

Hypnotic Tales

James L. Ford

Illustrated





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HYPNOTIC TALES.



*“I hear our Landlord coming in to
replenish the fire.”*

HYPNOTIC TALES

and

OTHER TALES

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1891

by

JAMES L. FORD

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illustrated by

C. JAY TAYLOR, F. OPPER, S. B. GRIFFIN,

L. DALRYMPLE

PUCK
KEPPLER & SCHWARZMANN
NEW YORK
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"The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind."

THE CORSAIR. BYRON.

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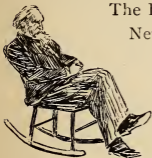
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INTRODUCTION.

John Grosse

INTRODUCTION.

IT WAS the last day of their sojourn in the mountains, where, for nearly two months, the queerly assorted company had dwelt together in a state of peace and harmony which would have been impossible if they had been carefully selected with a view to pleasing one another. And as they gathered in a large half circle about the open wood-fire, they spoke regretfully of the fact that their holiday was over, and that the next day would see them scattered in different directions.



The Rich Presbyterian was going back to New York; the School-Boy was due at his boarding-school; the Fiddler had an engagement to play in Chicago; the Boston Girl was invited to Lenox; and as for the Detective, nobody knew in what direction his mysterious duties might lead him.

To-night a new guest had joined the company — an elderly man of scholarly aspect, with a long, snow-white beard.

The company had not been seated long beside the

fire when the conversation turned on some of the recent discoveries in science, and it was noticed that when these topics were touched upon, the stranger with the white beard brightened up, and took part in the talk. Then the Spiritualist led them all off into the realms of second sight, spirit rappings, and other tenets of his queer faith, and waxed positively eloquent as he described various mysterious experiences which he had undergone.

“There ’s nothing more wonderful on earth,” he exclaimed, fervently, “than the things that our mediums are doing every day right here in this country. Talk about the old Bible miracles! they ’re not a marker on what ’s going on in Fourteenth Street at our weekly séances.”

“I can tell you of something more wonderful than that,” said the white-bearded stranger, quietly, but with a note of confidence in his voice, which, taken in connection with his venerable appearance, riveted the attention of the company instantly. Besides, the Spiritualist had mounted his hobby, and they had all had quite enough of each other’s hobbies for one Summer.

“And what do you know that is more wonderful than the manifestations of spiritualism?” asked the apostle of that belief, incredulously, and somewhat aggressively.

“Hypnotism,” replied the stranger.

“I ’ve heard of that!” exclaimed the Boston Girl, with sudden interest. “It’s going to be all the rage in Boston this season, and would have been last, if we

had n't had our hands full with Buddha and Ibsen. Do tell us something about hypnotism. It must be awfully interesting."

"I have made a study of it for some years, and am only now beginning to comprehend its possibilities as a great and wonderful science."

"But what can you do with the aid of hypnotism?" asked the Poet.

"A great many things. For example, I can hypnotize a company of people, so that they will all speak exactly what is in their minds, and by their conversation disclose the very innermost workings of their hearts. You have doubtless amused yourselves, this Summer, by telling tales founded on your own peculiar experiences, and very pretty stories some of them were, too, I dare say. Now, if I were to hypnotize each story-teller, he would prove infinitely more entertaining than ever before, because he would speak the truth without affectation or reserve."

"How very delightful!" exclaimed the Boston Girl, leaning forward eagerly.

"Does it hurt much to have it done to you?" demanded the School-Boy.

"No," rejoined the Scientist; "it does not hurt at all. On the contrary, I have been led to believe that the sensation of being hypnotized is, if anything, rather an agreeable one, and certainly I have never known any one of the hundreds whom I have subjected to the process to make any complaint whatever of it. The subject is seized with a desire to talk about himself; and, with

slight encouragement, will pursue that topic in a frank and interesting manner."

"Let's every one of us be hypnotized, and tell a story," cried the School-Boy. "It'll be lots of fun."

"Heaven forbid!" said the Rich Presbyterian, devoutly, as he glanced toward the door with a view of escaping, if the lad's proposition were acted upon. The Boston Girl tilted her nose upward; the Western Girl colored and giggled; the Detective looked scared, and the Spiritualist shuddered. No one but the School-Boy and the Scientist seemed anxious for the experiment.

"Wait a minute!" cried the long-bearded one; "I hear our Landlord coming in to replenish the fire. Ask him to join us to-night, and tell a story in his turn, and I will sit back in the shadows and hypnotize him without his knowing it."

The man of science seated himself in a dark corner, away from the fire-light, but where he could plainly see the faces of all the guests. The Landlord entered with a cheerful "haouw be ye this evenin'?" cast an armful of wood on the fire, and was on the point of leaving, when the company, with one accord, bade him to take a seat in the midst of his guests, and tell a story in turn with the rest. Now the Landlord was a typical New England tavern-keeper, who had been born and brought up in a country hotel, and had been the landlord of various rural hostelries for forty years. He wore chin-whiskers trimmed in the old Connecticut fashion, and had a soft nasal voice and a conciliatory manner.

The Hypnotist, seated in his shadowy corner, stroked

his long, white beard, and fixed his eyes firmly on the face of the Landlord, as he sat nervously fingering his whiskers, and trying to frame some reasonable excuse for recalling the past.

“I hed one curi’us experience onct,” he said, presently; and a faint smile lit up his face as he began:



"I've been a-keepin' tavern this forty year."

THE LANDLORD'S TALE.

“ I ’ve been a-keepin’ tavern this forty year, Summer an’ Winter, hot an’ cold, wet an’ dry, an’ I ’ve hed good business an’ I ’ve hed bad, but the wust ever I see wuz five year ago when I run the Eagle Hotel daown Bethel way, an’ the law did n’t allow no liquor ter be sold. Wa-al, fur a time I got along the best I could, sellin’ only tew them ez I knowed, an’ always puttin’ on a mask an’ all that; but they war n’t no money intew it, an’ a big heap er risk. Then a feller opened a drug store acrost the street, an’ right after that we hed a religious revival, an’ some o’ my best customers hed a change uv heart an’ quit comin’ tew my place — ”

“ Ah ! ” cried the Rich Presbyterian, “ I am glad to hear you bear testimony to the power of a religious revival. This hypnotism is indeed a marvelous thing,” he continued, addressing the man of science, “ if it makes this liquor seller admit the truth that only the power of religion can affect the profits of his nefarious calling.”

“ Thet ’s jesso,” the Landlord said, nodding his head pleasantly; “ ye see, daown aour way when folks

hez a change uv heart, they can't do no more settin' raound in the back rooms uv a hotel. They do all their drinkin' in the drug stores. Hain't ye never noticed haouw all the pious folks in a country village drops intew the drug store for sody an' one thing an' anuther? Wa-al, I tell ye a tavern hain't got no chance at all alongside a drug store; an' that druggist wuz a cute un, I kin tell ye. It wuz him ez started the revival an' kept it a-goin', long after every one thought the back-bone on 't wuz busted, by hevin' praise meetin's up tew his haouse ev'ry other night, an' askin' all them ez wuz converted tew stop in an' see him at his drug store, instid o' settin' araound the back room uv a rum-seller, ez wuz a partner uv the Devil. Of course, he done a big trade this way, an' I come putty near bein' run aout'n the business.



“I wuz a-settin' up one night a-talkin' tew my wife, 'n' sayin' ez haouw it wuz putty hard fer tew hev all religion on the side uv the drug store, an' Satan with the rum-seller, an' not willin' tew protect his own at that, when she breaks in an' sez:

“‘Why should n't *we* hev a revival, an' revive folks back from over the way tew aour own bar?’

“‘Mirandy,' sez I, 'thet 's a good idee, an' I 'll think on 't a spell, an' let ye know.’

“The next mornin' they wuz a feller by the name o' Lige Perkins come inter my place, an' called fer a drop o' Medford hot. I gin it tew him, for I knowed who

he wuz, an' then we sat daown fer tew hev a little chat. Lige wuz one o' them critters that goes raound a-lecturin', an' a-play-actin', an' doin' a mite o' doctorin' here, or gettin' up a revival there, or mebbe raisin' a church debt, or peddlin' an elixir o' life he 'd invented an' made himself, that kep' folks alive when they'd oughter be dead — an', in short, turnin' his hand ter putty nigh everythin'. He wuz smart ez chain lightnin', tew, an' could hustle along 'uth the next one.



“‘What be you a-doin’ this season, Lige?’ says I.

“‘Wa-al, I dunno,’ sez he; ‘I think mebbe I’ll lectur’ a spell on the ‘Converted Catholic; or, the Horrors of the Hoboken Inquisition.’ I kin make a sorter deal with camp-meetin’s an’ Sunday-school picnics, an’ sich cattle; an’ what with hevin’ fellers in the crowd a-sellin’ the elixir o’ life, I kalkerlate tew make aout putty well.’

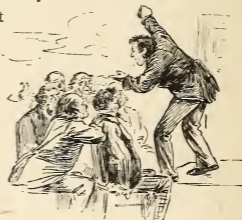
“‘Lige,’ sez I, ‘ye hain’t never tried yer hand at temp’rance lectur’s, hev ye? Why not gin a few right here in this taown?’

“‘They ain’t a dollar in temp’rance lectur’s,’ he says; ‘an onless ye kin make it an object, I don’t see nuthin’ in it fer me.’

“‘Wa-al,’ sez I, a-pourin’ aout a leetle more Medford, ‘mebbe I kin help ye aout, if you’ll fix up the lectur’ tew suit my business.’ He agreed, an’ we sot a night for the show. The posters wuz stuck up sayin’ ez haouw by my generosity the lectur’ would take place in

the ball-room uv the tavern. They wuz a big crowd, I kin tell ye, an' I did a lively business sellin' 'em hot rum an' apple-jack, an' one thing an' anuther, fur some on 'em hed druv in from the country an' wuz cold, an' they wuz all dry, ez usual. Then Lige got up, an' I tell ye, he gin 'em a lectur'.

They wa'an't a word intew it about taverns and bar-rooms, but he laid it on thick about the evils uv drug stores, an' the custom uv hangin' about sody fountains. He spoke uv me ez a public-spirited man ez kept a genooine temp'rance



hotel, an' desarved the support uv all the religious folks, an' said that bein' ez 't was a temp'rance haouse, they could spend a social evenin' a-playin' set-back in my back room, without bein' suspected o' tipplin'. An' he said the temp'rance drinks I sold wuz healthier an' better for 'em than the abominable concoctions they gin aout in a drug store. I tell ye he gin a grand lectur' that night, an' the result wuz I got all my old customers back the next day, an' nobody dassent be seen a-goin' intew the drug store after that.

“The druggist had tew sell aout, an' then I got all the trade. But I guess it's the fust time a tavern-keeper ever got put on his feet by a temp'rance lecturer.”

The Landlord ceased speaking, and a murmur of

approbation went round the circle. There was a ringing quality of truth and frankness in the tale that the company found both novel and delightful. All were now clamorous for another Hypnotic Tale, and each was confident that when his own turn came, he would be able to resist the spell which the mysterious graybeard knew so well how to cast.

“Let’s have a story from you, Signor,” cried the Spiritualist, and all eyes were turned toward the long-haired Fiddler, who was peering gloomily into the fire, thinking about himself, as was his wont.

The man of science turned in his chair, and fixed his brilliant eyes full on the musician. The latter yielded to their influence. A dreamy look came into his eyes, and he began his tale.



THE FIDDLER'S TALE.



“You ask me for my story,” said Signor Trankadillo.”

THE FIDDLER'S TALE.

“YOU ASK ME for my story —” said Signor Trankadillo, Rome’s Favorite Violinist.

“Yes, indeed, Signor,” cried the guests, eagerly; “let us hear some of your professional experiences.”

“Very well,” answered the Fiddler, whose real name was Jabez Billings, and who had assumed an Italian cognomen and long hair as adjuncts suitable to his art; “I will tell you of something that happened years ago, soon after I made my first reputation as a violinist. It is a strange, sad history, and one which I shall never forget, so deep was the impression that it made on me at the time.”

Leaning forward, so that the light from the blazing logs shone full on his strongly marked face, with its shock of long, iron-gray hair, Rome’s Favorite Violinist began his tale:

“Many years ago, although so vividly are the circumstances engraven on my mind that it seems but yesterday, I was seated in my library, engrossed in my favorite volume, the one book which is priceless above all others, — without which I never stir from home.”

“And yet,” cried the Rich Presbyterian, “they say that professional people are not religious, and care nothing for the word of God.”

“While I was perusing my scrap-book of notices,” continued the Fiddler, “I heard a knock at the door, and an old friend of my childhood

entered the room. As he seemed to be in a prosperous condition, I greeted him cordially, and for several minutes we chatted pleasantly about our boyhood days, and those whom we had known long ago. Among other things, he told me of the sad fate which had befallen a family I had once known very well, and who were, in fact, distantly related to me. The father had died, after losing his all in some disastrous specu-

lation, leaving a widow with the care of five young children on her shoulders. The story touched me, for the father had aided me during the earlier years of my career; but little did I dream of the climax to which my friend was artfully leading up. It had been decided, he said, to get up an entertainment for the benefit of these helpless orphans; and then, before I could utter a word of warning, he asked me to appear at that benefit, and play on my beautiful violin *without compensation*.

“It is only the true musician who can appreciate the shock I received when I was asked to do something for nothing.



“I fell back in my chair, too pained and mortified to speak.

“As soon as I found my voice, I said: ‘My friend, you know not what you ask? Are you aware of the fact that I am a member of the Musical Union, and that an awful vengeance would be meted out to me if I were to attempt even to put rosin on my bow at a benefit?’

“‘But consider the poor orphans!’ he exclaimed.

“‘I am a true artist!’ I replied, haughtily; ‘and never consider any one but myself. My terms are one hundred dollars; but as the case seems to be one of real distress, and I have no engagement at present, I will consent to appear on this occasion for seventy-five dollars, provided my name appears at the top of the poster in letters a foot high, followed by a line stating that I have kindly and generously volunteered my services for the benefit, and will render two matchless violin solos.’

“My friend shook his head sadly, and departed, leaving me indignant and unhappy. The next day he called on me again, told a harrowing tale of the destitution of the orphans, and renewed his importunities.

“At last, moved to compassion by the pitiful story, I offered to appear for fifty-five dollars; but this did not satisfy him, and again he departed, leaving me in an almost frantic condition; for, as a general thing, the mere mention of the word ‘benefit’ is enough to unstring my nerves for a whole day.



“He returned to me a third time, and — but why dwell upon this painful subject? Suffice it to say that at the end of two hours I, Signor Trankadillo, Rome’s Favorite Violinist, agreed to play at that benefit for the paltry and wretched sum of twenty-five dollars. The amount was so small that I forgot to ask for it in advance, which is a ceremony that I *never* neglect.”

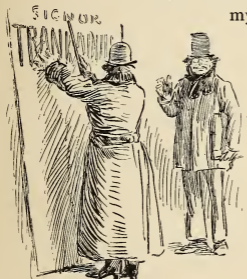
The Fiddler paused in his narration, and buried his head in his hands, overcome by the remembrance of the bitter trials through which he had passed. His auditors, deeply moved, neither spoke nor stirred, and for a moment a solemn silence hung like a pall over the group. At last the musician raised his head, threw back his long locks of iron-gray hair, and, with a half sob in his voice, continued his narrative.

“During the fortnight that elapsed before the night fixed for the benefit, my proud, sensitive artist soul went through sufferings which even now, after the lapse of years, I can not calmly describe. It seemed to me that the whole world knew my awful secret. I shunned the society of other musicians, fearing lest they should point the finger of scorn at me, and cry:

“‘We know you, Signor Trankadillo; you pretend to be Rome’s Favorite Violinist, and a member in good standing of the Musical Union, and yet down in the depths of your black heart you nourish the determination to disgrace your art, and corrupt the finest feelings of your nature by appearing at the benefit of some wretched orphans for the paltry sum of twenty-five dollars!’

“One day, while in this bitter, suspicious mood, I was passing through the public market place, and stopped to look at the posters announcing the benefit.

While I was measuring the letters with



my foot-rule to see that my name was printed according to contract, my old friend, Dr. Tannhauser, tapped me on the shoulder. Dr. Tannhauser is a pianist and I am a violinist, and so it happened that, although we are both musicians, we usually speak well of each other.

I may remark, therefore, that not only is Dr. Tannhauser termed with perfect justice the Trankadillo of pianists, but he is also a skillful, persistent and conscientious worker for the piano manufacturer who hires him to puff his instruments. Moreover, he has given a course of lectures on ‘The Dignity of the Musical Profession,’ which are spoken of in the very highest terms by all those who have been fortunate enough to hear them.

“Well, Dr. Tannhauser tapped me playfully on the shoulder, pointed to the poster, and said:

“‘What! a violinist volunteering for a benefit? Well, Signor, you and I know what volunteering means in our calling. I hope you make those orphans pay well for your services.’

“I thought he knew my black secret, and was mocking me, and I returned home overcome with shame and humiliation.



“At last the night of the benefit came— an awful night, with rain and wind and thunder and flashes of lightning. Although much depressed in spirits, I played my symphony in C. O. D., as I alone can play it. The audience, which was not large, cheered madly, and the other musicians who, like myself, had generously volunteered their services, tore their hair with envy. My number was the last on the programme, and when I had finished, the audience dispersed, and I went to the box-office to get my paltry recompense.

“How can I sit calmly here and describe the scene at the box-office window, when I learned that the receipts had been so scanty that there was barely enough to pay the rent? The other volunteers had, of course, demanded payment in advance, and stood in the lobby grinning derisively at me. I begged, I implored, I screamed for my money. Then I sprang at the manager's throat, and fell, insensate, on the cold pavement.

“For weeks I lay on a hospital cot, raving about my twenty-five dollars. After a while reason returned to me, and I prayed that I might regain my strength, so that I might pursue into their graves the fiends who had induced me to play, and had then defrauded me of my money.”

Signor Trankadillo paused in his story, and wiped

the sweat from his forehead. He was trembling with emotion, as the recollections of his sufferings came back to him with crushing force.

His hearers, too, were deeply moved.

“And did you ever obtain your just dues?” asked the Representative Business Man.

“Did I?” he cried, triumphantly.

“Did you ever know a true artist who did not? I hounded those miserable orphans until they paid me every dollar that was mine.”



“But how did they raise the money, if they were so poor?”

“They made pin-cushions and pen-wipers, and sold them at a little fair which they held in a basement, for the benefit of Signor Trankadillo, Rome’s Favorite Violinist. In this way they did me tardy justice.”

It was the Spiritualist who broke the silence.

“That’s a first-rate story,” he exclaimed; “but if you want to hear something really remarkable, just listen to me, and I will tell you a tale that illustrates the wonders of spiritualism —”

“Silence for the Spiritualist’s Tale!” cried the Hypnotist, as he stroked his long beard, and bent his gaze on the story-teller.



THE SPIRITUALIST'S TALE.



*"Ye hain't a-goin' tew disturb my wife,
when she's laid there ten year, be ye?"*

THE SPIRITUALIST'S TALE.

“YOU DO NOT believe in spiritualism ; I can tell that by your looks,” said the apostle of the other world.

“You would be surprised, perhaps, if I were to tell you that it is possible for believers in our faith to raise the dead to life. Nevertheless, when you have heard this story, which I know to be true, you will have no doubt that it is within the power of a true believer to accomplish this apparently impossible feat.

“At this moment, as I go back in memory to the circumstances which I am about to narrate, I am more than ever convinced that the whole story should be written out and given to the world. I shall certainly carry out this idea at once, and very much in the following form.”

Then, in a clear, even voice, as if he were reading aloud, the Spiritualist began his tale, quite unconscious of the potent glance of the Scientist :

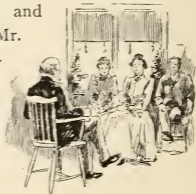
“Mr. Gettit Easy was one of the most popular and agreeable of the two-score of city people who made the village of Wampum, Conn., their home during the Summer of 1889. Of pleasant manners, with a mind well

stored with that sort of learning which constant intercourse with the world alone can give, it is not strange that Mr. Easy succeeded in impressing not only his fellow-boarders, but also the residents of the little village, with his qualities as a man of refinement and high standing. In addition to his other traits of character, Mr. Easy was an avowed Spiritualist, a fact which commended him in the highest degree to the good people of the neighborhood; for, like all the rest of enlightened New England, Wampum boasts a large proportion of spiritualists among its inhabitants.

“Mr. Easy lingered at the village inn late into the Fall; and, after the departure of his fellow-boarders, cultivated the society of his country neighbors with even greater assiduity than during the Summer months. There is a great deal of wealth represented by the families who dwell in the large substantial wooden houses that line the one broad elm-shaded street that constitutes Wampum Village; and it was with these families that Mr.

Easy sought to establish himself on terms of pleasant intimacy. Nearly all these people are spiritualists; some openly professing their belief, others pretending to despise it, yet in their secret hearts believing

everything that an intelligent human being should believe in regard to ‘warnings’ and ‘visions,’ and the return to earth of the shades of the departed.



“It was to several of these new friends that Mr. Easy one day broached a project which, for some time previous, he had been revolving in his mind.

“‘Why not hold one or two spiritualistic revival meetings, now that the days are getting shorter, and the evenings hang heavy on our hands?’

“That was Mr. Easy’s suggestion to the wealthy believers of Wampum Village, with whom he now stood on a very friendly footing, and it met with their heartiest approval. Accordingly, a series of Wednesday evening spiritualistic meetings was started under the special guidance of Mr. Easy, whose mastery of the mysteries of the craft was universally acknowledged and recognized in the village circles where he maintained his sway.

“The first three or four of the Wednesday evening meetings passed off quietly, and with nothing to mark them as different from other gatherings of their kind; but, at the fifth meeting, Mr. Easy, in accordance with certain mysterious hints which he had thrown out at the previous assemblies, made an announcement which thrilled his hearers to their hearts’ cores, and startled the old village from its lethargy of a hundred years. These are some of the words used by Mr. Easy on this memorable occasion :

“‘My friends, there are some mockers and scoffers who declare that spiritualism is a fraud, and that we, who conduct these séances and are familiar with the many manifestations whose meaning is perfectly plain to all of us, do these things for purposes of personal gain, and that we do not really believe that which we preach.

“ ‘ Now, my hearers, I propose to give the lie to these aspersions, at once and forever, one week from to-day, when I will prove to you, and to the whole community besides, that miracles can still be accomplished by means of help from the other world.



I will prove to you that the miracles of the New Testament can still be performed; for on that day I will go into the cemetery and bring back the dead to life.

Yes, my friends, if you will come with me to the cemetery one week from to-day, you will see standing before you in the flesh, clothed, and in their right minds, the loved ones who have passed before you to the better land. You will see your wives, husbands, mothers, fathers and children; and they will come back to live here with you many useful, happy years. So prepare, my friends, to meet them, and remember that by their coming the voice of the scoffer and mocker will be hushed forever.’

“ ‘ Mr. Easy’s words produced a sensation in spiritualistic and other circles in Wampum Village that it is difficult to describe. So great was the esteem in which he was held that no one doubted for a moment his

ability to do all that he said he would. There were many who were actually frightened by his words, and declared that they thought when he tried to usurp the prerogative of the Deity that he was going entirely too far, and ought to be stopped by the town authorities. But then, nothing could be done without the aid of the law, and there is nothing in any known statute-book which makes it a felony for a man to raise his friends and relatives from the dead.

“The days wore on, and Mr. Easy busied himself with certain mysterious preparations for the event of Wednesday, wearing at the same time an air of cheerful confidence, which more than confirmed the popular belief that he would accomplish his task.

“He had done it before, on a smaller scale, he declared, and he could do it again. Certain necessary preliminaries involved considerable expense; but he could afford it; and it was his pleasure to spend his money in proving to the world the great truths of spiritualism.

“On Sunday morning, while he was busy sending a message to the spirit land, by means of a piece of chalk fastened between two slates and then dipped in a pail of water, he received a call from a certain Cap'n Israel Larrabee, one of the wealthiest residents of Wampum and a fervent believer in spiritualism, though he had never had the courage to proclaim his faith. Captain Larrabee was one of those men who, by reason of their cowardice, are the very bane of all spiritualistic progress. Unfortunately for our great cause, the Captain was only one out of a very large number of timorous,

half-avowed believers, and if it had not been for these men—but I am anticipating.

“Mr. Easy welcomed his visitor cordially, and made room for him beside the wood fire by moving the huge table, touching it only with the tips of his fingers, to the other side of the room, and bringing up a big arm-chair in the same easy manner.

“‘There’s some on us ez ’u’d like tew know what folks you be a-goin’ tew bring back tew life this comin’ Wednesday,’ said the Cap’n, after a preliminary coughing spell.

“‘I am going to bring back the loved ones of the believers. That will be their reward for their faith in me,’ replied Mr. Easy.

“‘Ye hain’t a-goin’ tew disturb my wife, when she’s laid there ten year, be ye?’ demanded the Captain, piteously.

“‘Of course, I am,’ rejoined the other, warmly. ‘I will restore her to your arms, and she will comfort you for many a year to come.’

“‘The Captain writhed uneasily in his chair, and then went on: ‘Wa-al, there’s ’Lisha Elderkin’s wife been dead this two year. Ye see, a spell ago ’Lisha merried Sairey Doolittle, a cousin of hers, an’ a gal his wife never could endure the sight on. She hed a pesky temper, I kin tell ye. Be you a-goin’ tew fetch her back ag’in?’

“‘Certainly, I am. Mr. Elderkin’s a good believer, is n’t he?’

“‘The Captain said no more, and in a few moments

withdrew, leaving Mr. Easy to continue his preparations for the great event of the week.

“Late that night, while he was busy producing spirit portraits by Rembrandt and Copley, he heard what he supposed at first

was a communication from a dead author who was calling him up by ghostly rappings. But the knocking was on his own door, and it came from the earthly knuckles of Cap'n Larrabee, who



was accompanied by old

Ephraim Doolittle and young Bill Dyer, whose father, Judge Dyer, had been dead about two years.

“It was Mr. Doolittle who opened the conversation, by asking as soon as they were seated: ‘Mr. Easy, be you a-goin’ tew bring them folks back tew life this week?’

“‘Certainly, I am,’ replied the spiritualistic expert.

“‘Is my father comin’ back, too?’ demanded Bill Dyer anxiously; for he had been making the old man’s money fly pretty fast, and had no wish to be stopped short in his fun.

“‘Your father shall certainly be restored to you,’ was the reply.

“‘I s’pose, er-r,’ observed Mr. Doolittle, cautiously, ‘thet if the place gets a mite tew crowded ye could n’t fix it so ’s ter exchange some o’ these old critters ez is in

the way here? Naouw, fer example, there 's my wife's uncle —'

“‘Stop, Mr. Doolittle,’ cried Mr. Easy, lifting his hands with horror. ‘My mission here is to restore the dead to life, and not to destroy the living. I have received my instructions direct from the spirit world, and must obey them. I have already expended nearly five thousand dollars in preparations for this great undertaking—an undertaking which I supposed would bring joy and gladness to the hearts of all my good friends in Wampum. I find, to my surprise, that my proposition does not awaken the enthusiasm which I hoped it would, and —’

“‘I ’ll tell ye what it is, friend Easy,’ broke in Cap’n Larrabee, suddenly assuming a confidential tone; ‘what ’s it wuth tew ye ter skin aout o’ taown ter-morrer mornin’ early, an’ not hev’ no dead raisin’ at all? We ’ve been a-talkin’ it over amongst aourselves, an’, come ter find aout, all on us ez hez been afflicted is resigned to the Divine will, an’ don’t want no changes made—leastways, not that way. It ’u’d make altogether tew much trouble hevin’ some o’ them folks back in taown ag’in; an’ ef you ’ll name a figger I ’ll see what kin be done fer ye.’

“‘Very well,’ replied Mr. Easy; ‘I yield to the wishes of my friends, and ask only to be reimbursed for what I have expended. Spirits!’ he exclaimed, ‘how many thousand dollars have I expended in the preparations for this resurrection?’

“The answer came back in five distinct knocks.

“Mr. Easy turned to his visitors: ‘You hear the answer, and as true believers you know that the spirits do not lie. Give me back this amount and I will agree to leave the dead undisturbed.’

“‘All right,’ cried Cap’n Larabee; ‘we’ll raise it for you tomorrow.’

“And they kept their word.

“‘Thus it happened, my friends,’ said the Spiritualist, ‘that one of the most marvelous manifestations ever conceived of

was prevented by the cupidity and meanness of half a dozen villagers.’

“‘But,’ exclaimed the Representative Business Man, ‘do you really imagine that he could have brought back the dead to earth? It looks to me very much like a fraud. Yes, sir; very much like fraud.’

“‘Fraud!’ cried the Spiritualist angrily; ‘that’s always the way with you scoffers and unbelievers. You won’t even credit your own senses, but shriek “fraud” at the most marvelous of all phenomena. Don’t you suppose that a man who could produce paintings done by the old masters in the spirit land, and move dining-tables from one end of the room to the other, could raise people from the dead, if he chose to try?’”

“It seems to me he made a pretty good raise from the living,” exclaimed the Detective; “and that reminds me —”



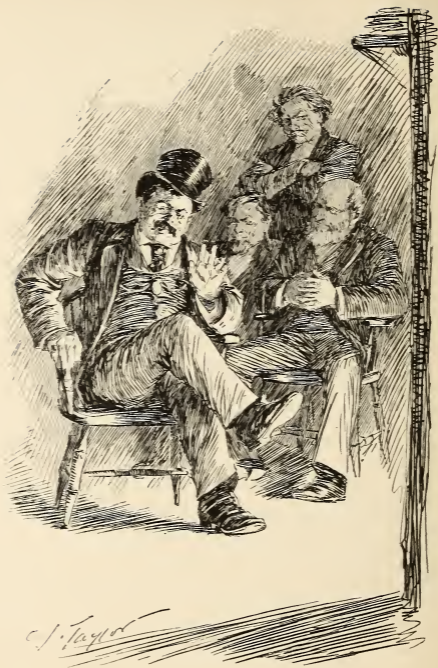
“Silence for the Detective’s tale!”

Thus cried the man of science, fixing his eyes firmly on the officer of the law.

A perfect silence reigned throughout the room, and everybody looked hard at the Detective.



THE DETECTIVE'S TALE.



“How long have I been a detective?” he said.”

THE DETECTIVE'S TALE.

YOU WOULD NEVER have taken him for a detective, this stout, ordinary-looking man, with the high shiny hat, dyed moustache and big watch chain. There was nothing of the craftiness or mystery about him that we expect to find in a professional Hawkshaw. On the contrary, he was, to all appearances, a person of phlegmatic temperament and matter-of-fact habits of thought. It would be hard, indeed, to imagine him following clues, or putting on mysterious disguises for the purpose of running criminals to earth. And yet this man was, as he said himself, one of the most famous detectives in New York, and was credited, moreover, with being one of the wealthiest.

“How long have I been a detective?” he said in reply to the question of the School-Boy. “Twenty years this last Spring. How did I come to be a detective? Well, it was nothing but a kind of an accident that got me on ‘the force.’ You see it was just after election, the year we ran Barney O’Brien in our district for Assembly, and got him in, too, by the skin of his teeth. Of course I worked for Barney, because me and him has always

stood in together, and I was to have had a stall in the market if Barney got elected. Well, a few days afterward he comes and says that he's had to make more promises than there was stalls in the market, and he was afraid some of his friends was going to get left.



‘But you’ll be taken care of, Rocksey,’ he says to me; ‘because I’ll get you on “the force,” and there’s a dollar there for a live man when they ain’t more’n a dime in Washington Market.’

“And I had n’t been at the Central Office three months before I seen he spoke the truth. Twenty years I’ve been on ‘the force,’ and followed up all sorts of cases, big and small; but the case I’m a-going to tell you about now, in some respects beats any I ever tackled.

“One morning we got news there’d been a big diamond and bond robbery up in the brown-stone district, and as there was ten thousand dollars reward offered I took hold of the case. I’d been giving pretty good satisfaction so far, and as business was kind of easy just then I knew I’d have plenty of time to devote to it, and, may be, make a good thing out of it.”

“Pardon me,” said the Rich Presbyterian; “but will you kindly tell us what the ordinary duties of a detective are, and what you mean by business being easy?”

“Oh! a detective’s got plenty to do. He’s got to see it that the saloons pay up regular, and that all the protection money is n’t divided between the police captain of the precinct and the Society for the Annoyance

of Criminals. When I first came on 'the force' there was a few snoozers, doing business not far from Broadway, that thought there was nobody on earth outside the captain of the precinct, and that it was n't worth their while to pay a dollar to a detective. Well, we just

went to work, and closed up a couple of 'em that was dealing brace faro games, and let the rest know that police protection was no protection at all without we said so; and, then, they was glad enough

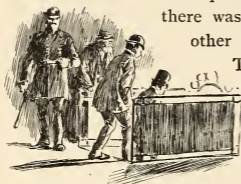


to change their tune, and come down every week, along with the rest. I claim that the only way to make the detective force really a success is to stand in with the police captains, and then squeeze every precinct in the city for the last dollar there is in it. The trouble has always been with one side or the other trying to get more than their share, and then getting to squabbling about it, and closing up all the joints just out of spite. The two departments ought to work together, harmonious-like, and divide the boodle fair and square. Of course, the societies with the long names has to get a whack now and then; but, properly speaking, they're not in it."

"Then, that's what you mean by business being easy?" observed the Rich Presbyterian, inquiringly.

"Yes; that's something like it, and business was

easy in the precinct I had charge of at the time I'm speaking of. When I first took hold of that precinct it was the worst in the whole city. Dull as dishwater, and hardly a dollar in it from one end to the other. What little money there was there went to the police, and the detective force did n't get a cent. Well, if I say it myself, I worked wonders in that precinct. I gave out that parties as wanted to do business there was safe if they only came to *us* first; and that we'd use 'em right and give 'em real *genooine* protection. What was the consequence? Why, in less than two years there was faro banks and opium-joints and other places running along at full blast.



They were selling policy slips in a dozen cigar shops, and there was a bunco joint that was a mine to us, besides concert saloons that give sacred concerts every Sunday night, and saloons that were open after one o'clock and all day Sunday.

“ Well, it's admitted everywhere that no man ever worked harder to improve his precinct and build up a business in it than I did in that; and with the streets full of country jays, brought in by the bunco men and the concert saloons, all the places coining money, and the police and detectives dividing a matter of twelve hundred cold bones every week, you might say that all hands were contented and the goose hung high.

“ But to go back to the story. This diamond and bond robbery looked as if it ought to be a big thing, and

I was put onto it, because I'd done so satisfactory in building up the precinct. There was two hundred thousand in bonds, five thousand in cash and a whole lot of diamonds taken. The bonds were not negotiable; but the cash was all right, and, as for the sparklers, it was an easy matter disposing of them. The reward was ten thousand, which was enough to make a man hump himself, and it was n't long before I made up my mind who done the job. It was a particular friend of mine, called Crooked Casey, who'd been running a sawdust game that was worth about two hundred cases a month to us the year round. So I put a couple of men on him, and, to make a long story short, in a few days I just stepped into his place and asked him what it was worth to him to have me drop the case, and give out that the criminal had been tracked to Havana, — 'but here even the vigilant Detective Rocksey could find no trace of him, and he is supposed to have fled to Europe.'

"Casey tried to make a bluff; but it was no go, and then he offered me all the diamonds and four thousand of the money to let up on him.

He said he'd chuck in the bonds, too; but they were no good to either of us. They were unregistered United States bonds; but the party he got 'em from had kept a list of the numbers on all of 'em, so they could n't be shoved anywhere. The diamonds would n't

bring more than a couple of thousand at the outside, and that set me a-wondering why there should be a ten



thousand dollar reward for stuff that would n't bring that amount. And just there I took a big tumble. I went to the party they was took from—he was an old Jew, rich as mud and just crazy over his loss—and I says to him: 'I've got to have the numbers of them bonds or I can't do anything more.'

Well, he made a lot of excuses; but pretty soon I pinned him down, and got out of him just what I'd suspected. He'd forgotten to take their numbers, and he'd given out that they were n't negotiable, as a bluff to the one as took 'em, to keep him from trying to place 'em in any of the banks. Then I goes back to Casey, and gets him to give up the whole lot of swag—diamonds, cash, bonds and all; and it was the detectives that came in on that racket, and the captain of the precinct never got a smell of the dust. Yes; I've done a good many pretty slick bits of detective work in my time; but I think that's the very slickest I ever had a hand in. And what's more, Crooked Casey is doing

business the same as before, at the old stand, and giving up his two hundred every month, and setting a good example to every one else in the precinct. I tell you, ladies and gents, this is an Iron Age, and everybody has got to produce."



A silence fell upon the Detective's amazed auditors. The grey bearded Scientist was almost beside himself with delight. Never before had hypnotism elicited from any subject so complete a revelation of the inner workings of the heart.

The Boston Girl, who looked upon the Detective as a low fellow, did not quite understand the meaning of the tale, and supposed it was all part and parcel of vulgar New York life.

“Do let us have a story of refined society!” she exclaimed a little disdainfully.

“Well, you’re just the lady as can tell that story,” said the Detective, with an appreciative glance at her undeniably trim figure.

She could not help feeling the force of the compliment, and her voice assumed a conciliatory tone as she said, with a glance at the Detective:

“But at any rate, sir, your story was an extremely interesting one—so you’d better not try to sell it to the *Atlantic*.”

The Spiritualist threw two or three pieces of dry pine on the fire, and the flame leaping up illumined the expectant faces of the guests, who awaited the Boston Girl’s Tale.



THE BOSTON GIRL'S TALE.



*“I will confine myself to a description
of Boston society.”*

THE BOSTON GIRL'S TALE.

SHE ADJUSTED her eyeglasses and carefully smoothed down the creases in her tailor-made dress. The white-bearded man of science fixed his eyes upon her, and, yielding to the hypnotic spell, she began her tale:

“I am going to tell you of a very remarkable and thrilling event which occurred in one of the most exclusive houses on Beacon Hill last Winter and made a profound sensation in the very best society of Boston; and I can assure you that in those circles it is very seldom that anything takes place that is in the slightest degree exciting or dramatic. The scene of my story is laid in the drawing-room of one of the most aristocratic of our Massachusetts mansions, during a characteristic gathering of the very best and most charming people of the modern Athens. You who have the misfortune to live in New York, or in places even further west, can form no idea of what a really exclusive social affair in Boston



is like. It is not like a New York ball, where the guests are selected solely on account of their wealth; or like a Western merry-making, where flannel shirts and broad hats are *de rigueur*—”

“It’s nothing of the sort!” cried the Western girl, impetuously. “You attend one of our select society round-ups, and you’ll find just as much style to the square foot as you will in Boston, or New York, either, for that matter.”

The Boston Girl raised her eyebrows gently, in token of surprise, and then went on: “Well, I will confine myself to a description of Boston society, with which I am so thoroughly familiar that my accuracy will be above question. This reception was given by Mr. Hiram Beeswax, who belongs to one of the oldest families in

Massachusetts, and is closely related to the Knuttmeigs, of Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Beeswax



lives in a beautiful old-fashioned house furnished in the Colonial style. His grandfather was an old Boston merchant, who used to send ships to the west coast of Africa, in order to Christianize the savages and induce them to leave their barbarous ways and come with him to the West Indies, where he found pleasant homes for them in the families of planters. He owned a large distillery, and amassed a great fortune by his trade with Africa.

“The reception was given in honor of Herr Rosin, the third violin in the Museum orchestra, and a great favorite in society. Of course, the presence of such a

distinguished musician filled the drawing-rooms with the most exclusive and charming literary and artistic celebrities in the city. And among others was Professor Gnowital, a very agreeable and accomplished man, and one of the founders of the Wednesday Night Club. He was talking to Mrs. Squeall, who gives delightful Russian readings every Saturday morning in the season. It 's so pleasant to hear Tolstoï in its original tongue."

"But how many of you understood Russian?" asked the Spiritualist.

"Why, we none of us understand it any more than she does; but it 's perfectly charming to go to her studio; one meets so many really cultivated people there; and her readings have been very successful," said the Boston Girl, looking rather superciliously at the questioner, and speaking with a rising inflection of the voice.

"But, to return to the Beeswax reception. Another guest of distinction was Mrs. Hopeful Squills, who made quite a furore a year or two ago by hanging all her garments from her shoulders and preaching all-wool health doctrines to the Philistines of New York, Chicago and Philadelphia."

"How do you mean?" demanded the School-Boy, who had listened with eyes and mouth wide open; "how do you mean — she hangs all her clothes on her shoulders? does n't she put them on? Why, do you know I should think —"

"Hush!" said the Rich Presbyterian.



“Te he!” giggled the Western Girl; and the Boston Girl went on with a heightened color:

“I thought that my meaning would be understood, and that it would not be necessary for me to go into particulars. I will only say that Mrs. Squills is a very accomplished and charming woman, and talks in a perfectly delightful way about the things in which she is interested. Mr. Fearsome Greer, another of the guests, entertained us during the evening with recitations. He reads Browning beautifully, and all the girls in Boston simply dote on him. There was an unusually large number of men present, fully half-a-dozen beside those that I have named; and you’ve no idea how refreshing it was to see so many black coats in one parlor, all on the same evening. Well, with such a large proportion of men present, you can imagine how surprised we were when at a very late hour another man, a total stranger — to me, at least — was ushered into the drawing-room. But, bewildered as we were, we were totally unprepared for the climax that, an hour later, followed the appearance of that stranger.

“It was not long before we found out who he was; and, indeed, you may trust the girls in our set to learn all there is to know about a man in about as short a time as any girls in New England.

“I had forgotten to say that Mrs. Beeswax had a niece of hers staying with her at the time — a rather pretty little thing from the West, somewhere; and, of course, this reception was the first exclusive and intellectual affair she had ever attended in her life. You

might say that on this occasion she made her *début* in society; and, naturally enough, she was very much awed by the brilliancy of the company, if not actually chilled by the *hauteur* of the guests. The truth is, the poor child was simply impossible in Boston, and we all of us agreed that it was best to let her know the truth as soon as possible.

“We did it kindly, but firmly. We drew her into our circle and talked about esoteric Buddhism, Dante and Ibsen, until I really felt sorry for the poor child—she looked so red and uncomfortable.

“I was sitting beside her when the strange man entered the room. It was dreadful the way she jumped up and ran to speak to him, right before every one in the room. I felt decidedly annoyed, for it is awkward to be left sitting alone by oneself on a sofa, and it never seemed to occur to her to bring the man over and present him to any of us. He was a tall, handsome man, too, though evidently from the West somewhere; and, as I said before, in less than five minutes we knew everything about him. He owned a mine, or something like that, in the place where Amelia—I believe that was her silly name—lived, and he had stopped for a few days in Boston on his way to Europe—on business, he said.

“You would n't believe it, but before he 'd been in the room fifteen minutes, he disappeared as if he 'd been swallowed up; and when I looked around for Amelia, I found that she had vanished, too. This sort of thing would never do in Boston, and so Sadie Applethorpe

and I started out to look for them. We found them, of course, in the conservatory, and we came upon them very suddenly. I heard him speaking to her, and his words were distinctly — too distinctly — audible to us both. I had often read in novels of men who addressed themselves to girls as he was addressing her; but I never dreamed that I should live to hear such language in the very holy of holies of Boston society. Sadie Applethorpe turned white. The warning cough froze upon my larynx. I do not know what strange force compels me to describe such a scene before this very mixed company, but I must.



“That audacious man from the West was holding both of that girl’s hands in his, and was asking her to marry him.”

The Boston Girl paused, and wiped her forehead with her lace handkerchief, while the company looked at her and at one another without speaking.

It was the School-Boy who broke the silence: “And what did *she* say?”

“What did *she* say?” exclaimed the story-teller, rather snappishly. “What would any girl say under such circumstances? She said YES, of course.”

“That’s a nice high-toned society story,” said the Detective, approvingly; “but there don’t seem to be much that’s practical about you gilt-edged folks.”

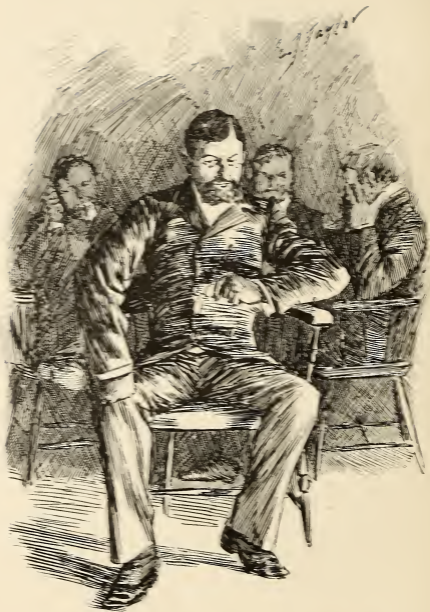
“I’ll tell you a story that’s practical enough to suit any one,” exclaimed the Representative Business Man, with sudden energy.

“Go on, then!” cried the man of science, moving his chair a little so as to get a full view of him.

And then the other guests settled down to a quiet enjoyment of the Representative Business Man's Tale.



THE REPRESENTATIVE
BUSINESS MAN'S TALE.



*“In fact, I did business on wind for
a long while.”*

THE REPRESENTATIVE BUSINESS MAN'S TALE.

“I HAVE BEEN KNOWN as a Representative Business Man for the past ten years,” said the eminently sleek and respectable gentleman with a black broad-cloth suit, on which not a speck of dust could be discovered. “Well, I certainly do represent a very large class of business men, and what I have not learned about finance and raising the wind during my long business life is not worth knowing.

“Talk about raising the wind, why, I can remember the time when I not only had to raise the wind, but carry on business with it when I had raised it. In fact, I did business on wind for a long while, and, of course, always kept a big stock of it on hand for emergencies; and the story I am going to tell relates to that rather exciting and interesting period in my career. I had started a small trade paper called the *Shoestring and Coppertoe Gazette*, and had fixed up a nice office downtown in the newspaper quarter of the city. It was a beautiful office for a Representative Business Man, with a high desk for the book-keeper—I had an old man,

with long, gray whiskers, to keep the books, because he gave tone to the place—and an iron railing, and a great big safe in one corner to make everything look solid and substantial.”



“But did you have anything to keep in your safe?” asked the Rich Presbyterian.

“Why, I kept my capital in it.”

“But I thought you told us you were doing business on wind,” persisted the Rich Presbyterian.

“Well, that’s what I kept there. The safe was made out of paper stretched on a light frame-work of wood, and beautifully painted. The lock and hinges were just as natural as life, and I tell you it was grand to see that old book-keeper fingering with the combination when anybody came in the office.

“Well, I got in a pretty tight hole one time, and though I tried every way I knew how, it seemed as if I’d never be able to squirm out. The paper was losing money, I had my bank account overdrawn, and I owed the printer so much that he would n’t print the paper except for cash. One day I was reading the ‘ads’ in the ‘Business Opportunities’ column in the *Herald*, when an idea suddenly struck me. Why should n’t I advertise for a partner? I knew there must be something in it, for I noticed that people kept on advertising in that column, and the old ‘ads’ were dropping out and new ones coming in, which seemed to indicate that somebody was caught now and then. So I sat down

and wrote out an 'ad' like this, and sent it in for the Sunday edition :

“ ‘A conservative business man of long experience desires to sell a half interest in a well-established trade paper. Would like to communicate with some young man of ability who can invest a few thousand dollars in cash.’

“I got half a dozen answers, and among the rest one that I knew was my huckleberry as soon as I laid eyes on it. It was from a Mr. Adolphus Grass, who said he was a young man with some money of his own, and a taste for writing. His friends had told him that he ought to get his stories published in the leading magazines; but there seemed to be a sort of ring in all the magazine offices that kept new writers out in the cold, and prevented them from getting a show. He wanted to know if there would be any chance for him to do any writing on the paper, and if I thought some of his stories would be of any use to a trade paper.

“I sat right down and wrote him that what I really wanted was a man of refined literary taste to conduct the paper, and write bright, clever things for it. I had been thinking of running a series of stories, and had no doubt his would be very valuable to me. I gave him my address, and asked him to call at the office as soon as he could. He dropped in the next day, and I tell you my eyes glistened when I saw him. I could n't have dreamed of a better man to have for a partner in a small, rickety business. He was a regular dude in appearance, and had a simple, confiding sort of face

that made me take to him the minute I set eyes on him. He carried some manuscript, tied up with red tape, under his arm. I took him right into my private office—I never got so broke but what I had a private office—and told the old book-keeper not to let any creditors make a disturbance outside, and spoil the snap while I had him in there. Of course, he wanted to see the last number of the paper, and he rather had me there, because the whole edition was down at the press-rooms waiting for me to pay the printer's bill, and I had n't anything but a five-dollar bill to my name. I told him the paper would n't be out till the next day, because the presses had broken down trying to rush off an extra big edition in a great hurry.



“I talked to him very smoothly, and made a mighty good impression on him, I know, for I saw him taking in the solid-looking safe and the old book-keeper with his gray whiskers, figuring in the big ledger at the high desk. When he went out he said he'd call the next day with his father, and I told him to come in the afternoon, so I could show him the new number that would be out at twelve o'clock.

“Then I made up my mind I'd have that edition in the office, no matter what it cost me. I sneaked into the press-room, and stole a half a dozen copies from the top of the heap, and started up the street for Findings & Co., whom I'd been working for a big “ad.” I put out the half dozen papers on all the news-stands around the office, and told the dealers to give 'em a good show,

and they 'd have a call for 'em. Then I walked into the office, and tackled Old Man Findings, who was sitting there all alone, as good luck would have it. The old fellow's as vain as a peacock, and I knew just how to take him, so I went in and said:

“ ‘Mr. Findings, I just dropped in to show you a little personal notice I printed about you this week—no, don't be alarmed, I 'm not going to charge you a cent for it. I just put it in because I thought your position in the trade and your sterling character deserved some sort of public recognition.’

“ ‘And all the time I was talking I was feeling in every pocket I had, looking for the paper which, of course, was n't there.



“ ‘Bless my soul!’ said I; ‘why, I find I have n't got the number with me; and it's very curious, too, because I'm sure I remember putting it in my pocket just before I left the office. But if you 'll just let your office-boy run out and buy one—here, Henry, take this dime, and get a copy of the *Shoestring and Coppertoe Gazette*; you 'll find it on any news-stand.’

“ ‘The boy went out, and I sat there as easy as you please, telling him what a big sale the paper had, and how there was n't a newsdealer in the city that did n't keep it on his stand. Of course, the boy came back with the paper in a couple of minutes, and the old man thought I must be pretty sure of the circulation, to trust

to his finding it as quick as that. I took the paper from the boy, and read the old man a notice that just tickled him all over. I'd laid it on pretty thick about his long and honorable business career, his stately home in an aristocratic suburb (he lived out somewhere near Flushing), his acts of unostentatious charity (he never let go of a dollar without there was a string tied to it), and, most of all, about his being a lay delegate to the Baptist convention.

"When I got through, he said: 'That's very well written, indeed; really quite a fine literary style. Let me take a look at your paper.'

"He put on his glasses and read the notice over a couple of times, and then he put his finger on a big 'ad,' and says he: 'How much do you charge for such an advertisement as that?'

"Well, to make a long story short, I staid with him till I got his contract and a check for one hundred in advance — 'to help boom the circulation,' I told him — and then I skipped back to the printers, got the edition out of their clutches into my office, and went home feeling that I'd done a good day's work.



"I was down the next morning in good season, and got everything ready for the afternoon's *séance*.

"When Mr. Grass and his old gentleman came in, I had everything arranged like a scene in a play. There was the old book-keeper working away at his high desk — I'd sent him out to get his whiskers trimmed, and he

looked grand, I can tell you — and there was the whole edition of the paper spread out, so as to look as big as possible, and three boys writing wrappers and pasting and doing up the mail-bags. I tell you that office was a hive of industry when the old man and his son came in. Of course, I took them right into my private office, where I could talk to them without being interrupted, except when the old man came in, as per arrangement, to say that the American News Company had sent over for an extra thousand, or that Doem, Quick & Co. wanted to increase their advertisement. I knew they'd want to look at the books of the concern, and as I'd been too busy to fix up anything for them, I began to be afraid that I was in a kind of hole. So by way of an excuse I told them the combination of the safe was out of order, and I could n't get the books out. I sprung that on them, and they seemed satisfied, for I promised to have it all right in a day or two.

“After I'd talked to them about an hour, and made that young fellow think the chance of his life had come, they started to go. I walked out with them, and they stood in the outer office a couple of minutes, looking at the boys getting off the edition, and the old man scratching away with his gold pen, and the big safe, and all the rest of it. I tell you I was proud of that office, if I never was before.

“‘I suppose you'll get those books out to-morrow,’ said the old gentleman.

“‘Yes, I hope so,’ said I; ‘you see it's a very complicated sort of a safe, and if it gets out of order it

takes considerable time to fix it. It cost me a lot of money; but if you 're going to have a safe at all, you must have a good one with all the latest improvements —'

“Just then a band of music struck up in the street outside. I declare, it makes me sick to this day when I think of it; but one of those infernal boys made a rush for the window before I could stop him, flung it wide open, and in came the wind at forty knots an hour, and just lifted up that paper safe and sent it flying across the room. I never saw any people so scared as those two Grasses. Then the old fellow took a tumble, and he took his

son by the arm and walked off. As for me, I just dropped into the nearest chair, and sat there while the band marched down



the street playing, 'Up in a Balloon, Boys.'”

“You should have put weights inside the safe to keep it down,” said the Rich Presbyterian, gravely, as the Representative Business Man finished his story.

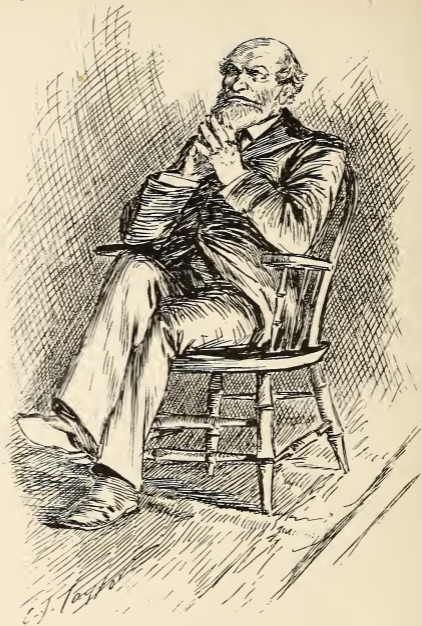
“Well,” retorted the other, “suppose you give us one of your business experiences, and we 'll see whether you managed any better than I did.”

The Rich Presbyterian was about to declare that his commercial ventures had always been of a much more solid and respectable nature than that just described; but the eyes of the Hypnotist were upon him, and before he realized what he was about, he was speaking the truth as easily and naturally as if he had

been accustomed to it all his life. The other guests listened with amazement as the man of piety, yielding to the hypnotic spell, revealed the very innermost motives of his heart.



THE RICH
PRESBYTERIAN'S TALE.



“‘Once upon a time,’ said the Rich Presbyterian, ‘I received an invitation to subscribe to a fund.’”

THE RICH PRESBYTERIAN'S TALE.

“ONCE UPON A TIME,” said the Rich Presbyterian, “I received an invitation to subscribe to a fund to increase the area of public parks in New York, and to lend my influence to a scheme for establishing not only new parks, but also a system of free swimming-baths along the water.

“I need not tell you that, being a Rich Presbyterian, my conscience would not allow me to aid in any such projects as those that I have named.”

“Pardon me,” interrupted the Spiritualist; “but I, for one, do not understand why your conscience would not permit you to support such an excellent measure. I have always seen your name mentioned prominently in connection with philanthropic undertakings of all kinds; and, indeed, your reputation is that of a man who subscribes largely to deserving charities.”

“My friend,” said the Rich Presbyterian, turning with a pleasant smile to his questioner, “it is evident to me that you are not a New Yorker; for, if you were, you would know that in that city every great public work that is a benefit to the people and the town is projected

and carried out by scoundrels. Bad men secured for the city its parks and boulevards, gave us the Broadway surface road, the new aqueduct — in short, so intimately are all our improvements associated with rascality of one

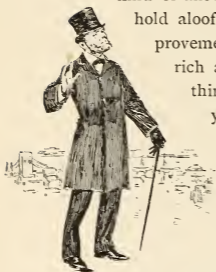
kind or another that we good men are obliged to hold aloof from all projects tending to the improvement of the city. You never heard of a

rich and truly good New Yorker doing anything for the metropolis, did you? Then

you can understand why it would be unwise in me to allow my name — the name of a well-known Rich Presbyterian — to appear in connection with such an enterprise."

"Pardon me once more," said the Spiritualist; "but will you tell me what a Rich Presbyterian is, and how much he differs from a poor member of the same faith?"

"The amount of difference between the two varies according to the wealth of the one and the poverty of the other, and frequently runs far up into the millions. There may also be differences in creed — but that, of course, is a minor matter compared with money — for the term Rich Presbyterian is merely a generic one, applied to wealthy and truly good Protestant New Yorkers. In a true Rich Presbyterian — he may be Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, anything but Roman Catholic — the spiritual and secular elements are artistically blended. Above all, must he be particular in regard to the outward and visible signs, which are of far more



importance than the inward and spiritual grace. But, to continue my story:

“As I have already told you, I refused to contribute to the park and swimming-school fund for the excellent reason which I have named to you.

But, as I was not averse to doing good, I said to the young man who had come to solicit my subscription: ‘My young friend, I can not conscientiously subscribe to this; but if you know of any really deserving charity which I can aid without injury to my soul, I will be glad to consider it.’



“The young man promptly replied that he considered himself to be a really deserving charity, and assured me that money contributed toward his advancement would be better spent than if applied to the swimming-school fund. ‘Besides,’ he added, ‘I only receive ten per cent. of what I collect for that, and I would, of course, be entitled to all of whatever you might choose to give me for myself. Do you wonder, then, that I am ninety per cent. more eloquent in my own cause than I am on behalf of the fund for the improvement of the public?’

“His mode of reasoning pleased me, so I said to him: ‘I would like to help you, my young friend; but, first of all, you must show me how I can benefit myself by so doing.’

“‘He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord,’ responded the young man.

“‘Of course he does,’ I said; ‘but while it would be irreverent to question the security in such a transaction, still I must remind you that in this case the lender forfeits his interest by not receiving that credit in the public prints to which a philanthropist is justly entitled. For instance, if I were to subscribe to the swimming-school fund, my name would appear in every newspaper in New York as ‘that public-spirited citizen,’ or ‘that estimable Christian philanthropist,’ or ‘that upright, God-fearing merchant;’ and I can assure you, my young friend, that as a Rich Presbyterian draws near to the close of a well-spent and pious life, all earthly joys grow dim, and the one pleasure that remains to him is seeing himself puffed in the newspapers. What, then, can you do for me in return for my kindness?’

“‘Sir,’ said the young man, ‘I have a little invention that I think we might both of us make some money out of. If you will contribute the necessary capital, we will put it into a joint-stock company, and I will take shares of stock for my idea, and also manage the business.’



“‘What is your invention?’ I asked.

“‘Here it is,’ he said, producing the model of what looked like a child’s toy. A small camel was suspended in the eye of a wooden needle, the eye being made so large that the little image easily swung to and fro through it, without touching either side. A figure intended to typify the Rich Man stood near by.

“I looked at it carefully, and said: ‘I suppose this is intended as a toy for children to play with on Sundays, when their secular playthings are put out of sight in the closet. Certainly, such a toy should meet with a ready sale, for I have noticed that there is nothing in this line on the market but the Noah’s Ark; and of late years children have become very tired of playing with that, and are clamoring for something new.’

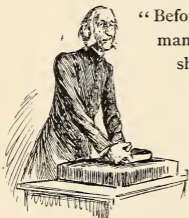
“But the young man assured me that it was not a child’s toy, but an emblem of a religious nature, designed expressly for the use of rich and pious men. ‘A Protestant,’ he explained, ‘can hang that up over his bed where his eye can rest on it every morning when he awakes; and just think of the consolation it will be to him to see that camel sliding back and forth through the needle’s eye as easy as rolling off a log!’

• “To tell the truth, the very sight of that little contrivance made my heart leap with pleasure, and I recognized at once its commercial value. ‘Where did you get the idea for this?’ I inquired. ‘You must have been a close student of the Bible even to have thought of such a thing.’

“‘No,’ he replied; ‘I can not claim to be a particularly close student of Biblical lore. I got the idea of this from a sermon I once heard. The Church of the Whited Sepulchre was in need of a pastor. Several well-known clergymen had been invited to preach on trial, but none of them pleased the congregation, which is as critical as it is wealthy, until Dr. Prairful Trimmer came on from Connecticut with a discourse which showed

conclusively that the needle's eye was in reality wide enough for two camels to pass through abreast, and that it was always kept greased so as to facilitate progress through it. This sermon made such a profound impression that Dr. Trimmer received a call at once, and I set to work on this little contrivance.'

"I knew at once that there was money in the invention," continued the Rich Presbyterian; "and, to make a long story short, I formed a company with fifty thousand dollars capital, installed the young man as manager, and began the manufacture of 'The Christian's Hope,' as we called it.



"Before long, it seemed to me that the young man was claiming altogether more than his share of the profits; for, after all, he was merely the inventor, while I and my friends had supplied all the capital for the company, and, of course, held the majority of the stock. We consulted together, and determined to freeze out the inventor; but he must have got wind of what we were about, for one morning we found the office vacant, the bank account exhausted, and only a package, directed to me, lying in the safe. I opened it, and found a new arrangement of 'The Christian's Hope,' representing the needle going through the rich man, while the camel stood by laughing. I suppose the rich man was intended for myself, and the needle for the young man; but who was meant by the camel I never could find out."

“Well,” exclaimed the Representative Business Man, who had been an interested listener to the story, “it seems to me that both you and I have played in pretty hard luck at one time and another. Now, my theory is, that in order to succeed in business, you’ve got to start in by getting something for nothing. After that, all will be plain sailing —”

“I’ve been getting things for nothing all my life,” cried a stout, important-looking man, with a ruddy complexion and a pervasive smile, who was known to the rest of the company as Colonel Wind.

“Very well, then; tell us how you do it,” said the Hypnotist, as he fixed his eyes on him.



THE GENIAL'S TALE.



*“I have been a professional Genial
for the past six or eight years—”*

THE GENIAL'S TALE.

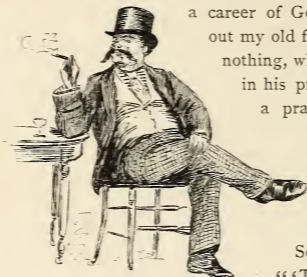
“YOU MUST know,” said Colonel Wind, “that I have been a professional Genial for the past six or eight years —”

“Excuse me, Colonel Wind,” interposed the Rich Presbyterian, “but will you kindly tell us precisely what a Genial is?”

The Colonel cleared his throat, and pondered a minute. Then he made answer in slow, impressive tones :

“A Genial is a man who lives, moves, and has his being on a plane of false sympathy and bonhomie, which he creates for himself as he goes along, in which particular he is a sort of self-lubricator. He defrays his expenses, so far as possible, by being genial and whole-souled, by hearty hand-shakes, and by eulogizing people behind their backs when they are sure to hear of it afterward. Of course, he need not always be whole-souled, but his face should resemble a sun-burst when he meets any one who can do him a favor. And there are certain persons in whose presence your true Genial will always maintain the outward and visible signs of Geniality. These are reporters, theatrical managers,

landlords, politicians (before election), and beings of that erratic class known as 'wine-openers.'



“When I determined to embark on a career of Geniality, I sought out my old friend, Judge Do-nothing, who has grown gray in his profession, and has a practice which embraces every café and bar-room on Broadway, from the Astor House to Forty-Second Street.”

“‘The best thing for you to do,’ said the Judge, ‘is to get hold of a reporter, tell him some infernal lie or other, and he’ll be sure to stick it in his paper. Once get a start of this sort, and it’s an easy matter to follow it up with other stories. I tell you, Colonel, (here he lowered his voice to a mysterious whisper,) newspaper men are the biggest gudgeons on earth. There are a dozen papers in this town, and it seems to me that they’re run for no earthly purpose except to publish a “Man-about-Town” column, or a “How-the-World-Wags” column, or something of the sort. And what’s the object of those columns? Why, simply to make men like you and me famous. After they’ve made celebrities of us, they’ve got to go on writing about us every day; and when Sunday comes, you find our homely old mugs

grinning at you from every printed page in the city. I tell you, old man, there's nothing equal to being a Genial here in New York, if you want to get along easy. Here comes a reporter, now; I'll introduce you to him, and ten to one he'll give you a start.'

"A well-dressed, alert-looking man, who was strolling through the café, stopped to exchange a word of greeting with my friend.

"'Sit down, Mr. Space-rayt,' said the Judge, in his sonorous voice; 'you're just in time to join us in something. I want you to know Colonel

Wind, and I want the Colonel to know you.' Then I heard him whisper to the reporter: 'Great character, the Colonel. Everybody round town knows him. Full of stories. Get him to tell you one, and you'll have something to put in your paper to-morrow.'

"The next morning I awoke to find myself, if not exactly famous, still on the high road to it, for I was a Genial. Mr. Spacerayt had started me on my journey along the corridors of Fame with a paragraph which began: 'Passing through the St. Anthony House Café, the other evening, I found my friend, Judge Doonothing, entertaining a party of convivial spirits in his customary hospitable fashion, and listening to the stories of that prince of *raconteurs*, Colonel Wind, who convulsed the party with the following anecdote of life in Arkansas.'



The paragraph ended in this manner: 'When the laughter which followed the Colonel's narrative had subsided, the Judge wiped the tears of mirth from his eyes, and gave it as his judicial decision that the next bottle should be on the veteran; and a moment later a suspicious popping in the vicinity of the table indicated that the sentence had been carried out.'

"From the moment of the appearance of Mr. Spacerayt's little tale—marked copies of which I mailed to every one of my acquaintance—my fame grew rapidly and steadily, and within a year I had attained such an exalted rank in my profession that no gathering of Genials was complete without my presence, any more than it would have been without the free lunch; and I could spend an evening—and nothing else—in the most delightful manner at a table in a café, and be puffed in half the papers in the city the following Sunday.

"The out-of-town correspondents seized upon me with avidity, especially after Judge Doonothing had introduced me to them as 'a great character,' which means, literally, a man of no character at all. Horrible process cuts, bearing a distant resemblance to my face, and labeled, 'Colonel Wind, the famous raconteur,' glistened in the columns of the contemporaneous press. Managers sent me tickets for first nights, and welcomed me to their private offices, where the critics found refreshment.

"I organized the Uptown Genials' Mutual Protective and Promotive Association, and I am proud to say

that it is largely owing to my efforts that that admirable benevolent order is to-day active in its charitable work."

"Benevolent order?" said the Rich Presbyterian, interrogatively; "I don't think I ever heard of any charitable association of that name. With what particular acts of mercy has it identified itself?"

"Acts of mercy!" exclaimed the Genial; "why, we promote and encourage acts of mercy and benevolence of every description; provided, of course, that we are the recipients. Cigars, drinks, theatre tickets, new hats, dinners, loans of ten dollars — everything, in short, that is the legitimate prey of the Genial comes in generous profusion to the members of our society, which includes, by the way, the most expert and experienced Genials to be met with in the city. Judge Doonothing is, of course, a member in high standing, as becomes a man of his title; and I may add that nobody can join us unless he can show that he became a Genial by a sequence of events as natural and legitimate as that which produces a jack-pot in a game of draw.

"For example, my friend, General Stufe, is a Genial, because at a remote period in his career he was a militia captain in California. That entitles him to the rank of General here, with full license to tell stories of the Argonauts of '49, the vigilance committee which he organized, gold mines which he discovered — in short, there is absolutely no limit to the opportunities for reminiscence enjoyed by a California Genial.

"Another member of our association, Mr. Horatio Hasbeen, was an actor once, during what he calls the

‘palmy days of the American drama,’ a period which, I believe, terminated with the Civil War. He is entitled to all reminiscences beginning: ‘I’ve played a wide range of parts during my fifty years’ connection with the stage, but the greatest triumph I have ever known—;’ or, ‘The other day I met Teddy Booth, and he reminded me of the time,’ etc.

“Well, our society had its headquarters at the St. Anthony House, and we were to be found there nearly every evening, lying in wait for any chance acquaintance who might come along. We have withdrawn our custom from that hotel, on account of the outrageous treatment to which we were subjected a short time ago by the proprietor and one of his wretched hirelings; and it will be a long while, I can tell you, before any of us will darken the doors of that café.

“One evening I dropped in, as usual, and, to my surprise, was very cordially greeted by the proprietor. I was surprised, because, for some time previous, his face had assumed a morose look whenever he encountered me; and once or twice he had sent a waiter over to ask me if I wished to order anything, when he knew perfectly well that I never entertained any intention of the kind.

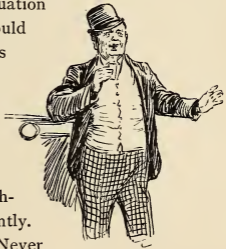
“On this occasion the proprietor of the St. Anthony not only greeted me with the most marked courtesy, but also presented me to a young man of a pleasant cast of countenance and unsophisticated look, toward whom my heart instantly warmed.

“Mr. Pointdexter, as the stranger was called, shook

my hand with much respect, remarking that he had often read of me in the newspapers, and was glad to make my acquaintance. He hoped I would join him in a glass of something; and, scarcely were the glasses filled, before old Hasbeen, who had been eying us enviously from a remote corner of the café, bore down upon us, tapped me playfully on the shoulder, and was about to pass on after a merry 'What, ho! Antonio! Again upon the Rialto?' when Mr. Pointdexter begged that I would present my friend. I did so, and Mr. Hasbeen was induced to bide with us for a while, and have a glass of whiskey.

"I had just begun a story of Arkansas life, to which the actor listened with as much grave interest as if he had never heard it before, when Judge Doonothing, smelling the bottle from afar off, awoke suddenly and beheld us. He took in the situation at a glance, and, as soon as he could catch Mr. Hasbeen's eye, waved his hand, and bowed to him in the most urbane manner. The histrion acknowledged the salutation in such a demonstrative way that Mr. Pointdexter's attention was attracted.

"My old friend, Judge Doonothing,' observed Mr. Hasbeen, pleasantly. 'You know him, of course! What? Never met the Judge? Why, I supposed every one in the city knew Judge Doonothing. You *ought* to know him, for you'd like him, and I'm positive he'd like *you*.



Here, I'll call him over.' And in another moment the Judge was with us. While we were in a full tide of whole-souled Geniality, Captain Rafferty hurried in breathless, and was closely followed by Mr. Stemwinder, who is a Genial because he carries a trained rat in his coat pocket, attached by a cord to his button-hole.

"It was eight o'clock when I joined Mr. Pointdexter, and at midnight there were fully a dozen of the leading Genials of the city pounding the table as they testified to the merits of one another, and becoming very much absorbed in conversation whenever the waiter came round. The pile of checks in front of our host made him look like a big winner at faro.

"At exactly midnight, just as Judge Doonothing was starting in with: 'Along back in the Spring of '55, or it may have been the Fall of '54, when I was practising law in St. Louis—' Mr. Pointdexter suddenly interrupted him with, 'Bless my soul! I'd no idea it was so late. Well, gentlemen, let's settle these checks and go.'

"Settle the checks? What in the world did the man mean? Did he expect a band of professional Genials to pay for the liquor they had consumed? Evidently the new-comer was not familiar with the habits of the regular frequenters of the St. Anthony café.

"'Well, sir,' said the Judge, pompously, 'we have enjoyed your hospitality very much, and trust that we shall meet you here frequently.'

"'I shall be here every evening,' said Mr. Pointdexter, smiling in a rather queer way, and absently



fingering the pile of checks; 'I have been engaged here as the regular detective of the house, and have just began my duties this evening.'

"'Well, have you detected anything yet?'" asked Mr. Hasbeen, merrily.

"'No,'" said Mr. Pointdexter; 'I was assigned to this table to see if I could detect any one in the act of paying for a round of drinks, but I have n't succeeded yet.' There was a great shout of laughter at this, and on looking round I saw that the proprietor of the house, three or four of the bar-tenders, and half a dozen waiters had gathered about us, and were enjoying the scene hugely. We left the room with haste and dignity, and from that day to this not one of us has ever darkened the door of the St. Anthony café."

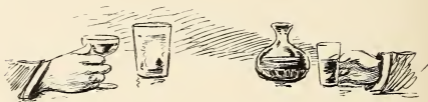
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"It is getting rather late, I am afraid," remarked the Chaperon at the conclusion of the Genial's Tale, for

she did not care to have the Boston Girl listen to stories about bar-rooms.

“But it’s your turn, Madam!” cried the Representative Business Man. “You must n’t leave us without contributing to the evening’s entertainment.”

The Chaperon began to object, but the Hypnotist had fixed his eyes on her, and there was no help for it; she was obliged to talk.



THE CHAPERON'S TALE.



THE CHAPERON.

THE CHAPERON'S TALE.

“ I DO NOT really know,” said the Chaperon, in a low, sweet, high-bred voice, “ how long it is since I took upon myself the duties of a chaperon ; but it seems to me now, as I look back, that I have always been a chaperon. Even when I was a young girl entering society, I displayed those qualities which late in life have been conspicuous in aiding me to gain a livelihood. Professionally, I have been a chaperon for twenty years ; but for two decades before that, I was a chaperon in an amateur way, partly because I had several nieces under my care, and partly because I enjoyed the duties and responsibilities incident to the position.



“ Unlooked - for circumstances, rather than choice, led me to adopt that means of making a competence in a dignified, and, in some respects, a pleasant way.”

“But do you mean to tell me,” exclaimed the Representative Business Man, “that a lady can make a living among the gilt-edged nobs just by sitting round at parties and knitting or one thing and another? What do they pay you for?”

“I receive a fee,” the Chaperon replied, “for my services in keeping a watchful eye on the young ladies entrusted to my care, selecting suitable partners for them, and seeing that they receive proper attention from the most eligible young men. Moreover, I am enabled, through my well-defined position in New York society, to introduce young girls into a great many of the very best houses in town, and to secure for them invitations which they could never obtain otherwise. This gentleman will, I am sure, testify to the fact that he has seen me in some of the most exclusive houses in New York.”

She turned her face toward the Detective as she said this; and the latter, to the intense surprise of the company, nodded his head in emphatic confirmation of her words, and said: “Cert! I’ve seen the lady with all the bong-tongs, and I can tell you she’s way up in G. I must say, though, if it had n’t ’a’ been for her giving it away just now, I never would have dropped to her racket in the world. I always thought she was just doing the genteel, same as any other party. Why, bless you, we none of us ever thought of watching *her!*”

“But how does it happen that *you* train with that high-toned, gilt-edged crowd?” cried the Representative Business Man, voicing the thought that was uppermost in every mind.

"How do I get around?" exclaimed the hawkshaw. "Well, I'd like to know where you can go in the city without seeing two or three of us men from the Central Office. There ain't a real high-toned lay-out given without we 're sent to keep an eye on the silver and diamonds."

"Indeed?" observed the Boston Girl, with a rising inflection of voice and nose; "in our best society those precautions are not considered necessary."

"Well, there 's something to steal in New York," observed the Detective, pointedly.

"But I am proud to say," continued the Chaperon, "that of late years there has not been the same need of your services that there was formerly."

"You 're correct, Ma'am," exclaimed the official; "ever since the nobs got onter them slippery Eytalian counts and dukes and ornery-lookin' English swells, there 's been less work for us and fewer things missed. I can remember when those ducks never went to a party or a reception without it was to win an overcoat or a couple of spoons."

"But to proceed with my story," said the Chaperon, in her quiet, effective way; "about two years ago a gentleman asked me to take charge of his daughter, who was coming to New York to make her debut in society. Her whole life had been spent in the little New England village in which she was born; and, at the time I took her in hand, she was as prim and as devoid of individuality as the little old square box of a meeting-house in her native place. She was pretty, too, in

a shy sort of way, and carried herself well — much better than most girls in society — for she had good blood in her veins, and it asserted itself once in a while in a way that made her look positively beautiful.



“I saw great possibilities in her from the very first, and as I knew that her father was rich, as well as ambitious, I determined to carry into effect an idea which for some time I had secretly cherished. I resolved to speculate in her. In other words, I agreed with her father, who was a shrewd New Englander, to make my professional fees contingent on my success; or, rather, to speak more exactly, the success of his daughter.”

“And what do you mean by the success of a girl in New York society?” asked the Boston Girl, who had been a breathless listener up to this moment.

“What could I mean but the one thing for which all girls are striving, no matter whether they live in New York or not?” rejoined the Chaperon with a significant glance at her questioner; “by success, I mean an advantageous marriage. What other form of success is there for a young girl, I should like to know?”

She paused a moment to allow the rest of the guests to enjoy the Boston Girl’s discomfiture, and then went on:

“I made her father a proposition which he accepted at once. I offered to take entire charge of his daughter’s bringing out, introduce her into houses to which I had access, chaperon her at balls and parties,

see that her name received due prominence in the society columns of the newspapers, surround her with eligible men only, and — have her engaged to a bona fide millionaire by the end of her first season. *Then* — and not until then — I was to receive my reward, a certified check for five thousand dollars.”

A murmur of surprise went round the circle.

“Why did n't *I* get up some racket like that long ago? Heaven knows I've tried pretty near everything else,” sighed the Representative Business Man.

“Oh! that's a regular scheme among the bong-tongs,” remarked the Detective, with the knowing air of one who is thoroughly familiar with the ins and outs of society.

“Early in October, long before society had thought of returning to town,” continued the Chaperon, “Miss Prudence came to me for a little preliminary training before the season should begin. Many a foolish virgin has been found with her lamp untrimmed when the bridegroom came, and I was determined that this one should not be caught napping if *I* were to have *my* say about it.

“She was really a lovely girl, and so simple-minded and innocent that I don't think it ever dawned on her that her father had entrusted her to my care for any particular purpose. I realized, before she had been in my house a week, that, if she ever learned of the agreement her father had signed with me, she would make it very unpleasant for us. Sometimes I actually felt ashamed to look her in the face when she turned her

great truthful, deep, innocent eyes on me, and asked me to explain something that most girls understand as well as their mothers, nowadays.

“The first step in the higher development of my young lady was taken in the direction of the dress-maker’s, and such an improvement, or rather such a transformation as Monsieur Phillippe effected, I would never have believed possible. I took her to a small afternoon tea in her new clothes, and, without exaggeration, she attracted more attention than any girl in the room. Very shy she was, with her eyes cast down and her cheeks the most exquisite pink imaginable, for the little



Puritan knew that she was pretty, and I suppose her conscience was tweaking her for being glad of it. I remember saying to myself that afternoon, as I watched her sitting with a cup of tea in her hand, and two of the half-dozen men in the room trying to talk to her: ‘A few weeks more, young lady, and you will be able to hold your head up while you talk, if for nothing more than to look about the room, and see how the other

women are regarding you. And you 'll not think it such a sin for a girl to look as well as she can, either; and by another season you 'll have the same ideas in regard to matrimony that most girls have who are properly brought up.'

"It was, perhaps, a month after this that I took her to her first great ball, and in the meantime I had taken pains to have half a dozen of the most eligible young men in town at the house to dinner, or an afternoon call, or to go with us to the opera, so that she should be sure of *some* attention, at least, at her first ball. She was beautifully dressed, and I can assure you that she created a positive sensation when she entered the ball-room. All the young men whom she knew came crowding about her, and her list of partners for that evening numbered many of the very best names in New York society.

"In short, Miss Prudence was a brilliant success; and if I had any doubts of it they were dispelled when I heard the envious remarks of certain old dowagers, whose daughters had not attracted as much notice as they could wish.

"But there was one thing that gave me more pleasure than anything else, and that was the fact that young Marigold, old Peter Marigold's eldest boy, paid her the most devoted attention, and that, moreover, she seemed pleased with him in her shy way. If I had had my pick of all New York there was not a single man I would have



chosen in preference to young Marigold as a husband for my young lady. To begin with, he is a thoroughly presentable young man, who knows how to dress, and how to behave in society, and would never, under any circumstances, disgrace his family by any of those ill-bred eccentricities which so many young men indulge in nowadays. Then, you know, his position in society is absolutely assured; and, as for his prospects, mark my words, when old Peter Marigold dies his estate will yield at least three millions more than anybody thinks it will. And this boy will get it all; that I know.

“That’s my idea of a suitable match for a young girl. Give me a young man with a name that somebody has ever heard of before, a round million or so to his credit in good securities, and better prospects ahead, and then, say I, where are your well-connected Englishmen, or slippery French Counts and Marquises in comparison with him?”



“Well, all through the season young Marigold was constant in his devotion to Prudence, and when Lent came, and we settled down to the quiet enjoyment of our sackcloth and ashes, I contrived to have him at the house on one pretext or another nearly every day.

“One afternoon, — it was near the close of the penitential season, — I was surprised to hear some one walk swiftly through the front hall, go out, and close the door with an angry bang. A moment later my young lady came streaming into my room, scarlet with indignation — and very handsome and spirited she looked,

too, I can assure you — and before I could lift my voice, she burst out at me with :

“ ‘Did you *dare* to make Mr. Marigold believe that I would consent to become his wife?’ ”

“ ‘Tut, tut,’ I said; ‘I ’m sure he ’s a very desirable young man;’ but she would not listen for a moment, only burst into tears, and declared that her father and I and the young man were all in a league together to compel her to marry a man she never could love — I wonder if she knew how near to the truth she came, then — and at last she ended



by rushing up to her room in a passion, and vowing that she would n't remain another day under my roof.

“ ‘Here was a pretty state of things. I telegraphed her father, and he came on at once, reaching the house early the next morning, but not early enough, for she had slipped out half an hour before he came, and I had to receive him alone.

“ ‘I told him that young Marigold — the best catch in New York — had offered himself to his daughter, and that I would like my check for five thousand dollars, according to our agreement.

“ ‘And what does Prudence say?’ asked the old man; and just at this moment a messenger-boy brought in a letter addressed to him. He opened it, read it, and then actually groaned: ‘I ought to have known that girl too well to have tried that scheme. I thought if she went to New York she might forget all about him, but

she has n't. The girl's got her mother's spirit in her. Read this.'

"He handed me the letter, and I read:

" 'John and I were married just now.

PRUDENCE.'

"Then the mercenary old thing actually brightened up a little, and said: 'Any way, that lets me out on the five thousand.'"

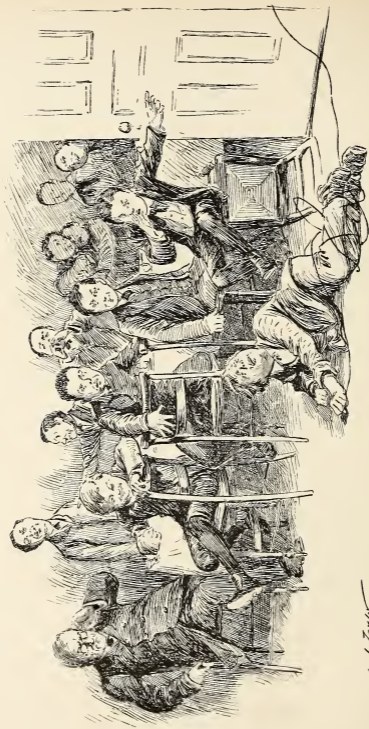
"I'm glad of it!" cried the School-Boy, enthusiastically, for he had listened to the story with deep interest.

"Well, Sonny, suppose we have a tale from you," said the Representative Business Man, who did not wish the party to break up.

"Yes, indeed," said the Hypnotist, as he tried to catch the lad's eye.



THE SCHOOL-BOY'S TALE.



W. J. Taylor

“ ‘What’s that bell?’ says the Doctor.”

THE SCHOOL-BOY'S TALE.

“CERT,” said the School-Boy, unabashed by the attention of which he had suddenly become the focus; “I can tell you a story about something that happened up in our hall just before the holidays, and made lots of fun for all the boys. You see, all of us little fellows room in the same house with the Doctor and his family, so he can get to us quick in case we make a row, or get hurt or sick or anything. Well, Deacon Drury has a room all to himself in the upper hall where the boys’ rooms are —”

“Who ’s Deacon Drury? One of the teachers, I suppose,” remarked the Detective.

“No; he ’s one of us boys; only we call him Deacon because he ’s such a solemn-looking fellow, and always inventing all sorts of things for us to have fun with. The Doctor won’t let him room with any of the other fellows because he ’s nearly killed one or two little chaps by his patent gunpowder going off under their beds, or their drinking some of his chemicals thinking it was lemonade. So, now, he has a room all to himself under the garret eaves, where he can keep all his

chemicals and mixtures, and where he works away at his flying machine every afternoon when there's nothing in particular going on."

"His flying machine!" exclaimed the Representative Business Man, incredulously.

"Certainly! Why not? You don't begin to know what a genius Deacon Drury is. Alexander and Socrates,



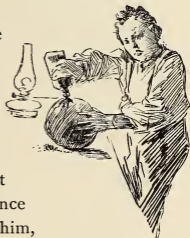
and those ancients we learn about were nothing to him in my opinion. He's all the time inventing things. He made a pistol, all by himself, that exploded and came near blowing Tommy Finn's hand off; and there is n't a boy in the upper hall that has n't had his hair or eyebrows singed one time or another by the Deacon's magic powder. He made a portable ghost with phosphorous eyes, that he could fold up and carry in his coat pocket, and most scared the life out of a new boy with it; and as for his flying machine, when he gets that ready, it'll be a surprise to the Doctor and a good many other folks, too, I guess."

“What’s the principle of his flying machine?”

“Nobody knows what it’s like. When the Deacon invents anything he shuts himself up in his room and works away at it, and nobody ever sees it until he’s ready to spring it on the school. We’re all crazy about that flying machine, and Drury claims that, when it’s finished, he’ll be able to fly from the window of the Upper Hall clear across the play-ground to the roof of the school-house. It’ll be a big day for the Deacon when he does that.”

“But do you mean to tell us that the teacher of your school permits a boy to go on preparing for an experiment which will certainly result in his death?” demanded the Spiritualist.

“Permits nothing! What has the teacher got to say about it, any way? It may be all right for him to boss us in school-hours, but the rest of the time it’s none of his business what we do. Any how, you don’t suppose the Deacon’s fool enough to let the Doctor know what he’s about, do you? No, sirree! Ever since he had his bombshell taken away from him, just when it was finished, and he was loading it with his own powder, he’s been mighty careful not to let any of the teachers find out what he’s doing. He’s built a sort of a closet ’way out under the eaves of the roof, and hides all his tools and chemicals and other traps in it, so’s nobody will find ’em. Why, it was the Deacon who invented the combination suit for the Upper Hall.”



“The what?” asked the Boston Girl.

“The combination suit. You see, if you ’re late for breakfast you don’t get any; and there ’s always some fellow who stays in bed till the last bell rings, and then has n’t time to dress and get down to table before the Doctor asks the blessing. So the Deacon collected enough clothes in the hall to make a medium-sized suit, with a false shirt bosom under the vest that looked all right; and he had the whole thing sewed together and hung on a nail in the hall, where any fellow that stayed in bed till the bell rang could jump into it and get downstairs in time for breakfast. But by-and-by the

Doctor thought it kind of funny that the last boy down from the Upper Hall always wore an old corduroy vest, and had his pants rolled up if he was small, and wore ’em at half-mast if he was a big fellow; so he took a tumble, and the combination suit was barred out. Then we told the Deacon he ’d got to invent something that ’u’d beat the combination suit; and he hid in his den for a week, and we did n’t see anything of him at all.

At last, one night while we were all sitting around the stove, rubbing ourselves with Pond’s Extract, for we ’d been playing shinny all the afternoon, the Deacon came out of his room, and says he:

“Well, fellows, I guess I ’ve got it this time, sure.’

“What is it?’ says all of us at once.

“The biggest thing I ever invented — next to the flying machine.’



“‘Look out or it’ll explode!’ sings out Tommy Finn; and, of course, we all burst out laughing; but the Deacon did n’t mind it a bit. He don’t care whether we laugh at him or not; just pegs along in his own queer way, same as if nobody said anything to him at all.

“‘This thing of mine,’ said the Deacon, ‘I’m going to patent and sell all over the country. Every boarding-school in the land ought to have one. I call it a Doctor-Catcher.’ And then he goes in his room and fetches out a great long wire, with some queer fixings at one end of it, and an old dinner-bell at the other. ‘Now,’ says the Deacon, ‘you know that loose step down near the bottom of the staircase, just before you reach the dining-room door. Well, when the Doctor comes upstairs he always comes up slow and deliberate, one step at a time.’

“‘Not when he hears an explosion in your room,’ puts in Tommy Finn; and then we all began to laugh again.

“‘Well,’ goes on the Deacon, ‘this contrivance is attached to the loose stair, so that when the Doctor steps on it, the wire rings the dinner-bell upstairs, and we know *he’s* coming. Now we’ll take a screw-driver and some screws and go down to fasten it, just to see how it will work.’

“‘It took an awful lot of trouble to get the wire



fixed so it would n't be noticed; but at last we got it all right; and when the Doctor came upstairs that evening we heard the bell ring long before he was halfway up. That gave us plenty of time to hustle into bed, and be asleep and snoring when he got to the rooms. So, of course, we all said the Deacon's Doctor-Catcher was a big thing; and we made a rule in the Hall that any fellow who trod on the loose step in the staircase was to get three boots around, so we would n't have any false alarm.

“Well, everything went along first-rate for some time; and I guess the Doctor must have thought it mighty queer that, no matter how quietly he came upstairs, everybody was still as a mouse when he reached the place. We all of us saved a lot of bad marks, because, no matter what we might be doing, we never got caught. But one morning the Deacon stayed in bed till the last bell rang, hopped up in a great hurry, and jumped into the combination suit, because he did n't have time to put his own clothes on; then started downstairs on the dead-run. How he did it, I don't know, but somehow he managed to catch his foot in the wire, and the first thing we knew, while we were all sitting at breakfast, we heard a fearful noise outside, and then the door burst open and the Deacon came tumbling in and fell full length on the floor, and you could hear the old dinner-bell a-rattling down the stairs behind him.

“We all burst out laughing, while the Deacon picked himself up and began getting his feet out of the wire.

“ ‘Drury,’ says the Doctor, kinder quick and mad like, ‘come here to me at once;’ and the Deacon started, gave another pull to the wire, and down came the dinner-bell rattling and jangling right on to the dining-room floor. I don’t know which looked most surprised, the Deacon or the Doctor.

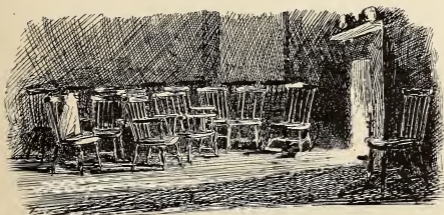
“ ‘What ’s that bell?’ says the Doctor.

“ ‘That ’s the bell that rings when anybody’s coming upstairs, sir.’

“ ‘Then you ’ll have ten marks for ringing it on the way down,’ says the Doctor; and that was the last of the Doctor-Catcher.”

“Good night,” came from every one; and in a few minutes the fire, burning low on the hearth, shone on an array of empty chairs.

“It ’s a curious fact,” said the Hypnotist, as the company separated for the night, “but I could n’t hypnotize that boy at all. He told the truth naturally and of his own volition. Very different from the rest of you.”



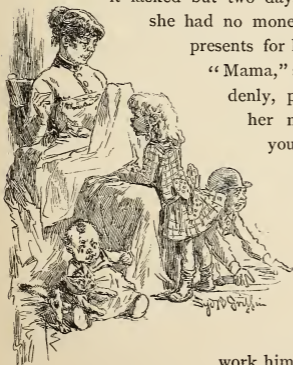
OTHER TALES.

THE BUNCO-STEERER'S CHRISTMAS.

IN A NEAT BUT HUMBLE ROOM on the east side of the city, Mary Sawdust sat with her sewing on her lap, and her children playing on the floor beside her. There were traces of tears on her young face, and a quiver in her lip as she diligently plied her needle, for it lacked but two days of Christmas, and she had no money with which to buy presents for her little ones.

“Mama,” said little Ethel, suddenly, placing her hand on her mother’s knee, “do you think kind Papa has caught a sucker on the Bridge to-day?”

“I do not know, darling,” replied Mary Sawdust; “we must hope for the best; but if he has, he will work him for all he is worth.”



She turned to her work again with a deep sigh, and little Ethel ran off to join her brother Willie in a merry game of "Catch the Jay."

It was late when Henry Sawdust returned to his home, wearied with his hard day's work on the Brooklyn Bridge. As he hung his dinner pail on its accustomed hook, and threw himself into a chair, his faithful wife noticed that his cheeks wore a hectic flush, while there was a strange glitter in his eyes.

"It is nothing," he said; "it will pass off." But the next morning he awoke in a raging fever, and poor Mary Sawdust realized that her Christmas was likely to be a sadder one than she had looked forward to.

"You must be very quiet to-day, little ones," said she to her children, "for Papa is very sick, and I can not leave his bedside."

Little Willie was still and thoughtful for some time after his mother left the room. Then he said softly to his sister: "I wish I were a big man, so that I might help Papa while he is sick. I have often asked him to let me go with him to carry the gold brick and the directory of bank cashiers, but he says I am too little. I know what I will do. I will go out on the Bridge, and try to win a roll. Oh, how pleased Mama will be if I succeed; and what nice Christmas presents we would get!"

Putting on his little ulster and hat, he set forth on his mission. As he was walking down the Bowery, he encountered a man who wore a broad hat and a coat of quaint pattern, and carried in his left hand an old-fashioned carpet-bag.



“Please, sir,” said the child, clasping the stranger’s right hand in his slender fingers, “how are all the folks in Chenango?”

“Hey! what!” gasped the astonished provincial, turning his gaze from the tops of the houses to the childish face before him.

“Oh, sir,” continued little Willie, “poor Papa is sick, and I am trying to earn money enough to buy him a new ulster, and some dye for his moustache. Won’t you please let me steer you into the joint? I am such a little boy that I can not work you myself; but Thirsty Bill, Papa’s friend, is there, and he can win a sucker’s roll every time in great shape.”

“Well, I swan!” exclaimed the stranger; “I’ve

had 'em try this on me every time I've come to town for the last ten years; but this is the youngest one I ever seen in the business."

"Oh, sir," pleaded the child; "Christmas is coming, and we have no presents! Papa is ill, and so poor that he had no benzine to put on his silker yesterday when he went out on the Bridge. Won't you please come and be buncoed, and then dear Mama will be so happy."

The stranger seemed deeply moved by Willie's simple tale.

"Take me home with you, child," he said, "and I will try to help you."

In a few minutes he was standing in Henry Sawdust's cheerful parlor, talking to the faithful wife, and learning from her lips the story of their poverty and suffering. "Would you like to see my husband?" she said, leading the way to the little bedroom.

The sick man stirred uneasily on his cot as they entered, and feebly murmured: "Ah! do my eyes deceive me? Can this be my old friend Mr. Johnson, of Elmira?"

The stranger turned aside and wiped his eyes.

"Madam," he said, "I have been the President of a Hartford Insurance Company for twenty years; but this sight has completely unmanned me. And to think of your two innocent babes not having any Christmas presents! Well, it shall never be said of Hiram Duzenbury that he did n't do at least one generous act in his life."

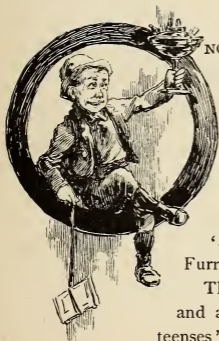
He turned to the sick man and said gently: "Yes, I am Mr. Johnson of Elmira, and I met you at your uncle's bank. Hush! Do not try to speak, for you are not strong enough yet. I want a gold brick — I deal in 'em when I'm home; and I want to see the prize you've drawn in the lottery, and the picture you painted in Paris. And when you're better we'll see the town together. Meantime take this and credit me with the usual cash discount."

He laid five crisp hundred-dollar bills on the coverlet, then grasped his carpet-bag and departed before Mary Sawdust could collect her scattered senses.

And on Christmas Day the children gathered about the beautiful tree, and gave thanks to the kind stranger who had buncoed himself that they might be happy.



ALADDIN.



ONCE UPON A TIME there was a little boy named Aladdin who preferred to play "hookey" rather than to go to school and improve his mind. One day while he was playing in a vacant lot, a stranger approached him and said:

'Are you not the son of Musty Furr, the tailor?'

The boy replied that he was, and added that he went to "Thirteenses" school, but had taken a holiday that day on account of a birth in the family.

"Then," exclaimed the stranger, "I am your long lost uncle; for I, too, went to 'Thirteenses', and stayed away whenever there was a birth, death or marriage in the family."

The next day the stranger came to the little boy,

and told him that he was a magician with a little open time on his hands, owing to the fact that the company with which he had been traveling was "resting" that week on Union Square. And the magician took the boy to a wild gulch on Orange Mountain, and bade him enter a dark cavern and bring him an old lamp which he would find there. The boy found the lamp, and made his escape with it through a cleft in the rock, leaving the fakir sitting by the cave, and wondering why he did not appear.

Aladdin started for New York on foot; but before he had gone very far he concluded to stop and polish up the lamp, in order that it might bring a better price in the junk-shop. So he sat down by the roadside, moistened his handkerchief, and began to scour the old copper lamp. But the moment he began to rub, the ground seemed to open before him, and there appeared a creature which he recognized at once as a Genie.

"What do you want?" demanded the Genie.

"I want to get back to New York," gasped the astonished boy.

"Not an unusual wish in this neighborhood," replied the strange creature, as he seized Aladdin by the coat collar and deposited him the next minute in front of his mother's door. He was afraid to go in, because he had been away so long; and, as he hesitated, he took his handkerchief from his pocket and began to polish up the lamp, which he still carried under his arm. Instantly the Genie appeared in a puff of queer-smelling smoke, and demanded:



“What do you want?”

“Something to square me with me mother,” replied Aladdin; and in a moment the Genie placed in his arms a huge bundle of kindling-wood, such as boys gather about new buildings.

Aladdin entered the house and gave his mother an account of his adventures. He showed her the wonderful

lamp, and explained its properties. After that, they lived happily for a number of years, depending on the lamp for whatever they wanted to eat, drink or wear.

And when the youth was in his twentieth year he attended the picnic of the Dennis Mahoney Association, and there beheld the beautiful Miss Maude Mahoney, the daughter of the eminent politician. And Aladdin fell in love with her at once, and went home and told his mother that he must marry her. But the old lady laughed him to scorn, saying that it would be useless for him to woo the child of the proud chief of the Public Manger, the man with the big "pull" at Albany.

Nevertheless, the young man went down to the Public Manger office the next day, and waited in the ante-room, in company with a number of gentlemen who desired employment "on the big pipes," and some others who wished to sell tickets for balls and target excursions, for election day was not far off. And when he was admitted to the presence of the "boss," he said to him: "Sir, I would like to marry your daughter."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Mahoney scornfully. "My daughter marry a young man without a pull in his district! In what sort of style would you support her?"

"Meet me to-morrow at the Jersey City Ferry in time for the 10:03 train, and I will show you," was the answer.

And the politician reached the ferry-house at 9:48 — so great was his anxiety — and had time to get the West Street mud scraped off his boots before Aladdin arrived. The 10:03 train took them to a hill which

overlooked the romantic plains lying between Newark and Jersey City. And within five minutes' walk of the station they found a splendid palace lit by electricity, heated by steam, and containing all the other modern improvements. The Genie met them at the door, and conducted them through the whole house, from top to bottom, finally leading them to the dining-room, where they "had something" out of a square wicker-covered bottle.

When the politician saw this beautiful palace he exclaimed: "Why, this mansion is for all the world like one described in a volume of fairy tales called 'Picturesque Homes on the Erie!'"

So he gave his consent to his daughter's marriage, and the ceremony took place the following day amid great pomp and splendor. And Aladdin's palace became the envy and admiration of all the people for many suburbs around. All the best families called on the young couple, and when Aladdin and his bride gave a grand house-warming the wonder of his guests knew no bounds: for they saw that the chimneys all drew properly, that the front door could be slammed on a book-agent without menace to the glass jars in the cellar, that the fire never languished in the furnace, and—most marvelous of all—that the electric door-bell always worked.

These miracles were, of course, brought about by the Genie, who spent his entire time in the palace attending to the various details of housekeeping. By the use of his magic arts he performed feats that were the talk

of the whole region around. He compelled farmers to sell him fresh vegetables and eggs of recent origin for very little more than they could realize by trucking them to New York, a dozen miles away. He could induce a native to spade up the garden, mend the fence or whitewash the hen-house; and that, too, at the very height of the fishing season. In short, there was absolutely nothing that the Genie could not accomplish.



Meanwhile the magician who had first taken Aladdin to the cave of the wonderful lamp had been playing in hard luck. The company with which he was engaged had disbanded. And the disintegration had, unfortunately, taken place while they were harassing the northern part of the State of Michigan. It took the magician nearly two years to walk back to New York; and during that time he subsisted entirely on omelettes which he cooked in his own high hat, rabbits which he caught in the sleeves of his dress suit, and gold fish which he took from the glass globe in his coat-tail pocket.

On reaching the metropolis he learned of Aladdin's prosperity, and knew that he owed it to the wonderful lamp. So he procured half-a-dozen new lamps, with patent devices for lighting and

extinguishing, and boldly made his way to the suburban palace during the absence of the Genie, who had gone over to the Guttenberg track to pick "mud winners" for his master.

The magician rang the electric bell, and boldly offered to exchange a new lamp for an old one. The mistress of the house was upstairs lying down, but she could not resist this opportunity for a trade (her grandfather on her mother's side amassed a large fortune from the product of a nutmeg grove in the vicinity of Hartford, Connecticut); so she took an old lamp that had long laid on a shelf in the storeroom, went to the door and asked the magician what he would give "to boot" if she consented to exchange a veritable antique for two or three of his wretched Philistine abominations. In less than half an hour he had exchanged his entire stock of lamps for the old one, and sealed the bargain by throwing in a gratuitous performance of the goldfish trick, which he executed on the doormat in the presence of the entire household.

The faithful Genie did not return that evening. He brought the money won at Guttenberg to his new master, the magician; and then, at the latter's command, erected a new palace on a high hill, and filled it with every modern convenience.

When Aladdin returned home that night and found what his wife had done he was enraged, and cried out, saying: "Now all our good fortune is gone, and we are like other suburban residents, dependent for our daily bread on the local baker."

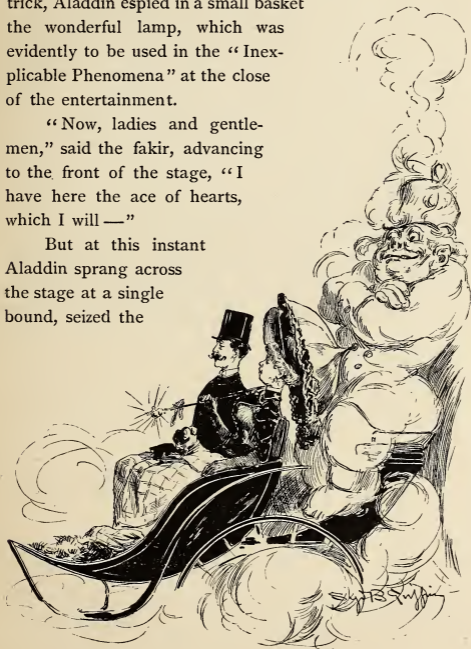
And from that day the fortunes of the Aladdin family began to fail. They could not get a man to spade up the garden, because the man had a job somewhere else. The rain descended and filled the cellar so that Aladdin had to go about in a flat-bottom boat when he fixed the furnace. When the "best people in the town" called at the house they could not get in, because the electric bell was out of order, and so they went away in high dudgeon. They spent all the money they had left in having the roof repaired and the leak in the bath-tub stopped up. Finally they became so poor that they kept thirteen dogs; and then Aladdin put on sackcloth, and threw ashes, of which the cellar was full, upon his head, and beat his breast, and cried "Allah, be merciful to me!"

And now the magician was in the swim, for all the best people called on him, and invited him to join the suburban club, and subscribe to the village band and the base-ball nine. And soon he became so popular that a committee of Independent Citizens nominated him for road commissioner. So he "yielded to the wishes of his friends" and became a candidate. Then, in order to make himself "solid" with the working classes, he announced a grand entertainment for the benefit of the local Bricklayers' Union. And Aladdin, hearing of this, resolved to defeat the plans of the wicked fakir; so he attended the performance disguised as a countryman in humble circumstances and of limited intelligence. He seated himself on the front bench, and by dint of gazing in open-mouthed wonder at the "professor" was soon

selected as a "gentleman from the audience" to step upon the stage and make a guy of himself. When the magician was preparing for the great card trick, Aladdin espied in a small basket the wonderful lamp, which was evidently to be used in the "Inexplicable Phenomena" at the close of the entertainment.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said the fakir, advancing to the front of the stage, "I have here the ace of hearts, which I will —"

But at this instant Aladdin sprang across the stage at a single bound, seized the



lamp, and rubbed it across his coat-sleeve, bringing the Genie into his presence at once.

“Seize this man and away with him!” he exclaimed: and the faithful Genie obeyed, while the people remained spell-bound with surprise.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said Aladdin, taking off his false wig and beard, “do not be alarmed. These are the “Inexplicable Phenomena” mentioned in the programme. I shall be glad to see you all — that is, all the best people — at my palace whenever you may care to call. The door bell will ring.”

And after that, Aladdin and his wife dwelt so happily together in their suburban palace that they always spent at least six months in the city. And wherever they went they were attended by the faithful Genie, who procured comforts and luxuries for them such as no other mortals could obtain.

JOHN COPPERTUG'S FALL.

A TALE OF PROHIBITION AND ICE-WATER.

“PLEASE, SIR, has my father been here yet?”

It was a timid, shrinking child who uttered these words. Her golden head was barely level with the polished top of the bar; and, as she stood there, the loungers in the gorgeous saloon cast glances of wonder at her. She seemed strangely out of place in that glittering palace of strong drink. The bar-tender, glancing at the sunny face and beseeching blue eyes, said, in tones of unwonted tenderness:

“N-a-a-aw.”

“Then, sir,” said the child, a delicate flush mantling her cheeks as she spoke, “my mother says will you please fill her growler for her, and Father will pay you when he comes uptown?”

John Coppertug was a man of kindly, genial disposition, except when deprived of his needed quantity of strong drink. When in his cups, no kinder father or more indulgent husband could be found. Then it was that he brought home toys



for his children, took his wife to the theatre, and made glad the hearts of all about him. It was only when he yielded to his evil cravings and tampered with the pernicious ice-water that the dark side of his character appeared. Then he would go home sullen and cross, ready to find fault with his wife, scold his children, and cast a gloom over the family circle. No wonder, then, that in the bitterness of her heart, his wife would utter a wailing cry against the Croton Aqueduct Board, and bitterly deplore the existence of street drinking-fountains.

And on the evening of which we write, John Coppertug was making his way uptown with bowed head and scowling visage. He did not stop at the corner-saloon for his customary evening "nip," but bent his steps directly toward the little home in which his wife and children awaited him.

The curtains were drawn in the cozy parlor, and the lamp on the centre-table shone softly on the face of the mother plying her needle and listening anxiously for her husband's footfalls. The cheery light fell, also, on the happy faces of the children at play on the floor. It gleamed on the polished sides of the tin growler which stood, half emptied, on the table.

Mary Coppertug was at work on a pillow-case, and as she sewed she wondered whether her husband would come home sober or not. Would he roll merrily in with unsteady step and a breath as fragrant as a zephyr from the far off Spice Islands? Would the theatre tickets gleam on her from his vest-pocket? Would his face have a Spring-bonnet smile?

"Papa's coming!" cried the golden-haired child from her place by the window.

"Coming!" echoed the wife, dropping her work and leaping to her feet. "Look, child, and tell me if he is full."

"No," said the little girl, sadly.

"No," repeated Mary Coppertug, the bright vision fading from her mind; "then may Heaven protect us! There will be no treat for us to-night. He has been at the water-faucet again. Run and hide, children, for your father is not himself to-night."



When John Coppertug entered the room, he found his faithful wife seated, needle in hand, by the little centre-table. His eye fell upon the tin pail which, in her anxiety, she had forgotten to conceal. His brow darkened.

“What is that?” he demanded.

“It is the growler,” she replied, firmly and sadly. “I have been working it for myself and our little ones. Oh, John, the time was when you used to share our simple pleasures! Why not now, as in the happy days gone by?”

Her husband seized the pail and emptied its contents out of the window.

“There!” he exclaimed; “I’m done with growlers for ever. Come here, and I’ll tell you what I’m going to do.”

She came nearer, with a strange look of horror on her face. He bent his head and whispered something in her ear. Then he went out into the still, cold night, and left her standing by the table with lips compressed and wild, staring eyes from which no tears would flow.

* * * * *

An hour later Mary Coppertug entered her father’s house leading her three children by the hand.

“I have come home to you at last, Mother,” she



said wearily, as she sank into a chair; "I can bear it no longer. John and I have been growing apart from one another for a long time, but I never thought it would come to this. To-night he told me that he had resolved to — to —"

"What?" demanded her mother.

"To vote the Prohibition ticket!"

JOHN COPPERTUG'S REFORMATION.

A TALE OF SELTZER AND LEMON-SODA.

“GENTLEMEN,” said the politician, as he entered the gilded palace of strong drink; “step up and take something with me.”

His invitation was accepted by thirteen individuals who were leaning against the bar, or sitting with chairs tilted up against the wall. There was one man, however, who did not respond, but remained in a corner of the saloon with eyes down-cast, and sullen, dissatisfied look.



“Every gentleman in the house step up and take a drink!” repeated the politician, with a friendly smile of encouragement. “Won’t you join us, sir?” he added, glancing at the morose man who had not responded to his invitation.

“Come,” said the bar-tender; “don’t take a shingle off a man’s house.”

The morose man sighed wearily as he arose and strode toward the bar. There was a chill in his voice that was felt by all who heard him say, in sullen tones:

“Gimme a seltzer-lemonade!”

In the sad-faced cold-water man who stood leaning on the polished bar few would have recognized the once happy and jovial John Coppertug. Temperance drinks were fast working his ruin. Ever since his decision to vote the Prohibition Ticket he had been a changed man. His wife had not seen him since the day she left him and returned to her father's house. His home was desolate, and he spent his evenings in the glittering corner saloon, where he imbibed temperance drinks until weakened nature compelled him to desist.



And so, on this cool October night, when the electric-light was shining on the pavement without and the gas-light flickering cheerily within, when the politicians were "setting 'em up" with a rapidity that fairly dazzled and bewildered the oldest "heelers" in the room, when even the man-who-sweeps-out-the-saloon-for-a-cocktail felt the kindly and genial warmth of political hospitality, and took his place at the bar for each round — then it was, John Coppertug's better nature began to assert itself.

"Please, sir, will you fill my mother's growler?"

Why did John Coppertug start when he heard these words? They were uttered by a golden-haired child — his own child. Well did he know the tin pail she placed on the bar. It was the growler, the bright growler of happier days. And the child — little Eva, with sunny curls — was quick to recognize her father. She approached him shyly, and hid her face in the tails of his last Spring overcoat.

"Come, set 'em up again!" exclaimed the politician.

"Gimme a lemon-soda," said John Coppertug, moodily.

"O Father! Why do you stick to soft drinks?" said little Eva, in pleading accents. "See, these other gentlemen are all taking hard liquors, just as you used to when we all lived happily together in the little home. We are staying with kind Gran'pa now; and he gets full every night, and is, oh! so good to us."

"What's yours, sir?" asked the bar-tender.

For a moment John Coppertug hesitated, then his better nature yielded, and he said:

"Lemon-soda."

A tear stood in little Eva's right eye.

"Take a little of Mr. Gilhooley's old rye," she whispered, coaxingly. "That was what you always used to smell of when you came home and kissed us all, and took us to the theatre. Dear Gran'pa says that is the best drink in the world to make a man feel good."

The bar-tender heard her, and placed the whiskey-bottle before the supporter of the Prohibition Ticket.

There was a momentary struggle in the temperance man's breast.

"I want lemon-soda," he said, in tones of feeble remonstrance.

"Please, Mr. Bar-tender," said the child, in firm,



clear tones; "please don't sell my father any more temperance drinks. Mother is so afraid he will come home sober again. Winter is coming on, and she has no seal-skin sacque. Oh, please, give him a little of that good rye!"

The rough loungers in the saloon were visibly affected.

"Take some of the rye, John, if only to please your child," said the politician, persuasively.

John Coppertug was not a wholly bad man, and now all that was noble in him bravely asserted itself.

"I will," he said, manfully; "and, what 's more, I 'll take a squirt of bitters in it. Run home, Eva, and tell your mother I 'll come to her again — full as I used to be. Tell her I 'm done with temperance drinks forever."

After that, John Coppertug never went home sober again.

VARIETY THEATRE REFORM.

A LONG NEEDED PENAL CODE.

THE NEW PENAL CODE intended to mitigate the horrors of the variety stage will go into effect at an early date. It provides suitable penalties for different offenses which have hitherto been committed without rebuke. It is gratifying to know that a long-suffering Public has at last risen in its might, and invoked the passage of a law which constitutes every audience a vigilance committee, with the power to mete out instant punishment to the reckless and hardened criminals of the variety stage.

Hereafter it will be unlawful to play a sketch containing the lines: "Yessir, I do want to hire a man. What can you do?" or, "Here he comes now. I'll hide behind this barrel, and when he comes in I'll down him;" or, "I put an advertisement in the paper this morning for a young man, but I don't see it anywheres. Ah, here it is;" or, "Yes, I am a musician, and I can play on pretty near anything.



I'll take down the stove and play you a few airs on it, just to show you what I can do."

The blind man who is let loose on the stage with an accordion will be cast into outer darkness.

All attempts to enhance the melancholy of variety and minstrel performances by intentionally pathetic ballads or recitations will be severely punished. This section of the Code is intended to apply particularly to songs containing allusions to home, maternal love, the old kitchen clock, and relics which once belonged to the singer's grandfather. "Old oaken" heirlooms of every description are forbidden.



All drinking-songs, songs in which kissing,

laughing, or the popping of corks is portrayed with the aid of the audience, and songs whose effect is heightened by the cracking of whips, or rattling of castinets are prohibited by law.

Attempts to extract music from coal-scuttles, cuspidors, tea-pots, or any other domestic utensils, will be punished by imprisonment in the county jail.

Dutch and Irish comedy of the "just landed" variety, songs laudatory of the Emerald Isle, and those beginning, "I'm a happy little something;" shoes with numbers on their soles, and ventriloquists with little wooden dolls, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Jokes and "gags" must be propelled into the audience by their own momentum. No external aid

from the leader of the orchestra, or members of the company will be tolerated; nor will it be legal to lubricate the path of a weary and care-worn joke by the remark: "That goes better at matinées."

Swinging angels will be swung from the nearest lamp-post.

There will be a prohibitory tariff on elongated bladders, tea-cup hats, bottomless carpet-bags, trick-vests, explosive cigars, squeaking "property" babies, and female impersonators.

And a high license for side-walk conversations, banjo monologues, lightning change acts and imitations of popular actors.

Performers will not be permitted to bill themselves as "Comical Maguire," or "Funny Maginnis," or "The Rip-Snorting Mokes from Omaha." They must save what humor they possess for the stage.

After-pieces showing the sorrows of a manager engaging a company may be given only under the supervision of the local authorities. Specialists will not be permitted to add to the honors of the after-piece by doing "acts" in which they have already appeared that evening. Instant transportation to Siberia is the penalty fixed for violation of this law.

Serio-comics who take more than one encore do it at their own risk.

The dungeon yawns for the man who engages in that form of iniquity known as the "pedestal-clog," or revives ancient plantation darkey business, or attempts to depict extreme age by means of a cotton wig and



nickel-plated "specs," and slides down a trick-staircase, or takes the leader of the orchestra into his confidence.

Criminals banded together for the purpose of harassing peaceable communities with "statue-clogs," or songs beginning "Come to the Silvery Stream," or, "There 's Moon, there 's moon, there 's moon, There 's Moonlight on the Lake," will be punished by fine or imprisonment, or both. Topical songs may be given under police surveillance only.

The contortionist in black tights will get all the writhing he wants in the sweet by-and-by.

Magicians who change a soiled pocket-handkerchief into an egg, women who impersonate swells with the aid of a long coat and blond wig, vocalists who sing "As I was going down the Street a Pretty Girl I Chanced to Meet," and ruffians who portray tenement-house quarrels will be summarily dealt with.

The girl who spreads out a fan behind her back, or performs the ancient and horrible skipping-rope dance, will also be severely punished.

Special enactments will protect the public from all

forms of torture by the cornet and accordion. Virtuosos attempting to wrest melody from the latter will be given over to the tormentors. Those who play Scotch airs on the first-named instrument will be left to the mercies of the audience.

It will not be lawful to perform on two or more musical instruments simultaneously, or to indulge in unnatural tricks, such as waving the banjo in mid-air, playing flute solos while standing on one's head, or extracting from one instrument imitations of another. The authorities will close the house as soon as any one attempts to play on a chime of bells. Every banjo soloist will be required to take out a license and wear his number on a brass collar about his neck.

The wearing of cuffs on the ankles, stockings on the hands, or elastic vests, and the stuffing of garments with pillows in order to enhance the hilarity of the "tumbling" business, will subject the offender to imprisonment with hard labor.

A man may play "Within a Mile of Sweet Edinboro' Town" on the cornet; but he must not play it within five miles of any other town.

Transportation to Botany Bay is the punishment which awaits the girl who betrays the trust reposed in her by the populace by singing a song of all nations and waving flags. All songs of this description will be strictly prohibited, and there will be



a life sentence ready for the girl who sings one containing the lines:

“There was dear Robert Emmet,
Who died for his green native shores.”

When capital punishment is decreed, the extreme penalty of the law will be inflicted by the audience. The culprit will be securely bound and carried to the nearest market-place, and there hung in the presence of the assembled multitude. In order to add to the ignominy of his death, a company of Swiss bell-ringers will play during his last agony. This punishment will be meted out only to the man who attempts to sing a comic song with a “part spoken” of this description:

“Ain't I the cheese? Ain't I the cheese,
Round by the Serpentine, under the trees?
Ain't I the cheese? Ain't I the cheese,
As I walk in the park with my darling Louise?”

(Spoken rapidly, and without a pause.)

Yes she 's a dear good girl bless her I
took her to an oyster-saloon the other night
and just look at me now —

(Turns pockets inside out, pulls out watch-chain with key attachment, drops several huge pawn-tickets on the stage, and gives other evidences of extreme destitution.)

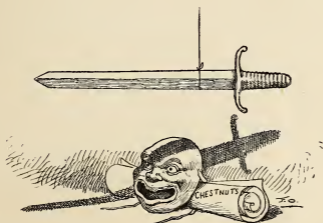
She said she was n't very hungry and all she wanted was apple-pie on toast clam-fritters on the deep pint bottle of Mumm Little Necks on the shallow gin cocktail Blue Point stew broiled partridge poached truffles mushroom fry whiskey sour — My! It took three waiters to bring in the check and I had to leave my swallow-



tailed coat and ulster with the cashier and go home in an army blanket but I love her dearly still and often as I walk down Fifth Avenue I stop and do a little step something like this and sing in clear melodious accents:

"Ain't I the cheese? Ain't I the cheese?"—

At this point the leader of the orchestra will put on the black-cap, and, the entire audience following, the culprit will be led away to suffer the death penalty. During his last moments, a picture of Joe Emmet looking through a broken slate will be held before his eyes.



THE ASSEMBLYMAN'S BRIDE.

A TALE OF AMERICAN HIGH LIFE — ALL NATIVE TITLES.

By the American Duchess — Ouida.

“I WONDER IF he will come,” murmurs Maud, languidly, as she lies in statuesque repose in her hammock, while the soft June breeze plays with her wavy chestnut hair and scatters snow-white blossoms at her feet. Through the branches of the swaying vine, whose foliage darkens the cool piazza, the golden sunlight

shimmers down and touches the perfect oval face with tender, checkered caress. There is the hum of many insects in the air; at the foot of the lawn the salt waves break in seething foam on the rock-bound shore; the branches of the tall locust-trees commune together in whispers and sighs

of exquisite softness, while far

overhead is the splendid blue sky, dotted with fleecy clouds of brilliant whiteness.



And yet, as Maud Mahoney lies in her hammock, with a half-closed volume in one hand, while the fingers of the other toy with the silken ears of the superb dog beside her, she looks bored.

And why should one be bored when one has youth and health and splendid dresses and fleet horses, and when the June sun is shining brightly? Is it worth nothing then to be the only daughter of Alderman Mahoney, the wealthiest Summer resident of Stamwalk on the Sound? Can one be bored with the knowledge that a doting father has a "pull" of colossal dimensions at Albany?

But, for all that, Maud is bored — undeniably bored. She has been trying to read all the afternoon; but her book rests idly in her lap. She is waiting for the 4:38 express, which will thunder into the station, bearing the dashing young Assemblyman Billings, who comes ostensibly to consult her father in relation to the ash-barrel inspectorship in the 18th District, but in reality that he may sit on the moonlit piazza and woo the daughter of the proud old politician, while the waves break on the shore, and the tall locusts whisper and murmur together, and the stars shine down in loving approval.

She has had many suitors ere this. She could have wed the eloquent young Tax Commissioner McGloin, the idol of the short-haired Democracy of her father's ward, and the hero of many a hard-contested battle at the polls. She is known scornfully to have refused the hand of him who was then only Pardon Clerk Smiles; but is now known as the "Brazen-voiced Orator of the

Assembly Chamber," and holds the black-and-tan vote of Bleecker Street in the hollow of his hand. Sewer Inspectors, Counselors, Clerks of the Bureau of Arrearages; aye, even Aldermen and Congressmen have knelt before her — knelt and pleaded in vain.

Perhaps she is thinking of these triumphs now, for a smile lightens her face for a moment. Then the whistle of the train is heard, and she springs to her feet, radiant with delight. "I must go and fix myself!" she exclaims; "I look like a fright!"

* * * * *

There are but three gathered at the tea table in the evening — the Alderman, his daughter and the young Assemblyman; and as they sit by the shaded lamps, the talk between the two men becomes confidential. Political schemes are hatched, and the most subtle mysteries of statecraft openly and almost carelessly discussed.

"I think they 'll defeat us on that bill to cut down all the trees in Central Park," says the Assemblyman; but it 'll make them very unpopular with the working classes for preventing the poor man from getting a job that 'd last him the Winter through."

"Be the powers," rejoins the Alderman, "there 's been a fearful kick made in my war-r-rud for 'fraid the bill won't pass. All the voters was countin' on it. Sure we 'll have to do something 'twixt now 'n' election if we expect to hould the party together."



“I can tell you,” replies the other, “there’s a big opposition to that bill up the River; and, for certain sure, Alderman Mahoney, if some of them members from the back counties don’t get their price, there’ll be a split-up in the party before November. I suppose it’s sorrow a bit of help we’ll get from that scalawag at Washington.”



The Alderman brings down his clenched fist on the table with a fearful oath. He is famous for his curses. They have made the rafters of old Tammany Hall ring ere this while frenzied throngs howled their approval.

He swore just such another oath at Chicago in '84, when the name of his party's nominee was made known to him.

“Bad cess to him!” he hisses between his clenched teeth; “I’ve been a worker in me war-r-rud this thirty odd year. I’ve been to primaries and served on committees, and done me whole duty as a Dimmycrat, and yet, when it comes to gettin’ recognition, there ain’t a swallow-tailed college student to be found but what’s got the call on me. You mark me words, Assemblyman, there’ll be a change one of these days, and then we’ll see a true Dimmycrat of the ould school in the White House.” And with these ominous words they rise from the table, and adjourn to the piazza.

The moon has risen now, and begun her stately march across the starlit sky. Her silvery rays fall on the old politician, who sits on the piazza dreaming of the days when he led his cohorts — “Mahoney’s toughs” they called them — to victory in his district. And down by the shore, where the white-crested waves come hurrying in from the broad Sound, and dash against the cool, gray stones; there, with the locusts murmuring overhead, and the Summer’s night keeping a silent watch with her thousand eyes, stands Maud, her head resting on the diagonal vest of the dashing young Assemblyman.

“Yes,” she says, a wonderful smile lighting up her face as she turns it to his, “I can not doubt that you love me with all the fervor of the

Lower House; but then, you

know only too well what my

father’s ambition is. He

has said long ago that I

must marry a man with a

pull. O Darling! why

have you not a pull?”

“Alas!” rejoins her

lover, “I have indeed a

very slight pull — even in

my own district. But it

has occurred to me that if

I can get your father’s Central

Park bill through next session, he will perhaps look more

favorably upon my suit.

“O Algernon!” exclaims the young girl, wringing



her hands in bitterness of spirit; "that job will never go through. The hayseeds are all down on it."

"Never mind," my precious one," he says, as he presses a kiss on her brow; "I will do something ere long to convince your father that I have not quite lost my grip."

* * * * *

A year has flown, and now another splendid June evening finds the young lovers seated side by side on the vine-hung piazza. They look tenderly and joyously into each other's eyes. All the sighing is done by the tall locust-trees described in a previous chapter.

The old Alderman approaches, but they do not draw apart from each other. He no longer opposes their union, for the handsome young member of the Lower House has shown that he has a pull. When the bill for cutting down the trees in Central Park was defeated by an unprecedented majority, and ominous murmurs of discontent were heard in the lower wards, Assemblyman Billings threw himself into the breach with a bill to tear up all the gas and water mains in New York and put them down again. With fiery eloquence he rushed the job through, although hayseed and swallow-tail fought shoulder to shoulder against it.

And so it came to pass that Alderman Mahoney's constituents got long and easy jobs on the big pipes, and the reins of power were placed again in the hands of the old Tammany chieftain, who dispensed his patronage

with lavish hand wherever he thought it would do the most good.

Then the gallant young Assemblyman proudly claimed his bride, the Alderman gave them his blessing, and Maud Mahoney married a man with a pull.



THE DESERTED HOUSE.

A LEGEND OF THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY.



A HAMLET CRADLED amid the steep, fir-clad hills, and shaded by tall elm-trees, through whose branches fall the shimmering rays of the setting sun, touching, with tender glow, the brand-new square house of 'Squire Larrabee, and coloring Deacon Pogram's old barn with the only kind of paint it has ever known. And now the shadows lengthen on the village street and on the steep sides of the western hills. And behind these verdure-clad walls the sun slowly sinks; its last rays picking out a few early-tinted leaves here and there in the tree-tops, and lingering in rosy caress on the gilt rooster, which, in Puritan communities, adorns the church-steeple and replaces the cross as a religious emblem. The last bright ray falls on this sacred symbol of New England faith and thrift, then the

glow fades from the burnished tail-feathers and the sun is gone.

The solemn hush of a Connecticut twilight has fallen upon Beanville. Twilight in shady street and quiet church-yard. Twilight in the 'Squire's front yard and in his "best room," where the shadows gather about the horse-hair sofa and claw-footed centre-table. Twilight in Deacon Pogram's barn-yard among the lowing kine. Twilight on the front stoop, where the Summer boarders are sitting, and where the evening breeze plays soft on bang and spit-curl. Twilight in the back kitchen, where the cat purrs before the stove, and the hired help is roasting bread-crusts for the coffee which the boarders will drink on the morrow.

Looking toward the dark hillside, from the stoop, one can see the decaying walls of a deserted house.

The bats keep their lonely vigil in its eaves and chimneys, while the wind sighs a sad requiem through the swaying tree-tops overhead.



"What a romantic-looking old place!" exclaims one of the boarders, impulsively; "it has always seemed to me that that old house must have some story—some wild legend of sorrow and disaster that stalks through its deserted halls and chambers like a dread phantom of the past. There surely must be a story."

She is a gushing young thing who teaches school in Jersey City in the Winter, and has temporarily ex-

changed the pleasures of that famous art centre for the Summer quiet of Beanville.

“Wa-al, I kin tell ye suthin’ ababout that there haouse,” says Deacon Pogram, seating himself, with much crackling of joints, on the door-step, and chuckling, the while, at the thought of the advantageous “trade” he has just made at the vil-
lage store.



“There was a feller come up here onc’t to try farmin’ a spell. He was one of these yer fancy city chaps that thought there was big money in farmin’ ef ’t was only run right. He ’d plenty o’ money, too. They tell me he was wuth pretty nigh onto a hunderd thaou-

sand dollars when he come up here. Made it daown York way a-keepin’ store there. Wa-al, as I was a-tellin’ ye, he come up here ’n’ built him a fine haouse over on the new turnpike road, ’n’ spent no end o’ money a-fixin’ on it up with sofys, ’n’ carpets, ’n’ all sorts o’ gimcracks. Why, they was pictur’s on his walls as cost a hunderd

dollars apiece, 'n' I've hearn 'em tell he kep' all sorts o' lickers 'n' wines in his cellar. Such extravagance had n't never been heard on before in the caounty, 'n' there was folks as druv in here of afternoons from five miles back just to look at the city chap's new place.

“Wa-al, it warn't long before it got aout among the folks ababout here as haow this new chap was a-payin' fur things most anything folks chose

to charge him. Then the light-nin'-rod fellers got wind of it,

'n' he 'd wake up in the mornin' to find six on 'em a-settin' on his door-step.

They socked it to him, I kin tell ye. They rodded his

haouse with enough stuff to fence in a grave-yard. They rodded his stable 'n' his barn

'n' his pigstye, 'n' it 's a wonder they did n't put rods on

his apple-trees.

“'Long in April, or mebbe 't was March, he moved in 'n' give

a'big house-warmin'. Everybody was invited, 'n' pretty nigh the hull village went. Such highfalutin' doings as there was that night I never *did* see.

What with the fancy victuals, 'n' the claret-wine, 'n' the champagne-wine, 'n' one thing 'n' another, folks did n't hardly know

what to eat. There was some on 'em — I don't want to mention no names — as went home with a leetle more



'n they could carry convenient. You see, he was a clever creetur' as ever lived, 'n' I hain't nuthin' in the world ag'in' him, only he was too careless, 'n' had n't no sort of a head fur figgers.

“Wa-al, of course, he did n't calkerlate to do his farmin' hisself. He was a-goin' to hire it done. What's more, he wanted to kinder let out contracts instead of payin' his hands so much a day. One man hoed corn 'n' charged a dollar a row. Another brung his team over 'n' did the plowin' at so much a furrow — made enough on 't to lift a mortgage off'n his farm 'n' take his family daown to York the next Winter.”

At this point in his narrative the good Deacon paused and chuckled softly to himself.

“I hed a contract, myself, to dig a drain fur him,” he continued, still chuckling softly. “I did n't want to make more 'n eight dollars a day, so I allers quit work at noon. Money was plenty here that year, I kin tell ye, 'n' everybody got a share of it. He tuk a pew at the meetin'-house, 'n', b'gosh, they charged him double-price, 'n' made him pay enough fur the carpet 'n' cushions to get a new candlebras — they called it — to hang over the pulpit.

“In all my life I never seen nuthin' to equal the way they useter charge that pore critter fur everything he got. Even the boys axed him a dollar a bushel fur diggin' his potatos, 'n' useter steal his apples, 'n' then come 'raound the back way 'n' sell 'em to him over again. Why, my boy 'Lisha made enough diggin' potatos 'n' sellin' him his own apples to get a new Winter-suit 'n' a nickel-plated watch.”

“But how long did his money last?” inquired one of the Summer boarders.

“Wa-al, I dunno but it would 'a' lasted longer if he had n't er et some tudstools some critter sold him for mushrooms. They killed him, 'n' he died before he 'd spent half his money. They was genooine sorrow when the news arrived; but nuthin' more could be done except to sock it to the estate fur the coffin 'n' the buryin' on him. Yes, Marthy, I 'm a-comin'!”

And the worthy Deacon toddled off to the kitchen, to learn that the hired-girl had gone and sent the stale eggs down to the store, and kept the fresh ones for the boarders' breakfast.



TWO OLD CRONES.

HOW THEY LEARNED OF THE LATEST ARRIVAL IN BEANVILLE.

THERE WAS something afoot in Beanville. That was evident even to the most careless observer. There was a hush in the air, and a tremulous rustling in the branches of the tall elms that shaded

the village street. From the marsh could be heard the mysterious

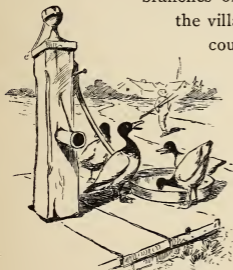
croaking of the frogs; old

Deacon Pogram's ducks quacked confidentially over the tin dish which contained their dinner.

A group of rustics, seated about the stove in the little store, spat meditatively about them, and

seemed to be absorbed in

some great common thought. And in some mysterious way these signs and portents were wafted down the long quiet street, and conveyed to the inmates of the two little white cottages at the foot of Zion Hill the news of



some impending event which would shortly open a mine under the feet of the gossips of Beanville. The two little white cottages stood on opposite sides of the street just at the foot of the long winding hill-road. Both had green blinds, and both had little side windows which commanded an excellent view of the shady village street. There were lilac-bushes in front of one. Tall sunflowers stood beside the other.

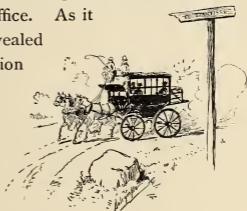
In one cottage dwelt Miss Betsy Carter; the other was the home of Miranda Larrabee. Both ladies were advanced in years and infirmity. Miss Carter was deaf and Miss Larrabee lame. Both were interested in the affairs of the little hamlet, and it was, figuratively speaking, a "cold day" when either one of the worthy old cronies "got left" on any bit of local news. Whatever escaped the deaf ears of Miss Carter was clearly heard by Miss Larrabee.

Intelligence that was slow in reaching Miss Larrabee's stronghold was industriously gathered in by her active neighbor.

So it happened that on this bright Summer's day, when the trees were rustling, the frogs were croaking and the ducks quacking, a pair of sharp eyes peered inquiringly from each of the little side windows that commanded so excellent a view of the long shady street. Miss Carter's range of vision ended at the village green, which gave her unexampled facilities for ascertaining who was playing croquet there. Miss Larrabee's vista included the steps of the meeting-house, so that her little side window was a veritable coigne of vantage on

Sundays and on Friday evenings, when the prayer-meeting folks were out in full force.

And while the two old ladies were straining their eyes to learn what was afoot in the little community, the old red stage lumbered down the hill past the little cottages and on toward the post-office. As it went by in a cloud of dust, it revealed to the two watchers a fleeting vision of a man, in a high white hat and linen duster, seated beside the driver. If they had been at their usual posts of observation by their respective doors they would have seen him distinctly.



In less than a moment Miss Carter was on her way across the street. Her neighbor met her at the door.

“Did n’t get a clear view, but guess mebbe it ’s a new boarder goin’ up to Deacon Pogram’s.”

“Jesso, jesso,” said Betsey; “but I *thought* the stage turned up just this side o’ the meetin’-house, ’n’ went off daown East Street. Could n’t ’a’ been goin’ far or they would ’a’ left the mail-bags fust off.”

Miss Larrabee, who had seen the stage turn off, and jealously tried to keep the fact to herself, wilted before her neighbor’s piercing gaze, and admitted that it was so, but she “had n’t taken no partic’lar notice.”

“Wa-al, Mirandy Larrabee,” said Betsey, severely, as she turned to go, “don’t ye try to fool me ag’in, or ye ’ll find yeseff cut pretty short o’ news. ’T ain’t the fust time ye ’ve led me astray tellin’ me folks hed gone

up to the Deacon's, 'n' hevin' me postin' up there in the hot sun, when ye knew well enough they 'd turned daown Bricktop way. I 'll hev the bottom facts consarnin' that critter in the fancy gret-cut 'n' tall hat afore sundaown; 'n' what 's more, I 'll keep it to myself. They 's folks upstreet es keeps posted 'n' don't grudge their neighbors a bit o' news, nuther."

"There be, be there?" retorted Miss Larrabee; "wa-al, I kin tell ye, Betsey Carter, they 's folks *daown*-street es hears news afore it 's tew hours stale, 'n' don't hev ter go a-gaddin' raound arter it, nuther."

Her neighbor turned away with a contemptuous sniff and marched back to her own house, where she took up her position at the little window which commanded such a good view of the upper end of the street. In less than fifteen minutes



she beheld a tall young man in "store-clothes" of fashionable cut, and with a high white hat on his head, picking his way across the street. She saw him enter 'Squire Elderkin's front gate and move quickly up the broad walk. The door opened, and there stood the

'Squire's daughter in her best merino dress, smiling and radiant.

The whole truth flashed upon her. Now she would be able to triumph over her neighbor across the way. She would show her that her facilities for obtaining news were "as good as other folk's." Then she re-

membered Mirandy's helpless condition, and resolved that she would be the first to carry the news to her.

And at the same time her neighbor, who had also witnessed the new-comer's progress across the street, determined that she would be magnanimous; "for," she said to herself, "poor Betsey don't hear more 'n half what goes on."

Simultaneously the doors of the two cottages opened, and the old crones stepped forth, both on the same mission bent. Mirandy's eagerness lent strength to her failing limbs. The two gossips met midway in the dusty road, and their voices blended as one in the startling cry which was heard by the croquet players on the distant green:

"Anna Mari' Elderkin's city beau 's come!"



'LISH' POGRAM'S THANKSGIVING HOG.

AN IDYL OF THE CONNECTICUT SHORE.



“A-AL, ENNYHAOUW, they ’s enough meat in that critter ter help us aout consid’able when the snow begins ter fly, an’ work gits slack.”

As Elisha Pogram said this, he looked proudly down on a huge hog which he had been fattening for Thanksgiving, and which he estimated would tip the scales at more than five hundred pounds, dressed. The fact was that Elisha had passed through a pretty hard Summer and Autumn; sickness, slack work, debt, the old story of ill luck, had melted the little pile laid away for a rainy day; and then, just as he was getting on his feet again, the Sheriff had swooped down on him, and carried off everything he could lay his hands on, to satisfy a judgment of old Deacon Darrer, the village store-keeper, for groceries, meat, and other supplies furnished while he was ill in the Summer. He would have seized the hog,

too, but for a merciful Connecticut law, which allows the poor debtor to keep not only the implements of his trade, but one pig, also.

As may be imagined, Elisha Pogram did not feel very pleasantly toward Deacon Darrer, but he could not help smiling that evening when, as he turned to leave the sty, he saw the village store-keeper leaning over the fence, and gazing with envious eyes at the huge fat porker which was to see the Pogram family through until the next Spring.

“Step in, Deacon, an’ git a nearer look at the critter,” he said, with a grin. “Don’t it kinder make yer mouth water ter see such a big fat hog, an’ then’reck’lect that litter o’ yourn ye ’ll hev ter feed all Winter? You ’d oughter go up ter Hartford next session an’ git them ter repeal that law, so ’s you could grab this critter, tew, along o’ the rest o’ the stock.”

“Sho, naouw, ’Lishy,” said the Deacon in a deprecatory way, “I don’t want ye ter bear no malice just on accaount o’ that there little matter. Business is business, ye know, an’ a man ’s gotter get the money that ’s a-comin’ ter him. But I hain’t got no idea o’ bein’ hard on ye, ’Lishy; why don’t ye drop araound some day, an’ mebbe I kin do suthin’ tew help ye aout a mite?”

“Thank ye kindly, Deacon,” rejoined the other; “but naouwadays I hev ter stop putty close ter home ter watch that nobody don’t steal that hog by process o’ law or other ways.”

“Wa-al, ’Lishy, said Deacon Darrer, as he moved

away, "I've always hearn tell ez haouw a soft answer turneth away wrath, an' if ye like ter come in an' be neighborly enny time, ye'll be welcome."

At the weekly prayer-meeting that night, Deacon Darrer sat in his accustomed corner seat, serenely stroking his long white beard, and apparently paying the closest attention to the services, but in reality thinking enviously of Elisha Pogram's magnificent fat hog, and sadly of the late litter that he would have to feed till Spring, when they would be able to grub for themselves. Thirteen in the litter, and all runts, every one of them; and there was 'Lishy, who owed him thirty



dollars for meat and groceries! What right had he to keep that hog in his sty, instead of using it to pay his honest debts? It really seemed to the Deacon that he had a good deal to try his righteous soul.

Two or three days later Elisha Pogram, walking swiftly along the East Road past the Darrer homestead, saw the Deacon gazing pensively into the sty wherein reposed the litter of thirteen little squealers — "all on 'em runts, tew" — to quote the pathetic words of their owner.

Elisha paused beside the fence, and called to his creditor: "Them pigs o' yourn growed enny since yesterday, Deacon?"

"Why, hulloa, 'Lishy! Be that you?" cried the other, in the genial, whole-souled tones that he always assumed when engaged in a horse trade, or some other form of legalized robbery. "Step in," he continued, pleasantly; "I've been a-thinkin' I'd oughter dew a leettle suthin' ter kinder help ye aout, 'Lishy, an' I'm a-goin' ter make ye a present."

Elisha scaled the fence, and crossed over to the sty, wondering what had made Deacon Darrer so generous all of a sudden.

"Ye see," said the Deacon, pleasantly, "bein' ez it's Thanksgivin' time, an' I don't want ye ter hev no hard feelin's, I thought I'd give ye one o' them porkers. Pick aout a good un, 'Lishy, an' take him along with ye. Feed him up a mite, an' they'll be a good meal ter be got aouten him."

Elisha selected a squeaking little porker, and departed with it safely tucked under his arm. Bill Perkins, the Deputy Sheriff, who happened along half an hour later, beheld Elisha watching the gambols of the little runt beside its huge companion. Bill had not called since the memorable occasion when he had carted away as many of the household effects as he could seize, and it was with some slight misgivings that Elisha saw him strolling leisurely across the garden patch.

"Goin' ter kill a critter, 'Lish'?" observed the Sheriff.



“Yes,” replied Elisha; “an’ I think mebbe I’ll hev a hog-guessin’ match Thanksgivin’ Day, fer ter make a little fun in the neighborhood. What do ye think that runt ’ll weigh, Bill? But I ain’t a-goin’ tew kill him. I’m a-savin’ him fer a curiosity. Deacon Darrer gin him tew me, an’ I guess there hain’t nobody in these ’ere parts ez kin show a present from Deacon Darrer.”

“So ye ’ve got tew pigs naouw instead o’ one,” remarked the Sheriff, as he climbed into the sty. “Wa-al, ’Lishy, that ’s one more ’n the law allows a debtor tew

keep, an' I 'll hev tew levy onto one on 'em. I guess the big critter 'll dew."

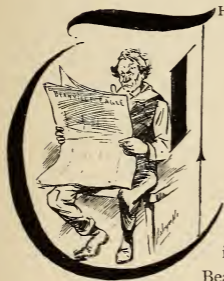
* * * * *

When the legislature next assembled at Hartford, the story of 'Lish' Pogram's Thanksgiving hog was duly recited by the member from his district, and the statute relating to seizure of goods for debt was at once amended so as to permit the poor debtor to keep two pigs instead of one.

But it came too late to save poor 'Lish' Pogram's bacon.

BEANVILLE JOURNALISM.

HOW THE FOREMAN PUT THE EDITOR UP TO
A NEW RACKET.



THE OLD YEAR had but a few more hours of life. The sun of '84 had gone down for the last time on snow-clad valley and wind-swept hill-top. It had set forever on city and plain, on the mansions of the rich and the hovels of the poor. The evening shadows were falling on the spires and roofs of Beanville. The old year was dying; the wind moaning, under the eaves of Deacon Pogram's barn, its only requiem.

From the street came the sound of sleigh-bells and cheery laughter. The light from the parsonage fell soft on the snow-clad front yard, and touched with ineffable tenderness the advance-guard of a ravenous donation-party which was approaching. Far more alluring was

the light that shone through the chinks of the blinds that shielded the "back room" of the Beanville tavern from the gaze of the curious. Far brighter that which streamed from the second-story windows of the *Eagle* editorial and composing-rooms.

The old year was dying there, too, as well as on the snow-clad valley and wind-swept hill-top. That was shown by the subscription-bills which the editor was preparing for his patrons.

"I suppose you think you 're going to collect some of those subscription-bills," said the foreman, who stood by, watching his theoretical chief prepare a stack of bills to delinquent subscribers.

"Certainly. Why not?" responded the other. "Ain't half of them at least as good as wheat? Did n't they pay up last year as soon as the bills reached them?"

"Yes," replied the foreman, who thought he could run the paper better than it had ever been run before; "but last year, if I remember rightly, you 'd fulfilled your duty to the subscribers, and this year, if my information is correct, you have n't."

"What are you driving at?" demanded the nominal chief of the office.

"Well, I 'll tell you what I 'm driving at," said the foreman, sternly. "Last year — thanks to me — you took care to mention the name of every man who owed his subscription before you sent him his bill. Then they all felt well disposed, and were quite willing to pay up when called upon. Have you done that this year? Just look back at the file, and see if you have? Now the

paper 's all ready to go to press, and you 're sending out a lot of bills to folks that you have n't treated square. You expect 'em all to pay up; and, what 's more, you 're counting on getting their money so 's to meet that bill for type next week. That 's about the size of it, ain't it?"

The editor admitted that it was, but added, apologetically, that he had mentioned everybody who could be mentioned.

"What are you going to say about a man if he does n't do anything worth mentioning?" he exclaimed: "Did n't I give Deacon Pogram and Deacon Tew a big send-off on their horse trade? Did n't I do the square thing by 'Lish' Deuzenbury when he sold his speckled hen? Was n't Deacon Perkins mentioned in good style when he led the prayer-meeting? May be you could ring in more names than I have. If so, you 'd better try it, and I 'll go into the composing-room and see if I can't get the paper to press a little before midnight. That 'll give better satisfaction all round."

The foreman placidly ignored the reflection on his own lack of skill. He smiled blandly as he produced a proof-slip from his pocket, and waved it under the editor's nose.



“I guess the sooner we trade off positions, the better it 'll be,” he said, calmly. “Now I 'll read you a little something I wrote for just such an emergency as this. It's in type now, and you can use your own discretion — which is n't very much, at the best — about putting it in. You're the boss here, not I. Now, this is what I wrote so 's to ring in the names of all those people you've been sending bills to. I call it the 'Country Church-Yard.' It runs somewhat in this style:

“‘Winter has come. The soft-falling snow has spread its dazzling mantle over the earth, covering hill and meadow, and weighting the hemlocks with fleecy loads. The mountain torrents are chained with an icy key. The woodland paths are choked and impassable. We are shut out from the old familiar haunts through which we loved to wander when the Summer sun warmed our blood, or when Autumn's leaves bestrewed our pathway. Where shall we stroll now? Let us hie us to the quiet country church-yard. Let us pass through the superb iron gateway, which stands as a lasting testimonial to the public spirit of our fellow-citizen, Mr. Hezekiah Trumbull, and the artistic excellence of the products of the South Beanville Iron Foundry.

“‘On the right of the gateway a stately marble shaft greets our eye, and records the virtues of him who sleeps beneath it, deeply mourned by his son-in-law, Hiram Fitch, the popular furniture-dealer. A few faded wreaths adorn the shaft, and show that the dead are not forgotten by those who trade with Elisha Simonds, the reliable florist.

“ ‘Who sleeps in yonder vault? Whose crumbling bones lie secure within Jabez Higginbotham’s four walls of solid and enduring masonry? The grated door is fastened with a Yale lock, purchased at Joshua Nichol’s hardware store, (that ’ll nail him for all his job-printing, I guess,) and the ivy which festoons the walls was planted by the loving hands, and watered by the tears of the Widow Simpkins, who, if report be true, will soon be led again to the altar, with the rowen blush on her cheeks.



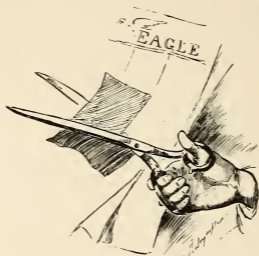
“ ‘A few steps further on we come to the modest inclosure of Squire Stainsbury. Here there is no vainglory or display. Little would the wayfarer think that beneath these unostentatious brown-stone slabs—the pick of Henry Snow’s job lot of tomb-stones; there are a few more left—sleep the relatives of the genial publisher of the county map.

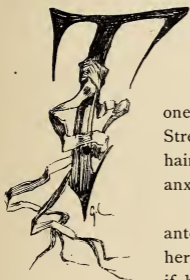
“ ‘Near by two men in rustic garb are at work on a grave. The sound of pick and shovel breaks on the still air. They are the lightning grave-diggers and champion wood-sawyers of the county—John Collins and Henry Ashton. The village church-bell is solemnly tolling—John Pogram’s eldest boy is at the bell-rope—and the funeral cortège is drawing near. We see the waving plumes of Undertaker John Coffin’s brand-new

hearse, and hear the jingle of the sleigh-bells. One more Beanvillian has joined the great majority, and will soon be committed to the dust from which he sprung.'

"There," said the foreman, "don't you rather think I've covered the hull ground pretty thoroughly? Now you can send out your bills with some chance of hearing from them."

"Put it in," said the editor, briefly.





THE STOCK-BROKER'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

MR. KIRBY STONE came home one night from his office in Broad Street, with a pale face, disordered hair, and general appearance of anxiety and excitement.

His wife met him with the usual ante-Christmas smile of welcome on her face, and asked him pleasantly if he had stopped in at Tiffany's on his way uptown, to look at those emeralds she admired so much.

No; he had not thought of such a thing as emeralds. How could he, with the market in such a condition? Squarettoe & Hustler had made an assignment that very day; the affairs of the Argentine Republic were in such a shape that no one knew whether their seven per cent. Guano bonds would ever be redeemed or not; and as for the London market, he hardly dared to cast his eyes in that direction.

"Tell me, my dear," he continued, plaintively,

“under these circumstances, and with the Rothschilds hesitating about the Russian loan, and refusing point blank to advance another cent to help the Paris Bourse, how *can* I think of such a thing as your Christmas present!”

And Mrs. Stone, who knew nothing of the stock market, nor of the relation of the Russian loan to her husband’s bank account, admitted that, of course, under such extraordinary conditions as he had named it was out of the question to think of Christmas presents.

“But I do hope, Kirby,” she added, affectionately, “that this ‘flurry,’ as you call it, will not last long, for I shall be bitterly disappointed if the holidays go by without bringing to me a gift at least as handsome and costly as that which I received from you last year. You have given me, in years gone by, diamonds, rubies, and pearls.

Now, I need only those emeralds to make my collection complete.”

“Mary,” said the broker, speaking with a sudden tenderness, “can you be brave? Can you hear the worst unmoved? It may be that I shall have no present for you this year.”

“Kirby, what is it?” demanded his wife, hoarsely. “Let me know the worst without delay! Say that you are not short on Villards or long on Lackawanna, like that Mr. Bungle who failed last year.”

“It is not that, Mary,” he responded, sadly; “I hold fewer of the Villard securities than any man on the Street, except Mr Villard himself. No, my loved one,



I am short of gold, and unless I can raise three thousand dollars to-morrow, we are beggared. I have tried everything, and now but one chance remains."

"And that is?" asked Mary.

"Your jewels. I could pawn them for a few weeks, and tide over the crisis with the money they would bring."

"I can not!" moaned his wife, wringing her hands in agony.

"Then," said Kirby, resolutely, "there will be no more Christmas presents — never, nevermore!"

A moment later, acting under a sudden impulse, she flung the jewels in his lap, and escaped to her own room where she gave way to transports of grief.

Her husband smiled complacently the next morning as he locked the jewels carefully in his safe:

"I think this will be the cheapest Christmas I have known in years, and the happiest, too."

* * * * *

Christmas Eve finds Mary Stone a changed woman. The loss of what Kirby calls her "sparklers" has brought into her heart a grief such as she has never known before. Seated by the fireside she grieves bitterly for the jewels which she fears have gone from her forever. She has long since ceased even to think of the once coveted emeralds.



A light step behind her, a hand on her shoulder, and the voice of Kirby exclaims:

“Mary, my own, here are your jewels! I have managed to get them out of hock for your Christmas present. Take them, my darling, and be happy.”

Mary Stone burst into tears, as she pressed the jewels to her heart; and her husband smiled to think of the cheap and happy Christmas which his genius had procured for her.

IN THE "400" AND OUT.

OUT ON THE SIDEWALK.

FIRST OUTSIDER (*looking enviously in through window*).— My! Don't I wish I could be in there with those swells! What an elegant time those Four-Hundred fellows have when they get together!



SECOND OUTSIDER.— Pretty hard, ain't it, Bill, that some of us poor devils have to toil and sweat and get precious few of the good things of life, while those folks have education and money, and champagne to drink, and everything else that they want to make 'em happy.

FIRST OUTSIDER.— I just wish I could hear what they 're talking about. When a lot of gilt-edged people like that get together, who 've had every advantage travel and culture can give, there's a feast of wit as well as food and drink, I can tell you.

IN AT THE DINNER TABLE.

MRS. GETTHERE SOMEHOW (*almost tearfully*).— My dear Mr. McGallister, can't you do something for poor Lillie? The child has set her heart on going to the Matriarchs' ball; and if you only *would* get her an invitation, why, I'd do anything in the world I possibly could for you.

MR. MCGALLISTER.— Lillie? Is that the scrawny one, or the plump one with dimples? Really, Mrs. Somehow, doncherknow I'd be charmed to do anything I could for you, but we have to be very select.

MRS. SOMEHOW.— Oh! She's not so very scrawny; really and truly she's not; and you need n't ask *me*. I'll promise not to come. And then, you know, I'll ask anybody to my dinners you want me to.

MR. MCGALLISTER.— Yes; but doncherknow there was tame duck on your table the last time I dined with you; and that will never do in the world, doncherknow. But I'll see what I can do. Major, can you tell me when a door is not a door?

THE MAJOR (*one of the brightest wits in Society*).— When it is ajar. (*Roars of laughter.*)

MRS. SOMEHOW.— How very, very clever! Mr. McGallister, you do manage to gather about you the very wittiest people I ever met.

MR. MCGALLISTER (*addressing solemn English*



swell).—I suppose you must see a great difference between society here and in London, Lord Finecut?

LORD FINECUT.—Oh, no; really, not the least, I assure you. (*aside.*) God bless my soul, I should rather think I did!

MR. MCGALLISTER.—Really, you 're very flattering and kind, doncherknow. We try as hard as we can to have it like the genuine London article. We 're very select, but we 're merciful. Never cut a real nob, even if he is poor. Always go round the corner, doncherknow.

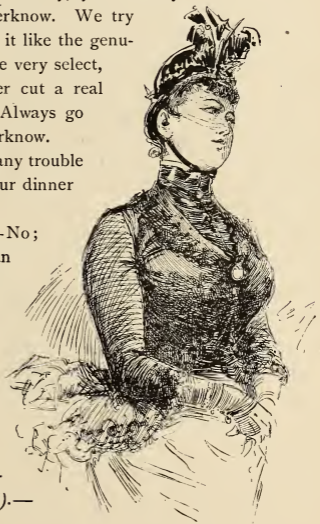
THE MAJOR.—Have any trouble pairing off the guests at your dinner party last week, Mac?

MR. MCGALLISTER.—No; not much. One gentleman objected to taking Mrs. Somehow down to dinner, but I talked him round in a few minutes. Did n't I, Mrs. Somehow?

MRS. SOMEHOW.—I'm sure you did it beautifully, Mr. McGallister.

LORD FINECUT (*open-mouthed with amazement*).—Good Gawd!

MR. MCGALLISTER.—If there 's any ball or reception you 'd like to go to while you 're in town, my Lord,



just let me know. I can get you invitations anywhere. They dare n't refuse me.

LORD FINECUT.—Thanks, awfully, deah boy ; but, really, I 've seen quite a good deal of society here, already. (*Relapses into silence, and listens to a discussion about the cost of various dinners and parties. Then glances at window, and, seeing two outsiders, says to himself.*) What a relief it would be to go and have a glass of beer with those chaps out there ! May be I might learn something about Americans from them.



THE EVOLUTION OF THE HUMORIST.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROSE WRITINGS OF BILL
MILDEW, PROFESSIONAL HUMORIST.

*At 15.—Influenced by a German Professor and a Few
Easy Lessons in Metaphysics in Pursuit of the Un-
findoutable.*



AND WHAT, after all, is to be the end of this life whose mystery we shall never know? Well did the poet of ancient heathen days exclaim: "*Arma virumque cano!*" He was like many modern writers, thinking more of deeds of arms than of the mind. He sang of the prowess of the great warriors of early days, and of their splendid achievements.

But, as he sang, did he have no thought of the dominant influence of mind over matter? Why did he not sing of what he would have called in his own pellucid tongue, "*Mentis Imperium?*" Why did he leave no record

behind him of the vast mental powers of his day, to which Rome owed its final subjugation?

It remained for the great Fenelon to say, after the world had waited hundreds of years for his utterance: "*Calypto ne pouvait se consoler du départ d' Ulysse.*" Even at that comparatively advanced stage of history, men, and women, too, were thinking more of physical prowess than of the great attainments of thought and culture which should have claimed their attention.

Even Cicero, when he hurled his fiercest invective against Cataline, demanded, in tones of fervid eloquence, how long he intended to abuse the patience of the Roman senate.

It behooves us, whose minds and pens are perhaps destined to wield a mighty influence throughout this broad land, to remember that intellect is, after all, bound to assert its sway.

At 19.—Influenced by "St. Elmo," "Guerndale," blighted affections and a general desire to Portray Himself as he would like to appear. In pursuit of revenge.



St. George De Vere, despite his extraordinary intellectual gifts and rare personal charms, was not exactly a popular man. Beneath an outer crust of high-bred, haughty reserve, there lay a generous, noble nature; but this side of his character was revealed only to his intimate friends.

Women were irresistibly drawn toward him. There was a look of veiled tenderness in his dark eyes, a touch

of sadness in the lines about his firm mouth, and a bitter cynicism in his speech that seemed to tell of some great and hidden sorrow. But of the nature of this secret grief none knew, for his was not a spirit that could either brook inquiry or speak of its deepest feelings.

It was late in the evening, and the guests at Vere Hall were chatting together in the oak parlor. St. George stood on the bear-skin rug in front of the great fire-place, as usual the centre of a group of women who crowded about him, listening to the bitter cynicisms which fell from his lips.

On a divan near him sat Maude Beverley, apparently engrossed with the portfolio of rare engravings which rested on her knee. No one who saw her there that night would have dreamt what bitter feelings were astir beneath the filmy lace that rose and fell with every pulsation of her heart.

There was only one thing that betrayed her feelings, and that was the flush which ever and anon crimsoned her cheek as she listened to the gay banter that went on around her.

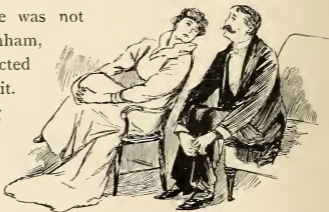
St. George had a way — a trick, the envious ones declared — of throwing into his voice an exquisite shade of tenderness and feeling, which never failed in its effect on the woman for whom it was intended; and it was these wonderful tones that from time to time swept across the heart-strings of Maude Beverley, and brought the flush to her fair cheek, and the tremor to her proud lips.

And he, did he feel no pity for the woman whose heart he was so cruelly lacerating? None could tell. None could read the thoughts that were hidden by the mocking, cynical laugh, or guess that deeper passions were at work despite his apparent gayety.

At 24.—Influenced by an affection as yet unblighted, and one or two novels of the modern analytical school. In pursuit of the ideal intellectual life.

Elvira smiled at the young man's frank avowal. It was a smile that told, almost as plainly as words, the sincere interest he had awakened in her heart. It was not the merry, innocent laugh of sunny girlhood, nor the more mellow hilarity of the matron. It was simply one of those rare smiles which became her so well, softening, as they did, the intellectual austerity of her face, and leading one to marvel that she indulged in them so seldom.

The smile was not lost upon Burnham, though he affected not to notice it. He was sitting in a rather negligent attitude, apparently engrossed in the



contemplation of one of the once famous series of the "Voyage of Life," which hung on the wall before him. It was the one in which the voyager is represented as

a youth standing on the prow of his boat, and gazing, undaunted, at the dark clouds of adversity and trouble which confront him.

“What are you thinking about?” demanded Elvira, suddenly.

“I am wondering,” replied Burnham, “how such a conventional treatment of so great a subject could ever have commanded general attention. For example: why should clouds be made to represent difficulties and disaster? Why not take something tangible — something that we would really fear, and that could not be warded off by an umbrella or a waterproof coat?”

He was silent after this, and for a moment Elvira regarded him curiously. She may have felt a twinge of resentment and disappointment when she learned that he had been thinking of the picture instead of herself; but that feeling, if any such there were, was lost in one of admiration for the keen analytical qualities of a mind that could conceive such brilliant and subtle criticism.

“Don’t you want I should show you the new pictures that were sent me yesterday?” she inquired, with a look of expectancy, and speaking in a tone full of the deepest significance.

It was a way she had of uttering trivialities in a wonderfully effective manner.

Burnham was visibly moved, but at first he made no reply. For an instant he seemed lost in thought. Then, lifting his head from his elbow, he replied in slow, measured cadence:

“Thank you.”

At 30. — Influenced by column rates and their relation to comfort and luxury in the home. In pursuit of a living.

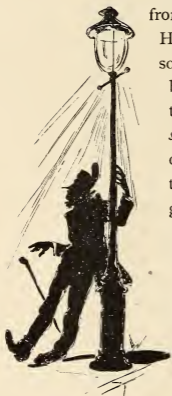
It was after one o'clock when Mr. McGuffin returned from what he facetiously termed his "Lodge."

He was a trifle unsteady in his gait; so much so, in fact, that he mistook the door-mat for a banana-peel, and, in his endeavors to find the key-hole of the door, executed a *pas seul* of such a complicated nature that he completely lost his balance and fell against the railing with a whoop of terror and anguish, which caused Mrs. McGuffin to open the window of her room and call out: "Is that you, Mr. McGuffin?"

"Yes," he replied, meekly, and added: "I've lost my latch-key, so I wish you'd come down and let me in."

His better half muttered something of a very uncomplimentary nature, in a distinctly irascible tone, and then slammed the window and prepared to descend to his assistance.

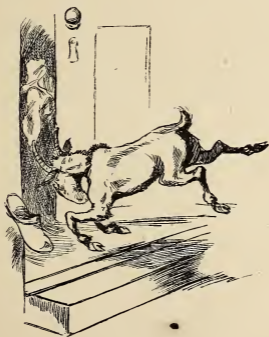
But before she could put on her dressing-gown and grope her way down the dark stair-case, her husband saw a sight calculated to cause dismay to the stoutest heart. A large William goat, which pastures in the fertile coal-yard adjacent to the McGuffin homestead, was enjoying a moonlight stroll in the street, and suddenly beholding the swaying figure of the Lodge member mistook it in the darkness for some strange animal. For



a moment the goat paused irresolute on the curbstone; then, with a hoarse bray of anger, he charged up the steps, eager for the fray.

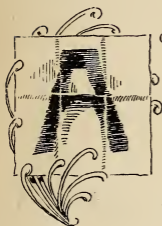
At this opportune moment Mrs. McGuffin opened the hall-door, and sternly requested her lord and master to "come in, and not keep me standing here all night!" The invitation was accepted — by the goat — and so suddenly that the good lady did not stand there more than four seconds after uttering it.

McGuffin heard a blood-curdling shriek —





THE CURIOSITIES' CHRISTMAS.



CLEAR, COLD, STARLIT NIGHT and Christmas Day at hand. The streets are filled with shoppers, and the frosty air is resonant with the music of the Third Avenue horse-car bells. Surely, every one should be merry to-night and give thanks for the joyous holiday season.

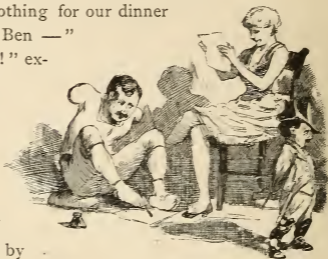
But Susan Phreak is not merry to-night, as she sits sewing by the fire in her humble but neat apartment on an East-Side street. She is waiting for her husband's return; he has been out all day looking for work. A quick step in the hall outside, and Susan is at the door to greet him.

"Alas!" cries her husband, as he sinks wearily into a rocking-chair by the fire, "I have roamed the streets all day long in search of an engagement, but only to meet with rebuffs on every side. They tell me that Armless Wonders are a drug on the market, and are not worth their salt in comparison with such curiosities as the Human Griddle Cake, who broils himself a beautiful

golden brown every hour, or the Transparent Lady, through whose calf one may watch the total eclipse of the sun."

As John Phreak utters these words he sighs deeply, and with a deft movement of his left foot unties his woolen comforter from his neck and places it on the table. He fastens his eye on Benjamin, the Learned Pig, who is playing solitaire in a warm nook by the fire, and says: "Christmas is at hand, Susan, and we have nothing for our dinner except poor Ben —"

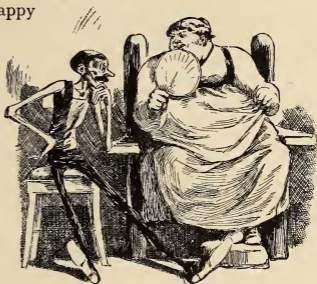
"O John!" exclaims Susan, reproachfully; and the frightened Pig drops his cards, and effaces himself from the scene by creeping under the sofa.



It can not be denied that the Phreak family were playing in hard luck; for, though it would be difficult to find two more industrious, sober and painstaking fakirs than the Armless Wonder and his wife, the Tattooed Princess, still competition and the fickle popular taste had gradually crowded them from the platform on which for years they had earned their daily bread. As John and Susan sat by the fire this cold December night, their thoughts went back to the days of their courtship

in the old Bowery Museum, where they sat side by side on the same platform. Susan was thinking of the notes which the dashing young Armless Wonder used to write to her, with his pen held firmly between his toes, and John recalled the day when his peerless tattooed love first burst upon his enraptured vision, to the rage and envy of the Circassian Beauty, Fat Woman, and all the other female marvels of that era. He remembered, also, their wedding, celebrated with great pomp and splendor in the "theatorium" of the establishment, and the gaping crowds that viewed them during their honeymoon—a triumphal progress from one museum to another throughout the country.

Three years of happy married life, and but one great sorrow. Their only child, the longed-for darling, for whom their hearts had sorely yearned, was a bitter disappointment. They had hoped that the little stranger would come into the world either tattooed or armless, or with an elastic skin, or at



least fitted in some way to cope with the world. But, alas! Nature had been unkind to him, and the son and heir of the Phreak family was a sturdy, well-formed infant, for all the world like any other mortal. During



their married life, Benjamin, the Learned Pig, had been their constant companion. He had been presented to them, on the occasion of their wedding, by the proprietor of the museum, and by his sagacity and cunning had proved himself of inestimable value to them in many an extremity. It was the first time that John Phreak had ever referred to him as a possible edible, instead of as a trusted friend.

He must have repented of it now, for he spoke kindly to Benjamin, and called him out from under the sofa to play a game of euchre with him. Now the intelligent quadruped well knew the straits to which the family were put, but never before had the alternative been presented to him of being served, himself, as the *pièce de résistance* of the Christmas dinner, or of enjoying the repast as one of the family, as he always had before.

“Poor little fellow!” said Susan, sadly glancing at

the cradle in which the child was sleeping; "if it had pleased heaven to make him nothing more than a spotted boy, I would not murmur; but it is awful, John, to think of that innocent babe coming into the world so terribly handicapped. Why, even if we were to get an engagement, who would take care of our little one? Ben gets so absorbed in his game of solitaire that I am almost afraid to leave the child alone with him. By the way," she added, as she rose to spread the supper table, "I think that we had better send all those old duds of Mama's to be sold somewhere. They're only in the way here; and, any how, the old Circassian business is dead to the world now."

Her mama had been a beauty in her time — a Circassian Beauty — and the "duds" referred to by her daughter consisted of a gaudy costume of cotton velvet, and a wig of long, straight, bleached hair, of the kind often noticed on the steppes of Circassia and the platforms of the Bowery.

The Learned Pig heard her, and an idea suddenly seized him. The effects of the retired Beauty were piled in a heap in one corner of the room. Benjamin leaped from his chair, pried open the band-box with his snout, and in another moment appeared before his astonished master and mistress, crowned with the bleached wig.

Then he seated himself on his haunches beside the cradle, and began to rock it with his right forefoot, while he looked appealingly at John and Susan Phreak.

"I'm on, Benjamin!" cried John, joyfully. "That's a good fake, if ever there was one." And,

with hope in his heart, he started for the Dime Museum. The contract was signed that very night, and on Christmas Day the huge red-and-blue posters announced the engagement, at an enormous salary, of "The Tattooed Queen and Prince Royal of Circassia, attended by the Marvelous Trained Circassian Porcine Nurse."

And as the faithful Benjamin ate his Christmas dinner, he gave devout thanks that his place was on a chair, instead of on a table, garnished with parsley and with a lemon in his mouth.



AT THE CHROMO-LITERARY RECEPTION.



RS. SYMPLE (*patronizingly*). — Why, Kate! how in the world do *you* happen to be here among all these bright, clever people? Thought you never strayed beyond the limits of the Four Hundred.

MRS. MODE (*smiling*). — Why, Arabella, don't you know that since Mr. McAllister's book came out, no one will confess to membership in the Four Hundred? We must seek other pastures till the excitement dies away. That's one reason why I came here to-night. Another reason is my desire to meet a few bright, clever people — like yourself. Now do be obliging and tell me who all the rest of you are.

MRS. SYMPLE. — Oh, I hardly know where to begin! The rooms are filled with celebrities of every description. Whom do you see that you wish to know about?

MRS. MODE. — Who is that tall woman in the queer, limp gown?



MRS. SYMPLE.—That 's the celebrated Mrs. Hopeful Squills, who goes in for Buddha and wears common-sense garments. She 's all the rage this Winter, and I see she has quite thrown poor Mrs. Rank into the shade.

MRS. MODE.—And what are the mental qualifications of poor Mrs. Rank?

MRS. SYMPLE.—Why, have you never heard of

Mrs. Rank? (*Pityingly.*) Oh! excuse me, I forgot; this is your first introduction to cultivated circles. Mrs. Rank speaks Norwegian and knows Ibsen. She will probably read one or two scenes from the "Doll's House" before the evening is over.

MRS. MODE (*in alarm*).—Good gracious!

MRS. SYMPLE.—Oh, there 's that wonderful Mr. Patterji! He 's a real Brahmin, and it 's perfectly delightful to hear him talk. He 's *so* learned! and can tell you everything about India and Buddha and all that sort of thing. He 's perfectly elegant, and they say he 's going to be converted to Christianity.

MRS. MODE.—If he 's the man who sold me a smuggled camel's hair shawl last Winter — and he looks very much like him, too — the sooner he 's converted to Christianity, the better it will be for the Christians.

MRS. SYMPLE.—Mercy, Kate! Mr. Patterji does n't go around selling shawls. He would scorn to do such a thing. He gives lectures on theosophy, and gets a hundred dollars apiece for them, too.

MRS. MODE.—Well, the result is the same; but who is that man with the big nose and sharp Jewish face?

MRS. SYMPLE.—That 's Count Stepoff, the Russian nobleman who was such a favorite in Boston, last Winter. He 's a real Count and just as fascinating as he can be. He was received in the most exclusive artistic and literary circles in Boston, and everybody went wild over him.

MRS. MODE (*perplexed*).—But there are no Jews in the Russian nobility. Surely, you must be mistaken.

MRS. SYMPLE.—Not at all. I was introduced to

him last week, and everybody says he is all right. Why, he 's talking to a great friend of his, Mr. Beeswax Appleworth Crib, the Boston litterateur who translates Tolstoï, and knows everything about Russia. Do you suppose he would have anything to do with a bogus Count?

MRS. MODE.—I 'm sure I can't say; but tell me who is that rather pretty woman, with the gold eye-glasses?

MRS. SYMPLE.—That 's Mrs. Ketchum, who has a wonderful system of curing all diseases by locking you up in a dark room, and telling you what to think about. She 's perfectly wonderful, and never eats any meat. A most interesting woman; I 'm sure you 'd like her.

* * * * *

MRS. CHASER (*the hostess, to REV. GIDEON MEALY, of the Established Church*).—So good of you to come, Mr. Mealy! To whom shall I introduce you? I 'm sure there are ever so many people here whom you really *ought* to know. There 's Dr. Higgins, who used to be a Presbyterian minister, and has lately embraced theosophy; and there 's Miss Portia, who has played on the real stage, and is trying to form a Church and Stage Guild in this country; and there 's Father Rooney—plain Mr. Rooney he calls himself, now—who is a converted priest and who, they say, is going to get married, and there 's—

THE REV. MR. MEALY.—Pardon me, but I wish to speak to an old friend of mine over there—(*makes a*

precipitate escape through the back parlor to the hall, and thence to the street, where he finishes his sentence) in Waverley Place.

* * * * *

MISS PAULINE PROLL MCPRAY (*poetess*).— My dear Mr. Fantail, I can not tell you how deeply you touched me by your exquisite recital of Browning last Monday. You really *ought* to go on the stage. With your precious gifts of voice and figure, you would win a wonderful name for yourself.



MR. FANTAIL (*Browning reader, water-color artist, poet and member in full standing of the Mutual Admiration Society, to which MISS MCPRAY belongs*).— Positively, you flatter me, Miss McPray. But how soon are we to have another volume of those divine, tender sonnets, which seem actually to throb with the essence of sweetness?

MISS MCPRAY. — Really, Mr. Fantail, that is too, too much to say of my poor little verses!

* * * * *

MRS. CHASER (*leading up* COUNT STEPOFF and MR. CRIB).— Mrs. Mode, permit me to introduce to you Count Stepoff, the Russian nobleman, who gives

such delightful teas at his rooms, and is well acquainted with all the best people in Boston. And this is Mr. Beeswax Appleworth Crib, who translates Tolstoï, and has written such charming articles on modern Russian society.



(The COUNT and MR. CRIB bow very low, and MRS. MODE surveys them with a well-bred smile of amusement.)

MR. CRIB.—I hope you have found this little reunion agreeable, Mrs. Mode.

MRS. MODE (*sweetly*). — Very amusing, indeed, Mr. Crib.

MR. CRIB (*who knows that MRS. MODE is a great swell, and respects her accordingly*). — I am glad to hear you say that. My friend, Count Stepoff, says that it reminds him very much of St. Petersburg.

MRS. MODE (*placidly surveying the COUNT through her lorgnette*). — Indeed?

MR. CRIB. — Speak a little Russian, Count. I wish Mrs. Mode to hear what a musical language it is.

COUNT STEPOFF (*who has made his way into society with a Hebrew nose, a brass samovar, and two pounds of tea*). — Wobblety — gobblety, mugglety — pugglety — pretzel — turn verein.

MR. CRIB (*gravely*). — I assure you, Mrs. Mode, his accent is perfect. I have translated a number of Tolstoï's books.

MRS. MODE. — Then the accent must have changed a good deal since I was in St. Petersburg, five years ago — but where is the Count?

MR. CRIB. — There he goes, and there they all go. Supper's announced. (*Joins the stampede, while MRS. MODE calls for her carriage.*)



THE MASTER THIEF.



ONCE UPON A TIME there was a retired thief who desired that his son should follow the profession in which he himself had amassed a fortune, so he apprenticed him to an old friend who had a seat on the Petroleum Board, and was as slippery as the commodity in which he dealt.

And the youth remained there seven years; and at the end of that time he returned to his father's house, with a note from the head of the firm stating that he was entirely too smart for their business. The son desired his father to set him up in business for himself; but the retired thief said that before he did that the young man must show his proficiency as a robber.

“Now,” he said, “if you can steal from me I shall believe you are competent to go into business on your own account.”

The following Sunday the youth went down to the large Coney Island Hotel which he knew his father frequented, disguised himself as a waiter, and secured a position by giving the head-waiter five dollars and a promise of half of all he could make by “knocking down” on the house. When the old man arrived, his



son had a table ready for him, and he served him with choice dishes, and filled his glass with *Chateau Margaux* of rare Ohio vintage. And when the retired thief saw that his check amounted to \$24.75 he said that it was outrageous robbery; but he paid the check, and his son

showed it to him that night when he returned home, and laughed, at the same time, in merry glee.

So, the old man acknowledged the corn — charged for at the rate of fifty cents an ear — but said that before he could furnish capital for his son's business the young man must give him further proof of his ability.

“I can give you a sure pointer on the oil market—,” began the audacious youth; but the father cut him short with some remarks on filial ingratitude which caused him to slink off in shame and confusion.

The next day the young man told his father that he ought to buy some pictures to adorn the walls of his house, and accordingly the old thief went forth to procure some. He entered an art gallery, and it was his son, skillfully disguised, who waited on him and led him, unresisting, to a secret chamber back of the store. Then he caused the lights to be turned up so that they shone full on a huge painting in a gilt frame. Then he assured the retired thief that the picture was “genoowine hand-made,” because it had one whole side of the room to itself. And the old man asked if the picture possessed any breadth of tone, and the undaunted youth said:

“Yes, it has breadth of tone till you can't rest.”

“But I don't see any atmospheric qualities,” continued the retired thief.

Accordingly the salesman lit two more gas jets, and exclaimed triumphantly:

“There! don't you see them now?”

And the father acknowledged that he did, although



the salesman offered to turn on the electric lights if he required them.

And, finally, the old man bought the picture for thirteen thousand four hundred and seventy-five dollars, and was grateful to the young man for letting him have it at that price. But his gratitude was not a marker on that of the proprietors of the gallery, who straightway paid a year's rent, and declared that the rest of the day should be given over to rejoicing.

And the next day the youth explained to his father the ingenious mechanical processes whereby the picture — together with three hundred exactly like it — was made; and he showed him the check he had received as his commission on the sale, and then claimed his reward.

But the old man gnashed his teeth in the bitterness of his woe, and declared that, after all, the art of picture-selling was merely a primitive form of robbery, and that his son must prove his ability on a higher professional plane.

And the youth departed, vowing vengeance against his sire; and he went straightway before the chief ruler of the city and laid information against the retired thief, so that the chief ruler summoned one of his subordinates and commanded him to "run him in." And the old man, having been lodged in jail, sent for the warden and asked how much it would cost him to procure a bondsman. And the warden said he thought he could fix it for him, but if he wished to go out it would be necessary for a deputy sheriff to accompany him. So, the deputy led the master thief to a gentleman who made a specialty of putting his name on bail bonds for people whose standing in society was not good.

This gentleman signed the bond on terms which caused the retired thief to take off his hat and enquire respectfully where he received his training, and what particular line he was following just then; "because," he added, "I'll want a partner when I get out of this, and you would suit me right down to the ground."

"That 's all right," said the bondsman, as he removed his false beard, "but you must content yourself with a silent interest."

Then the retired thief recognized the features of his own son, and he cheerfully made over to him a large share of what property he had left.

And the young man took the money and opened a dentist's office in one of the uptown streets, and lived happily ever after, honored and envied by brigands of every degree. In the course of time he married the daughter of the janitor of a fashionable apartment house, and she proved an invaluable helpmeet.



sovereign ordered for me by telegraph. "It is a delicate mission," he said to me on parting, "and only to you would I entrust this secret." I find I am to be lionized. What a bore! I would like to go into some business that does not require me to be irresistible to the ladies.

JANUARY 6TH.—Dropped in to see the Czar at the Touchemoff Palace—a handsome house, fitted with all the modern improvements, perfect drainage, bomb-proof, and no malaria—and was warmly welcomed by the sovereign. His Majesty observed that it was a cold day, and that an early frost had been predicted by the weather prophet; a remark which made it apparent to an old and grizzled diplomat like myself that he desired to gain time. He said the Empress would see me later, and dismissed me with a courteous '*Allez vous en!*' (Git!) The Empress, received me in the afternoon, and tried not to show that she disliked me. I felt tempted—but, no, my fascinations have made me trouble enough already. I will be merciful this time.

JANUARY 7TH.—Count Longbow invited me to a supper to-night to meet M'lle Nathalie, the *première* of the opera. A very pleasant evening. Just as the party broke up, the Count killed himself just because M'lle Nathalie said I was the only real gentleman in the room, and she would be pleased to have me call and take her out to supper some evening. This has been rather an off day for me.



JANUARY 8TH. — Ball to-night at the American legation. Professor West, the American minister, like most of his compatriots, is rich and wears gray chin whiskers and no moustache. While I was standing between Prince Borrowdollar and the old Countess of Whiskyskin I beheld a woman in a tailor-made suit of pansy-colored brocade, open at the front and garnished down the front breadth with passementerie and ruchings. As I looked at her, I involuntarily hummed the old couplet beginning: "She was the belle of the ball." And that, too, although the Einsteins, the Lippmanns —

in short, the very cream of the court circle of Petersburg — were present.

I was presented to her. She lifted a face of exquisite, ravishing beauty, and regarded me steadily for a moment. Then her lovely eyes fell, and I saw her dash away a tear from her damask cheek.

“You remind me,” I said nonchalantly, “of a superb Grecian statue I once saw in Rome, except that you have *beaux yeux*, and those of the statue were cold and expressionless.”

I watched the effect of my words. She seemed strangely affected by my glance. Her lips moved as if she were about to speak, and I bent my head to catch her words. With a pretty *moue* she uttered the simple phrase, “Come off!”

JANUARY 11TH.—I have learned the name and story of this adorable woman. She is Mrs. Johnson, of Troy. Years ago, when she was a light-hearted, innocent girl, she married Mr. Johnson, then in his seventieth year, with the express understanding that he should not live longer than three months. As he was wealthy, she consented to make this heroic sacrifice. But the miscreant blighted her young life by remaining on this planet until he was eighty-two. While she was awaiting his obsequies, she sought to divert her mind by plunging into the mad whirl of fashionable life, and for more than ten years she reigned a queen in the most exclusive and brilliant circles of her native city.

JANUARY 12TH.—I am not naturally a vain man, but I know my power with women. It is not my fault if the Grand Duchesses insist upon writing me notes, and asking me to meet them on the Avenuesky after the matinée. Such triumphs as these I care but little for; but when Mrs. Johnson told me, as we were dining with the Czar the other night, that I looked perfectly elegant in my uniform, it sent a thrill through my diplomatic heart, and brought the blood to my pale cheeks.



JANUARY 13TH.—Several ladies called to-day, but I sent word that I was out, and remained by my fireside, dreaming of my adorable Mrs. Johnson.

JANUARY 14TH.—There was a review of the entire Russian army in my honor to-day. I did not care to go, and was about to send word to the Czar at the last moment that I was indisposed, when I received a note from Mrs. Johnson, saying that she would be at a window in the Zuboff House, to see me ride past.



JANUARY 25TH.—She is going back to America; but she has promised to be mine. She will write me from Troy, she says. How can I live until that letter arrives?

JANUARY 30TH.—She has gone. I saw her off at the station, and with my usual tact bought for her all the latest magazines and a package of choice caramels, and put them in her lap just before the train started.

APRIL 1ST.—This morning a letter was placed before me on a silver salver. It was from Mrs. Johnson. I opened it with trembling hands, and read:



“Do not curse me, I implore; but when you receive this I shall be the bride of another. My gentleman friend from Troy (of whom you have heard me speak and whose photograph I enclose) was on the dock to meet me when I returned. He had left his laundry, and come all the way down the river to meet me. His devotion touched me. He has not your elegant ways, and wears plainer clothes; but he has a steady business, which counts for something. I have mailed this to reach you on the first of April.

Farewell for ever,

MRS. JOHNSON.”

When I had finished reading this letter I wept.

