*, for, if I had written and published such a letter, I would consider myself guilty, not only of profanity, but of blasphemy.

If the “unco guid” is the best product of Christianity, Christianity must be pronounced a ghastly failure, and I should feel inclined to exclaim, with the late Dean Milman, “If all this is Christianity, it is high time we should try something else—say the religion of Christ, for

instance.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

MILWAUKEE—A WELL-FILLED DAY—REFLECTIONS ON THE SCOTCH IN AMERICA—CHICAGO CRITICISMS.

Milwaukee, February 25.

ARRIVED here from Detroit yesterday. Milwaukee is a city of over two hundred thousand inhabitants, a very large proportion of whom are Germans, who have come here to settle down, and wish good luck to the *Vaterland*, at the respectful distance of five thousand miles.

At the station I was met by Mr. John L. Mitchell, the railway king, and by a compatriot of mine, M. A. de Guerville, a young enthusiast who has made up his mind to check the German invasion of Milwaukee, and has succeeded in starting a French society, composed of the leading inhabitants of the city. On arriving, I found a heavy but delightful programme to go through during the day: a lunch to be given me by the ladies at Milwaukee College at one o’clock; a reception by the French Club at Mrs. John L. Mitchell’s house at four; a dinner at six; my lecture at eight, and a reception and a supper by the Press Club at half-past ten; the rest of the evening to be spent as circumstances would allow or suggest. I was to be the guest of Mr. Mitchell at his magnificent house in town.

A CITIZEN OF MILWAUKEE.

"Good," I said, "let us begin." 238

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Went through the whole programme. The reception by the French Club, in the beautiful Moorish-looking rooms of Mrs. John L. Mitchell's superb mansion, was a great success. I was amazed to meet so many French-speaking people, and much amused to see my young compatriot go from one group to another, to satisfy himself that all the members of the club were speaking French; for I must tell you that, among the statutes of the club, there is one that imposes a fine of ten cents on any member caught in the act of speaking English at the gatherings of the association.

The lecture was a great success. The New Plymouth Church[3] was packed, and the audience extremely warm and appreciative. The supper offered to me by the Press Club proved most enjoyable. And yet, that was not all. At one o'clock the Press Club repaired to a perfect German *Brauerei*, where we spent an hour in Bavaria, drinking excellent Bavarian beer while chatting, telling stories, etc.

I will omit to mention at what time we returned home, so as not to tell tales about my kind host.

In spite of the late hours we kept last night, breakfast was punctually served at eight this morning. First course, porridge. Thanks to the kind, thoroughly Scotch hospitality of Mr. John L. Mitchell and his charming family, thanks to the many friends and sympathizers I met 239
here, I shall carry away a most pleasant recollection of this large and beautiful city. I shall leave Milwaukee with much regret. Indeed, the worst feature of a thick lecturing tour is to feel, almost every day, that you leave behind friends whom you may never see again.

I lecture at the Central Music Hall, Chicago, this evening; but Chicago is reached from here in two hours and a half, and I will go as late in the day as I can.

No more beds for me now, until I reach Albany, in three days.

. . . . . .

The railway king in Wisconsin is a Scotchman. I was not surprised to hear it. The iron king in Pennsylvania is a Scotchman, Mr. Andrew Carnegie. The oil king of Ohio is a Scotchman, Mr. Alexander Macdonald. The silver king of California is a Scotchman, Mr. Mackay. The dry-goods-store king of New York—he is dead now—was a Scotchman, Mr. Stewart. It is just the same in Canada, just the same in Australia, and all over the English-speaking world. The Scotch are successful everywhere, and the new countries offer them fields for their industry, their perseverance, and their shrewdness. There you see them landowners, directors of companies, at the head of all the great enterprises. In the lower stations of life, thanks to their frugality and saving habits, you find them thriving everywhere. You go to the manufactory, you are told that the foremen are Scotch.

I have, perhaps, a better illustration still. 240

TALES OF OLD SCOTLAND.

If you travel in Canada, either by the Grand Trunk or the Canadian Pacific, you will meet in the last parlor car, near the stove, a man whose duty consists in seeing that, all along the line, the workmen are at their posts, digging, repairing, etc. These workmen are all day exposed to the Canadian temperature, and often have to work knee-deep in the snow. Well, you will find that the man with small, keen eyes, who is able to do his work in the railroad 241
car, warming himself comfortably by the stove, is invariably a Scotchman. There is only one berth with a stove in the whole business; it is he who has got it. Many times I have had a chat with that Scotchman on the subject of old Scotland. Many times I have sat with him in the little smoking-room of the parlor car, listening to the history of his life, or, maybe, a few good Scotch anecdotes.

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In the train from Chicago to Cleveland, February 26.

I arrived in Chicago at five o’clock in the afternoon yesterday, dined, dressed, and lectured at the Music Hall under the auspices of the Drexel free Kindergarten. There was a large audience, and all passed off very well. After the lecture, I went to the Grand Pacific Hotel, changed clothes, and went on board the sleeping car bound for Cleveland, O.

. . . . . .

The criticisms of my lecture in this morning’s Chicago papers are lively.

The *Herald* calls me:

> A dapper little Frenchman. Five feet eleven in height, and two hundred pounds in weight!

The *Times* says:

> That splendid trinity of the American peerage, the colonel, the judge, and the professor, turned out in full force at Central Music Hall last night. The lecturer is a magician who serves up your many little defects, peculiar to the auditors' own country, on a silver salver, so artistically garnished that one forgets the sarcasm in admiration of the sauce.

242

A CELEBRATED EXECUTIONER.

The *Tribune* is quite as complimentary and quite as lively: 243

> His satire is as keen as the blade of the celebrated executioner who could cut a man's head off, and the unlucky person not know it until a pinch of snuff would cause a sneeze, and the decapitated head would, much to its surprise, find itself rolling over in the dust.

And after a good breakfast at Toledo station, I enjoyed an hour poring over the Chicago papers.

I lecture in Cleveland to-night, and am still in "the neighborhood of Chicago."

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3 Very strange, that church with its stalls, galleries, and boxes—a perfect theater. From the platform it was interesting to watch the immense throng, packing the place from floor to ceiling, in front, on the sides, behind, everywhere.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MONOTONY OF TRAVELING IN THE STATES—"MANON LESCAUT" IN AMERICA.

In the train from Cleveland to Albany, February 27.

AM getting tired and ill. I am not bed-ridden, but am fairly well rid of a bed. I have lately spent as many nights in railway cars as in hotel beds.

Am on my way to Albany, just outside "the neighborhood of Chicago." I lecture in that place to-night, and shall get to New York to-morrow.

I am suffering from the monotony of life. My greatest objection to America (indeed I do not believe I have any other) is the sameness of everything. I understand the Americans who run away to Europe every year to see an old church, a wall covered with moss and ivy, some good old-fashioned peasantry not dressed like the rest of the world.

"THE SAME 'INDIAN.'"

What strikes a European most, in his rambles through America, is the absence of the picturesque. The country is monotonous, and eternally the same. Burned-up fields, stumps of trees, forests, wooden houses all built on the same pattern. All the stations you pass are alike. All the towns are alike. To say that an American town is ten times larger than another simply means that it has ten times more blocks of houses. All the streets are alike, with the same telegraph poles, the same "Indian" as a sign for tobacconists, the same red, white, and blue pole as a sign for barbers. All the hotels are the same, all the *menus* are the same, all the plates and dishes the same—why, all the ink-stands are the same. All the people are dressed in the same way. When you meet an American with all his beard, you want to shake his hands and thank him for not shaving it, as ninety-nine out of every hundred Americans do. Of course I have not seen California, the Rocky Mountains, and many other parts of America where the scenery is very beautiful; but I think my remarks can apply to those States most likely to be visited by a lecturer, that is, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and others, during the winter months, after the Indian summer, and before the renewal of verdure in May.

. . . . . .

After breakfast, that indefatigable man of business, that intolerable bore, who incessantly bangs the doors and brings his stock-in-trade to the cars, came and whispered in my ears:

"New book—just out—a forbidden book!"

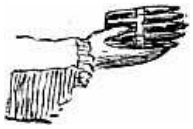
"A forbidden book! What is that?" I inquired.

He showed it to me. It was "Manon Lescaut."

"NEW BOOK JUST OUT—A FORBIDDEN BOOK!"

Is it possible? That literary and artistic *chef-d'œuvre*, which has been the original type of "Paul et Virginie" and "Atala"; that touching drama, which the prince of critics, Jules Janin, declared would be sufficient to save contemporary literature from complete oblivion, dragged in the mire, clothed in a dirty coarse English garb! and advertised as a forbidden book! Three generations of French people have wept over the pathetic story. Here it is now, stripped of its unique style and literary beauty, sold to the American public as an improper book—a libel by translation on a genius. British authors have complained for years that their books were stolen in America. They have suffered in pockets, it is true, but their reputation has spread through an immense continent. What is their complaint compared to that of the French authors 247 who have the misfortune to see their works translated into American? It is not only their pockets that suffer, but their reputation. The poor French author is at the mercy of incapable and malicious translators hired at starvation wages by the American pirate publisher. He is liable to a species of defamation ten times worse than robbery.

And as I looked at that copy of "Manon Lescaut," I almost felt grateful that Prevost was dead.



CHAPTER XXVIII. 248

FOR THE FIRST TIME I SEE AN AMERICAN PAPER ABUSE ME—ALBANY TO NEW YORK—A LECTURE AT DALY'S THEATER—AFTERNOON AUDIENCES.

New York, February 23.

THE American press has always been very good to me. Fairness one has a right to expect, but kindness is an extra that is not always thrown in, and therefore the uniform amiability of the American press toward me could not fail to strike me most agreeably.

Up to yesterday I had not seen a single unkind notice or article, but in the Albany *Express* of yesterday morning I read:

> This evening the people of Albany are asked to listen to a lecture by Max O'Rell, who was in this country two years ago, and was treated with distinguished courtesy. When he went home he published a book filled with deliberate misstatements and willful exaggerations of the traits of the American people.

This paper "has reason," as the French say. My book contained one misstatement, at all events, and that was that "all Americans have a great sense of humor." You may say that the French are a witty people, but that does not mean that France contains no fools. It is rather painful to have to explain such things, but I do so for the benefit of that editor and with 249 apologies to the general reader.

In spite of this diverting little "par," I had an immense audience last night in Harmanus Bleecker Hall, a new and magnificent construction in Albany, excellent, no doubt, for music, but hardly adapted for lecturing in, on account of its long and narrow shape.

RIP VAN WINKLE.

I should have liked to stay longer in Albany, which struck me as being a remarkably beautiful place, but having to lecture in New York this afternoon, I took the vestibule train early this morning for New York. This journey is exceedingly picturesque along the Hudson 250
River, traveling as you do between two ranges of wooded hills, dotted over with beautiful habitations, and now and then passing a little town bathing its feet in the water. In the distance one gets good views of the Catskill Mountains, immortalized by Washington Irving in “Rip Van Winkle.”

On boarding the train, the first thing I did was to read the news of yesterday. Imagine my amusement, on opening the Albany *Express* to read the following extract from the report of my lecture:

> He has an agreeable but not a strong voice. This was the only point that could be criticised in his lecture, which consisted of many clever sketches of the humorous side of the character of different Anglo-Saxon nations. His humor is keen. He evidently is a great admirer of America and Americans, only bringing into ridicule some of their most conspicuously objectionable traits.... His lecture was entertaining, clever, witty and thoroughly enjoyable.

The most amusing part of all this is that the American sketches which I introduced into my lecture last night, and which seemed to have struck the Albany *Express* so agreeably, were all extracts from the book “filled with deliberate misstatements and willful exaggerations of the traits of the American people.” Well, after all, there is humor, unconscious humor, in the Albany *Express*.

. . . . . .

Arrived at the Grand Central Station in New York at noon, I gave up my check to a transfer man, but learned to my chagrin that the vestibule train from Albany had carried no baggage, and that my things would only arrive by the next train at about three o’clock. 251
Pleasant news for a man who was due to address an audience at three!

There was only one way out of the difficulty. Off I went post-haste to a ready-made tailor’s, who sold me a complete fit-out from head to foot. I did not examine the cut and fit of each garment very minutely, but went off satisfied that I was presenting a neat and respectable appearance. Before going on the stage, however, I discovered that the sleeves of the new coat, though perfectly smooth and well-behaved so long as the arms inside them were bent at the elbow, developed a remarkable cross-twist as soon as I let my arms hang straight down.

By means of holding it firm with the middle finger, I managed to keep the recalcitrant sleeve in position, and the affair passed off very well. Only my friends remarked, after the lecture, that they thought I looked a little bit stiff, especially when making my bow

to the audience.

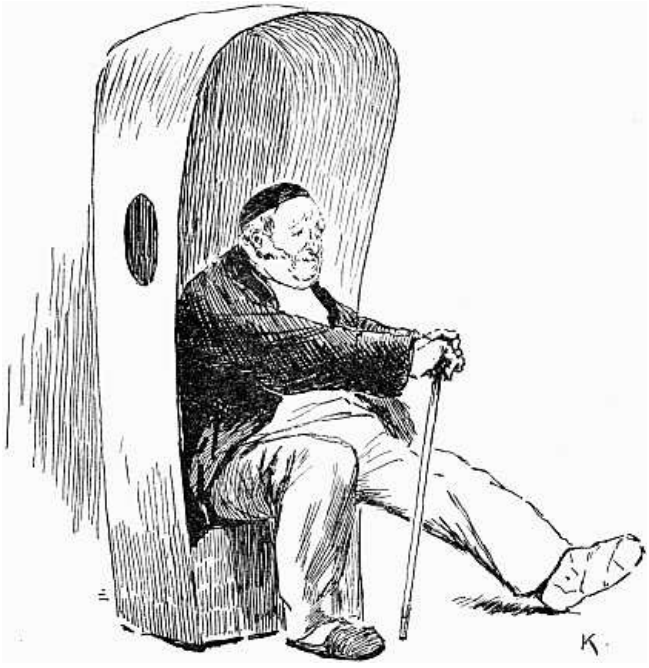
“A LITTLE BIT STIFF.”

. . . . . .

My lecture at Daly’s Theater this afternoon was given under the auspices of the Bethlehem Day Nursery, and I am thankful to think that this most interesting association is a little richer to-day than it was yesterday. For an afternoon audience it was remarkably warm and responsive.

I have many times lectured to afternoon audiences, but have not, as a rule, enjoyed it. Afternoon “shows” are a mistake. Do not ask me why; but think of those you have ever been to, and see if you have a lively recollection of them. There is a time for everything. Fancy playing the guitar under your lady love’s window by daylight, for instance!

Afternoon audiences are kid-gloved ones. There is but a sprinkling of men, and so the applause, when it comes, is a feeble affair, more chilling almost than silence. In some fashionable towns it is bad form to applaud at all in the afternoon. I have a vivid recollection of the effect produced one afternoon in Cheltenham by the vigorous applause of a sympathizing friend of mine, sitting in the reserved seats. How all the other reserved seats craned their necks in credulous astonishment to get a view of this innovator, this outer barbarian! He was new to the wondrous ways of the *Chillitonians*. In the same audience was a lady, Irish and very charming, as I found out on later acquaintance, who showed her appreciation from time to time by clapping the tips of her fingers together noiselessly, while her glance said: “I should very much like to applaud, but you know I can’t do it; we are in Cheltenham, and such a thing is bad form, especially in the afternoon.”



THE GOUTY MAN.

Afternoon audiences in the southern health resorts of England are probably the least inspiriting and inspiring of all. There are the sick, the lame, the halt. Some of them are very interesting people, but a large proportion appear to be suffering more from the boredom of life than any other complaint, and look as if it would do them good to follow out the well- 253
known advice, “Live on sixpence a day, and earn it.” It is hard work entertaining people who have done everything, seen everything, tasted everything, been everywhere—people whose sole aim is to kill time. A fair sprinkling are gouty. They spend most of their waking hours in a bath-chair. As a listener, the gouty man is sometimes decidedly funny. He gives signs of 254
life from time to time by a vigorous slap on his thigh and a vicious looking kick. Before I began to know him, I used to wonder whether it was my discourse producing some effect upon him.

I am not afraid of meeting these people in America. Few people are bored here, all are happy to live, and all work and are busy. American men die of brain fever, but seldom of the gout. If an American saw that he must spend his life wheeled in a bath-chair, he would reflect that rivers are numerous in America, and he would go and take a plunge into one of them.

CHAPTER XXIX. 255

WANDERINGS THROUGH NEW YORK—LECTURE AT THE HARMONIE CLUB—VISIT TO THE CENTURY CLUB.

New York, March 1.

THE more I see New York, the more I like it.

After lunch I had a drive through Central Park and Riverside Park, along the Hudson, and thoroughly enjoyed it. I returned to the Everett House through Fifth Avenue. I have never seen Central Park in summer, but I can realize how beautiful it must be when the trees are clothed. To have such a park in the heart of the city is perfectly marvelous. It is true that, with the exception of the superb Catholic Cathedral, Fifth Avenue has no monument worth mentioning, but the succession of stately mansions is a pleasant picture to the eye. What a pity this cathedral cannot stand in a square in front of some long thoroughfare, it would have a splendid effect. I know this was out of the question. Built as New York is, the cathedral could only take the place of a block. It simply represents so many numbers between Fiftieth and Fifty-first streets on Fifth Avenue.

In the Park I saw statues of Shakespeare, Walter Scott, and Robert Burns. I should have liked to see those of Longfellow, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and many other celebrities of the 256
land. Washington, Franklin, and Lincoln are practically the only Americans whose statues you see all over the country. They play here the part that Wellington and Nelson play in England. After all, the “bosses” and the local politicians who run the towns probably never heard of Longfellow, Bryant, Poe, etc.

. . . . . .

At four o’clock, Mr. Thomas Nast, the celebrated caricaturist, called. I was delighted to make his acquaintance, and found him a most charming man.

I dined with General Horace Porter and a few other friends at the Union League Club. The witty general was in his best vein.

At eight o’clock I lectured at the Harmonie Club, and had a large and most appreciative audience, composed of the pick of the Israelite community in New York.

After the lecture I attended one of the “Saturdays” at the Century Club, and met Mr. Kendal, who, with his talented wife, is having a triumphant progress through the United States.

There is no gathering in the world where you can see so many beautiful, intelligent faces as at the Century Club. There you see gathered together the cleverest men of a nation whose chief characteristic is cleverness.

CHAPTER XXX.

257

VISIT TO THE BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC—REV. DR. TALMAGE.

New York, *March* 2.

WENT to hear Dr. T. de Witt Talmage this morning at the Academy of Music, Brooklyn.

What an actor America has lost by Dr. Talmage choosing the pulpit in preference to the stage!

The Academy of Music was crowded. Standing-room only. For an old-fashioned European, to see a theater, with its boxes, stalls, galleries, open for divine service was a strange sight; but we had not gone very far into the service before it became plain to me that there was nothing divine about it. The crowd had come there, not to worship God, but to hear Mr. Talmage.

At the door the programme was distributed. It consisted of six hymns to be interluded with prayers by the doctor. Between the fifth and sixth, he delivered the lecture, or the sermon, if you insist on the name, and during the sixth there was the collection, that hinge on which the whole service turns in Protestant places of worship.

THE LEADER OF THE CHOIR.

I took a seat and awaited with the rest the entrance of Dr. Talmage. There was subdued conversation going on all around, 258
just as there would be at a theater or concert: in fact, throughout the whole of the proceedings, there was no sign of a silent lifting up of the spirit in worship. Not a person in that strange congregation, went on his or her knees to pray. Most of them put one hand in front of the face, and this was as near as they got that morning to an attitude of devotion. Except for this, and the fact that they did not applaud, there was absolutely no difference between them and any other theater audience I ever saw.

The monotonous hymns were accompanied by a *cornet-à-piston*, which lent a certain amount of life to them, but very little religious harmony. That cornet was the key-note of the whole performance. The hymns, composed, I believe, for Dr. Talmage’s flock, are not of high literary value. “General” Booth would probably hesitate to include such in the *répertoire* of the Salvation Army. Judge of them for yourself. Here are three illustrations culled from the 259
programme:

Sing, O sing, ye heirs of glory!
Shout your triumphs as you go:
Zion’s gates will open for you,
You shall find an entrance through.

’Tis the promise of God, full salvation to give
Unto him who on Jesus, his Son, will believe.

Though the pathway be lonely, and dangerous too, (*sic*)
Surely Jesus is able to carry me thro’.

This is poetry such as you find inside Christmas crackers.

Another hymn began:

One more day's work for Jesus,
One less of life for me!

I could not help thinking that there would be good employment for a prophet of God, with a stout whip, in the congregations of the so-called faithful of to-day. I have heard them by hundreds shouting at the top of their voices:

O Paradise, O Paradise!
'Tis weary waiting here;
I long to be where Jesus is,
To feel, to see him near.
O Paradise, O Paradise!
I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord,
In love, prepares for me!

Knowing something of those people outside the church doors, I have often thought what an edifying sight it would be if the Lord deigned to listen and take a few of them at their word. If the fearless Christ were here on earth again, what crowds of cheats and humbugs he would drive out of the Temple! And foremost, I fancy, would go the people who, instead of thanking their Maker who allows the blessed sun to shine, the birds to sing, and the flowers to grow for them here, howl and whine lies about longing for the joy of moving on to the better world, to the "special place" that is prepared for them. If there be a better world, it will be too good for hypocrites. 260

After hymn the fifth, Dr. Talmage takes the floor. The audience settled in their seats in evident anticipation of a good time, and it was soon clear to me that the discourse was not to be dull at any rate. But I waited in vain for a great thought, a lofty idea, or refined language. There came none. Nothing but commonplaces given out with tricks of voice and the gestures of a consummate actor. The modulations of the voice have been studied with care, no single platform trick was missing.

The doctor comes on the stage, which is about forty feet wide. He begins slowly. The flow of language is great, and he is never at a loss for a word. Motionless, in his lowest tones, he puts a question to us. Nobody replies, of course. Thereupon he paces wildly up and down the whole length of the stage. Then, bringing up in full view of his auditors, he stares at them, crosses his arms, gives a double and tremendous stamp on the boards, and in a terrific voice he repeats the question, and answers it. The desired effect is produced: he never misses fire.

Being an old stager of several years' standing myself, I admire him professionally. Nobody is edified, nobody is regenerated, nobody is improved, but all are entertained. It is not a divine service, but it is a clever performance, and the Americans never fail to patronize a clever performance. All styles go down with them. They will give a hearing to everybody but the bore, especially on Sundays, when other forms of entertainment are out of the running. 261

It is not only the Brooklyn public that are treated to the discourses of Dr. Talmage, but the whole of America. He syndicates his sermons, and they are published in Monday's newspapers in all quarters of America. I have also seen them reproduced in the Australian papers.

The delivery of these orations by Dr. Talmage is so superior to the matter they are made of, that to read them is slow indeed compared to hearing them. 262

At the back of the programme was a flaring advertisement of Dr. Talmage's paper, called:

CHRISTIAN HERALD AND SIGNS OF OUR TIMES.

A live, undenominational, illustrated Christian paper, with a weekly circulation of fifty thousand copies, and rapidly increasing. Every State of the Union, every Province of Canada, and every country in the world is represented on its enormous subscription list. Address your subscription to Mr. N., treasurer, etc.

"Signs of our times," indeed!

CHAPTER XXXI. 263

VIRGINIA—THE HOTELS—THE SOUTH—I WILL KILL A RAILWAY CONDUCTOR BEFORE I LEAVE AMERICA—PHILADELPHIA—IMPRESSIONS OF THE OLD CITY.

Petersburg, Va., March 3.

LEFT New York last night and arrived here at noon. No change in the scenery. The same burnt-up fields, the same placards all over the land. The roofs of houses, the trees in the forests, the fences in the fields, all announce to the world the magic properties of castor oil, aperients, and liver pills.

MY SUPPER.

A little village inn in the bottom of old Brittany is a palace of comfort compared to the best hotel of a Virginia town. I feel wretched. My bedroom is so dirty that I shall not dare to undress to-night. I have just had lunch: a piece of tough dried-up beef, custard pie, and a glass of filthy water, the whole served by an old negro on an old, ragged, dirty table-cloth. 264

Petersburg, which awakes so many souvenirs of the War of Secession, is a pretty town scattered with beautiful villas. It strikes one as a provincial town. To me, coming from the busy North, it looks asleep. The South has not yet recovered from its disasters of thirty years ago. That is what struck me most, when, two years ago, I went through Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia.

Now and then American eccentricity

reveals itself. I have just seen a church built on the model of a Greek temple, and surmounted with a pointed spire lately added. Just imagine to yourself Julius Cæsar with his toga and buskin on, and having a chimney-top hat on his head.

The streets seemed deserted, dead.

To my surprise, the Opera House was crowded to-night. The audience was fashionable and appreciative, but very cool, almost as cool as in Connecticut and Maine.

Heaven be praised! a gentleman invited me to have supper at a club after the lecture.

. . . . . .

March 4.

I am sore all over. I spent the night on the bed, outside, in my day clothes, and am bruised all over. I have pains in my gums too. Oh, that piece of beef yesterday! I am off to Philadelphia. My bill at the hotel amounts to $1.50. Never did I pay so much through the nose for what I had through the mouth.

. . . . . .

Philadelphia, *March* 4. 265

Before I return to Europe I will kill a railway conductor.

"IMAGINE JULIUS CÆSAR WITH A BIG HAT."

From Petersburg to Richmond I was the only occupant of the parlor car. It was bitterly cold. The conductor of the train came in the smoke-room, and took a seat. I suppose it was his right, although I doubt it, for he was not the conductor attached to the parlor car. He 266
opened the window. The cold, icy air fell on my legs, or (to use a more proper expression, as I am writing in Philadelphia) on my lower limbs. I said nothing, but rose and closed the window. The fellow frowned, rose, and opened the window again.

"Excuse me," I said; "I thought that perhaps you had come here to look after my comfort. If you have not I will look after it myself." And I rose and closed the window.

"I want the window open," said the conductor, and he prepared to re-open it, giving me a mute, impudent scowl.

I was fairly roused. Nature has gifted me with a biceps and a grip of remarkable power. I seized the man by the collar of his coat.

“As true as I am alive,” I exclaimed, “if you open this window, I will pitch you out of it.” And I prepared for war. The cur sneaked away and made an exit compared to which a whipped hound’s would be majestic.

. . . . . .

I am at the Bellevue, a delightful hotel. My friend Wilson Barrett is here, and I have come to spend the day with him. He is playing every night to crowded houses, and after each performance he has to make a speech. This is his third visit to Philadelphia. During the first visit, he tells me that the audience wanted a speech after each act.

It is always interesting to compare notes with a friend who has been over the same ground as yourself. So I was eager to hear Mr. Wilson Barrett’s impressions of his long tour in the States. 267

Several points we both agreed perfectly upon at once; the charming geniality and good-fellowship of the best Americans, the brilliancy and naturalness of the ladies, the wonderful intelligence and activity of the people, and the wearing monotony of life on the road.

THE WHIPPED CONDUCTOR.

After the scene in the train, I was interested, too, to find that the train conductors—those mute, magnificent monarchs of the railroad—had awakened in Mr. Barrett much the same feeling as in myself. We Europeans are used to a form of obedience or, at least, deference from our paid servants, and the arrogant attitude of the American wage-earner first amazes, and then enrages us—when we have not enough humor, or good-humor, to get some amusement out it. It is so novel to be tyrannized over by people whom you pay to attend to 268 your comfort! The American keeps his temper under the process, for he is the best-humored fellow in the world. Besides, a small squabble is no more in his line than a small anything else. It is not worth his while. The Westerner may pull out a pistol and shoot you if you annoy him, but neither he nor the Eastern man will wrangle for mastery.

A BOSS.

If such was not the case, do you believe for a moment that the Americans would submit to the rule of the “Rings,” the “Leaders,” and the “Bosses”?

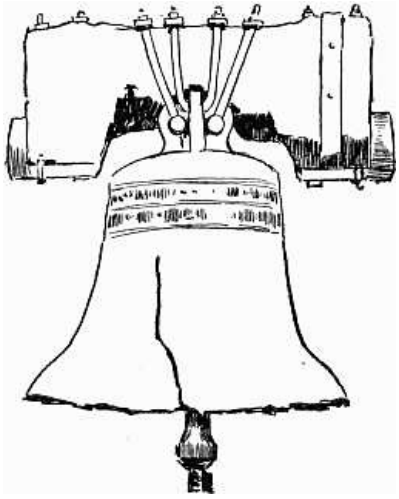
. . . . . .

I like Philadelphia, with its magnificent park, its beautiful houses that look like homes. It is not brand new, like the rest of America. 269

My friend, Mr. J. M. Stoddart, editor of *Lippincott’s Magazine*, has kindly chaperoned me all the day.

I visited in detail the State House, Independence Square. These words evoke sentiments of patriotism in the hearts of the Americans. Here was the bell that “proclaimed liberty throughout the Colonies” so loudly that it split. It was on the 8th of July, 1776, that the bell was rung, as the public reading of the Declaration of Independence took place in the State House on that day, and there were great rejoicings. John Adams, writing to Samuel Chase on the 9th of July, said: “The bell rang all day, and almost all night.”

It is recorded by one writer that, on the 4th of July, when the motion to adopt the declaration passed the majority of the Assembly, although not signed by all the delegates, the old bell-ringer awaited anxiously, with trembling hope, the signing. He kept saying: “They’ll never do it, they’ll never do it!” but his eyes expanded, and his grasp grew firm when the voice of a blue-eyed youth reached his ears in shouts of triumph as he flew up the stairs of the tower, shouting: “Ring, grandpa, ring; they’ve signed!” 270

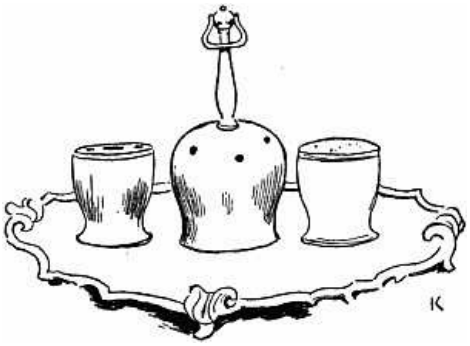


THE OLD LIBERTY BELL.

What a day this old “Liberty Bell” reminds you of!

There, in the Independence Hall, the delegates were gathered. Benjamin Harrison, the ancestor of the present occupier of the White House, seized John Hancock, upon whose head a price was set, in his arms, and placing him in the presidential chair, said: “We will show Mother Britain how little we care for her, by making our president a Massachusetts man, whom she has excluded from pardon by public proclamation,” and, says Mr. Chauncey M. Depew in one of his beautiful orations, when they were signing the Declaration, and the slender Elbridge Gerry uttered the grim pleasantry, “We must hang together, or surely we will hang separately,” the portly Harrison

responded with more daring humor, “It will be all over with me in a moment, but you will be kicking in the air half an hour after I am gone.”



THE INKSTAND.

The National Museum is the auxiliary chamber to Independence Hall, and there you find many most interesting relics of Colonial and Revolutionary days: the silver inkstand used in signing the famous Declaration; Hancock’s chair; the little table upon which the document was signed, and hundreds of souvenirs piously preserved by generations of grateful Americans. 271

. . . . . .

It is said that Philadelphia has produced only two successful men, Mr. Wanamaker, the great dry-goods-store man, now a member of President Benjamin Harrison’s Cabinet, and Mr. George W. Childs, proprietor of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, one of the most important and successful newspapers in the United States.

I went to Mr. Wanamaker’s dry-goods-store, an establishment strongly reminding you of the Paris *Bon Marché*, or Mr. Whiteley’s warehouses in London.

By far the most interesting visit was that which I paid to Mr. George W. Childs in his study at the *Public Ledger’s* offices. It would require a whole volume to describe in detail all the treasures that Mr. Childs has accumulated: curios of all kinds, rare books, manuscripts and autographs, portraits, china, relics from the celebrities of the world, etc. Mr. Childs, like the Prussians during their unwelcome visit to France in 1870, has a strong *penchant* for clocks. Indeed his collection is the most remarkable in existence. His study is a beautiful *sanctum sanctorum*; it is also a museum that not only the richest lover of art would be proud to possess, but that any nation would be too glad to acquire, if it could be acquired; but Mr. Childs is a very wealthy man, and he means to keep it, and, I understand, to hand it over to his successor in the ownership of the *Public Ledger*.

Mr. George W. Childs is a man of about fifty years of age, short and plump, with a most kind and amiable face. His munificence and philanthropy are well known and, as I understand his character, I believe he would not think much of my gratitude to him for the kindness he showed me if I dwelt on them in these pages. 272

. . . . . .

Thanks to my kind friends, every minute has been occupied visiting some interesting place, or meeting some interesting people. I shall lecture here next month, and shall look forward to the pleasure of being in Philadelphia again.

WHEN IRELAND IS FREE.

At the Union League Club I met Mr. Rufus E. Shapley, who kindly gave me a copy of his clever and witty political satire, “Solid for Mulhooly,” illustrated by Mr. Thomas Nast. I should advise any one who would understand how Jonathan is ruled municipally, to peruse this little book. It gives the history of Pat’s rise from the Irish cabin in Connaught to the City Hall of the large American cities. 273

“When one man,” says Mr. Shapley, “owns and dominates four wards or counties, he becomes a leader. Half a dozen such leaders combined constitute what is called a Ring. When one leader is powerful enough to bring three or four such leaders under his yoke, he becomes a Boss; and a Boss wields a power almost as absolute, while it lasts, as that of the Czar of Russia or the King of Zululand.”

Extracts from this book would not do it justice. It should be read in its entirety. I read it with all the more pleasure that, in “Jonathan and His Continent,” I ventured to say: “The English are always wondering why Americans all seem to be in favor of Home Rule, and ready to back up the cause with their dollars. Why? I will tell you. Because they are in hopes that, when the Irish recover the possession of Ireland, they will all go home.”

A foreigner who criticises a nation is happy to see his opinions shared by the natives.

CHAPTER XXXII. 274

My Ideas of the State of Texas—Why I Will Not Go There—The Story of a Frontier Man.

New York, *March* 5.

Have had cold audiences in Maine and Connecticut; and indifferent ones in several cities, while I have been warmly received in many others. It seems that, if I went to Texas, I might get it hot.

I have received to-day a Texas paper containing a short editorial marked at the four

corners in blue pencil. Impossible not to see it. The editorial abuses me from the first line to the last. When there appears in a paper an article, or even only a short paragraph, abusing you, you never run the risk of not seeing it. There always is, somewhere, a kind friend who will post it to you. He thinks you may be getting a little conceited, and he forwards the article to you, that you may use it as wholesome physic. It does him good, and does you no harm.

The article in question begins by charging me with having turned America and the Americans into ridicule, goes on wondering that the Americans can receive me so well everywhere, and, after pitching into me right and left, winds up by warning me that, if I should go to Texas, I might for a change meet with a hot reception. 275

A shot, perhaps.

A shot in Texas! No, no, no.

I won't go to Texas. I should strongly object to being shot anywhere, but especially in Texas, where the event would attract so little public attention.

"A SHOT IN TEXAS."

. . . . . .

Yet, I should have liked to go to Texas, for was it not from that State that, after the publication of "Jonathan and His Continent," I received the two following letters, which I have kept among my treasures? 276

DEAR SIR:

I have read your book on America and greatly enjoyed it. Please to send me your autograph. I enclose a ten-cent piece. The postage will cost you five cents. Don't trouble about the change.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have an album containing the photographs of many well-known people from Europe as well as from America. I should much like to add yours to the number. If you will send it to me, I will send you mine and that of my wife in return.

. . . . . .

And I also imagine that there must be in Texas a delightful primitiveness of manners and good-fellowship.

A friend once related to me the following reminiscence:

I arrived one evening in a little Texas town, and asked for a bedroom at the hotel.

There was no bedroom to be had, but only a bed in a double-bedded room.

"Will that suit you?" said the clerk.

“Well, I don’t know,” I said hesitatingly. “Who is the other?”

“Oh, that’s all right,” said the clerk, “you may set your mind at rest on that subject.”

“Very well,” I replied, “I will take that bed.”

At about ten o’clock, as I was preparing to go to bed, my bedroom companion entered. It was a frontier man in full uniform: Buffalo Bill hat, leather leggings, a belt accommodating a couple of revolvers—no baggage of any kind.

I did not like it.

“Hallo, stranger,” said the man, “how are you?”

“I’m pretty well,” I replied, without meaning a word of it.

The frontier man undressed, that is to say, took off his boots, placed the two revolvers under his pillows and lay down. 277

I liked it less and less.

By and by, we both went to sleep. In the morning we woke up at the same time. He rose, dressed—that is to say, put on his boots, and wished me good-morning.

MY ROOM-MATE.

The hall porter came with letters for my companion, but none for me. I thought I should like to let that man know I had no money with me. So I said to him: 278

“I am very much disappointed. I expected some money from New York, and it has not come.”

“I hope it will come,” he replied.

I did not like that hope.

In the evening, we met again. He undressed—you know, went to sleep, rose early in the morning, dressed—you know.

The porter came again with letters for him and none for me.

“Well, your money has not come,” he said.

“I see it has not. I’m afraid I’m going to be in a fix what to do.”

“I’m going away this morning.”

“Are you?” I said. “I’m sorry to part with you.”

The frontier man took a little piece of paper and wrote something on it.

“Take this, my friend,” he said; “it may be useful to you.”

It was a check for a hundred dollars.

I could have gone down on my knees, as I refused the check and asked that man’s pardon.

. . . . . .

I lectured in Brooklyn to-night, and am off to the West to-morrow morning.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

279

CINCINNATI—THE TOWN—THE SUBURBS—A GERMAN CITY—"OVER THE RHINE"—WHAT IS A GOOD PATRIOT?—AN IMPRESSIVE FUNERAL—A GREAT FIRE—HOW IT APPEARED TO ME, AND HOW IT APPEARED TO THE NEWSPAPER REPORTERS.

Cincinnati, March 7.

MY arrival in Cincinnati this morning was anything but triumphal.

On leaving the car, I gave my check to a cab-driver, who soon came to inform me that my valise was broken. It was a leather one, and on being thrown from the baggage-van on the platform, it burst open, and all my things were scattered about. In England or in France, half a dozen porters would have immediately come to the rescue, but here the porter is practically unknown. Three or four men belonging to the company gathered round, but, neither out of complaisance nor in the hope of gain, did any of them offer his services. They looked on, laughed, and enjoyed the scene. I daresay the betting was brisk as to whether I should succeed in putting my things together or not. Thanks to a leather strap I had in my bag, I managed to bind the portmanteau and have it placed on the cab that drove to the Burnet House.

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Immediately after registering my name, I went to buy an American trunk, that is to say, an iron-bound trunk, to place my things in safety. I have been told that trunk makers give a commission to the railway and transfer baggagemen who, having broken trunks, recommend their owners to go to such and such a place to buy new ones. This goes a long way toward explaining the way in which baggage is treated in America.

MY BROKEN VALISE.

On arriving in the dining-room, I was surprised to see the glasses of all the guests filled with lemonade. "Why," thought I, "here is actually an hotel which is not like all the other hotels." The lemonade turned out to be water from the Ohio River. I could not help feeling grateful for a change; any change, even that of the color of water. Anybody who has traveled a great deal in America will appreciate the remark.

281

Cincinnati is built at the bottom of a funnel from which rise hundreds of chimneys vomiting fire and smoke. From the neighboring heights, the city looks like a huge furnace, and so it is, a furnace of industry and activity. It reminded me of Glasgow.

If the city itself is anything but attractive, the residential parts are perfectly lovely. I have

seen nothing in America that surpasses Burnet Wood, situated on the bordering heights of the town, scattered with beautiful villas, and itself a mixture of a wilderness and a lovely park. A kind friend drove me for three hours through the entire neighborhood, giving me, in American fashion, the history of the owner of each residence we passed. Here was the house of Mr. A., or rather Mr. A. B. C, every American having three names. He came to the city twenty years ago without a dollar. Five years later he had five millions. He speculated and lost all, went to Chicago and made millions, which he afterward lost. Now again he has several millions, and so on. This is common enough in America. By and by, we passed the most beautiful of all the villas of Burnet Wood—the house of the Oil King, Mr. Alexander Macdonald, one of those wonderfully successful men, such as Scotland alone can boast all the world over. America has been a great field for the display of Scotch intelligence and industry.

After visiting the pretty museum at Eden Park, a museum organized in 1880 in 282
consequence of Mr. Charles W. West's offer to give $150,000 for that purpose, and already in possession of very good works of art and many valuable treasures, we returned to the city and stopped at the Public Library. Over 200,000 volumes, representing all the branches of science and literature, are there, as well as a collection of all the newspapers of the world, placed in chronological order on the shelves and neatly bound. I believe that this collection of newspapers and that of Washington are the two best known. In the public reading-room, hundreds of people are running over the newspapers from Europe and all the principal cities of the United States. My best thanks are due to Mr. Whelpley, the librarian, for his kindness in conducting me all over this interesting place. Upstairs I was shown the room where the members of the Council of Education hold their sittings. The room was all topsy-turvey. Twenty-six desks and twenty-six chairs was about all the furniture of the room. In a corner, piled up together, were the cuspidores. I counted. Twenty-six. Right.

After thanking my kind pilot, I returned to the Burnet House to read the evening papers. I read that the next day I was to breakfast with Mr. A., lunch with Mr. B., and dine with Mr. C. The *menu* was not published. I take it for granted that this piece of intelligence is quite interesting to the readers of Cincinnati.

My evening being free, I looked at the column of amusements. The first did not tempt me, 283
it was this:

THE KING OF THE SWAMPS.

The Only and the Original.

ENGLISH JACK.
THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE FROG MAN.

He makes a frog pond of his stomach by eating living frogs. An appetite created by life in the swamps. He is so fond of this sort of food that he takes the pretty creatures by the hind legs, and before they can say their prayers they are inside out of the cold.

"THE KING OF THE SWAMPS."

The next advertisement was that of a variety show, that most stupid form of entertainment

so popular in America; the next was the announcement of pugilists, and another one that of a “most sensational drama, in which ‘one of the most emotional actresses’ in America” was to appear, supported by “one of the most powerful casts ever gathered together in the world.” 284

The superlatives, in American advertisements, have long ceased to have the slightest effect upon me.

The advertisement of another “show” ran thus: I beg to reproduce it in its entirety; indeed it would be a sacrilege to meddle with it.

TO THE PUBLIC.

My Friends and Former Patrons: I have now been before the public for the past seventeen years, and am perhaps too well known to require further evidence of my character and integrity than my past life and record will show. Fifteen years ago I inaugurated the system of dispensing presents to the public, believing that a fair share of my profits could thus honestly be returned to my patrons. At the outset, and ever since, it has been my aim to deal honestly toward the multitude who have given me patronage. Since that time many imitators have undertaken to beguile the public, with but varying success. Many unprincipled rascals have also appeared upon the scene, men without talent, but far-reaching talons, who by specious promises have sought to swindle all whom they could inveigle. This class of scoundrels do not hesitate to make promises that they cannot and never intend to fulfill, and should be frowned down by all honest men. They deceive the public, leave a bad impression, and thus injure legitimate exhibitions. Every promise I make will be faithfully fulfilled, as experience has clearly proven that dealing uprightly with the public brings its sure reward. All who visit my beautiful entertainment may rely upon the same fair dealing which has been my life-long policy, and which has always honored me with crowded houses.

NEW UNIQUE PASTIMES.	NEW HARMLESS MIRTH.
NEW COSTLY WONDERS.	NEW FAMOUS ARTISTS.
NEW PLEASANT STUDIES.	NEW INNOCENT FUN.
NEW POPULAR MUSIC.	NEW KNOWLEDGE.

Special Notice.

Ladies and Children are especially Invited to Attend this Entertainment. We Guarantee it to be Chaste, Pure, and as Wholesome and Innocent as it is Amusing and Laughable.

Finally I decided on going to see a German tragedy. I did not understand it, but the acting seemed to me good. 285

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A GERMAN TRAGEDY.

Like Milwaukee, Cincinnati possesses a very strong German element. Indeed a whole part of the city is entirely inhabited by a German population, and situated on one side of the water. When you cross the bridge in its direction, you are going “over the Rhine,” to use the local expression. “To go over the Rhine” of an evening means to go to one of the many German *Brauerei*, and have sausages and Bavarian beer for supper. 286

The town is a very prosperous one. The Germans in America are liked for their steadiness and industry. An American friend even told me that the Germans were perhaps the best patriots the United States could boast of.

Patriots! The word sounded strangely to my ears. I may be prejudiced, but I call a good patriot a man who loves his own mother country. You may like the land of your adoption, but you love the land of your birth. Good patriots! I call a good brother a man who loves his sister, not other people’s sisters.

The Germans apply for their naturalization papers the day after they have landed. I should admire their patriotism much more if they waited a little longer before they changed their own mother for a step-mother.

. . . . . .

March 8.

I witnessed a most impressive ceremony this morning, the funeral of the American Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Berlin, whose body was brought from Germany to his native place a few days ago. No soldiers ordered to accompany the *cortège,* no uniforms, but thousands of people voluntarily doing honor to the remains of a talented and respected fellow-citizen and townsman: a truly republican ceremony in its simplicity and earnestness.

The coffin was taken to the Music Hall, a new and beautiful building capable of accommodating thousands of people, and placed on the platform amid evergreens and the Stars and Stripes. In a few minutes, the hall, decorated with taste but with appropriate 287
simplicity, was packed from floor to ceiling. Some notables and friends of the late Minister sat on the platform around the coffin, and the mayor, in the name of the inhabitants of the city, delivered a speech, a eulogistic funeral oration, on the deceased diplomatist. All parties were represented in the hall, Republicans and Democrats alike had come. America admits no party feeling, no recollection of political differences, to intrude upon the homage she gratefully renders to the memory of her illustrious dead.

The mayor’s speech, listened to by the crowd in respectful silence, was much like all the speeches delivered on such occasions, including the indispensable sentence that “he knew he could safely affirm that the deceased had never made any enemies.” When I hear a man spoken of, after his death, as never having made any enemies, as a Christian I admire him, but I also come to the conclusion that he must have been a very insignificant member of the community. But the phrase, I should remember, is a mere piece of flattery to the dead, in a country where death puts a stop to all enmity, political enmity especially. The same would be done in England, and almost everywhere. Not in France, however, where the dead continue to have implacable enemies for many years after they have left the lists.

. . . . . .

The afternoon was pleasantly spent visiting the town hall and the remarkable china manufactories, which turn out very pretty, quaint, and artistic pottery. The evening brought to the Odéon a fashionable and most cultivated audience. I am invited to pay a return visit to 288
this city. I shall look forward to the pleasure of lecturing here again in April.

. . . . . .

March 9.

Spent a most agreeable Sunday in the hospitable house of M. Fredin, the French consular agent, and his amiable and talented wife. M. Fredin was kind enough to call yesterday at the Burnet House.

As a rule, I never call on the representatives of France in my travels abroad. If I traveled

as a tourist, I would; but traveling as a lecturer, I should be afraid lest the object of my visits might be misconstrued, and taken as a gentle hint to patronize me.

One day I had a good laugh with a French consul, in an English town where I came to lecture. On arriving at the hall I found a letter from this diplomatic compatriot, in which he expressed his surprise that I had not apprised him of my arrival. The next morning, before leaving the town, I called on him. He welcomed me most gracefully.

“Why did you not let me, your consul, know that you were coming?” he said to me.

“Well, Monsieur le Consul,” I replied, “suppose I wrote to you: ‘Monsieur le Consul, I shall arrive at N. on Friday,’ and suppose, now, just suppose, that you answered me, ‘Sir, I am glad to hear you will arrive here on Friday, but what on earth is that to me?’”

He saw the point at once. A Frenchman always does.

. . . . . .

March 10. 289

I like this land of conjuring. This morning I took the street car to go on the Burnet Hills. At the foot of the hill the car—horses, and all—enters a little house. The house climbs the hill vertically by means of cables. Arrived at the top of the mountain, the car comes out of the little house and goes on its way, just as if absolutely nothing had happened. To return to town, I went down the hill in the same fashion. But if the cable should break, you will exclaim, where would you be? Ah, there you are! It does not break. It did once, so now they see that it does not again.

A VARIETY ACTOR.

In the evening there was nothing to see except variety shows and wrestlers. There was a variety show which tempted me, the Hermann’s Vaudevilles. I saw on the list of attractions the name of my friend and compatriot, F. Trewey, the famous shadowgraphist, and I concluded that if the other artistes were as good in their lines as he is in his, it would be well worth seeing. The show was very good of its kind, and Trewey was admirable; but the audience were not refined, and it was not his most subtle and artistic tricks that they applauded most, but the broader 290 and more striking ones. After the show he and I went “over the Rhine.” You know what it means.

. . . . . .

March 11, 9 *a. m.*

For a long time I had wished to see the wonderful American fire brigades at work. The wish has now been satisfied.

At half-past one this morning I was roused in my bed by the galloping of horses and the shouts of people in the street. Huge tongues of fire were licking my window, and the heat in the room was intense. Indeed, all around me seemed to be in a blaze, and I took it for granted that the Burnet House was on fire. I rose and dressed quickly, put together the few valuables that were in my possession, and prepared to make for the street. I soon saw, however, that it was a block of houses opposite that was on fire, or rather the corner house of that block.

The guests of the hotel were in the corridors ready for any emergency. Had there been any wind in our direction, the hotel was doomed. The night was calm and wet. As soon as we became aware that no lives were lost or in danger in the burning building, and that it would only be a question of insurance money to be paid by some companies, we betook ourselves to admire the magnificent sight. For it was a magnificent sight, this whole large building, the prey of flames coming in torrents out of every window, the dogged perseverance of the firemen streaming floods of water over the roof and through the windows, the salvage corps 291

men penetrating through the flames into the building in the hope of receiving the next day a commission on all the goods and valuables saved. A fierce battle it was between a brute element and man. By three o’clock the element was conquered, but only the four walls of the building remained, which proved to me that, with all their wonderful promptitude and gallantry, all firemen can do when flames have got firm hold on a building is to save the adjoining property.

A FIRE YARN.

I listened to the different groups of people in the hotel. Some gave advice as to how the firemen should set about their work, or criticised. Others related the big fires they had witnessed, a few indulging in the recital of the exploits they performed thereat. There are a good many Gascons among the Americans. At four o’clock all danger was over, and we all retired. 292

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AS WE SAW IT.

AS THE REPORTERS SAW IT.

I was longing to read the descriptions of the fire in this morning’s papers. I have now read 293
them and am not at all disappointed. On the contrary, they are beyond my most sanguine
expectations. Wonderful; simply perfectly wonderful! I am now trying to persuade myself
that I really saw all that the reporters saw, and that I really ran great danger last night. For, 294
“at every turn,” it appears, “the noble hotel seemed as if it must become the prey of the
fierce element, and could only be saved by a miracle.” Columns and columns of details most
graphically given, sensational, blood-curdling. But all that is nothing. You should read about
the panic, and the scenes of wild confusion in the Burnet House, when all the good folks,
who had all dressed and were looking quietly at the fire from the windows, are described as 295
a crowd of people in despair: women disheveled, in their night-dresses, running wild, and
throwing themselves in the arms of men to seek protection, and all shrieking and panic-
stricken. Such a scene of confusion and terror you can hardly imagine. Wonderful!

THE FIREMAN.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

296

A Journey if you Like—Terrible Encounter with an American Interviewer.

In the train to Brushville, March 11.

LEFT Cincinnati this morning at ten o'clock and shall not arrive at Brushville before seven o'clock to-night. I am beginning to learn how to speak American. As I asked for my ticket this morning at the railroad office, the clerk said to me:

"C. H. D. or C. C. C. St. L. and St. P.?"

"C. H. D.," I replied, with perfect assurance.

I happened to hit on the right line for Brushville.

By this time I know pretty well all those combinations of the alphabet by which the different railroad lines of America are designated.

No hope of comfort or of a dinner to-day. I shall have to change trains three times, but none of them, I am grieved to hear, have parlor cars or dining cars. There is something democratic about uniform cars for all alike. I am a democrat myself, yet I have a weakness for the parlor cars—and the dining cars.

At noon we stopped five minutes at a place which, two years ago, counted six wooden huts. To-day it has more than 5000 inhabitants, the electric light in the streets, a public library, two hotels, four churches, two banks, a public school, a high school, cuspidores, 297
toothpicks, and all the signs of American civilization.

I changed trains at one o'clock at Castle Green Junction. No hotel in the place. I inquired where food could be obtained. A little wooden hut, on the other side of the depot, bearing the inscription "Lunch Room," was pointed out to me. *Lunch* in America has not the meaning that it has in England, as I often experienced to my despair. The English are solid people. In England *lunch* means something. In America, it does not. However, as there was no *Beware* written outside, I entered the place. Several people were eating pies, fruit pies, pies with crust under, and crust over: sealed mysteries.

"I want something to eat," I said to a man behind the counter, who was in possession of only one eye, and hailed from Old Oireland.

"What 'd ye loike?" replied he, winking with the eye that was not there.

"Well, what have you got?"

"Peach poy, apricot poy, apple poy, and mince poy."

"Is that all?" 298

"And, shure, what more do you want?"

"PEACH POY AND APPLE POY."

I have always suspected something mysterious about mince pies. At home, I eat mince pies. I also trust my friends' cooks. Outside, I pass. I think that mince pies and sausages should be made at home.

“I like a little variety,” I said to the Irishman, “give me a small slice of apple pie, one of apricot pie, and another of peach pie.”

The Irishman stared at me.

“What’s the matter with the mince poy?” he seemed to say.

I could see from his eye that he resented the insult offered to his mince pies.

I ate my pies and returned on the platform. I was told that the train was two hours behind time, and I should be too late to catch the last Brushville train at the next change.

I walked and smoked.

The three pies began to get acquainted with each other.

. . . . . .

Brushville, March 12.

Oh, those pies!

At the last change yesterday, I arrived too late. The last Brushville train was gone.

The pies were there.

A fortune I would have given for a dinner and a bed, which now seemed more problematic than ever.

I went to the station-master.

“Can I have a special train to take me to Brushville to-night?”

“A hundred dollars.” 299

“How much for a locomotive alone?”

“Sixty dollars.”

“Have you a freight train going to Brushville?”

“What will you do with it?”

“Board it.”

“Board it! I can’t stop the train.”

“I’ll take my chance.”

“Your life is insured?”

“Yes; for a great deal more than it is worth.”

“Very well,” he said, “I’ll let you do it for five dollars.”

And he looked as if he was going to enjoy the fun. The freight train arrived, slackened speed, and I boarded, with my portmanteau and my umbrella, a car loaded with timber. I placed my handbag on the timber—you know, the one I had when traveling in “the neighborhood of Chicago”—sat on it, opened my umbrella, and waved a “tata” to the station-master.

ON THE ROAD TO BRUSHVILLE.

It was raining fast, and I had a journey of some thirty miles to make at the rate of about twelve miles an hour.

Oh, those pies! They now seemed to have resolved to fight it out. *Sacrebleu! De bleu! de bleu!*

A few miles from Brushville I had to get out, or rather, get down, and take a ticket for Brushville on board a local train. 300

Benumbed with cold, wet through, and famished, I arrived here at ten o’clock last night. The peach pie, the apple pie, and the apricot pie had settled their differences and become on friendly and accommodating terms.

I was able, on arriving at the hotel, to enjoy some light refreshments, which I only obtained, at that time of night, thanks to the manager, whom I had the pleasure of knowing personally.

At eleven o'clock I went to bed, or, to use a more proper expression for my Philadelphia readers, I retired.

I had been "retiring" for about half an hour, when I heard a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" I grumbled from under the bedclothes.

"A representative of the Brushville *Express*."

"Oh," said I, "I am very sorry—but I'm asleep."

"Please let me in; I won't detain you very long."

"I guess you won't. Now, please do not insist. I am tired, upset, ill, and I want rest. Come to-morrow morning."

"No, I can't do that," answered the voice behind the door; "my paper appears in the morning, and I want to put in something about you."

"Now, do go away," I pleaded, "there's a good fellow."

"I must see you," insisted the voice.

"You go!" I cried, "you go——" without mentioning any place. 301

For a couple of minutes there was silence, and I thought the interviewer was gone. The illusion was sweet, but short. There was another knock, followed by a "I really must see you to-night." Seeing that there would be no peace until I had let the reporter in, I unbolted the door, and jumped back into my—you know.

THE INTERVIEWER.

It was pitch dark.

The door opened; and I heard the interviewer's steps in the room. By and by, the sound of a pocket being searched was distinct. It was his own. A match was pulled out and struck; the premises examined and reconnoitered.

A chandelier with three lights hung in the middle of the room. The reporter, speechless and solemn, lighted one burner, then two, then three, chose the most comfortable seat, and 302
installed himself in it, looking at me with an air of triumph.

I was sitting up, wild and desheveled, in my "retiring" clothes.

"*Que voulez-vous?*" I wanted to yell, my state of drowsiness allowing me to think only in French.

Instead of translating this query by "What do you want?" as I should have done, if I had been in the complete enjoyment of my intellectual faculties, I shouted to him:

"What will you have?"

“Oh, thanks, I’m not particular,” he calmly replied. “I’ll have a little whisky and soda—rye whisky, please.”

My face must have been a study as I rang for whisky and soda.

The mixture was brought—for two.

“I suppose you have no objection to my smoking?” coolly said the man in the room.

“Not at all,” I remarked; “this is perfectly lovely; I enjoy it all.”

He pulled out his pocket-book and his pencil, crossed his legs, and having drawn a long whiff from his cigar, he said:

“I see that you have no lecture to deliver in Brushville; may I ask you what you have come here for?”

“Now,” said I, “what the deuce is that to you? If this is the kind of questions you have to ask me, you go——”

He pocketed the rebuff, and went on undisturbed:

“How are you struck with Brushville?”

“I am struck,” said I, “with the cheek of some of the inhabitants. I have driven to this hotel from the depot in a closed carriage, and I have seen nothing of your city.” 303

The man wrote down something.

“I lecture to-morrow night,” I continued, “before the students of the State University, and I have come here for rest.”

He took this down.

“All this, you see, is very uninteresting; so, good-night.”

And I disappeared.

The interviewer rose and came to my side.

“Really, now that I am here, you may as well let me have a chat with you.”

“You wretch!” I exclaimed. “Don’t you see that I am dying for sleep? Is there nothing sacred for you? Have you lost all sense of charity? Have you no mother? Don’t you believe in future punishment? Are you a man or a demon?”

“Tell me some anecdotes, some of your reminiscences of the road,” said the man, with a sardonic grin.

I made no reply. The imperturbable reporter resumed his seat and smoked.

“Are you gone?” I sighed, from under the blankets.

The answer came in the following words:

“I understand, sir, that when you were a young man——”

“When I was WHAT?” I shouted, sitting up once more.

“I understand, sir, that when you were *quite* a young man,” repeated the interviewer, with the sentence improved, “you were an officer in the French army.” 304

“I was,” I murmured, in the same position.

“I also understand you fought during the Franco-Prussian war.”

“I did,” I said, resuming a horizontal position.

“May I ask you to give me some reminiscences of the Franco-Prussian war—just enough to fill about a column?”

I rose and again sat up.

“Free citizen of the great American Republic,” said I, “beware, beware! There will be blood shed in this room to-night.”

And I seized my pillow.

“You are not meaty,” exclaimed the reporter.

“May I inquire what the meaning of this strange expression is?” I said, frowning; “I don’t speak American fluently.”

“It means,” he replied, “that there is very little to be got out of you.”

“Are you going?” I said, smiling.

“Well, I guess I am.”

“Good-night.”

“Good-night.”

I bolted the door, turned out the gas, and “re-retired.”

“Poor fellow,” I thought; “perhaps he relied on me to supply him with material for a column. I might have chatted with him. After all, these reporters have invariably been kind to me. I might as well have obliged him. What is he going to do?”

And I dreamed that he was dismissed. 305

I ought to have known better.

This morning I opened the Brushville *Express*, and, to my stupefaction, saw a column about me. My impressions of Brushville, that I had no opportunity of looking at, were there. Nay, more. I would blush to record here the exploits I performed during the Franco-Prussian war, as related by my interviewer, especially those which took place at the battle of Gravelotte, where, unfortunately, I was not present. The whole thing was well written. The reference to my military services began thus: “Last night a hero of the great Franco-Prussian war slept under the hospitable roof of Morrison Hotel, in this city.”

“Slept!” This was adding insult to injury.

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This morning I had the visit of two more reporters.

“What do you think of Brushville?” they said; and, seeing that I would not answer the question, they volunteered information on Brushville, and talked loud on the subject. I have no doubt that the afternoon papers will publish my impressions of Brushville.

CHAPTER XXXV. 306

THE UNIVERSITY OF INDIANA—INDIANAPOLIS—THE VETERANS OF THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC ON THE SPREE—A MARVELOUS EQUILIBRIST.

Bloomington, Ind., March 13.

LECTURED yesterday before the students of the University of Indiana, and visited the different buildings this morning. The university is situated on a hill in the midst of a wood, about half a mile from the little town of Bloomington.

In a few days I shall be at Ann Arbor, the University of Michigan, the largest in America, I am told. I will wait till then to jot down my impressions of university life in this country.

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I read in the papers: “Prince Saunders, colored, was hanged here (Plaquemine, Fla.) yesterday. He declared he had made his peace with God, and his sins had been forgiven. Saunders murdered Rhody Walker, his sweetheart, last December, a few hours after he had witnessed the execution of Carter Wilkinson.”

If Saunders has made his peace with God, I hope his executioners have made theirs with God and man. What an indictment against man! What an argument against capital punishment! Here is a man committing a murder on returning from witnessing an execution. And there are men still to be found who declare that capital punishment deters men from committing murder! 307

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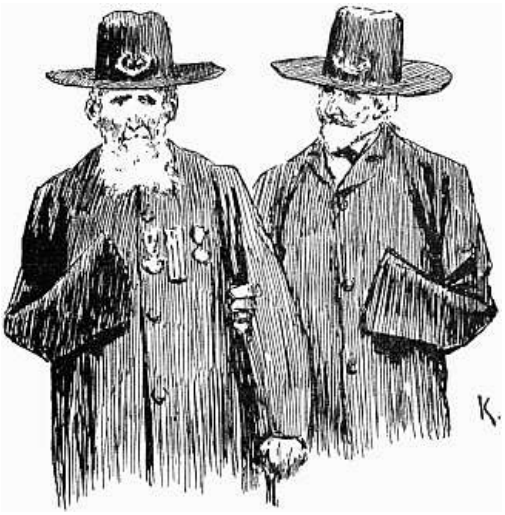

VETERANS.

Indianapolis, *March* 14.

Arrived here yesterday afternoon. Met James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet. Mr. Riley is a man of about thirty, a genuine poet, full of pathos and humor, and a great reciter. No one, I imagine, could give his poetry as he does himself. He is a born actor, who holds you in suspense, and makes you cry or laugh just as he pleases. I remember, when two years ago Mr. Augustin Daly gave a farewell supper to Mr. Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry at Delmonico’s, Mr. Riley recited one of his poems at table. He gave most of us a big lump in our throats, and Miss Terry had tears rolling down her cheeks. 308

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A GREAT BALANCING FEAT.

The veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic are having a great field day in Indianapolis. They have come here to attend meetings and ask for pensions, so as to reduce that unmanageable surplus. Indianapolis is full, and the management of Denison House does not know which way to turn. All these veterans have large, broad-brimmed soft hats and are covered all over with badges and ribbons. Their wives and daughters, members of some patriotic association, have come with them. It is a huge picnic. The entrance hall is crowded all day. The spittoons have been replaced by tubs for the occasion. Chewing is in favor all 309
over America, but the State of Indiana beats, in that way, everything I have seen before.

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"IN EUROPE SWAGGERING LITTLE BOYS SMOKE."

Went to see Clara Morris in Adolphe Belot's "Article 47," at the Opera House, last night. Clara Morris is a powerful actress, but, like most actors and actresses who go "starring" through America, badly supported. I watched the audience with great interest. Nineteen mouths out of twenty were chewing—the men tobacco, the women gum impregnated with 310
peppermint. All the jaws were going like those of so many ruminants grazing in a field. From the box I occupied the sight was most amusing.

On returning to Denison House from the theater, I went to have a smoke in a quiet corner of the hall, far from the crowd. By and by two men, most smartly dressed, with diamond pins

in their cravats, and flowers embroidered on their waistcoats, came and sat opposite me. I thought they had chosen the place to have a quiet chat together. Not so. One pushed a cuspidore with his foot and brought it between the two chairs. There, for half an hour, without saying one word to each other, they chewed, hawked, and spat—and had a good time before going to bed.

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Trewey is nowhere as an equilibrist, compared to a gallant veteran who breakfasted at my table, this morning. Among the different courses brought to him were two boiled eggs, almost raw, poured into a tumbler according to the American fashion. Without spilling a drop, he managed to eat those eggs with the end of his knife. It was marvelous. I have never seen the like of it, even in Germany, where the knife trick is practiced from the tenderest age.

In Europe, swaggering little boys smoke; here they chew and spit, and look at you, as if to say: “See what a big man I am!”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

311

Chicago (Second Visit)—Vassili Vereschagin’s Exhibition—The “Angelus”—Wagner and Wagnerites—Wanderings About the Big City—I Sit on the Tribunal.

Chicago, *March* 15.

Arrived here this morning and put up at the Grand Pacific Hotel. My lecture to-night at the Central Music Hall is advertised as a *causerie*. My local manager informs me that many people have inquired at the box-office what the meaning of that French word is. As he does not know himself, he could not enlighten them, but he thinks that curiosity will draw a good crowd to-night.

This puts me in mind of a little incident which took place about a year ago. I was to make my appearance before an afternoon audience in the fashionable town of Eastbourne. Not wishing to convey the idea of a serious and prosy discourse, I advised my manager to call the entertainment “*A causerie*.” The room was full and the affair passed off very well. But an old lady, who was a well-known patroness of such entertainments, did not put in an appearance. On being asked the next day why she was not present, she replied: “Well, to tell you the truth, when I saw that they had given the entertainment a French name, I was afraid it might be something not quite fit for me to hear.” Dear soul!

312

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March 16.

My manager’s predictions were realized last night. I had a large audience, one of the keenest and the most responsive and appreciative I have ever had. I was introduced by Judge Elliott Anthony, of the Superior Court, in a short, witty, and graceful little speech. He spoke of Lafayette and of the debt of gratitude America owes to France for the help she received at her hands during the War of Independence. Before taking leave of me, Judge Anthony kindly invited me to pay a visit to the Superior Court next Wednesday.

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March 17.

Dined yesterday with Mr. James W. Scott, proprietor of the Chicago *Herald*, one of the most flourishing newspapers in the United States, and in the evening went to see Richard Mansfield in “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.” The play is a repulsive one, but the double

impersonation gives the great actor a magnificent opportunity for the display of his histrionic powers. The house was crowded, though it was Sunday. The pick of Chicago society was not there, of course. Some years ago, I was told, a Sunday audience was mainly composed of men. To-day the women go as freely as the men. The “horrible” always has a great fascination for the masses, and Mansfield held his popular audience in a state of breathless suspense. There was a great deal of disappointment written on the faces when the light was turned down on the appearance of “Mr. Hyde,” with his horribly distorted features. A woman, sitting in a box next to the one I occupied, exclaimed, as “Hyde” came to explain his terrible secret to the doctor, in the fourth act, “What a shame, they are turning down the light again!”

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313

“DEAR SOUL!”

March 18. 314

Spent yesterday in recreation intellectual—and otherwise. I like to see everything, and I have no objection to entering a dime museum. I went to one yesterday morning, and saw a bearded lady, a calf with two heads, a gorilla (stuffed), a girl with no arms, and other freaks of nature. The bearded lady had very, very masculine features, but *honi soit qui mal y pense*. I could not help thinking of one of General Horace Porter’s good stories. A school-master asks a little boy what his father is.

“Please, sir, papa told me not to tell.”

“Oh, never mind, it’s all right with me.”

“Please, sir, he is the bearded lady at the dime museum.”

From the museum I went to the free library in the City Hall. Dime museums and free libraries—such is America. The attendance at the free libraries increases rapidly every day, and the till at the dime museums diminishes with proportionate rapidity.

After lunch I paid a visit to the exhibition of Vassili

Vereschagin’s pictures. What on earth could possess the talented Russian artist, whose coloring is so lovely, to expend his labor on such subjects! Pictures like those, which show the horrors of a campaign in all their hideousness, may serve a good purpose in creating a detestation of war in all who see them. Nothing short of such a motive in the artist could excuse the portrayal of such infamies. These pictures are so many nightmares which will certainly haunt my eyes and brain for days and nights to come. Battle scenes portrayed with a realism that is revolting, because, alas, only too true. The execution of nihilists in a dim, dreary, snow-covered waste. An execution of sepoys, the doomed rebels tied to the mouths of cannon about to be fired off. Scenes of torture, illustrative of the extent to which human suffering can be carried, give you cold shudders in every fiber of your body. One horrid canvas shows a deserted battlefield, the snow-covered ground littered with corpses that ravens are tearing and fighting for. But, perhaps worst of all, is a picture of a field, where, in the snow, lie the human remains of a company of Russian soldiers who have been surprised and slain by Turks. Among the bodies, outraged by horrible and nameless mutilations, walks a priest, swinging a censer. One seems to be pursued by, and impregnated with, a smell of cadaverous putrefaction. This collection of pictures is installed in a place which has been used for stabling horses in, and is reeking with stable odors and the carbolic acid that has been employed to neutralize them. Your sense of smell is in full sympathy with your horrified sense of sight: both are revolted.

315

“THE BEARDED LADY.”

316

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Now, behind the three large rooms devoted to the Russian artist’s works was a small one, in which hung a single picture. You little guess that that picture was no other than Jean Francois Millet’s “Angelus.” Millet’s dear little “Angelus,” that hymn of resignation and peace, alongside of all this roar and carnage of battle! The exhibitor thought, perhaps, that a sedative might be needed after the strong dose of Vassili Vereschagin, but I imagine that no one who went into that little room after the others was in a mood to listen to Millet’s message.

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March 19.

Yesterday morning I went to see the Richmond Libby Prison, a four-story, huge brick building which has been removed here from Richmond, over a distance of more than a thousand miles, across the mountains of Pennsylvania. This is, perhaps, as the circular says, an unparalleled feat in the history of the world. The prison has been converted into a museum, illustrating the Civil War and African Slavery in America. The visit proved very interesting. In the afternoon I had a drive through the beautiful parks of the city.

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In the evening I went to see “Tannhäuser” at the Auditorium. Outside, the building looks more like a penitentiary than a place of amusement—a huge pile of masonry, built of great, rough, black-looking blocks of stone. Inside, it is magnificent. I do not know anything to compare with it for comfort, grandeur, and beauty. It can hold seven thousand people. The decorations are white and gold. The lighting is done by means of arc electric lights in the enormously lofty roof—lights which can be lowered at will. Mr. Peck kindly took me to see the inner workings of the stage. I should say “stages,” for there are three. The hydraulic machinery for raising and lowering them cost $200,000.

Madame Lehmann sang grandly. I imagine that she is the finest lady exponent of Wagner’s music alive. She not only sings the parts, but looks them. Built on grand lines and crowned with masses of blond hair, she seems, when she gives forth those volumes of clear tones, a Norse goddess strayed into the nineteenth century.

M. Gounod describes Wagner as an astounding prodigy, an aberration of genius, a dreamer haunted by the colossal. For years I had listened to Wagner’s music, and, like most of my compatriots, brought up on the tuneful airs of Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, Verdi, Auber,

etc., I entirely failed to appreciate the music of the future. All I could say in its favor was some variation of the sentiment once expressed by Mr. Edgar W. Nye (“Bill Nye”) who, after giving the subject his mature consideration, said he came to the conclusion that Wagner’s 318
music was not so bad as it sounded. But I own that since I went to Bayreuth and heard and saw the operas as there given, I began not only to see that they are beautiful, but why they are beautiful.

Wagnerian opera is a poetical and musical idealization of speech.

The fault that I, like many others, have fallen into, was that of listening to the voices instead of listening to the orchestra. The fact is, the voices could almost be dispensed with altogether. The orchestra gives you the beautiful poem in music, and the personages on the stage are really little more than illustrative puppets. They play about the same part in the work that pictures play in a book. Wagner’s method was something so new, so different to all we had been accustomed to, that it naturally provoked much indignation and enmity—not because it was bad, but because it was new. It was the old story of the Classicists and Romanticists over again.

If you wanted to write a symphony, illustrative of the pangs and miseries of a sufferer from toothache, you would, if you were a disciple of Wagner, write your orchestral score so that the instruments should convey to the listener the whole gamut of groans—the temporary relief, the return of the pain, the sudden disappearance of it on ringing the bell at the dentist’s door, the final wrench of extraction gone through by the poor patient. On the boards you would put a personage who, with voice and contortions, should help you, as pictorial illustrations help an author. Such is the Wagnerian method. 319

“A TERRIBLE WAGNERITE.”

After the play I met a terrible Wagnerite. Most Wagnerites are terrible. They will not admit that anything can be discussed, much less criticised, in the works of the master. They are not admirers, disciples; they are worshipers. To them Wagner’s music is as perfect as America is to many a good-humored American. They will tell you that never have horses neighed so realistically as they do in the “Walküre.” Answer that this is almost lowering music to the level of ventriloquism, and they will declare you a profane, unworthy to live. My Wagnerite friend told me last night that Wagner’s work constantly improved till it reached perfection in “Parsifal.” “There,” he said, quite seriously, “the music has reached such a state of perfection that, in the garden scene, you can smell the violets and the roses.” 320

“Well,” I interrupted, “I heard ‘Parsifal’ in Bayreuth, and I must confess that it is, perhaps, the only work of Wagner’s that I cannot understand.”

“I have heard it thirty-four times,” he said, “and enjoyed it more the thirty-fourth time than I did the thirty-third.”

“Then,” I remarked, “perhaps it has to be heard fifty times before it can be thoroughly appreciated. In which case, you must own that life is too short to enable one to see an opera fifty times in order to enjoy it as it should really be enjoyed. I don’t care what science there is about music, or what labors a musician should have to go through. As one of the public, I say that music is a recreation, and should be understood at once. Auber, for example, with

his delightful airs, that three generations of men have sung on their way home from the opera house, has been a greater benefactor of the human race than Wagner. I prefer music written for the heart to music written for the mind."

On hearing me mention Auber's name in one breath with Wagner's, the Wagnerite threw a glance of contempt at me that I shall never forget.

"Well," said I, to regain his good graces, "I may improve yet—I will try again."

As a rule, the Wagnerite is a man utterly destitute of humor.

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March 20.

Yesterday morning I called on Judge Elliott Anthony, at the Superior Court. The Judge 321
invited me to sit by his side on the tribunal, and kindly explained to me the procedure, as the cases went on. Certainly kindness is not rare in Europe, but such simplicity in a high official is only to be met with in America.

CHAPTER XXXVII. 322

ANN ARBOR—THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN—DETROIT AGAIN—THE FRENCH OUT OF FRANCE—OBERLIN COLLEGE, OHIO—BLACK AND WHITE—ARE ALL AMERICAN CITIZENS EQUAL?

Detroit, *March* 22.

ONE of the most interesting and brilliant audiences that I have yet addressed was the large one which gathered in the lecture hall of the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, last night. Two thousand young, bright faces to gaze at from the platform is a sight not to be easily forgotten. I succeeded in pleasing them, and they simply delighted me.

The University of Michigan is, I think, the largest in the United States.

Picture to yourself one thousand young men and one thousand young women, in their early twenties, staying together in the same boarding-houses, studying literature, science, and the fine arts in the same class-rooms, living happily and in perfect harmony.

They are not married.

No restraint of any sort. Even in the boarding-houses they are allowed to meet in the sitting-rooms; I believe that the only restriction is that, at eight o'clock in the evening, or at nine (I forget which), the young ladies have to retire to their private apartments. 323

"But," some European will exclaim, "do the young ladies' parents trust all these young men?" They do much better than that, my dear friend—they trust their daughters.

During eighteen years, I was told, three accidents happened, but three marriages happily resulted.

The educational system of America engenders the high morality which undoubtedly exists throughout the whole of the United States, by accustoming women to the companionship of men from their infancy, first in the public schools, then in the high schools, and finally in the universities. It explains the social life of the country. It accounts for the delightful manner in

which men treat women. It explains the influence of women. Receiving exactly the same education as the men, the women are enabled to enjoy all the intellectual pleasures of life. They are not inferior beings intended for mere housekeepers, but women destined to play an important part in all the stations of life.

No praise can be too high for a system of education that places knowledge of the highest order at the disposal of every child born in America. The public schools are free, the high schools are free, and the universities,[4] through the aid that they receive from the United States and from the State in which they are, can offer their privileges, without charge for tuition, to all persons of either sex who are qualified by knowledge for admission.

The University of Michigan comprises the Department of Literature, Science, and the Arts, the Department of Medicine and Surgery, the Department of Law, the School of Pharmacy, 324
the Homœopathic Medical College, and the College of Dental Surgery. Each department has its special Faculty of Instruction.

I count 118 professors on the staff of the different faculties.

The library contains 70,041 volumes, 14,626 unbound brochures, and 514 maps and charts.

The University also possesses beautiful laboratories, museums, an astronomical observatory, collections, workshops of all sorts, a lecture hall capable of accommodating over two thousand people, art studios, etc., etc. Almost every school has a building of its own, so that the University is like a little busy town.

No visit that I have ever paid to a public institution interested me so much as the short one paid to the University of Michigan yesterday.

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Dined this evening with Mr. W. H. Brearley, editor of the Detroit *Journal*. Mr. Brearley thinks that the Americans, who received from France such a beautiful present as the statue of “Liberty Enlightening the World,” ought to present the mother country of General Lafayette with a token of her gratitude and affection, and he has started a national subscription to carry out his idea. He has already received support, moral and substantial. I can assure him that nothing would touch the hearts of the French people more than such a tribute of gratitude and friendship from the other great republic.

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In the evening I had a crowded house in the large lecture hall of the Young Men’s 325
Christian Association.

After the lecture, I met an interesting Frenchman residing in Detroit.

“I was told a month ago, when I paid my first visit to Detroit, that there were twenty-five thousand French people living here,” I said to him.

“The number is exaggerated, I believe,” he replied, “but certainly we are about twenty thousand.”

“I suppose you have French societies, a French Club?” I ventured.

He smiled.

“The Germans have,” he said, “but we have not. We have tried many times to found French clubs in this city, so as to establish friendly intercourse among our compatriots, but we have always failed.”

“How is that?” I asked.

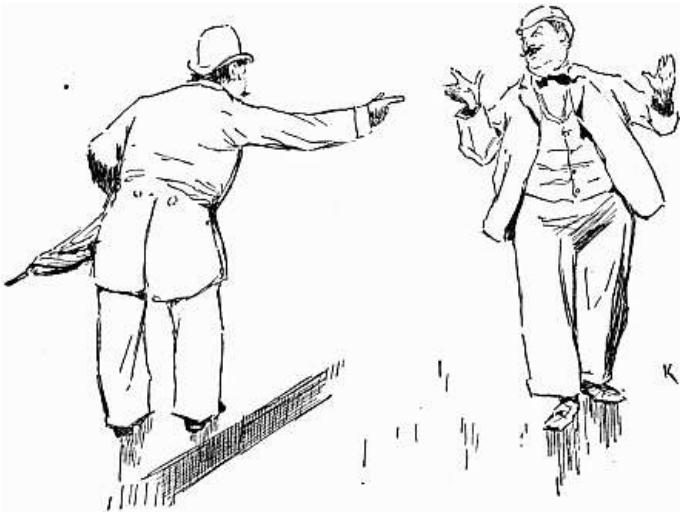
“Well, I don’t know. They all wanted to be presidents, or vice-presidents. They quarreled among themselves.”

“When six Frenchmen meet to start a society,” I said, “one will be president, two vice-presidents, one secretary, and the other assistant-secretary. If the sixth cannot obtain an official position, he will resign and go about abusing the other five.”

“That’s just what happened.”

It was my turn to smile. Why should the French in Detroit be different from the French all over the world, except perhaps in their own country? A Frenchman out of France is like a fish out of water. He loses his native amiability and becomes a sort of suspicious person, who spends his life in thinking that everybody wants to tread on his corns. 326

“When two Frenchmen meet in a foreign land,” goes an old saying, “there is one too many.”



THE TWO FRENCHMEN.

In Chicago there are two Frenchmen engaged in teaching the natives of the city “how to speak and write the French language correctly.” The people of Chicago maintain that the streets are too narrow to let these two Frenchmen pass, when they walk in opposite directions. And it appears that one of them has lately started a little French paper—to abuse the other in.

I think that all the faults and weaknesses of the French can be accounted for by the presence of a defect, jealousy; and the absence of a quality, humor. 327

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Oberlin, O., March 24.

Have to-night given a lecture to the students of Oberlin College, a religious institution founded by the late Rev. Charles Finney, the friend of the slaves, and whose voice, they say, when he preached, shook the earth.

The college is open to colored students; but in an audience of about a thousand young men and women, I could only discover the presence of two descendants of Ham.

Originally many colored students attended at Oberlin College, but the number steadily decreased every year, and to-day there are only very few. The colored student is not officially “boycotted,” but he has probably discovered by this time that he is not wanted in Oberlin College any more than in the orchestra stalls of an American theater.

The Declaration of Independence proclaims that “all men are created equal,” but I never met a man in America (much less still a woman) who believed this or who acted upon it.

The railroad companies have special cars for colored people, and the saloons special bars. At Detroit, I was told yesterday that a respectable and wealthy mulatto resident, who had been refused service in one of the leading restaurants of the town, brought an action against the proprietor, but that, although there was no dispute of the facts, the jury unanimously decided against the plaintiff, who was moreover mulcted in costs to a heavy amount. But all this is nothing: the Young Men’s Christian Association, one of the most representative and influential corporations in the United States, refuses to admit colored youths to membership. 328

THE NEGRO.

It is just possible that in a few years colored students will have ceased to study at Oberlin College.

I can perfectly well understand that Jonathan should not care to associate too closely with the colored people, for, although they do not inspire me with repulsion, still I cannot imagine —well, I cannot understand for one thing how the mulatto can exist.

But since the American has to live alongside the negro, would it not be worth his while to 329
treat him politely and honestly, give him his due as an equal, if not in his eyes, at any rate in the eyes of the law? Would it not be worth his while to remember that the “darky” cannot be gradually disposed of like the Indian, for Sambo adapts himself to his surroundings, multiplies apace, goes to school, and knows how to read, write, and reckon. Reckon especially.

It might be well to remember, too, that all the greatest, bloodiest revolutions the world has ever seen were set on foot, not to pay off hardships, but as revenge for injustice. “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” was called a romance, nothing but a romance, by the aristocratic Southerners; but, to use the Carlylian phrase, their skins went to bind the hundreds of editions of that book. Another “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” may yet appear.

America will have “to work her thinking machine” seriously on this subject, and that before many years are over. If the next Presidential election is not run on the negro question, the succeeding one surely will be.

4 A fee of ten dollars entitles a student to the privileges of permanent membership in the University.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. 330

MR. AND MRS. KENDAL IN NEW YORK—JOSEPH JEFFERSON—JULIAN HAWTHORNE—MISS ADA REHAN —“AS YOU LIKE IT” AT DALY’S THEATER.

New York, March 28.

THE New York papers this morning announce that the “Society of Young Girls of Pure

Character on the Stage” give a lunch to Mrs. Kendal to-morrow.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal have conquered America. Their tour is a triumphal march through the United States, a huge success artistically, financially, and socially.

I am not surprised at it. I went to see them a few days ago in “The Ironmaster,” and they delighted me. As *Claire* Mrs. Kendal was admirable. She almost succeeded in making me forget Madame Jane Hading, who created the part at the Gymnase, in Paris, six years ago.

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This morning Mr. Joseph Jefferson called on me at the Everett House. The veteran actor, who looks more like a man of fifty than like one of over sixty, is now playing with Mr. William J. Florence in “The Rivals.” I had never seen him off the stage. I immediately saw that the characteristics of the actor were the characteristics of the man—kindness, naturalness, simplicity, *bonhomie*, and *finesse*. An admirable actor, a great artist, and a lovable man. 331

At the Down-Town Club, I lunched with the son of Nathaniel Hawthorne—the greatest novelist that America has yet produced—Mr. Julian Hawthorne, himself a novelist of repute. Lately he has written a series of sensational novels in collaboration with the famous New York detective, Inspector Byrnes. Mr. Julian Hawthorne is a man of about forty-five, tall, well-proportioned, with an artistic-looking head crowned with grayish hair, that reminds a Frenchman of Alexandre Dumas, *fils*, and an American of Nathaniel Hawthorne. A charming, unaffected man, and a delightful *causeur*.

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In the evening I went to Daly’s Theater and saw “As You Like It.” That bewitching queen of actresses, Miss Ada Rehan, played *Rosalind*. Miss Rehan is so original that it would be perfectly impossible to compare her to any of the other great actresses of France and England. She is like nobody else. She is herself. The coaxing drawl of her musical voice, the vivacity of her movements, the whimsical spontaneity that seems to direct her acting, her tall, handsome figure, her beautiful, intellectual face, all tend to make her a unique actress. She fascinates you, and so gets hold of you, that when she is on the stage she entirely fills it. Mr. John Drew as *Orlando* and Mr. James Drew as *Touchstone* were admirable.

It matters little what the play-bill announces at Daly’s Theater. If I have not seen the play, I am sure to enjoy it; if I have seen it already, I am sure to enjoy it again.

CHAPTER XXXIX. 332

WASHINGTON—THE CITY—WILLARD’S HOTEL—THE POLITICIANS—GENERAL BENJAMIN HARRISON, U. S. PRESIDENT—WASHINGTON SOCIETY—BALTIMORE—PHILADELPHIA.

Washington, April 3.

ARRIVED here the day before yesterday, and put up at Willard’s. I prefer this huge hotel to the other more modern houses of the capital, because it is thoroughly American; because it is in its rotunda that every evening the leading men of all parties and the notables of the nation may be found; because to meet at Willard’s at night is as much the regular thing as to perform any of the official functions of office during the day; because, to use the words of a guide, which speaks the truth, it is pleasant to live in this historical place, in apartments where battles have been planned and political parties have been born or doomed to death, to become familiar with surroundings amid which Presidents have drawn their most important papers and have chosen their Cabinet Ministers, and where the proud beauties of a century have held their Court.

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On the subject of Washington hotels, I was told a good story the other day. 333

EVENING AT WILLARD’S.

The most fashionable hotel of this city having outgrown its space, the proprietors sent a note to a lady, whose back yard adjoined, to say, that, contemplating still enlarging their hotel, they would be glad to know at what price she would sell her yard, and they would hand her the amount without any more discussion. The lady, in equally Yankee style, replied that she had been contemplating enlarging her back yard, and was going to inquire what 334
they would take for part of their hotel!

. . . . . .

How beautiful this city of Washington is, with its wide avenues, its parks, and its buildings! That Capitol, in white marble, standing on elevated ground, against a bright blue sky, is a poem—an epic poem.

I am never tired of looking at the expanse of cloudless blue that is almost constantly stretched overhead. The sunsets are glorious. The poorest existence would seem bearable under such skies. I am told they are better still further West. I fancy I should enjoy to spend some time on a farm, deep in the country, far from the noisy, crowded streets, but I fear I am condemned to see none but the busy haunts of Jonathan.

. . . . . .

In the evening I went to what is called a colored church. The place was packed with negroes of all shades and ages; the women, some of them very smartly dressed, and waving scarlet fans. In a pew sat a trio truly gorgeous. Mother, in black shiny satin, light-brown velvet mantle covered with iridescent beads, bonnet to match. Daughter of fifteen; costume of sky-blue satin, plush mantle, scarlet red, chinchilla fur trimmings, white hat with feathers. Second girl, or daughter, light-blue velvet, from top to toe, with large hat, apple-green and gold.

A GORGEOUS TRIO.

Every one was intently listening to the preacher, a colored man, who gave them, in graphic language and stentorian voice, the story of the capture of the Jews by Cyrus, their slavery and their delivery. A low accompaniment of “Yes!” “Hear, hear!” “Allelujah!” 335
“Glory!” from the hearers, showed their approbation of the discourse. From time to time, there would be a general chuckle or laughter, and exclamations of delight from the happy grin-lit mouths, as, for instance, when the preacher described the supper of Belshazzar, and the appearance of the writing on the wall, in his own droll fashion. “’Let’s have a fine supper,’ said Belshazzar. ‘Dere’s ole Cyrus out dere, but we’ll have a good time and enjoy ourselves, and never mind him.’ So he went for de cups dat had come from de Temple of Jerusalem, and began carousin’! Dere is Cyrus, all de while, marchin’ his men up de bed ob de river. I see him comin’! I see him!” Then he pictured the state all that wicked party got in at the sight of the writing nobody could read, and by this time the excitement of the congregation was tremendous. The preacher thought this a good opportunity to point a moral. So he proceeded: “Now, drink is a poor thing; dere’s too much of it in dis here city.” Here followed a picture of certain darkies, who cut a dash with shiny hats and canes, and 336
frequented bars and saloons. “When folks take to drinkin’, somefin’s sure to go wrong.” Grins and grunts of approbation culminated in perfect shouts of glee, as the preacher said: “Ole Belshazzar and de rest of ’em forgot to shut de city gate, and in came Cyrus and his men.”

THE PREACHER.

They went nearly wild with pleasure over the story of the liberation of the Jews, and incidental remarks on their own freeing. “Oh, let dem go,” said their masters, when they found the game was up, “dey’ll soon perish and die out!” Here the preacher laughed loudly, and then shouted: “But we don’t die out so easy!” [Grins and chuckling.]

One old negro was very funny to watch. When something met with his approval, he gave off a little “tchsu, tchsu!” and writhed forward and back on his seat for a moment, apparently in intense enjoyment; 337

then jumped off his seat, turning round once or twice; then he would listen intently again, as if afraid to lose a word.

"I see dis, I see dat," said the preacher continually. His listeners seemed to see it too.

THE OLD NEGRO.

. . . . . .

At ten minutes to twelve yesterday morning, I called at the White House. The President had left the library, but he was kind enough to return, and at twelve I had the honor to spend a few minutes in the company of General Benjamin Harrison. Two years ago I was received by Mr. Grover Cleveland with the same courtesy and the same total absence of red tape.

The President of the United States is a man about fifty-five years old; short, exceedingly neat, and even *recherché* in his appearance. The hair and beard are white, the eyes small and very keen. The face is severe, but lights up with a most gentle and kind smile.

General Harrison is a popular president; but the souvenir of Mrs. Cleveland is still haunting the minds of the Washingtonians. They will never forget the most beautiful lady who ever did the honors of the White House, and most of them look forward to the possibility of her returning to Washington in March, 1893. 338

. . . . . .

Washington society moves in circles and sets. The wife of the President and the wives and daughters of the Cabinet Ministers form the first set—Olympus, as it were. The second set is composed of the ladies belonging to the families of the Judges of the Supreme Court! The Senators come next. The Army circle comes fourth. The House of Representatives supplies the last set. Each circle, a Washington friend tells me, is controlled by rigid laws of etiquette. Senators' wives consider themselves much superior to the wives of Congressmen, and the Judges' wives consider themselves much above those of the Senators. But, as a rule, the great lion of Washington society is the British Minister, especially when he happens to be a real live English lord. All look up to him; and if a young titled English *attaché* wishes to marry the richest heiress of the capital, all he has to do is to throw the handkerchief, the young and the richest natives do not stand the ghost of a chance.

. . . . . .

Lectured last night, in the Congregational Church, to a large and most fashionable audience. Senator Hoar took the chair, and introduced me in a short, neat, gracefully worded little speech. In to-day's Washington *Star*, I find the following remark:

> The lecturer was handsomely introduced by Senator Hoar, who combines the dignity of an Englishman, the sturdiness of a Scotchman, the *savoir faire* of a Frenchman, and the culture of a Bostonian.

What a strange mixture! I am trying to find where the compliment comes in, surely not in "the *savoir faire* of a Frenchman!" 339

. . . . . .

Armed with a kind letter of introduction to Miss Kate Field, I called this morning at the office of this lady, who is characterized by a prominent journalist as “the very brainiest woman in the United States.” Unfortunately she was out of town.

I should have liked to make the personal acquaintance of this brilliant, witty woman, who speaks, I am told, as she writes, in clear, caustic, fearless style. My intention was to interview her a bit. A telegram was sent to her in New York from her secretary, and her answer was wired immediately: “Interview *him*.” So, instead of interviewing Miss Kate Field, I was interviewed, for her paper, by a young and very pretty lady journalist.

. . . . . .

Baltimore, *April* 4.

I have spent the day here with some friends.

Baltimore strikes one as a quiet, solid, somewhat provincial town. It is an eminently middle-class looking city. There is no great wealth in it, no great activity; but, on the other hand, there is little poverty; it is a well-to-do city *par excellence*. The famous Johns Hopkins University is here, and I am not surprised to learn that Baltimore is a city of culture and refinement.

A beautiful forest, a mixture of cultivated park and wilderness, about a mile from the town, must be a source of delight to the inhabitants in summer and during the beautiful months of September and October.

340

I was told several times that Baltimore was famous all over the States for its pretty women.

They were not out to-day. And as I have not been invited to lecture in Baltimore, I must be content with hoping to be more lucky next time.

. . . . . .

Philadelphia, *April* 5.

A BALTIMORE WOMAN.

After my lecture in Association Hall to-night, I will return to New York to spend Easter Sunday with my friends. Next Monday off again to the West, to Cincinnati again, to Chicago again, and as far as Madison, the State city of Wisconsin.

By the time this tour is finished—in about three weeks—I shall have traveled something like thirty thousand miles.

The more I think of it, the more I feel the truth of this statement, which I made in “Jonathan and His Continent”: To form an exact idea of what a lecture tour is in America, just imagine that you lecture to-night in London, to-morrow in Paris, then in Berlin, then in Vienna, then in Constantinople, then in Teheran, then in Bombay, and so forth. With this difference, that if you had to undertake the work in Europe, at the end of a week you would be more dead than alive.

341

“THE GOOD, ATTENTIVE, POLITE CONDUCTOR OF ENGLAND.”

But here you are not caged on the railroad lines, you can circulate. There is no fear of cold, no fear of hunger, and if the good, attentive, polite railway conductors of England could be induced to do duty on board the American cars, I would anytime go to America for the mere pleasure of traveling.

CHAPTER XL.

342

EASTER SUNDAY IN NEW YORK.

New York, April 6 (*Easter Sunday.*)

A BELLOWING SOPRANO.

THIS morning I went to Dr. Newton’s church in Forty-eighth Street. He has the reputation of being one of the best preachers in New York, and the choir enjoys an equally great reputation. The church was literally packed until the sermon began, and then some of the strollers who had come to hear the anthems moved on. Dr. Newton’s voice and delivery were not at all to my taste, so I did not sit out his sermon either. He has a big, unctuous voice, with the intonations and inflections of a showman at the fair. He has not the flow of ideas that struck me so forcibly when I heard the late Henry Ward Beecher in London; he has not the histrionic 343 powers of Dr. Talmage, either. There was more show than beauty about the music, too. A bellowing, shrieking soprano overpowered all the other voices in the choir, including that of a really beautiful tenor that deserved to be heard.

. . . . . .

New York blossoms like the rose on Easter Day. Every woman has a new bonnet and walks abroad to show it.

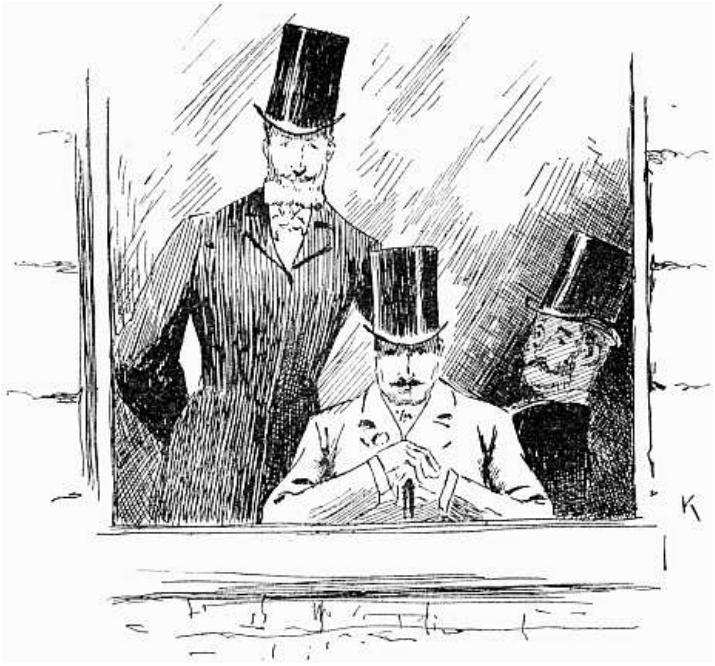
SOME EASTER BONNETS.

There are grades in millinery as there are in society. The imported bonnet takes the proudest rank; it is the aristocrat in the world of headgear. It does not always come with the conqueror (in one of her numerous trunks), but it always comes to conquer, and a proud, though ephemeral triumph it enjoys, perched on the dainty head of a New York belle, and supplemented by a frock from Felix's or Redfern's.

It is a unique sight, Fifth Avenue on Easter Sunday, when all the up-town churches have emptied themselves of their gayly garbed worshipers. 344

KEEPING LENT.

The "four hundred" have been keeping Lent in polite, if not rigorous, fashion. Who shall say what it has cost them in self-sacrifice to limit themselves to the sober, modest violet for table and bonnet decoration during six whole weeks? These things cannot be lightly judged by the profane. I have even heard of sweet, devout New York girls who limited themselves to one pound of *marrons glacés* a week during Lent. Such feminine heroism deserves mention.



A CLUB WINDOW.

And have they not been sewing flannel for the poor, once a week, instead of directing the manipulation of silk and gauze for their own fair forms, all the week long? Who shall gauge 345
the self-control necessary for fasting such as this? But now Dorcas meetings are over, and dances begin again to-morrow. The Easter anthem has been sung, and the imported bonnet takes a turn on Fifth Avenue to salute and to hob-nob with Broadway imitations during the hour between church and lunch. To New Yorkers this Easter Church parade is as much of an institution in its way as those of Hyde Park during the season are to the Londoners. It was 346
plain that the people sauntering leisurely on the broad sidewalks, the feminine portion at least, had not come out solely for religious exercise in church, but had every intention to see and to be seen, especially the latter. On my way down, I saw some folks who had not been to church, and only wanted to see, so stood with faces glued to the windows of the big clubs, looking out at the kaleidoscopic procession: old bachelors, I daresay, who hold the opinion that spring bonnets, whether imported or home-grown, ought to be labeled “dangerous.” At all events they were gazing as one might gaze at some coveted but out-of-reach fruit, and looking as if they dared not face their fascinating young townswomen in all the splendor of their new war paint. A few, perhaps, were married men, and this was their quiet protest against fifty-dollar hats and five-hundred-dollar gowns.

The sight was beautiful and one not to be forgotten.

. . . . . .

In the evening I dined with Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll and the members of his family. I noticed something which struck me as novel, but as perfectly charming. Each man was placed at table by the side of his wife, including the host and hostess. This custom in the colonel’s family circle (I was the only guest not belonging to it) is another proof that his theories are put into practice in his house. Dinner and time vanished with rapidity in that house, where everything breathes love and happiness.

CHAPTER XLI. 347

I Mount the Pulpit, and Preach on the Sabbath, in the State of Wisconsin—The Audience is Large and Appreciative; but I probably Fail to Please One of the Congregation.

TO a certain extent I am a believer in climatic influence, and am inclined to think that Sabbath reformers reckon without the British climate when they hope to ever see a Britain full of cheerful Christians. M. Taine, in his "History of English Literature," ascribes the unlovable morality of Puritanism to the influence of the British climate. "Pleasure being out of question," he says, "under such a sky, the Briton gave himself up to this forbidding virtuousness." In other words, being unable to be cheerful, he became moral. This is not altogether true. Many Britons are cheerful who don't look it, many Britons are not moral who look it.

But how would M. Taine explain the existence of this same puritanic "morality" which can be found under the lovely, clear, bright sky of America? All over New England, and indeed in most parts of America, the same Kill-joy, the same gloomy, frowning Sabbath-keeper is flourishing, doing his utmost to blot the sunshine out of every recurring seventh day. 348

Yet Sabbath-keeping is a Jewish institution that has nothing to do with Protestantism; but there have always been Protestants more Protestant than Martin Luther, and Christians more Christian than Christ.

PURITAN LACK OF CHEERFULNESS.

Luther taught that the Sabbath was to be kept, not because Moses commanded it, but because Nature teaches us the necessity of the seventh day's rest. He says "If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake, then I command you to work on it, ride on it, dance on it, do anything that will reprove this encroachment on Christian spirit and liberty."

The old Scotch woman, who "did nae think the betterer on" the Lord for that Sabbath-day walk through the cornfield, is not a solitary type of Anglo-Saxon Christian. But it is when these Puritans judge other nations that they are truly great.

Puritan lack of charity and dread of cheerfulness often lead Anglo-Saxon visitors to France to misjudge the French mode of spending Sunday. Americans, as well as English, err in this matter, as I had occasion to find out during my second visit to America.

I had been lecturing last Saturday evening in the pretty little town of Whitewater, in Wisconsin, and received an invitation from a minister to address a meeting that was to be held yesterday, Sunday, in the largest church of the place to discuss the question, "How Sunday should be spent." I at first declined, on the ground that it might not be exactly in good taste for a foreigner to advise his hosts how to spend Sunday. However, when it was suggested that I might simply go and tell them how Sunday was spent in France, I accepted the task. 349

The proceedings opened with prayer and an anthem; and a hymn in praise of the Jewish Sabbath having been chosen by the moderator, I thought the case looked bad for us French people, and that I was going to cut a poor figure.

The first speaker unwittingly came to my rescue by making an onslaught upon the French mode of spending the seventh day. "With all due respect to the native country of our visitor," said he, "I am bound to say that on the one Sunday which I spent in Paris, I saw a great deal of low immorality, and I could not help coming to the conclusion that this was due to the fact of the French not being a Sabbath-keeping people." He wound up with a strong appeal to his townsmen to beware of any temptation to relax in their observance of the fourth commandment as given by Moses.

I was called upon to speak next. I rose in my pew, but was requested to go into the rostrum.

With alacrity I stepped forward, a little staggered, perhaps, at finding myself for the first time in a pulpit, but quite ready for the fray. 350

"I am sorry," said I, "to hear the remarks made by the speaker who has just sat down. I cannot, however, help thinking that if our friend had spent that Sunday in Paris in respectable places, he would have been spared the sight of any low immorality. No doubt Paris, like every large city in the world, has its black spots, and you can easily discover

them, if you make proper inquiries as to where they are, and if you are properly directed. Now, let me ask, where did he go? I should very much like to know. Being an old Parisian, I have still in my mind's eye the numerous museums that are open free to the people on Sundays. One of the most edifying sights in the city is that of our peasants and workmen in their clean Sunday blouses enjoying themselves with their families, and elevating their tastes among our art treasures. Did our friend go there? I know there are places where for little money the symphonies of Beethoven and other great masters may be and are enjoyed by thousands every Sunday. Did our friend go there? Within easy reach of the people are such places as the Bois de Boulogne, the Garden of Acclimation, where for fifty centimes a delightful day may be spent among the lawns and flower-beds of that Parisian "Zoo." Its goat cars, ostrich cars, its camel and elephant drives make it a paradise for children, and one might see whole families there on Sunday afternoons in the summer, the parents refreshing their bodies with this contact with nature and their hearts with the sight of the children's glee. Did our friend go there? We even have churches in Paris, churches that are crammed 351
from six o'clock in the morning till one in the afternoon with worshipers who go on their knees to God. Now, did our friend go to church on that Sunday? Well, where did he go? I am quitting Whitewater to-morrow, and I leave it to his townspeople to investigate the matter. When I first visited New York, stories were told me of strange things to be seen there even on a Sunday. Who doubts, I repeat, that every great city has its black spots? I had no desire to see those of New York, there was so much that was better worth my time and attention. If our friend, our observing friend, would only have done in Paris as I did in New York, he would have seen very little low immorality."

The little encounter at Whitewater was only one more illustration of the strange fact that the Anglo-Saxon, who is so good in his own country, so constant in his attendance at church, is seldom to be seen in a sacred edifice abroad, unless, indeed, he has been led there by Baedeker.

And last night, at Whitewater, I went to bed pleased with myself, like a man who has fought for his country.

. . . . . .

When I am in France, I often bore my friends with advice, and find, as usual, that advice is a luxurious gift thoroughly enjoyed by the one who gives it.

"You don't know how to do these things," I say to them; "in England or in America, they are much more intelligent; they do like this and like that." And my friends generally advise me to return to England or America, where things are so beautifully managed. 352

But, when I am out of France, the old Frenchman is all there, and if you pitch into my mother country, I stand up ready to fight at a minute's notice.

CHAPTER XLII. 353

THE ORIGIN OF AMERICAN HUMOR AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS—THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE—THE GERMANS AND AMERICAN HUMOR—MY CORPSE WOULD "DRAW," IN MY IMPRESARIO'S OPINION.

Madison, Wis., April 22.

HAVE been lecturing during the past fortnight in about twelve places, few of which possessed any interest whatever. One of them, however—Cincinnati—I was glad to see again.

This town of Madison is the only one that has really struck me as being beautiful. From the

hills the scenery is perfectly lovely, with its wooded slopes and lakes. Through the kindness of Governor Hoard, I have had a comprehensive survey of the neighborhood; for he has driven me in his carriage to all the prettiest spots, delighting me all the while with his conversation. He is one of those Americans whom you may often meet if you have a little luck: witty, humorous, hospitable, kind-hearted, the very personification of unaffected good-fellowship.

The conversation turned on humor.

I have always wondered what the origin of American humor can be; where is or was the fountain-head. You certainly find humor in England among the cultured classes, but the 354
class of English people who emigrate cannot have imported much humor into America. Surely Germany and Scandinavia cannot have contributed to the fund, either. The Scotch have dry, quiet, pawky, unconscious humor; but their influence can hardly have been great enough to implant their quaint native “wut” in American soil. Again, the Irish bull is droll, but scarcely humorous. The Italians, the Hungarians, have never yet, that I am aware of, been suspected of even latent humor.

What then, can be the origin of American humor, as we know it, with its naïve philosophy, its mixture of the sacred and the profane, its exaggeration and that preposterousness which so completely staggers the foreigner, the French and the German especially?

The mixing of sacred with profane matter, no doubt, originated with the Puritans themselves, and is only an outcome of the cheek-by-jowl, next-door-neighbor fashion of addressing the Higher Powers, which is so common in the Scotch. Many of us have heard of the Scotch minister, whom his zeal for the welfare of missionaries moved to address Heaven in the following manner: “We commend to thy care those missionaries whose lives are in danger in the Fiji Islands ... which, Thou knowest, are situated in the Pacific Ocean.” And he is not far removed in our minds from the New England pastor, who preached on the well-known text of St. Paul, and having read: “All things are possible to me,” took a five-dollar bill out of his pocket, and placing it on the edge of the pulpit, said: “No, Paul, that is going too far. I bet you five dollars that you can’t——” But continuing the reading of the text: “Through 355
Christ who strengtheneth me,” exclaimed, “Ah, that’s a very different matter!” and put back the five-dollar bill in his pocket.

THE MISSIONARY AND THE FIJIS.

This kind of amalgamation of the sacred and profane is constantly confronting one in American soil, and has a firm foothold in American humor.

Colonel Elliott F. Shepard, proprietor of the New York *Mail and Express*, every morning sends to the editor a fresh text from the Bible for publication at the top of the editorials. One day that text was received, but somehow got lost, and by noon was still unfound. I was told 356
that “you should have heard the compositors’ room ring with: ‘Where can that d——d text

be?’” Finally the text was wired and duly inserted. These men, however, did not intend any religious disrespect. Such a thing was probably as far from their minds as it was from the minds of the Puritan preachers of old. There are men who swear, as others pray, without meaning anything. One is a bad habit, the other a good one.

. . . . . .

All that naïve philosophy, with which America abounds, must, I fancy, be the outcome of hardship endured by the pioneers of former days, and by the Westerner of our own times.

The element of exaggeration, which is so characteristic of American humor, may be explained by the rapid success of the Americans and the immensity of the continent which they inhabit. Everything is on a grand scale, or suggests hugeness. Then negro humor is mainly exaggeration, and has no doubt added its quota to the compound which, as I said just now, completely staggers certain foreigners.

Governor Hoard was telling me to-day that a German was inclined to be offended with him for saying that the Germans, as a rule, were unable to see through an American joke, and he invited Governor Hoard to try the effect of one upon him. The governor, thereupon told him the story of the tree, “out West,” which was so high that it took two men to see to the top. One of them saw as far as he could, then the second started from the place where the first stopped seeing, and went on. The recital did not raise the ghost of a smile, and Governor Hoard then said to the German: “Well, you see, the joke is lost upon you; you can’t see American humor.” 357

“THAT’S A TAMNT LIE!”

“Oh, but,” said the German, “that is not humor, that’s a *tamnt* lie!” 358

And he is still convinced that he can see through an American joke.

. . . . . .

Grand Rapids, April 24.

Have had to-day a lovely, sublime example of that preposterousness which so often characterizes American humor.

Arrived here this morning from Chicago. At noon, the Grand Rapidite who was “bossing the show” called upon me at the Morton House, and kindly inquired whether there was anything he could do for me. Before leaving, he said: “While I am here, I may as well give you the check for to-night’s lecture.”

“Just as you please,” I said; “but don’t you call that risky?”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, I may die before the evening.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” he interrupted. “I’ll exhibit your corpse; I guess there will be just as much money in it!”

. . . . . .

Grand Rapids is noted for its furniture manufactories. A draughtsman, who is employed to design artistic things for the largest of these manufactories, kindly showed me over the premises of his employers. I was not very surprised to hear that when the various retail houses come to make their yearly selections, they will not look at any models of the previous season, so great is the rage for novelties in every branch of industry in this novelty-loving America. 359

MY EXHIBITOR.

No sinecure, that draughtsman’s position, I can tell you. 360

Over in Europe, furniture is reckoned by periods. Here it is an affair of seasons.

Very funny to have to order a new sideboard or wardrobe, “to be sent home without delay” for fear of its being out of date.

CHAPTER XLIII.

GOOD-BY TO AMERICA—NOT "ADIEU," BUT "AU REVOIR"—ON BOARD THE "TEUTONIC"—HOME AGAIN.

New York, *April* 26.

THE last two days have vanished rapidly in paying calls.

This morning my impresario gave me a farewell breakfast at the Everett House. Edmund Clarence Stedman was there; Mark Twain, George Kennan, General Horace Porter, General Lloyd Bryce, Richard Watson Gilder, and many others sat at table, and joined in wishing me *bon voyage*.

Good-by, my dear American friends, I shall carry away sweet recollections of you, and whether I am re-invited in your country or not, I will come again.

. . . . . .

April 27.

The saloon on board the *Teutonic* is a mass of floral offerings sent by friends to the passengers. Two huge beautiful baskets of lilies and roses are mine.

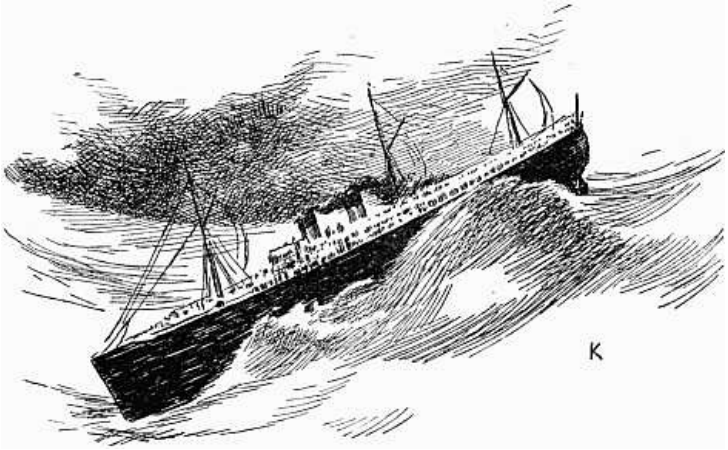
The whistle is heard for the third time. The hands are pressed and the faces kissed, and all those who are not passengers leave the boat and go and take up position on the wharf to wave their handkerchiefs until the steamer is out of sight. A great many among the dense crowd are friendly faces familiar to me.

TWO BASKETS FOR ME.

The huge construction is set in motion, and gently and smoothly glides from the docks to the Hudson River. The sun is shining, the weather glorious. 363

The faces on land get less and less distinct. For the last time I wave my hat.

Hallo, what is the matter with me? Upon my word, I believe I am sad. I go to the library, and, like a child, seize a dozen sheets of note paper on which I write: “Good-by.” I will send them to New York from Sandy Hook.



THE “TEUTONIC.”

The *Teutonic* is behaving beautifully. We pass Sandy Hook. The sea is perfectly calm. Then I think of my dear ones at home, and the happiest thoughts take the place of my feelings of regret at leaving my friends.

My impresario, Major J. B. Pond, shares a beautiful, well-lighted, airy cabin with me. He is coming to England to engage Mr. Henry M. Stanley for a lecture tour in America next 364

season.

The company on board is large and choice. In the steerage a few disappointed American statesmen return to Europe.

"A FEW DISAPPOINTED STATESMEN."

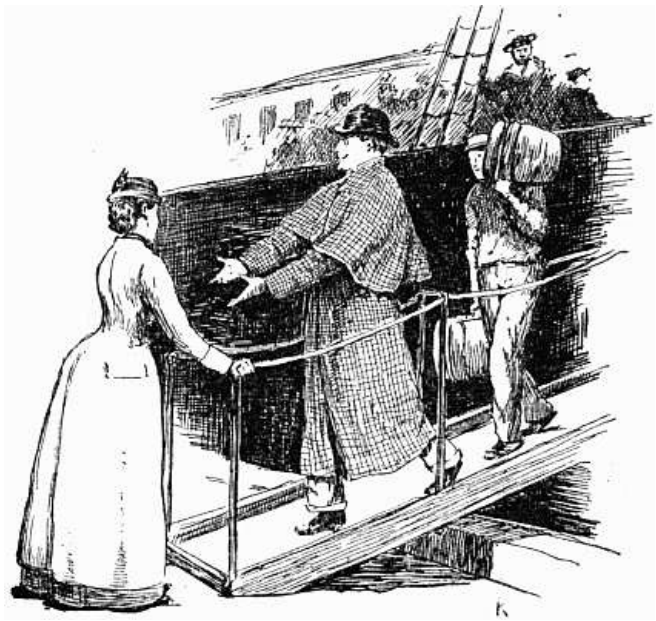
Oh! that *Teutonic!* can any one imagine anything more grand, more luxurious? She is going at the rate of 450 miles a day. In about five days we shall be at Queenstown.

. . . . . .

Liverpool, May 4.

My most humble apologies are due to the Atlantic for libeling that ocean at the beginning of this book. For the last six days the sea has been perfectly calm, and the trip has been one of pleasure the whole time. Here is another crowd on the landing-stage at Liverpool.

And now, dear reader, excuse me if I leave you. You were present at the friendly farewell handshakings on the New York side; but, on this Liverpool quay, I see a face that I have not looked upon for five months, and having a great deal to say to the owner of it, I will politely bow you out first.



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