



















A

SINGLE GENTLEMAN:

BY

TIMOTHY THISTLE.

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DESIGNS BY THE AUTHOR.

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY I. HYDE.

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OLIVER ELLSWORTH.

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## TO THE READER.

**I**N glancing over the “prefatory notices” of every work, the reader should be permitted to form an idea of the author’s design, in the presentation of his subject.

Many writers, I find, have thought proper to include in their “brief outlines,” lengthy “Editorial remarks,” while others embrace the opportunity in which to offer an apology for what has been omitted or committed.

A few, I regret, unconsciously lead the mind into an abyss of darkness, from which there is no escape after once passing beneath the arches of a subterranean edifice possessed of countless apartments, traversed only through windings so intricate and tortuous in their construction, it is astonishing that the architect — after the completion of his labor — ever afterwards held communication with the “outside world.”

In each narrative herein presented, I have endeavored to reach the close in the use of as few words as possible ; while the delineation of characters assumed,

will, I trust, show to those whose duty and privilege it is to *add* to the happiness and comfort of all with whom they are associated, how detestable as well as ridiculous their conduct often appears, — either from want of education, experience or *disposition* — in neglecting to fulfill the humble calling to which they have been assigned.

It has not been my design to offer any offence : those who may feel condemned, become their own judges ; while others, — who have suffered — will, like myself, I trust, “majestically” rise above their tormentors, and “coincide most fully” with one who has experienced untold misery searching after “temporal blessings,” under the disguise of that promised place “possessing all the comforts of a home.”

This work having received no “Editorial” assistance, such remarks must necessarily be dispensed with : the author would therefore inform the public, he has no one connected with him through whom an apology, if necessary, could be offered.

The only objection to the work, thus far advanced by several of my friends, is that of brevity. Among these, I most highly esteem the opinion of Solomon Doolittle, Esq., a gentleman to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for constant and unalloyed friendship so long existing between us, and from whom I have received comfort and consolation in the most trying moments of my life.

To his protection and guardian care, I would recommend all distressed and weary “pilgrims,” during *their* “journey through the wilderness.”

There are others in every community who, no doubt, fully coincide in the views entertained by Mr. Doolittle, while not a few will be quite as positive I have written altogether too much.

Should this difference of opinion exist, a “discriminating public” will at once realize my position.

Those who are averse to a plain though faithful narrative, — “feelingly expressed” — should not peruse these pages. To such, in all candor I would say, the misfortunes and sufferings I have endured, are more especially adapted to the requirements of a class who will greet my humble effort — if wanting in consolation — as one, abounding in sympathy.

THE AUTHOR.

## THE ADVERTISEMENT.

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A SINGLE GENTLEMAN, engaged in a highly respectable business, desires three or four rooms, situated on one floor, unfurnished, and located at the South End. Hight of apartments or number of flights to reach the same unimportant, *provided* it does not extend *beyond* the attic stairway. The proprietor, and more especially the proprietress, are not expected to be too FLIGHTY in respect to terms, but adhere at least one week to the conditions made known at the first. One hour each Monday morning will be devoted to making new contracts, if desired. The occupant chooses to select his own society on all occasions; answer any and all interrogatories in a manner befitting the occasion, or agreeable to the interest the inquirer should possess in regard to the matter. The few effects that may be placed in the various apartments will be considered the property of the *owner*, and not for the benefit of uncles and aunts visiting the family. And, as the furniture is not of the ordinary auction character, he will be happy to furnish a suitable duster, rather than have birch brooms too frequently drawn across the face of the paintings. Small children positively prohibited entering the apartments, and all cats found in his sanctum will be unceremoniously disposed of from an open window.

Address —, *lock box*, Boston Post Office.

P. S. — It is desirable “Bridget” should not mistake the Piano for a wood box, and that coals should be kept in the occupant’s apartments. Breakfast desired, if worth the price, and the price immaterial, if worthy of the meal.





## A SINGLE GENTLEMAN.

### I.

I ENTERTAINED no doubts from the first, of receiving numerous and pressing invitations to occupy rooms, in response to the foregoing advertisement.

A "single gentleman," in this age, is regarded somewhat as a curiosity by many individuals, who, no doubt, hail with delight the opportunity to behold something new, or to mark the inhuman creature who positively refused the admittance of small children into his *sanctum sanctorum*.

On responding to the many "Please calls" received by me, I became aware that I had mortally offended a great many married women, especially the younger portion of the fair sex, the latter of whom, with but one exception, I had the misfortune only to displease.

*She* partially coincided in the sentiment so feelingly entertained — if not so elegantly expressed. The others, however, all seemed to doubt my being in earnest when I penned the advertisement, and in fact, questioned me in regard to it.

Aside from these objections, however, I received encouragement from several “proprietors” on whom I called, who seemed to regard my views as correct, in the main.

Inspired by this success, in an interview with a “proprietress” I ventured to add another topic to my original subject, and, hoping to impart a moral lesson, expatiated at some length, upon the rearing of youth within the city limits.

To my utter astonishment, I was soon met with the searching rebuke, couched in the somewhat direct interrogatory, “Were you not once young yourself?” I could not say much as to the facts in this case, but from certain painful recollections I think I must have been.

In my perambulations since Monday, I have been exceedingly mortified at times; seeking for quietude and comfort, I have encountered,

in their stead, scarcely any thing but painful difficulties. i

In this narrative I shall forbear mentioning names or localities, from a strict sense of honor; nevertheless, I earnestly warn all mankind, especially "single gentlemen" with less experience than myself, against communicating any thing verbal, derogatory to the feline race, in the presence of maiden ladies. I consider it my duty to caution them against another error, which is as bad, if not worse. If, like myself, any of them should have the hardihood to announce their aversion towards the genus *Felis*, in a *printed* paragraph, let them never afterwards respond in person to an elderly unmarried lady's "please call."

I honor this secluded class of individuals. They have displayed good sense in attending to their own affairs, and not meddling with other people's business; they have ample time for reflection, meditation and reading; thus keeping matters in excellent trim, they are enabled to conduct their own transactions on a small capital. They are, however, extremely sensitive on certain points; yet, in respect to the annoyance caused by small

children, not a single objection, on their part, was offered to the views so feelingly set forth in my advertisement; on the contrary, they concurred most fully.

It is perfectly astonishing to note the extensive circulation given to my wishes, through the medium of a single advertisement. A newspaper certainly reaches all classes, judging from the numerous replies forwarded to me pertaining to a matter of so humble, though vital a nature.

The following, being but a few specimens of letters addressed to me, will doubtless satisfy the reader that my assertion is well founded:—

“MISTER LOK BOX number —.

Ser if yu wish rums i hav um kal & se kats i abhor & childen two i keep no help of coarse no boddy wil put wud into yur piannar yu kan chews yur own cumperney & du putty mutch az yu pleze pleze kal affectionatley \_\_\_\_\_”

“DEAR LOCK BOX, No. — Boston Post Office,

I feel proved that the city of Boston possesses one fearless spirit, that dares to exem-  
plyfy his independence in the manner you

have done. The advertisement, upon which my eyes fall, is a moddle of beauty and of the structure of our English language. Few words contain such sentiments and few sentiments so much meaning. I would that we had such men connected with our city government (I once held office), for you evidently know what is right. Suckerlate the advertisement all you can, and send me fifty copies for gratuatus distribution. I only wish I had room in my house for you. My wife says, she'd like the piano in our parlour.

Yours truly, ——."

LOCK BOX number —, Boston Post Office.

MY DEAR SIR: — As usual, the Sunday —— having been left at my residence (subscribed for by my parishioners), I opened it in order to refresh my mind in the perusal of the excellent sermon therein contained; accidentally, in running over the several columns, seeking the list of marriages and deaths, I discovered your advertisement, and at once called the attention of my wife, and several of her family connections (who have long made my dwelling their abiding place), to the truth so beautifully illustrated.

Like myself, you have a great duty to perform. I am annoyed by a drowsy, listless congregation, bad music, and scanty remuneration for my ever devoted labors: yet, as it has often been said to me, I would now reiterate the words, and bid you "Go on;" "Press forward;" "Be comforted;" "Full of hope."

Were it not for a large family of eleven children, who, with so many dear family friends, occupy a small house, and necessarily fill every room, I should offer you hospitalities beneath my own roof.

My children are not what would be termed noisy, the more advanced being playful. Youth and life will manifest itself in various forms. The younger portion are occasionally irritable; the kind assistance, however, of friends present, tends to quiet their minds, and restore peace to their sorrowful hearts.

Would I could offer you an asylum; one, who so keenly feels another's woes, must possess large and generous impulses, and would surely become attached to every member of my devoted household.

Affectionately yours,

S— A—, D.D.,

Pastor of the Lethargic Chapel.

Having moved twice during the past week, I propose giving in my next, an account of my perplexities and many sorrows. I have invariably accustomed myself when "moving," to take with me a single cot-bed, and to do this, at a late hour in the afternoon, waiting the ordinary course of events, preparatory to a "general breaking-up." A single night thus passed, will reveal in part, what must be expected in the future. Steam and horse cars, crying inmates, the rumbling of ice-carts, stages and market-wagons, the sound of various bells, and their close proximity to one's quarters, are objects of deep solicitude to the new "boarder". The quantity of gas one is permitted to burn, the hour at which a "single gentleman" is expected to enter his domicile, and how long he is allowed to sit up, are all interesting topics for meditation. The state of the furnace, and the condition of the range, can be fairly tested in these brief but anxious moments.

I have found it convenient to ascertain, if possible, who are the occupants of "rooms overhead," particularly if carpets are dispensed with (an economical idea where one

can afford it), and how many boarders may be accommodated at a time, in a room "six by nine." Early rising I approve of; I always did; no doubt it is conducive to general prosperity; if this movement however takes place at a great altitude, I recommend that boots be left at the foot of the first flight, otherwise occupants should have rooms where little time will be lost in reaching the front door.

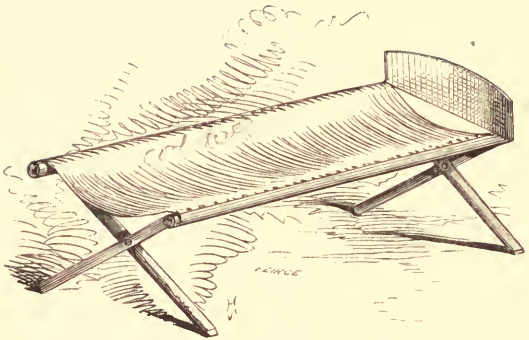
Of late, I have been invited to pass my first evening "with the family;" and this mark of attention is the more striking, since the respect has been proffered only within the past few days. In two instances, I have accepted the polite invitation, partially to demonstrate to the ladies that I am not so exclusive as my advertisement would indicate. I regretted on both occasions, finding a larger number present than was anticipated; suggestive in fact, of a surprise party, without any of the advantages attached; and in both instances I found I was the recipient of personal attention, or marked inattention. At our last "family gathering," I ventured to make a few inquiries touching the number of persons



belonging to the same, and on being assured that all present sprang from one stock, I could not divest my mind of the probability that it must have extended as far back as Adam. I am not disposed to question this point too closely, as it is difficult, sometimes, to trace one's genealogy with the greatest accuracy. I am indebted to many persons, for various marks of attention during the week past; but I regret the necessity which impelled me to leave my last boarding-house in such an unceremonious manner. However, the bursting of a water-pipe, directly over my head, was good and sufficient reason for my sudden exit at a very early hour.

I do not know that I ever before felt the full *flow* and meaning of these words, "for one night only." Grasping my bed, I hastened to the door, and wending my way to my office, remained sitting until daylight.

As temporal blessings are so fleeting, I prefer to supply my own *tears* on such occasions.



I have invariably accustomed myself when "moving" to take with me a single cot-bed. — PAGE 17.



## II.

CONTINUING to receive letters of invitation to call at the most respectable houses, "where one will find all the comforts of a home," I have not yet suspended experimental labor, being dissatisfied with the few places so far visited.

True, I have experienced a good deal of what is called "Feast of Reason," without the reasonable feast. To breakfast daily on this commodity, is to experience a remarkably cheap diet. The ordinary duties I have to perform, require more stimulating food than that coming within the true meaning of the words, "*Vanity Fare.*" A large display of table linen, cut-glass goblets and empty dishes, may be fashionable, but these will never accomplish the great design which nature evidently intended in my particular case.

At the especial invitation of a female friend in whom I have ever placed great confidence,

and who knew the many trials to which I had been subjected, I accepted a proposal to occupy rooms in a "First-class Boarding House."

Deviating in this instance from my invariable custom of transferring my *only* article of furniture,—for a night's trial,—I at once moved my entire effects where, I was pleased to learn, every attention should be paid my wants, by simply touching the bell cord.

It had been arranged that I could enjoy the "English style" of living, if I so desired, or, if I preferred it, could breakfast with the "family."

My parlor, sleeping apartment and library, now being in comfortable condition, I felt happy in the thought of a full realization of my expectations.

The first evening, by invitation, I passed with the "family." Naturally exclusive, I considered this a mark of attention, under existing circumstances, and in view of the advertisement so lately issued, I was glad to have an opportunity of thus removing any false impressions that might have been received.

As on former occasions, I found the "fam-

ily" quite large, and comprising in this instance, a mixed assembly.

We can not always trace our own genealogy: therefore the virtue of Charity inspired my footsteps, and led me to move about more freely than my wonted modesty usually allowed.

Youth and beauty did not abound: I thought perhaps, indisposition prompted the seclusion of those possessing these qualities, and freely overlooked any want of cordiality on their part evinced by their non appearance.

I left the door of my apartment open during my absence, in hopes of discovering tracks of the feline race, if any were lurking about. I returned to my rooms at a late hour, occupying a few moments before retiring, in the perusal of the story of the "Prodigal Son."

The first night was passed without disturbance, except that of some one constantly moving about "in the room overhead." This I soon learned was an afflicting case of somnambulism, often resulting in the secretion of various articles; on one occasion this individual would have lost his own identity,

except for the kind offers of one largely interested; otherwise he would have found himself called by some other appellation than his own.

I awoke, however, after my first night's trial, feeling refreshed, and exceedingly grateful for the deliverance seemingly placed within my grasp. The servant had unintentionally forgotten to kindle my fire, but I freely forgave this oversight of cordiality on the part of the "family."

Throwing a cloak over my shoulders, I read a brief passage containing the sufferings of Solomon, and could not but sympathize most deeply in all his afflictions. I dwelt on the frequent bereavements he must have met with, owing to the peculiar circumstances of his case, the number of deaths constantly taking place in his family, and conjectured as to whether he ever left off mourning.

Having arranged to breakfast with the "family," at the servant's beckon I majestically approached the room. Beside several young ladies, to whose company I could not reasonably object, I discovered to my horror, children of all ages. A chair was shown me,

which placed me in close proximity to a snarling, shrinking, homely creature, five or six years of age, who immediately grasped my goblet, and drawing it to the front, amused herself, first, by dipping her fingers, and snapping the contents on either side, then thrusting her entire hand into the same.

Feeling somewhat subdued by this unlooked for annoyance, I inquired in tones — most feelingly expressed, — “Unto whom do all these things belong?” Whereupon, a general uprising took place, and I noticed “all these things” followed after.

A gentleman sitting opposite and perceiving the unfortunate position I sustained, answered my interrogatory in a doubtful manner; whereupon, thinking I could take my choice, I did so.

Breakfast ended, I considered it prudent to fortify my situation, and at once commenced inquiring into the matter. I soon learned that my amiable land-lady had connected the two adjoining dwellings by a door-way, leading from the second floor, and that while the younger portion of the married ladies occupied one building, most of the single gentle-

men had exclusive control of the opposite side, and the sober and more reliable portion of the inmates, — of whom I was considered a member—occupied the center edifice.

This division allowed me some consolation, as I should not be molested by constant outbursts of fitful temper, often displayed by those, who, when they are older, will no doubt know better; but I can not wait for “all these things” to be developed.

My land-lady, quite early in the day, reminded me, rather sharply, I thought, of the remark I had made at the breakfast table, and intimated that it would be well to say something conciliatory on the following morning, to pacify the unfriendly feeling rapidly increasing against me: I concurred most fully with her advice.

The evening of this eventful day was to be celebrated by an instrumental, as well as vocal concert, given by several philanthropic individuals residing on the premises, whose duty it was ever to be active about something, and who naturally supposed the world would stand still, without their aid. The inmates were to assemble in the parlor, and



there be regaled with the sweet music, which no doubt would be furnished on the occasion.

Therefore, leaving my door open as a necessary precaution, at a proper hour I descended to the parlor, where I was received with due consideration, and conducted to a conspicuous seat. I noticed on a casual survey, that the furniture was remarkably varied in form and color; recalling to mind the fashion, adopted by some, of driving different colored horses, and presuming the land-lady knew best, had adopted the same fashion, not as regards horses, but in her furniture. I rather admired the style. In fact, I took the liberty to comment rather freely on the good taste displayed, and wondered how such a selection could readily be obtained; I commenced addressing my conversation to the land-lady herself, whom I was about congratulating, when turning suddenly, she left the room as if something had been forgotten, thus obliging me to defer my comments to a more convenient time. I noticed also that those around me constantly used their handkerchiefs, and for some reason, several did nothing else during my entire stay. I remembered it was

winter, and that influenza was quite prevalent, but could not comprehend how so many at the same time, — all of whom resided in one house, could have been so seriously afflicted.

I was about mentioning this coincidence to my amiable land-lady, who had returned, with no visible object in her hand, but who perceiving me approaching — and thus reminded, no doubt, by my presence, of what she had forgotten on the former occasion, — immediately turned, and went after it.

A few moments only elapsed, before the instrumental portion of the concert were in position. Thereupon, one, older than the rest, announced, that “sacred music would now be performed;” adding, “the rules of the house is well known to most on us, and for the information of all new comers I would say, — no profane music will ever be allowed in the building; I think,” said he, “profanity one of the worst of evils.”

The most attractive person bearing a part of the instrumental display, was a lean, lank, gaunt-appearing man, upon whose hips hung a snare-drum, suspended from a broad, dirty

leathern strap, crossing his breast. Next followed a short, fat man, who could scarcely reach the thumb-screws of a huge bass-viol, which he firmly clasped around the center as he entered the room, completely shutting out any merit to importance on his part. Surrounding these dignitaries, stood others who could not catch the sound of their instruments, — which were undergoing a process of tuning, on account of the zealous efforts of those who were making a greater noise.

The long-roll from the snare-drum was perfectly overpowering ; still, I supposed it must be right, as my amiable land-lady evidently understood all about it.

I confess I was rapidly becoming polite, particularly when I noticed a monstrous bass-drum enter the room, completely eclipsing all but its own legs.

Our ears having suffered for the past ten minutes by these preparatory measures, quiet at length reigned ; and for a few moments, one could have heard a pin drop, had the pin been large enough.

Waiting in anticipation, — from the grand preparation that had been going on, of the

announcement of the "Dead-March," the "Judgment," or perhaps a Requiem, my anxieties were soon appeased, by being informed, that the choir, accompanied by the full band, would execute "Come ye disconsolate."

No immediate steps being taken for a fulfillment of this promise, and deeming the words adapted to my own necessities, I arose majestically from my chair,—and glancing over the afflicted throng, said,—in accents feelingly expressed, "I second the motion;" whereupon a general turning around of all present took place, and facing the sides of the room, they reminded me of the nature of the occasion, and the probable neglect of duty on my part, thereupon I immediately turned also.

As no exhortation took place, there was something in this entire movement, which I did not comprehend, and indeed, never yet have fully understood; a great deal of whispering then took place, succeeded by terrible coughing spells, and I thought several wept, from the appearance of their eyes. As the influenza was prevalent, particularly

in the house, I concluded that it naturally explained the last mentioned exhibition of emotion.

The whispering, I thought might have been in opposition to my motion, though all I uttered was spoken with the falling inflection, and in a most feeling manner.

The first verse of the consoling hymn concluded, I at once discovered the utility and great effect of the snare-drum ; and, in short, it was brought in play with full force between each succeeding verse. The duration of this part of the performance, appeared strangely prolonged, and of unnecessary power ; but, thinking the land-lady knew best, I listened until my nerves became so affected by it, that I have heard nothing in my ears ever since, but the "long-roll," beaten by that long man.

Turning to a stranger who sat at my right, I inquired, if she could tell me the names of the various instruments in the hands of the performers ; "The gentleman" she said, "standing next to the one playing the big bass-drum, is my husband ; he performs on the clarionet ; my son, standing next, plays the flageonet, and my uncle is the one hold-

ing the baronet under his arm ;" adding, " she couldn't see much difference, as they all made considerable noise." In this last remark I concurred most fully.

" Who plays the big fiddle, ma'am ?" I asked. Here a coughing spell intervened, and I waited long enough, to learn that what I had called a big fiddle, was more properly termed a sub-bass-viol, by the inmates ; the performer, however, " not having been called upon," his name could not be ascertained.

" Are you frequently entertained in this manner ?" I next inquired.

" This, sir, is the first week of the entertainment," she remarked, " and though it's a sort of an impromptu affair, it's proposed to meet three times a week."

Our amiable land-lady, who had returned, and must have been standing in the room some moments, unnoticed on my part, announced, " ' Swinging round the circle ', having been set to sacred music, will now be performed, as a solo." This was executed by the little man in gray pants, discovered sitting behind the " big bass-drum." Suiting his actions to the words, with his drum he com-



Suiting his actions to the words, with his drum he commenced revolving around the room. — PAGE 32.





menced revolving around the room, beating, as if the wind must be completely knocked out of both ; our performer acquitted himself worthy of the man. I did not think much of his accomplishment ; the music was boisterous, his manners were coarse, and his voice in shocking discord with the instrument ; neither did he receive much encouragement, except from his wife, a sister of our land-lady, who on this occasion was the only one to *encore*. He would not be urged to make a second effort, in my opinion : broken glass lay beneath our feet, which he had struck from the chandelier ; one drum-stick had been lost in the effort, while half a dozen ladies had been swept out of sight ; thus ended the scene of his grand exploit.

The band regaining their former position, we were informed by a relative of the compiler, (who, as I then learned was confined to his room by a severe attack of varioloid) that, "Angels are hovering round," with variations, would now be performed.

Turning to my informant, I asked if this disease (the varioloid) was prevalent ; he answered it had been, quite so ; several had

died, but that it was not raging in the center edifice.

Suddenly feeling as if I could not longer appreciate the entertainment, and moreover not possessing an ear for "variations," I majestically bowed myself out of the room.

Reaching my apartments, and stretching out my hand to seize the bell-cord, but finding nothing pendant, I substituted in its place, a black neck-tie, intending to summon, as I supposed was according to rule, a servant to my room. Perceiving my call unheeded, I commenced pulling, and continued thus, until discovered by an inmate, sitting beneath the object of my labors ; at once he informed me that a great deal of sickness existed in the family, rendering it necessary that the bells should be muffled ; conveying me to a dark passage-way, bounding one side of my sleeping apartment, to my utter disgust with all things human and inhuman, he showed me, wrapped in red flannel, five and twenty bells, each sufficiently large to answer the purpose of an ordinary restaurant.

Without a moment's loss of time, I called for the land-lady ; to her I could confide my

troubles, as she knew what was best. On responding to my summons, I took her gently by the hand and leading her to the passageway, I pointed my finger to the row of disguised afflictions, and asked, — in a feeling manner, — “Unto whom do all these things belong?” “These things, sir, belong to the house, sir; and allow me to say, sir, you are no gentleman: your conduct is disrespectful; your remarks made at my table this morning, cannot be overlooked; the same impertinent question then asked, you dare now ask me. You know I am engaged with company below; you know, perfectly well, that we have sick folks in this house, and all I have to say, sir, is, your actions *is* contemptible. Leave my house! Is all the folks in this building to be inconvenienced to please you? No, sir! Leave as soon as you please; and I want you to understand another thing, I don’t keep what you call *boarders*; folks living in this house belong to my family; I should like to know what sort of a bringing up you’ve had; I’ll let you know another thing too; I’ve kept house long afore I ever see you.”

I let go of my amiable land-lady’s hand

sometime "afore" this speech was ended: retaining it only so long as to show proper respect.

If any of my readers have been in close proximity to a bomb-shell, and watched the peculiar changes going on during an explosion, they can appreciate my idea of a sudden change of expectations, and realize the uncertainty of all temporal blessings.

Naturally, I am easily disturbed, owing to an error in early life. When I was born, there were two of us; each possessing peculiar temperaments. At the age of one year, from my excessive gentleness, and from the fear that I might be effeminate in my character, it was decided I should be nourished on syrup and gun-powder: this course of diet continued until I had reached the age of six, when our family physician, thinking my character in the respect of non-effeminacy, sufficiently established, ordered a change; accordingly the nurse gave me gun-powder and syrup. I never perceived much difference in the taste, but remember hearing the landlady say, it was all right, and that she knew what was best. Therefore if at times, I find

the gun-powder within me concentrating, I cannot be responsible for the result.

“Afflictions seldom come singly;” I sought the consolation of my female friend through whose influence I had been induced to seek this place, “possessing all the comforts of a home.” She discouraged my remaining longer in the house, and refused having any thing to do in the matter; said, she had always been mixed up in boarding-house difficulties, and should keep out of this one.

I returned, disconsolately, to my room; re-read the story of the “Prodigal Son,” after which I commenced packing for another removal.



I returned disconsolate to my room ; re-read the story of the " Prodigal Son." — PAGE 37.



### III.

ON the morning of the following day, I hastened to leave the society of my land-lady, whom I now found disposed to make my situation as uncomfortable as possible, in every way.

She had positively forbidden the servants to carry coals or water to my room, and admonished the table-help to pay no attention to my wants, should I occupy my former seat.

Obtaining a supply of coals, and a few kindlings, from a neighboring sufferer, I continued to keep comfortable, until the labor of packing had been accomplished. Then, presenting a servant with more than sufficient to meet the amount of my indebtedness, I requested her to hand it to the land-lady, and return me the difference, as I was about leaving the house.

Meeting several of the inmates, as I made my way out, I majestically bowed, although their attention appeared suddenly called in an opposite direction. A few, however, recognized the honor conferred. At the door, I waited the appearance of the servant, who soon returned and informed me, she had done my bidding; but that her mistress, having an engagement at a neighboring grocer's, had been called away, leaving word that if I would await her return, she would hand me the difference. This "difference" has existed until the present time; and though small, merits an explanation.

It puzzles me, to learn how my late landlady left the house, and merged into the street, as I had complete command of both entrances, and though charitable in my disposition, I think she must have been mistaken in regard to her own absence.

As I was about shaking hands with the help, who had arranged themselves in a single row around the vestibule, I was informed of the custom of "remembering" the same. I feelingly expressed my sentiments, remarking, I could never forget them; and re-



quested each, in his, or her own vernacular, to convey my views to the land-lady, immediately on her return. The influenza had reached a portion of those whom I addressed, who, for want of handkerchiefs, freely used their aprons. I sympathized with this people, and stepping upon the threshold, I perceived a number of the foreign element about, to whom I addressed a few words in French, thanked them in Dutch, and bade them adieu in Greek; the latter language they appeared fully to comprehend.

My furniture again stored, I commenced anew reading over my invitations, when a note was placed in my hands; breaking the seal, I read as follows:—

“TIMOTHY THISTLE ESQ.,

MY DEAR SIR:—Having been informed of your departure from Mrs. ——, and feeling that there could now be no intrusion on my part, in thus addressing you, I hasten to announce the certainty of obtaining elegant accommodations, where all the comforts of a home may be enjoyed.

I regret the necessity that compelled your

vacating the apartments referred to, but could perceive no other alternative on your part.

I am advised of your gentlemanly deportment, which, displayed on other occasions, would not have been misinterpreted. Our family, though somewhat large, is exceedingly literary in its tendency; and a person of your culture and refinement, will, no doubt, early embrace an opportunity affording circumstances so congenial to your taste.

Awaiting your reply, or, if convenient, a personal interview, I remain, with profound respect and esteem,

Your obdt. servant,

MISS MATILDA ROUSINDASH,

Per C. C. C. — A.M.”

I read, and re-read the pressing invitation; she must have heard of my late misfortune, thought I, through a boarder, who, appreciating real worth, no doubt has proposed my name as a suitable candidate for admission.

I immediately resolved to respond to this courteous invitation, but preparatory to so doing, I fully concluded to learn something of the character of the inmates, composing the family.

Sadly disappointed in my late change, and now comfortably located at a respectable hotel, I deemed it prudent to move with a good degree of caution. The expense of the style of living I then enjoyed, I well knew exceeded my income; retrenchment was necessary, and must early be resorted to, and perhaps, thought I, Miss Rousindash's is the very place I have long been seeking; the letter certainly conveys encouragement, and an effort must be made.

Stationing myself the following morning on a neighboring door-step, at the hour inmates would naturally leave for their places of business, I watched, with eager eye, the faces of those leaving the house, in hopes of meeting a familiar one, who, upon recognizing me, would convey the information I then sought. Discovering one, whom I surmised to be a gentleman with whom I had been associated, as pall-bearer, at a late funeral, I approached and presenting my hand, shook his heartily, and saluted him with as hearty a "good morning;" I noticed he looked a little surprised, and allowed me to do pretty much all of the shaking; this being the fashion among many

persons too lazy to do their share of such conventionalities, and recalling the services lately performed, at which time he did not overtax his strength but appeared to make an excellent mourner, I was not much surprised.

Addressing the person, whose acquaintance had thus been made, I said, "I have not the honor of recalling your name; *my* name is Thistle, probably well known to yourself; however that may be, we were associated, you remember, as pall-bearers, at the recent funeral of our lamented and mutual friend, Mr. —," and here, I was at loss to recall the name, while both of us appeared wonderfully absorbed in thinking what the other would say next. Raising my eyes, I said; "Don't *you* remember the name?" Touching his under lip with the thumb and forefinger of his left hand, while looking steadily on the ground, as if absorbed in deep and solemn thought, befitting the occasion, he meditated a moment or two, then, suddenly glancing at me, he asked; "Do you remember the name of the street in which the deceased resided?" I was as much perplexed at this question, as at the loss of the

name ; and finding my memory sadly bewildered, I finally acknowledged the deficiency, so rapidly developing itself.

“I don’t remember,” said my informant, “having served in the capacity referred to ; are you not mistaken in the individual ?” “Why, yes ! certainly ! I must be,” I remarked ; “yet you have a remarkable resemblance to the one for whom I mistook you,” and here, making a circuit of the stranger, I added, “it’s a singular coincidence ; crape on the hat, blue coat, brass buttons ; however, tell me if you please, do you board at Miss Rousindash’s ?” “I am,” said he, “one of the family.”

“Just so ! just so ! a member of the family,” said I ; and here, producing her letter of invitation to me, I remarked, “that’s a good sensible letter ; I would be pleased to make the acquaintance of its author, Mr. C. C. C. if to be found, before calling on Miss Rousindash, personally.” Making a very low bow, then drawing himself to a reserved attitude, he added, “you have that honor ; — but have omitted, unintentionally no doubt, my title, A.M.”

“Just so! just so! but this is an unexpected pleasure I assure you, C. C. C. A.M.” I ejaculated.

“Christopher Columbus Crusoe, A.M. is my name,” said my new made acquaintance.

“And you are the Mr. Crusoe that wrote that epistle, and not the Mr. Crusoe that served with me as pall-bearer?” “I am the author of the letter,” said he, “and don’t recall the performance of the duties alleged.”

Locking arms with Mr. Crusoe, and turning my face half toward him, in order to obtain a different view of the features of so distinguished a gentleman, I commenced moving off with him at a slow and measured pace. “Probably a relative of Mr. Robinson Crusoe?” I asked; “have no definite knowledge to the contrary I presume. May be descended from the Columbuses also, from the fact you bear the full name of a distinguished sailor of that family.” “I suppose, I am,” said Mr. Crusoe, “a relative of both; particularly of that distinguished navigator.”

“Just so! just so! I should have said, ‘navigator;’ and you are pleased with Miss Rousindash’s style of keeping house; keeps

a genteel place; quiet, respectable boarding-house; no small children probably, in a house of this character; consequently, no particular use for much ringing of bells; and the boarders possess something of a literary turn."

"The inmates of the house we term occupants, or members of the family; we never speak of such, as boarders," said my informant, with not a little disgust in his manner.

"Just so! just so! I'm used to calling things by their right names," said I, "and you will pardon me if I do so. I would not be inquisitive, but please inform me, how many occupants that house contains; their names, and the vocation of each."

"There are," said Mr. Crusoe, "Mr. and Mrs. Thrasher, artists. Mr. and Mrs. Rainshaw, sculptors. The celebrated violinist, A. M. Vingut. Miss Rhapsody, the authoress, well known in literary circles — contributor to the 'Owl,' 'Colorado Weekly,' 'Cranberry-Center Evening Gazette,' and various other prominent magazines of the present day. M. Phill, the celebrated Comedian. Madame Tug, the great Tragedienne. General Gonzales, exile from Juan Fernandez. Capt. Cook — a

supposed descendant of the famous South-sea explorer; has traveled extensively on the Guano Islands, situated off Peru. General Southerland and family, late of the Confederate army, and compiler of the Sabbath-Evening Select Hymn Book. This family has been somewhat reduced in circumstances, owing to unforeseen accidents; they are now, however, receiving an income from the sale of his work, which appears well adapted to the wants of the Fejee Islanders.

There are Mr. and Mrs. De Soto, lineal descendants of the discoverer of the Mississippi; a great grand-son of Capt. Robert Kidd, who has in his keeping, a family likeness of that romantic genius; Hon. H. Clay Digbee, inventor of the system of 'Sound Imprinting.' This discovery is not fully developed by the process now employed. He has, however, associated with himself Professor Fizzleton, author of various works on Chemistry, and, bringing to his aid the great knowledge and practical experience of this distinguished scholar, will, no doubt, meet with immediate success. I have invested largely in the stock of this corporation, and consider it not only safe, but



one of the wisest operations of my life ;” here he added, “ would you not like to take an interest, to a small amount? probably a small interest could yet be secured.” I remarked, “ if I took an interest, it would be a small one.”

“ There are other equally distinguished personages,” continued Mr. Crusoe, “ members of the family, and no doubt, should you occupy apartments, they will be pleased to call, and form your acquaintance.”

The lower portion of my jaw, at the conclusion of this information, I found resting on my closely buttoned coat collar. I stood gazing at vacancy, as he bade me good morning, and suddenly vanished up a flight of stairs, leading to various offices, over the window of one of which I noticed a sign, bearing the following inscription, “ Office of the Sound Imprinting Company. Christopher Columbus Crusoe, President.”

If, thought I, “ all these things” can be accommodated, and feel content to remain in the house, together with many other distinguished, literary inmates, whose names have been omitted, certainly I shall meet with the

furthering of my highest aims, by being thus associated; can select my own society, profit by the vast wisdom and experience of such distinguished characters, and shall, no doubt, soon take rank among those so well qualified to appreciate real merit and true genius. ˆ

At eight, in the evening, my friend's servant, Jonathan, stood at the door-way, leaning on the cot bed, which I had ordered him to convey to the house of Miss Rousindash, with express directions, to wait there for my arrival.

A few moments later, I rang the door-bell; a servant, robed in a Turkish costume, responded to my call, and gracefully bowing me to the reception room and receiving my card on a tastefully arranged willow basket, soon vanished out of sight, after advising me in an unknown tongue, to do something I could not understand; but which from the gesture accompanying his words, I supposed meant, "please sit down, and wait until the lady can see you."

There I sat nearly an hour, before seeing Miss Rousindash; meantime Jonathan stood without, benumbed with cold, watching my

cot-bed, which, agreeable to custom, I had resolved never again to omit using, on my first night's trial.

The appearance of Miss Rousindash, when she entered the room, was prepossessing; and after a few moments' conversation, I became satisfied I had, for once, made a wise and judicious choice; indeed the lady and myself had freely exchanged sentiments on various topics, and perfect harmony existed on all points. The rooms, which were well located, having been shown me, and the terms being reasonable, I remarked, as I bade her good evening, I had brought only a small cot-bed, and with her permission, I would place the same in my rooms above; while on the morrow, my entire effects would be removed, and I should then be happily located, and to my great relief; for I had been sadly disappointed thus far, by my sudden and unexpected changes.

Acquiescing in my desires, she detailed "Miss McCarthy" to attend my wants. I noticed that Miss McCarthy passed to the front door, with a heavy, clumsy tread, and directed my servant to "jist carry yer bag-

gage round through the passage-way into the back yard, and wait at the back intrance 'til I call ye."

While waiting in the vestibule, agreeably entertained by my new land-lady, a shout came up from the kitchen and basement, mingled with anathemas which were hurled at me in all conceivable tongues.

Miss Rousindash, at once leaving me, rushed to the scene of this new revolutionary development, and demanded the cause of such an outburst of feeling, on the part of the "ladies" present. "The single gintleman wid his cot-bedstead; ah! the horrid man to spake of Bridgit in sich disrespectful manner; and do ye think we are the ladies to wait on sich a brute crature? Niver! Is this the man who would be after saying we don't know a piano from a wud-box? Out of this house you spalpeen." The sound of voices was growing louder and louder, when in rushed\* the land-lady, followed by her Turkish escort, and a dozen "ladies" from the kitchen department; thrusting a copy of the paper containing my advertisement, into my face, she demanded, if I was the author of that advertisement;





“That, sir!” — pointing her finger to the spot, — “that infamous intimation.” — PAGE 53.

“that, sir!” — pointing her finger to the spot; “that infamous intimation. Did you dare insinuate, that inmates ever lose coals, or are interfered with, in any way? Do you pretend we use birch-brooms for dusters, and that cats are permitted to travel about, at the inconvenience of members of the family? In short; are you the author of that foul calumny?”

“Madam,” said I, in words most feelingly expressed, as I stood surrounded by a bevy of “ladies,” holding brooms, rolling-pins, flat-irons, shovels and pokers, over my head, “be calm; don’t get excited; you may make a mistake, and entertain an angel unawares. — How do these ‘ladies,’ present know but I am a relative of St. Patrick?”

As suddenly as if a vision had been opened to their sight, dropped every arm raised against me; and slipping one after another, into the dining room, thence into the basement, until all I could hear was, “be the powers and if he should be a rilitive, what will became of us all?”

Turning to my land-lady, I remarked, “a single word of explanation on my part, will

satisfy you, as to the annoyance I may have unintentionally occasioned."

"Then you did, after all, write that article?" demanded Miss Rousindash. "Begone from this house; the ladies employed in my service will never brook such insult. I cannot countenance such expressions, neither permit the author to associate with members of my family."

Sailing away like a miniature man-o'-war, my amiable land-lady left me to my own reflections. Where's that cot-bed, thought I; and where's the man who brought it?

Finding myself dependent upon my own resources, I passed through the dining-room in search of my furniture; approaching the basement stair-way, I ventured to inquire, if Jonathan was below. "Jonifan, Massa, and dat yer bed o' yourn, I'se stood agin de outside brick wall of dis yer house; guess you'll find bofe on um dare, by jist going round de same way dey come in; I'se got noffin to do wid dis yer row, I want yer to understand."

I understood this to mean, that I was to retrace my steps, and go round by the back way; which doing, after stumbling over saw-



horse, blocks of wood, and coal-shovels, I secured the cot-bed, but saw nothing of Jonathan.

It was now a late hour ; the night cold and drizzly, and being unable to procure assistance, I raised my bed to my shoulder, and made my way direct to my office. It occurred to me I never experienced so sudden a change in expectations, as the present case illustrated.

Such a reverse in anticipated "temporal blessings," required an investigation; and the manner of ascertaining the authorship of the advertisement, required a ferreting out.

How, thought I, could twelve or fifteen domestics, know any thing of my plan of operation. A thorough inquiry obtained through the aid of detectives, at last revealed the secret.



I raised my bed to my shoulder, and made my way direct to my office.  
PAGE 55.



#### IV.

**B**EFORE proceeding further with this narrative, it is necessary an explanation should be given, showing the manner of my detection, and the cause which led to disasters so lately experienced.

Miss Rousindash enjoyed, no doubt, an enviable reputation as a house-keeper; her furniture had been selected with great taste, every apartment was scrupulously neat, and each article so arranged that it presented an air of style, while combining comfort and utility.

Mirrors, large and costly, adorned parlors and reception-room, while elegant damask drapery graced each window, conveying the impression, that she possessed ample pecuniary means to sustain the luxurious style thus enjoyed.

The lady herself was exceedingly attractive; she was intelligent and prepossessing

in form and feature — notwithstanding her present rank in social life, she must have been an early associate of wealth and refinement, and circumstances no doubt, subsequently obliged her to resort to this honorable avocation, as a means of subsistence. None, however, could have appeared more cheerful in the performance of its duties, or better qualified to direct its oversight, while few could have entertained so gracefully and enchantingly, as “the beautiful Miss Rousindash.”

Her nervous and somewhat impulsive temperament, which gave rise to the momentary fear of losing so many “ladies” attached to the culinary department, and the sudden discovery of the presence of the Single Gentleman, himself, “fired her zeal,” and the natural result was, that she displayed a feeling entirely unlooked for on her own part.

I would have been pleased, had sufficient time been allowed for an explanation of my former conduct. Fate, by an overwhelming demonstration, decreed otherwise; and resting assured, “truth crushed to earth shall rise again,” and that my calumniators should fully

experience the vengeance of the God, whose "mills grind slowly yet exceeding small," I waited patiently for "all these things" to be developed, nor have I waited in vain.

Located in a public place and convenient of access, there is said to exist a rendezvous to which "female help" of our city, have long had resort; there, a record is kept of all irregular transactions taking place between mistress and "companion," and coming to the knowledge of the informant. This organization has long been established, and is continued, I learn, at the present time, through individual subscription and annual fees of small amount, contributed by its members.

On the book of the association, appears a list of "Names anticipating a change," and reasons given for so doing; also, a lengthy memorandum of "Situations eligible, and worthy of the notice of members." This new development readily accounted for the sudden transfer of important events that often occur, and which are carried from house to house by instant communication on the part of members and sympathizers of the "Order of my Lady."

One of the greatest accomplishments of this sisterhood, has been, the quiet, but most successful carrying out of a scheme securing to its members each Sabbath evening, and also — although allowed one half of the entire day — two evenings during the week, in addition to one afternoon. A resolution is now under consideration by the Board of Managers, asking an extension of the “rights” of each member, demanding weekly, two afternoons, three evenings, and the entire Sabbath. The “Order” is pledged to carry out its patriotic designs, in words as follows.

“All persons engaged in assisting house-keepers in the discharge of their duties, finding companionship uncongenial and dictatorial, shall, at once withdraw fellowship, and leave refractory inmates to their own inevitable destruction.”

The first Article, contained in the Constitution of this “Order,” develops conclusively its object.

“Section First; Article First.

Whereas all men are created equal, and whereas, we possess inalienable rights, among

which are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of knowledge, and,

Whereas we possess acquirements enabling us fully to appreciate, and to extend to others, the blessings hereinafter set forth,—Be it known unto all men: we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, to secure the privileges hereinafter mentioned, and bequeath the same, unimpaired, to our posterity.”

During the preceding year, a zealous member of the “Order” offered the following resolution: judicious and decisive opposition to the same,—after great anxiety—resulted in its withdrawal; otherwise, much inconvenience as well as suffering must have been the result.

“*Resolved.* Whereas, the Creator of the Universe placed His works within the keeping of the children of men, and Whereas certain usurpers, claiming rights and privileges—either by inheritance of worldly goods and chattels, success in enterprise, or in being favored by greater knowledge and experience, do now direct, order and command, and Whereas they expend such possessions for

private wants and to their individual convenience,

BE IT KNOWN; on and after the adoption of this resolution, we solemnly affirm, the duties pertaining to house-keeping shall be equally divided and performed by those, now styled, 'mistress and companion;' and forever thereafter we shall faithfully devote one-half of our leisure time to entertainment, return of calls, cultivation of the graces and the perfection of science; while we will also strive for the advancement of knowledge among those with whom we shall hereafter reside, or consent to accept as our associates."

The peaceful citizens of our great metropolis, little realize how much they have to fear from another source of grievance, rapidly gaining strength, and already assuming a powerful organization.

Through combination and coalescing, the milk-men of Boston are largely implicated in this gigantic wrong. Striking hands with the many "ladies" who now adorn the laundry and basement of our first class boarding-houses, they at once become "common-carriers," thus circulating important information,





25.

“BE IT KNOWN; on and after the adoption of this resolution.” — PAGE 62



and often conveyers of "a general call" for the meeting of the sisterhood; and this by signs and symbols. A vender of milk presents himself at the rear entrance of your dwelling; mark the perfect indifference on the part of each "companion" in household duties, save that one who hastens to his call.

A "grand rally" for any evening may be signalized by one loud ring of the door-bell, or two loud raps of the hand, or three knocks of the foot against the door. This sign is answered by the "lady" saying "good morning:" and immediately making a memorandum at the side of the door-post.

A hurried step on the part of the "carrier," implies "there is 'work' to be performed by some one."

If, in filling the measure, a portion of its contents should fall to the ground, (this sign is seldom given) the sisterhood at once infer, that through indiscretion, the "work" has "slopped over;" this latter expression is a cant phrase among the members.

Carrying the measure in the left hand, while holding the can in the right, on leaving the

premises, indicates "something important will soon be laid on the table."

There are various grips, pass-words, chalk-marks, and water-lines, the meaning of which I am not fully instructed in ; sufficient knowledge has been acquired to place all opposed to secret societies on their guard, while timely notice on my part may avert a serious and fatal calamity.

It is by this class, or through the connivance and aid of letter-carriers, assisted by the night patrol, I have been exposed, my plans frustrated, my hopes blasted.

For days, have I caused the Post-office "department" to be closely watched, and mail and *fe-mail* carriers questioned. There is something singular in the disguised conduct practised on *its* part ; notice the "department" engaged in the discharge of its duties—carrying a small package, only, which is turned over and over again, in search of a pretended letter, or one bearing a superscription, held full in view.

Hastening to learn the reason for such prolonged delivery, detectives at once interrogated "ladies" receiving the attention of the

“department,” but generally received the most evasive answers, such as — “And what matters it what the gintleman was after say- ing, can’t a lady spake wid a body widout molest from the like o’ ye ?”

In several instances, we were informed the following was the result of the “delivery,” but without placing the least reliance on what was said, as the conversation alleged to have taken place, was entirely foreign to the duties of the “department,” and none but those wearing the cloak of deception, would have resort to such extremes.

“It’s a very fine morning, my lady ! ought you not to be out walking ? How old are you ? Wouldn’t you like to take a drive ? Did you ever go to Morris’s ? I’ll call around some pleasant evening. Never saw so pretty a face in this city ; adding, the ‘department’ would be proud to have you associated with its destinies.” Such pretended conversation, of course, offered no satisfaction, except to condemn the parties already implicated.

Leaving Miss Rousindash’s, on the follow- ing day I sought my former quarters at the respectable hotel. Disposing of my effects at

public auction, I resolved no longer to be hampered with cot-bed, and its attendant embarrassments.

Thus remaining and enjoying the solitude pertaining to one of my secluded habits, I listened to as few objectionable sounds as the nature of circumstances would admit. Occasionally, a stranger would occupy an adjoining room, who, troubled with asthma or affected by chills, was unable to rest comfortably during the night; presuming such to be indisposed, and absent from home and friends, — while there were those who undoubtedly loved him, — Samaritan-like, I have sometimes called and administered a balm to his never failing acceptance.

Often, I have been called upon by the same unfortunate, soon after, afflicted to an unaccountable degree with cramps, colic, and on one occasion, he seemed to be suffering terrible neuralgic pains, extending the entire length of the alimentary canal. Relief appeared to follow the application of restoratives, though, occasionally, of less duration than the quantity, strength and frequency of appliances would suggest.

On one occasion, I was completely overwhelmed, fearing the alterative would fall short of the requirement ; this case continued to offer stubborn resistance during the entire night.

There is another evil to which I have already alluded. The police department of our city, it is said, have been solicited to join the "Order," as an auxiliary only. An experiment now going on, will test the practicability of such a movement, and at present, the duties are confined almost exclusively to the night patrol, who, in the discharge of their obligations, may be seen faithfully watching to that end.

If one of these vigilant public servants should be questioned as to the nature of the conversation carried on, while confronting a "lady companion," of some residence, the same evasive retort, will be the only consolation, with the polite addition : "we have instructions, and know how to execute our orders."

The city of Boston possesses a superior police force, in proportion to its number — and none better adapted to guard the public

trust, confided to its keeping — laying aside the present experiment, which it is believed by those opposed to secret organizations, will soon be discontinued on their part.

Application had also been made to the “Bakers’ Independent Order of Apprentices” to render aid to this enterprise, but has received the discountenance of all master workmen.

The “Brewer’s Club” were long, and zealously solicited to enter the compact; they declined, on account of the instability of their representatives; the variety of languages spoken by the members would have been no hindrance to success, as only signs and symbols are adopted, to convey the required information. In gestures and uncouth grimaces, the efforts of the “Club” would have been found indispensable.

Having fulfilled my obligations towards an appreciative public, complimenting two departments — in words most feelingly expressed, — I would here acknowledge the attentions paid me personally in the honor of various escorts, hospitalities and continued gratuitous offerings of cordiality by the “*Societe gens-*



*d'armes*” particularly in providing sumptuous private entertainments, and shielding its guest from every external danger,

“ While its vigils keep  
Safe and confined, and thus within the grip of iron clasp,  
The trembling spirit finds a sweet repose.”

C. C. C. — A.M.

My rooms at the hotel necessity obliged me to relinquish, though I had hoped to be so prosperous in business matters, that I should never again be obliged to move.

Observing an advertisement in a daily paper — “ Rooms for single gentlemen,” and thinking this would reach my case, I adjusted my toilet, and hastened to the house. External appearances soon convinced me the place could only rank as a third-rate establishment. Having pulled a bell-knob ten or twelve inches beyond its natural limit, without other effect than watching my own effort, with my cane I gave a few loud raps on the door, which prudently opening, revealed the head and shoulders of a man, who had forgotten to put on his coat. A husky, rough voice within, inquired, “ Who do you want to find ? ”

“ I would be pleased to see the proprietor

or proprietress," I answered. "The who?" "The person having charge of the house," said I. The inside sentinel—for I could not think of any other appellation by which he should be called—raising his hand to his head, and running his fingers through a bewildered state of matters and things in general, called out, "Mr. Officer; I say; there's a man down here what wants to see you." Meantime I stood without, awaiting further marks of hospitality. "Mr. Officer" made his appearance, and relieving guard, asked, "Who'd you want to see?"

"I came, sir, in response to a notice, found in this morning's paper, to see rooms suitable for a single gentleman. Are you the proprietor?" "Well, no; the woman who run this machine has 'gone up,' and I'm taking stock. That 'ere notice you speak of, has been in the paper for a month or more, I guess. There hasn't a soul lived here for more nor three weeks to my sartin knowledge, and I don't see how folks ever stood it to live at all in such a place. Won't you come in? Sit down; sit down if you can find a chair that's got four legs; I never see one since I've had charge."

Out of curiosity I concluded I would explore the premises, and accordingly accepted the cordial invitation, though expressed at so late a moment.

On entering, "Mr. Officer" handed me a list of articles enumerated on a sheet of greasy foolscap paper, embracing the entire stock of household effects, and valued at \$396.95. "That," said he, pointing to the result of his official duties, "is all these things will fetch at auction. I wouldn't give a red herring for all left over; 'aint it astonishing how some folks will keep boarders on a mighty small outfit?"

"How many members of the family did the house contain?" I asked.

"O! they wa'n't all one family, bless your soul, the woman kept *boarders*."

"Yes, I understand you, 'boarders' is the common and proper name given to this class of occupants. How many had she, may I ask?"

"Well! I couldn't say exactly; she never kept no books, but a Miss Spriggins, who used to run a sewing machine in her own room, told me there was about forty table-

boarders, including the six and seven o'clock breakfasts, and the twelve and one o'clock dinners, and she reckoned about thirty-five 'stiddy lodgers."

"The inventory is small in valuation, considering the number of boarders there must have been accommodated," I remarked.

"Accommodated? well. Do you know how folks used to sit at that 'ere table? why; the chairs stood kinder sideway; a broad-shouldered man like me, would never have any show at dinner time. No sir; them figgers is about right. See the stuff and say if I ha'n't been over liberal."

Calling my attention to a list of furniture contained in twenty-two sleeping rooms, I found his valuation to be two hundred and twenty-two dollars; kitchen furniture and cooking utensils, fifteen dollars and fifty cents; dining table, crockery and glass ware, forty-two dollars; table linen, thirteen dollars and fifty cents; and all other articles embraced in the inventory, one hundred and three dollars and ninety-five cents. Scrutinizing the "Estate," I concluded the estimate rendered fully covered its present value, and was indeed over "liberal."

Thanking "Mr. Officer" for his kindness, and regretting any intrusion on my part, I moved towards the door, when he remarked, "I guess I'll buy the lot when it's sold, and add enough to it to make the thing a first class boarding-house;" ejaculating, "call agin; come round when we git things to rights, and the old lady will show you over the premises. This house will git built up about as soon as the next one; my wife's jist the smartest woman you ever see, and can put this thing through, in apple-pie order. Call agin; don't forgit the number." Leaving the house, I had not advanced far, when, hearing the sound of an opening window, and turning, I perceived "Mr. Officer" beckoning my return. Retracing my steps, he said in an undertone, "Don't say nothing about what I've said about buying this ere property; I'm so situated, myself, my son Theophilus must bid it in. You know Theophilus? keeps in Quincy Market; you understand how these things are done, on the square? Call round some time and take your choice of rooms."

Leaving "Mr. Officer" with his body half out of the open window, his eyes raised to

the firmament as if engaged in an astronomical discovery, the thumb of his right hand inserted in his right ear, the fingers of which were gracefully moving, as if accustomed to the keys of a musical instrument, I turned, saying to myself, that must be a masonic sign, a symbol of the association; it should have been given with greater caution, although the attitude betokened reverence. I liked the method of recognition, although I could not give the countersign; turning, and facing my would-be fraternal friend, and swinging my arms about in every conceivable direction, which appeared to give entire satisfaction, and approaching him once more, I inquired, "What would be the terms for a regular boarder?" with a benign look, he remarked, "Well! betwixt five and eight; you'd want to sleep alone, of course; shall have to charge *about* eight dollars for three meals of vittles; vittles is vittles now days. But come round; I'll accommodate you, if I don't nobody else; you're exactly my style."

The choice may have been complimentary, although, I thought the honor attached itself to "Mr. Officer" rather than to any feeling

of pride possessed on my part. As I could not concur, therefore I did not "call round."

To what extent "Mr. Officer" has "swung round the circle" I never learned; the evidence before me for a successful campaign, led to the conviction, it would result in this case—as on a former occasion—"in a cipher."



Samaritan-like, I have sometimes called — PAGE 66.





## V.

A FEW evenings since while sitting by a fire, in a remote apartment of the hotel where I continued to reside, my ear suddenly detected the sound of approaching footsteps. A loud rap at the door next followed, and meeting with a hearty welcome from within, the door opened and the familiar face of an old and tried companion of my early years appeared before me, who, like myself, had long been seeking other and more economical accommodations, but with equally poor success. The object of the visit on the part of my friend, Mr. Doolittle, was to inform me he had been earnestly solicited to engage rooms already furnished and procure his meals at a restaurant, or if he preferred, at one of the many famous club-houses which abound in our city.

Having thus disclosed the purport of his call, he remarked, "I have visited the ac-

commodations referred to, and find, adjoining the rooms which I have selected, another still unoccupied. I have obtained the refusal of both, for a short time, and shall be most happy if you will decide to accompany me." Favorably entertaining the project, I consented at once to try the experiment; but not being a member of any Club, nor aware of having a single personal acquaintance among gentlemen who were members, I queried how the introduction could be obtained unless my companion happened to be more favorably situated in this respect.

Mr. Doolittle remarked, "he had a bowing acquaintance only, with a gentleman to whom he once sold a patent-right, which unfortunately proved utterly valueless. This transaction" he added, "has never developed that degree of attachment on the part of the purchaser and myself, often following business engagements with merchants in general;" and he further said, that he had been unjustly accused of deceiving the purchaser, when it was well known, "every transfer of right, title and interest in such fluctuating commodities, entitled the seller to due considera-

tion and gentlemanly treatment, if nothing else."

Discussing the advantages and disadvantages connected with a restaurant life, we found much that was favorable with much more that was unfavorable, for gentlemen holding our position in society. The club-house project had its advantages in our estimation, and after mature deliberation by Mr. Doolittle and myself, it received our unanimous vote.

As we both enjoyed the reputation of being sober and sedate citizens, we decided that our names should be handed in for immediate action on the part of the members of whatever Club we should conclude to join. The experiment of living, should, for a while, alternate between club-house favors and restaurant necessities, until we could decide, by actual experience, which of the two should prove preferable and ultimately less expensive; meantime the rooms should be secured, and so soon as we became associates at the Club we would then settle down for the winter.

Honorable Leharo Return, the name of the "patent friend" of Mr. Doolittle, having been

selected to receive and present our names as candidates for admission to the "Corporate Body of Select Few," we immediately called upon him, requesting his assistance; readily complying with our request, he remarked, it would be considered a privilege on his part, and no doubt we should both attain distinguished positions, occupying seats of honor, in connection with the duties and responsibilities we were about to engage in. Our names and reputation being unobjectionable, we soon had the satisfaction of learning we were "unanimously elected," and should soon enjoy full fellowship, as members of this distinguished association; we were, however, advised of the custom of remitting the sum of twenty dollars each, to the treasurer, before being privileged to sign the "articles of compact," by-laws and regulations of the "Corporate Body," made and provided for its better government, after which, we would be presented to its members "in due and ancient form." To this we readily gave our assent, and at once remitted the required "fee," which we were informed would be expended for the sole benefit of members of the associa-

tion. The following morning I received a polite note acknowledging the receipt of the remittance, and stating that the members awaited our pleasure for further communication.

For the first time, we were now informed of the necessity existing on the part of candidates, of delivering an oration, reading a composition, relating an original story, or singing an original song, before participating in the "privileges" of the association. Abashed by this late discovery, I immediately called upon Mr. Doolittle, and informing him of my embarrassing situation, requested his advice. I could not sing; a story I never learned, neither could I repeat one were it told to me; public speaking I shrunk from, as I never felt composed while addressing an audience, and was sure to make some terrible blunder by asserting exactly what I did not intend; and as for reading a composition — if copied by me — I knew perfectly well no one else could decipher a dozen words, should I unfortunately break down in its delivery. Mr. Doolittle and myself condoled and sympathized with each other over this unlooked-for

obligation. He, however, enjoyed the reputation of being a respectable public speaker, and could also compose and sing an excellent song; and therefore he finally concluded to write a few pathetic lines and adapt them to appropriate music, recommending me to compile a speech and commit it to memory; remarking, "You understand gestures and attitude, having once been a teacher of elocution, and will thus make up in action, what experience would otherwise have taught, as an extemporaneous speaker."

Two or three days then elapsed, when my companion called at my room, and, producing a scroll, commenced singing the original composition intended for the introductory occasion. The music was a masterly production, and worthy of publication. I remarked, he should dedicate that song to the President of the "Corporate Body;" he said he thought he should. I can recall but a few lines, which run thus, —

When all that is bright must fade from my sight,  
 My pathway obscured shall become;  
 When Hope fades away, and thorns strew the way,  
 The light of Thy love guide me on.

When storms, in their tempest, howl round my frail bark,  
When seas become mountains of fear,  
Then, tossed in mid-ocean without compass or chart,  
The light of Thy promise be near.

Having selected my own theme, and with the great object in view of removing any false impressions arising from my late inadvertences, I determined to produce something effectual, in order to be restored to favor in the minds of my female acquaintances, who had allowed these false impressions to take such complete possession of them. I knew my efforts, in time, would reach their ears, and therefore determined to await patiently the result.

Having advised the President of the Club of our readiness to appear before its members, we awaited his further instructions: meantime I devoted my leisure hours to practice and drill, and the endeavor to attain thorough perfection in the important part I was soon to bear in the introductory exercises.

Receiving a note from the Secretary, requesting my friend, Mr. Doolittle, to be at the Club, that evening, precisely at six, and desiring my presence at seven and one-half

o'clock, I at once communicated these instructions to my companion, who informed me he could not possibly be present at the hour designated; but added, "Friend Thistle, you take my place, and I will report myself in your stead, at seven and one-half o'clock; it will make no difference, except that, when my name is mentioned during the introductory ceremonies, you will please correct the gentleman, and allow your name to be substituted."

Without giving the Secretary further notice of any change in the programme on my part, I accordingly reported at the hour intended for my friend's reception. Immediately on reaching the place, I was requested to occupy a small and dimly-lighted apartment, one side of which appeared to consist entirely of folding doors, which, when opened, evidently connected the room I occupied with another, forming one large parlor or hall. I thought little of this reception, believing it all for the best; and as I had been informed I should be called upon to exhibit my powers in such a manner as I might select, I supposed the seclusive opportunity was intentionally pre-



sented, and in which I could prepare myself — by further rehearsal — for the entertainment of the evening.

Therefore I arose, and, facing the large doors, commenced a process of drill, until becoming animated by my efforts, and the occasion, I found myself audibly engaged in my oration. “Man,” said I, (with a good deal of emphasis,) “is a discontented portion of creation. Woman, if conforming to the condition, position, and requisition of her husband, moves with greater ease and better grace through the rough shoals and ragged rocks of life’s turbid waters,” (here I gave a few sweeping gestures,) “thus realizing a greater share of happiness, and enjoying to a far greater degree the comforts pertaining to the existence of all mortals.” (changing position) “It is useless to deny that woman is the great balance-wheel to society,” (my arms here imitating a wheel in motion,) “regulating prosperity, usefulness and respect. Power, force, impetus” (throwing out my right arm with clinched hand), I added, “may be supplied through various means, and controlled by various circumstances ; yet, this power unde-

veloped and confined within its own dark, restless, clinging-self," (both hands folded on my breast, then suddenly dropping my arms,) I continued, "must become not only useless, but destructive to mankind." (Pointing one finger, as if appealing to the audience, and gracefully agitating the same digit,—then raising it to the ceiling) I said, "Such is woman's worth, made after the image of her God; possessing attributes that may even move our very earth, as intelligence, purity of thought, strength of purpose, unceasing confidence and unfailing devotion. These God-like gifts, (my arms were here outstretched,) once set in motion, impart an impetus to all created things, and bind society by an endless chain, the links of which are forged by the Great Architect of worlds."

I had proceeded thus far, having made a last grand effort, (standing at the moment with head uplifted and eyes fixed upon the ceiling,) when suddenly the folding doors flew open to their full extent, revealing, no doubt, a ludicrous tableau to the fifty or sixty gentlemen who were seated before me, every one of whom had his eyes fixed upon this

ridiculous transaction; although, from the obscure light imparted, my features could not have been distinguishable, yet it occurred to me they should have given some slight notice of their intention thus to invade the privacy of a gentleman, by knocking at the door, while he was engaged in a rehearsal. These gentlemen — unintentionally, no doubt — entirely overlooked this necessary courtesy, although they closed the doors after them, but not with the alacrity displayed in the opening scene. Gently subsiding into a chair, with considerable chagrin, that would certainly have been perceived on my countenance in a less obscure light, I awaited further instructions.

The deputation that thus unceremoniously called upon me consisted of two strangers, who intimated that the present occasion would be made one of special interest on my part, as a brief biographical sketch of my life and virtues would be recited by some one present. I did not know how the numerous facts relating thereunto had been made known to the person who was to officiate on this important occasion, as I had written no account

of myself, to my knowledge ; neither did I care particularly, when I noticed the mistake made by the deputation, of calling me by my friend's name, as Mr. Doolittle possessed honors I would be glad to enjoy.

This misunderstanding I intended to rectify at the time of my presentation, which could be done by simply changing our names, and confiding in the gentlemen present to do me, and the cause about to be represented, full justice, I felt that they would be elevating themselves by placing me in an honorable position.

Presuming that no other mortifying circumstances could occur to mar the entertainment of the evening, the deputation again waited upon me, and announced the oration on my part would be dispensed with ; that a great portion had already been listened to by those in the adjoining room, during my excited rehearsal. They approved of the subject, as a befitting topic for a lecture, but said it was ill adapted to the present occasion. They acknowledged I possessed some literary ability, and had my thoughts followed other and more practical channels, or if I would confine

myself, hereafter, to my proper sphere — referring no doubt to Mr. Doolittle's musical ability — I should, in time, immortalize myself. I knew that my disguise was now complete, from their reference to the subject of music; and had not their remarks mortified me exceedingly, I should, at once, have placed myself in a proper attitude regarding my real name.

At this crisis, I was requested to sign certain papers presented to me, and which, for want of light, I could not read; after which I was told to kneel and repeat after one of the deputies certain lengthy obligations, requiring me to conform to all "rules of the Club," behave myself on all occasions "in a dignified and courteous manner," refrain from all intoxicating beverage, assist the widow, provide for the destitute, regard the sabbath, believe in an architect of the world," and conform to many other excellent promises. I did not approve of the conditions, in case of the violation of any one of these obligations: it occurred to me the punishment to be inflicted, should I depart from paths of rectitude, was exceedingly stringent in its nature.

This concluded, I was directed to rise and be seated. Thereupon, the deputation addressed me in words — feelingly expressed, — setting forth the benefits that would arise in the bond of fellowship about to be entered into; remarking, that it would be absolutely necessary that I should enter the presence of the august “Corporate Body” in becoming attire, which would indicate my condition of utter helplessness, showing thereby my inability to assist myself, thus exemplifying the professions of those with whom I should ever after be associated; and in this way alone could the fundamental truths, in which they believed, be duly impressed on my mind.

Majestically bowing my assent, and having remarked, I fully appreciated the kind offering and design, I added, “It certainly is a most appropriate and impressive manner of conveying the relation we sustain to each other.” “Who,” I inquired, “designed this beautiful and brotherly form? May I ask, if either or both the gentlemen present conceived the idea?” Having been informed its origin extended as far back as the date of the old “Know-Nothing” party, I concluded the

Club possessed a good record, and congratulated the deputation on the continued and exalted reputation it had so long sustained. I now sat and resignedly submitted myself to the "robing process." A silk handkerchief being first tied over my eyes, I thought, at the same time, something not unlike the lining of an old hat was being drawn close over my head, completely covering my mouth — so far as I could judge. Feeling my nose protruding through an orifice, in this modern "crown," I inquired of the deputation — who had been busy, during this invisible process, in snugly stuffing my arms into a "strait-jacket" — what was the specific object of their present labor? "The garment," said they, "placed over your head and shoulders, represents meekness. The confined state of your arms inculcates dependency." Rising, and supported on either side by my guides, I was requested to accompany them, and told that, by their aid, I should "meet and overcome all danger, and in due time reach the Celestial Empire." To their wishes I yielded, but not without exhibiting traits of an unregenerated nature.

Just before entering the room, I heard raps from all sides, in quick succession; it seemed to me as if the "Club" were cracking walnuts in their laps. Stopping suddenly, in the midst of my journey to the "Celestial Empire," thinking it possible, after all, I was joining a secret order, perhaps some sort of "Odd Fellowship"—for it was a most remarkable odd way of introducing a stranger to a room, filled with gentlemen—and turning to one of my escort, I said,—in words feelingly expressed, "am I forfeiting my allegiance to my country, my family, or my Maker? Am I not losing my birth-right? Am I joining in any manner or form whatever, a secret organization? Are these proceedings in exact conformity to the laws of this Commonwealth, and have they received the sanction of the 'General Court'?" One of my escort informed me, that he, himself, had the honor of drafting the identical law conferring this right upon the Club, and the attending honor on its members; adding, "I am now a member of the 'General Court,' well acquainted also with all the members of the School-committee, connected with our city



schools. You do not probably recognize me, at this time, but there are several present, to whom you are no stranger, Mr. Doolittle." I should have preferred to watch "Mr. Doolittle," rather than to personify him. "No," said I, "it is not convenient to recognize our friends at this moment. Did I hear you remark, you belonged to our School Board?" "No! not at the present time. My views differing in various respects, and having been invited to follow some other profession, I was obliged to submit to the substitution of another's name, in place of my own, and without receiving any particular notification, on the part of my constituents." "That has been my experience," I remarked; yet the thought that the one directing the exercises, had once walked in the same disinterested path, listened to the same urgent calls, knelt at the same shrine of devotion, gave me renewed courage, and yielding to pressing urgency on the part of my escort, I crossed the threshold of the reception-room, entered the hall, walking in all possible uprightness of manhood; feeling, however, as if my head had been excluded from taking

any very active part in the exercises of the occasion.

A quartette of voices, now commenced singing the following lines,—

Hail! "Corporate Body." Hail! earth's chosen few.

Hail! wisdom that's almost divine.

Hail! Comrades, who thus their allegiance renew,  
And offer their gifts at thy shrine.

No knowledge we seek, but that thou dost impart;

No love can be equal to thine:

No friendship outlives this, our union of hearts,  
That possesses one wish and one mind.

No honor conferred, nor hope yet retained,

Can equal the crown on the brow

Of a wanderer lost, but whose path is regained,  
Through the offering we tender him now.

Dejected, forlorn, distressed and unknown,

Our guardian care he would seek;

Debased though he be, he shall sit on a throne,  
And kingdoms shall bow at his feet.

Passing round and round the room, my guide evidently seeking a vacant chair wherein to place me during the recital of the biographical eulogy, I was surprised at the incivility of the gentlemen present, not one of whom offered me a seat; and yet, all could but notice the inability on my part to procure one for myself. A queer bond of brotherhood



Yielding to pressing urgency on the part of my escort, I crossed the threshold of the reception-

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is this, thought I. Then commenced quotations from every conceivable writer, who had figured since the days of Moses; and as the walk was prolonged, and the prospect of sitting somewhat dubious, the thought occurred to me, that we had already started on a somewhat doubtful undertaking.

Being talkatively disposed, I inquired of my escort, if either of them passed under the cognomen of "Christopher Columbus Crusoe, A. M." Being informed they had not that distinguished honor, I inquired, if either had ever been associated with me in the duties of pall-bearer; and if so, when and where, and how many times. Both of my accompanying friends appeared to take this last interrogatory as a joke; remarking, simultaneously, "they had." My dear sirs, said I — (disposed to stop and discuss the subject) — did you officiate as pall-bearers when I was present? "You have been already informed on this subject," said my escort, "and nothing more must be said now; please listen to what is said by others, and let the lesson find a suitable response within, and there make an abiding impression." "Just so; just so; but

I can't see what is the use of losing so much time in searching after a seat. Had you not better speak to one of the brethren, and thus call especial attention to my case?"

Suddenly, touching a cricket with my foot, and being requested to kneel, I quietly placed myself in a sitting posture thereon, not thinking the man intended what he said, and thanking my escort for their attention, I excused them from any further trouble. I was, however, immediately informed of the irregularity of my conduct, and early relieved of the care of the cricket. At once, kneeling, in conformity to previous orders, I found this a great relief to me, for three of us had traveled about no less than ten minutes, listening to songs, the reading of selections, and rehearsal of dialogues by the members. All this time we seemingly had been going up and down stairs, my guides being evidently in search of a chair, until it appeared to me as if we had visited every room in the building.

A gentleman now approached, and requested me to repeat after him, other lengthy promises. I did so, again confiding in the leniency of those present, for I felt the utter

impossibility of keeping one-half of my engagements already entered into. I cannot recall one promise in fifty I then made ; and I no doubt executed many maneuvers I never contemplated. During this portion of the exercises, there was a good deal of shuffling about from place to place, whispering and laughing, by those present. I knew there must be, at this time, several vacant chairs ; yet no one appeared to take much interest in my case. All that was being enacted they alone understood, and whatever was found to laugh at, those present enjoyed among themselves ; as for me, it was sober reality. With all the dignity I could summon, I asked my escort how much longer this portion of the exercises would continue, remarking, I was prepared for the "biographical eulogy," and introductory ceremonies ; and begged no farther postponement of these duties, on my account. A good deal of singing at this time took place ; and although I am no judge of music, I can recall these appropriate words:—

Pilgrims are we, strangers too,  
 Until we tread within the gate ;

There, our wearied labors through,  
 Celestial honor we await.  
 Though through life our cares shall be  
 'Mid chilly want and poverty,  
 Brighter shall our virtues shine,  
 If trusting in that Power divine.

I had been kneeling about ten minutes, when I was requested to rise. Being informed by some one present, I had then to perform a "journey," traveling through a "wilderness, requiring thirty and ten days in which to return," it occurred to me I should be under the necessity of postponing a large portion of the tour until the next season. Being notified, however, we were not required to take food or money,—as these necessities would be provided on our way—I had no objection to starting, and seeing what the country resembled for the first ten or fifteen miles. I found, however, I was again to place "confidence" in my escort, and thus appreciate the lesson of "brotherly love" I was about to be taught. One of my guides stepping in the rear, and placing his hands upon my shoulders, at the command of "travel," urged me forward without much ceremony. I concluded, however, from the



relation we sustained to each other, I might expect company the entire route. Thinking we had commenced our "travel" at too rapid a pace for so long a journey, I intimated we had better go a little slower, else both would give out before daylight, and thus be left destitute in the wilderness. Whereupon, misunderstanding my remarks, I was urged forward at a much more rapid speed.

My guide selected the most crooked and tortuous paths imaginable, pushing my body against immovable objects which obstructed our progress, and which appeared to exist on all sides of us. Our foot-path was constantly blocked; every impediment to progress appeared under our feet; and though we both stepped high, everything we had to contend with appeared a trifle higher than we could reach. I spoke to my guide of the difficulty I experienced, and inquired if he found the same trouble following after me: he said that he did; therefore I recommended he should walk hereafter in front, unloose my arms, and allow me to take hold of his hand, or else travel alone.

Just at this moment, we appeared to reach

a tavern, located on the highway. I do not think it could have been a profitable investment for the proprietor, as few persons would ever pass that way the second time; certainly not unless the Street Commissioner attended more closely to his duties. With considerable flourish of trumpet, a voice demanded, — “Whence art thou, stranger, and whither dost thou journey?” I made no reply to this interrogatory, for although familiar with Boston, — being the city whence we started, — I had no acquaintance with the place of our destination. I only realized that we had moved with considerable velocity over the worst constructed turnpike I had ever traveled, which created considerable doubt in my mind, as to whether my escort and his brotherly charge would continue together during the entire period contemplated in the performance of this journey.

“We are pilgrims,” said my guide, “who, by command of our illustrious King, Monarch of North and South, having journeyed ten days in the wilderness, without food, careworn and distressed, seek now the hospitalities of a ‘Companion of the Corporate Body

of Select Few,' unto whom we will make known our wants, and from whom we can ask aid, and receive assistance in this hour of our distress." "Art thou of that chosen and honored brotherhood?" said the tavern keeper. "We are, O Publican!" responded my guide. "Thy answer is correct; pursue thy journey, and prosperity attend thee," answered our host. This was the first intimation I had received of what I resembled,— "a pilgrim;" and though the occupant of the premises had been advised—in words most feelingly expressed—by my pilgrim-traveling-companion of our destitute condition, I could not perceive that the brother "Publican" was disposed to alleviate our wants, excepting by good advice and well-wishes.

As we were about to continue our journey,—having accomplished ten days of the period in five minutes of time,—I came to the conclusion that we had better consider the journey entirely ended, and indeed positively refused traveling another step, unless my guide hereafter led the way, and selected less dangerous paths. Discovering the accumulation of gun-powder working in my sys-

tem, and fearing the result, in connection with the various promises made by me at the commencement of the introductory exercises, besides other agreements entered into during the services, I concluded it was best to submit gracefully, but with the proviso I had mentioned to my guide, and accordingly, taking hold of my arm, he led me through a remarkably uneven tract of country, as rugged as that I had previously explored, and possessing nearly the same characteristics.

Stopping at another tavern, we were informed that we had reached the turning point of our destination, making in all "twenty days travel in the wilderness." "Here," said my guide, "we will partake of food and refresh ourselves with sleep, after which we will return to the Palace whence we came, and report ourselves to his Majesty, Monarch of North and South." The same story of our allegiance and fidelity was again recited to our second tavern-keeper by my distressed guide, but with similar hospitable results to that met with on a former occasion. The two Publicans must have been twin brothers; their voices and manners bore a remarkable

resemblance, and what appeared as a coincidence, each possessed the same impediment in his speech.

We were now informed that his Majesty, having learned with deep sorrow of the many dangers that had befallen us and obstructions that had existed in our pathway, had, through the love that he entertained for his subjects, commanded that a government road should be built, leading thence, three leagues, at the terminus of which we should take steam-cars, and with great despatch be returned to the gates of his Palace.

The three leagues of government road we passed, but with much more difficulty than I had anticipated. We found it nothing but a corduroy road, made of something resembling chopping-troughs. It was impossible to step into, or upon one of these, with any kind of safety to our person. Arriving at the terminus of this wooden-ware route, we took a wheel conveyance, and had we brought any baggage I would have said a mistake had been made, by our conductor placing the pilgrims in wheel-barrows and conveying their freight by rail. Not many minutes

elapsed before we alighted at the depot and were presented to the king, who had condescended to come a portion of the distance from his Palace, to greet us.

I had supposed this Potentate nothing more than the President of the Club, until otherwise informed. The King most graciously bestowed upon my guide a kiss, which would have been extended to me, no doubt, but for the difficulty of returning the same. "Pilgrim," said his Majesty, "rest from thy labor; thy journey is ended. Sit thou beneath the vine and the fig-tree. Hereafter, rivers of water shall flow at thy feet, and the dews of the morning and of the evening shall be with thy flocks and herds." My pilgrim companion informed me I could then be seated.

Halting in front of what I supposed to be an easy chair and majestically bending my form, the top of which still served as a lining to an old bell-crown hat, I then gracefully placed myself in the center of a huge sponge, which, if not intentionally moist, certainly had suffered nothing from evaporation for the previous six months. "Here's a mistake, gentlemen," said I. "There's no vine or fig-

tree about this; may be I have discovered the river and am now receiving the benefit of the first evening's dew," whereupon, I felt the weight of my obligations falling upon me in an inconceivable degree. Never had I experienced such evidences of cordiality as were now exhibited by my brothers present; several, with great impropriety, sat in my lap, while others clung around my neck.

The circumstances appeared to be growing affecting; the bonds of companionship I realized were now complete, without farther demonstrations of sincerity. I was perfectly satisfied if they were, having already experienced the full meaning of the words which fell from His "Majesty's" lips during the performance of a portion of these imposing ceremonies. "Love, the great regulator of our lives." It occurred to me, "love" would be outstripped in the contest, and "the great regulator" come in some length in advance.

A brief address, occupying fifteen or twenty minutes, then followed other demonstrations, during which no reference was made to the character and standing of either Mr. Doolittle or myself; meantime I had the honor of re-

maining in a sitting posture, owing, no doubt, to fatigue, occasioned by the exhausting journey through the wilderness; soon, however, orders were issued, that the Pilgrim should be placed before his Majesty, the King, in due form, to receive a welcome and to be introduced to the members of his household. A gentleman then commanded me as follows. "On thy right knee and on thy left knee, bow thyself, O Pilgrim, in the presence of His Majesty, our most Gracious King of North and South." Again I knelt, and never with less reluctance, or so little humiliation. I had become completely imbued with the last exercise and was thankful for any change in the programme.

What a picture, thought I, must be presented in my personal appearance; an old hat completely covering my face; my nasal organ protruding from a small triangular shaped hole, cut in its side; my hands tied in front, and thus confined in a strait-jacket, to say nothing of other external characteristics, apparently essential to my proper and formal introduction. Thus I waited "coming events" that had "cast shadows" each side, for the past half hour.



“What’s become of that eulogy ; and where’s the gentleman who was to deliver it?” I inquired in an audible voice. Being told to keep silent before His Majesty, I awaited the pleasure of this mighty Potentate, who, condescending to advance to the spot where I was kneeling, most graciously touched the top of my bell-crown hat with what I afterwards learned to be an umbrella, and said, “Pilgrim, the hour is advanced ; we will therefore dispense with the biographical eulogy intended to be delivered in honor of your reception, recounting the many virtues of a well spent life. It is enough that you have acquitted yourself on the present occasion, as one worthy of the honors already conferred and those yet to be bestowed upon you.” Again placing the umbrella on the top of each shoulder, then resting it a moment on the top of the hat, he pronounced in stentorian tones, “Thou art a Companion of the Corporate Body of Select Few.”

I was glad to hear His Majesty so express himself even at this late hour, as my own private impressions were, I should remain a “Pilgrim” the remainder of my life. “What

most dost thou now desire ? ” asked His Majesty. I was about to express the wish that the exercises might be concluded as early as convenient, when my old pilgrim-traveling companion answered for me. — He who had wandered in the wilderness ; suffered untold hardships from hunger and thirst, traveled over nine miles of government-chopping-trough-corduroy-turnpike ; encountered also hundreds of dangers from old and decayed vegetation left standing in the road. His words were, “ To walk humbly before all mankind, doing unto others as others do unto us.” A little mistake, thought I, in this last quotation ; but as I “ concurred most fully ” in the sentiment so “ feelingly expressed,” I offered no correction towards the proper rendering of the same. The King now summoned the household into his presence, ordered the gates of the Palace to be thrown open and the trumpets to sound the edict of my liberty ; and then exclaimed, “ Companion, thou art free ! Most worthy and devoted subjects of my realm, unloose his bonds and bind up his wounds, pouring thereon oil. Give unto him wine, and into his sack, cast thou corn.

Sandals shalt thou wear, bound to thy right foot, and to thy left foot; a staff shall be thy support all the days of thy life. Scrip, take thou not, and journey thou amongst all nations; visit the sick, clothe the naked, feed the poor; and declare thou good tidings of great joy unto all men, and great shall be thy reward."

Much of this last order I knew could not be complied with; especially that part of it requesting me to travel about without funds. I had no doubt of the reward, when I should accomplish the deed; but it occurred to me I had never heard of such philanthropic measures being carried out by any, connected with other city Clubs, and as none of the gentlemen present had been on such an expedition to my knowledge, I thought it best to defer my tour until we could all travel together. During the utterance of the last orders which fell from the lips of our Grand Potentate, I underwent somewhat the same transformation experienced no doubt by a worm in the chrysalis state, merging into the glory of a full-fledged butterfly.

My arms were now unloosed, which the suspected strait-jacket had confined. Next,

the hat was removed carefully from my head, giving to my nose its former satisfactory appearance, and in this condition I was left to remove the bandages from my own eyes. I found, to my great relief, I was in the midst of almost total darkness; otherwise my eyes would have suffered from rays of light suddenly thrown upon them. I did not until then know that there were only half a dozen gentlemen present, and presumed at once, my companions had left, wearied at what I, myself, considered protracted and useless ceremonies.

The "Corporate Body" having lifted me to my feet before unloosing my bonds, I looked around immediately on removing the handkerchief from my eyes, to thank the officers and receive the congratulations of the members of the Club. Not a gentleman present appeared to know any thing about what had transpired during the entire evening; all present had evidently just entered the room, and appeared entirely unconcerned; they even asked me what was the difficulty with my eyes, and why they had been so closely bandaged, and advised me to go home immediately.

“Gentlemen,” said I, “do you know nothing of what has taken place this evening? I saw fifty or more individuals seated in this place an hour since; and is there not one out of the six brothers remaining who has not been engaged in these interesting introductory exercises?” “You are dreaming, friend;” said one. “Dreaming, Mr. Doolittle; you had better go home and think it over.” “Then I can leave now?” I asked. “Certainly; certainly, any time, Mr. Doolittle, any time;” and Mr. Thistle, *alias* Mr. Doolittle, immediately started for his room; upon reaching which, he found ample time for reflection and self-examination.

“Dreaming,” thought I, as I threw a pair of pantaloons, thoroughly soaked, across an improvised clothes-line. “Dreaming, Mr. Doolittle;” was it because my *head* had been shut out from the world for an hour past, while my body had been actively engaged during every moment of that time? Where’s Mr. Doolittle, himself? thought I. Where’s any body who can expound what all this means? Where am I, any way; in the body or out of it?” I walked around my room touching

different articles of furniture to satisfy myself that they were not in the spiritual form. Drawing myself in front of a warm fire, my thoughts became as busy as a fulling-mill, wondering what all this was intended to represent, and where Mr. Doolittle could be; and whether he, too, had called at seven and one-half o'clock at the Club-House. In the midst of my reveries, in walked the companion of my youth.

Slowly, silently and thoughtfully he grasped my hand; I did not rise, and neither of us spoke. Turning my chair half round, while he seized another, and placing it directly in front, sat down. We both commenced looking each other full in the face. Finally, said I, "Mr. Doolittle, I am a member of the 'Corporate Body of Select Few.' The internal working of our organization, is amazingly like your 'Phi Beta Kappa' companies, of which I have heard you speak; a sort of 'Odd Fellowship,' but nothing very secret in its nature. It's a strictly moral association, one in which sacred music is largely employed, and which has for its purpose solely, the protection of widows and orphans, and the promulgation

of brotherly love among its own members, while possessing a paternal care over the poor generally. But what astonishes me most, Mr. Doolittle, is, not a single project contained in the programme has been carried out. Every body appeared to know you, and nobody knew me, whilst I, myself, knew nobody. I could not find a single man at the conclusion of the meeting, who knew anything about the introductory exercises, or who could give me any information whatever on the subject. I was told I had been 'dreaming,' and advised to go home. Am I asleep; are those pantaloons silent monitors of inaction, as they now appear suspended on my clothes-line? Is your name 'Doolittle;' and do we exist on earth, or have we met on the other side of that river, over which, may be, I have this evening been conveyed?"

From the immovable appearance of my friend's countenance, I began to think this last query had proved true. Still gazing at me with both eyes, and again clasping my hands, he asked, "Are you aware where you have been and what you have been doing, Mr. Thistle?" "Fully aware, fully aware," said

I. "Mr. Doolittle, I have received my introduction." "Are you in your right mind?" continued he. "Most assuredly I am, if not in an unconscious condition," I replied. "Did you ever hear of a secret organization, Mr. Thistle," continued my friend, "that had not its 'grips,' 'passes,' and 'sign of distress'?"

Pointing towards my clothes-line, I asked, "what greater 'sign of distress' do you require? look at my trowsers. I have been 'passed' through a wilderness, thirty and ten days, and with a free-pass on my return trip. 'Grips' I have experienced, to their fullest extent; look at my shoulders. Mr. Doolittle, have *you* passed the same ordeal I have experienced? are *you* also a 'Companion of the Corporate Body of Select Few;' and are you in full fellowship with me at this moment?" "Not in your way of joining, Mr. Thistle," said my companion. "There has been a great mistake about this whole matter. You and I changed hours you remember, and every one present supposed — until the exercises were nearly concluded — that it was myself beneath that hat. The gentlemen ascertaining their mistake — not however



until a very late moment—left you in an empty room and with gas nearly turned out. Mr. Return, my ‘patent’ friend, intended to reward me for our late patent-right transaction. You were to be excluded from the play, except as a silent spectator. I was to experience all that you have passed through in these ‘interesting introductory exercises,’ which were concocted by forty or fifty of Return’s friends, for this especial occasion, and who are now terribly mortified at what has taken place.

It’s all a farce, Mr. Thistle, from beginning to end.” Imagine my feelings. I forbear saying more, and shall allow this subject to rest for the present, with these reminiscences of the past. It was true that a mistake had been made and an unfortunate one at that.



Drawing myself in front of a warm fire, my thoughts became as busy as a fulling-mill. — PAGE 112.



## VI.

THE effect of the introductory experience through which I had passed, confined me to my room several days; during which time, I often heard these consoling words fall from my companion's lips: "It's all over, Mr. Thistle; all over, and every body regrets the circumstances." A portion of this assertion I fully realized, while none regretted the "circumstances" more deeply than the one who suffered every deprivation during a brief though exhausting journey through the "wilderness." The morning following the bogus installation and conferment of membership as a "Companion of the Corporate Body of Select Few," I received a note from the President of the Club confirming the report already received from my friend, Mr. Doolittle, in which every apology was offered for the conduct of a portion of its members.

The absence of sufficient light, — not only

in the reception-room, but in the adjoining room or hall during the performance of the burlesque — rendered it impossible for the members to discover their mistake until it was revealed by a question asked by myself in an audible tone, which was recognized by some one present as not the voice of Mr. Doolittle.

From that moment, I learned that most of the gentlemen present dropped off, one by one, each apparently having pressing foreign business to look after, thus leaving only five or six to witness the close, who were strangers to Mr. Doolittle, as well as to myself, and who mistook me for the veritable disposer of "Patent rights," all of whom sympathized naturally with Mr. Return, in the heavy loss he had sustained in his late purchase of so "fluctuating a commodity."

My position at the Club-House, until this moment, was one of humiliation and chagrin. The regret expressed by the President did not convey the required consolation. An apology was all that could be tendered as a balm to my wounded feelings, unless I could be received with a special welcome on my

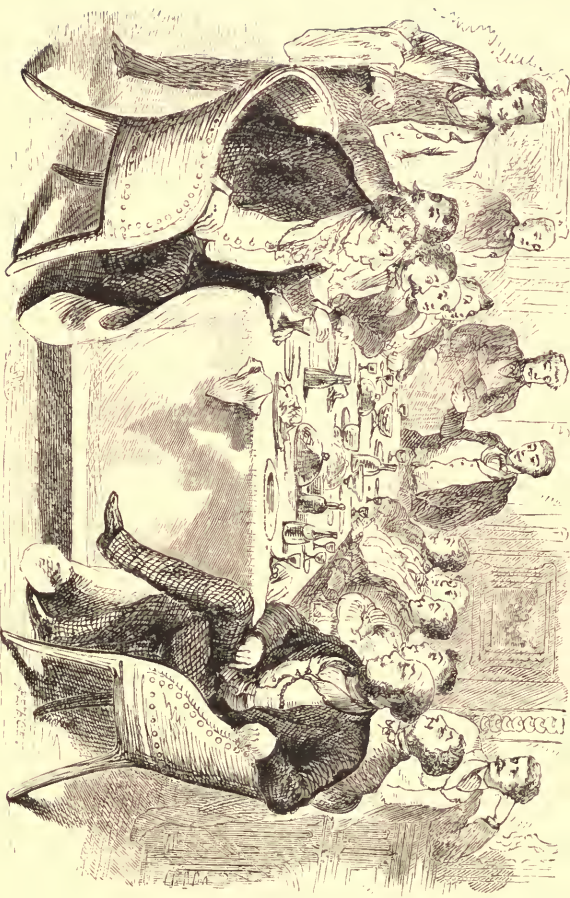
next appearance at the Club-House. I conferred with Mr. Doolittle, and we concluded to call the following evening and laugh off the whole affair. We decided it would be politic to look upon the transaction as a joke, and as it was neither intended for me, nor experienced by Mr. Doolittle, we resolved that our next call should be made as agreeable as circumstances would admit.

As I had anticipated, my appearance at the Club-House was the signal for the general shaking of hands. No bell-crown hat now disguised my features, and my hands were free to do their work, which they did with a hearty will. I marched majestically from room to room, receiving introductions to every member present, through the gentlemanly attention of two strangers, who constantly accompanied me, one of whom I think must have been associated with me in the fatigues endured in the "wilderness." The hospitalities of my escort could not have been excelled; they evidently took the deepest interest in my welfare, and by their courtesies endeavored to efface every record of an unpleasant nature, should such be lurking within.

Every reparation was offered by all with whom I came in contact, while my friend Doolittle, on this occasion, was congratulated upon the result of the unfortunate mistake, and his escape from the practical joke intended to be perpetrated on him only.

During the evening, we were toasted and fêted; yet I did not recognize the face of a single acquaintance, not even that of Mr. Return, until an early hour in the morning. Thus passed the second evening of Club-life, and in a most agreeable manner so far as it related to me. Mr. Doolittle explained to those present, in a very neat and appropriate speech, the Patent-right transaction, and received from them a unanimous verdict of "not guilty." Even Mr. Return accepted the explanation as entirely satisfactory, and joined in the hilarity of the occasion. All appeared thankful that this affair had been amicably adjusted.

In response to a proposal that Mr. Doolittle should give the company present the benefit of "that song," — the fame of which had already preceded him, — he modestly moved to the head of a bountifully supplied table,



During the evening, we were toasted and feted.—PAGE 120.





hurriedly arranged, as we conjectured, in honor of our presence, and commenced singing an entirely different piece of composition; one, however, certainly befitting the occasion, but when and where he prepared himself for the opportune moment, I never learned. This song — of which I can recall two verses only — could not have been composed during the evening, for he had been actively engaged in conversation most of the time.

We'll blot from the record all thoughts of the past,  
 That cloud or obstruct from our view  
 A feeling of Friendship. This only we ask  
 As the motto of — "The Select Few."

While we bear on our neck His Majesty's yoke,  
 We'll submissively kneel to His practical joke.

We'll "bury the hatchet," and sod o'er the place  
 Where error entombed shall remain;  
 From the pages of Mirth, all else we'll erase,  
 But the record of "Friendship's" fair name.

Then throw to the breeze, or engulf in the sea,  
 Each fault of our lives, most willingly.

Applause followed the song, and speech after speech served as links in the chain now binding us together.

During the ceremonies, I looked on with perfect amazement, wondering how so much

native talent could have remained so long buried in oblivion. There was a remarkable similarity existing on the part of all I met at this entertainment. The general contour of the entire assembly conveyed the impression I had met with gentlemen of culture and refinement, all of whom possessed an excellent taste for things palatable. There was not one in whose countenance could not be discovered a good degree of fire, expressive of a certain fitness of character, while nearly all who sustained this reflective trait, gave evidence of its concentration at the same point.

They were the most talkative, congenial and jolly set of human beings ever assembled together; and during the entire evening there was no disposition evinced by any one, to return to their homes. In fact, it was not until an early hour in the morning that any indication was observed to break the circle of free thought and pleasant interchange of sentiment; neither would this interruption have occurred, except for the unexpected visit of several ladies, at about one o'clock, who desired their husbands to accompany them to their residences. As the hour was

an unseasonable one for any female to be left thus unprotected, the excuses offered by the gentlemen for withdrawal from our society, though tendered with many regrets, were necessarily accepted.

Mr. Doolittle and myself, were, with few exceptions, the only single gentlemen associated with the Club; and yet we found our society, and that, too, offering protracted interviews for mental culture, consisting chiefly of those who were married men. The few single gentlemen generally retired to the residences of their parents at an early hour; while those of more mature years remained much later, gathering into the great storehouses of thought, that knowledge so important to the fulfillment and discharge of every duty pertaining to the rise and progress of a happy and well regulated family. Such, knowing my preference to the relations which I sustained towards woman, seldom advised me as to any different course to be pursued.

All, however, spoke kindly of the fair sex, eulogized their many virtues, and freely acknowledged we could not exist without their divine interposition; and yet, not one of all

the married gentlemen with whom I conversed, extended to me an invitation to call at his house. This was proper, I thought, as I was still a stranger, and no doubt at a seasonable time I should be permitted to witness the happiness that clusters around the hearthstone, forming the unbroken circle of domestic bliss.

It was a marked change that took place in the countenances of these married men when they left the Club-House, to retrace their steps homeward. The cares of a large family; the difficulty experienced in providing all the comforts for the partners of their joy; the requisites a paternal eye can only discover; the daily sacrifice such can only make; the sympathy these generous hearts must experience, can only be realized by one walking in their *over-shoes*, as he slowly and solemnly ascends the steps of his dwelling, at the trying hour of two o'clock in the morning. How many, thought I, are censured for this apparent neglect and absence from their families. Little is known no doubt, of the mental suffering of such devoted husbands, whose solicitude consists in providing every comfort

for those who seldom appreciate or reciprocate such constant remembrances on their part.

Mr. Doolittle and myself had now become thoroughly installed in the customs of the Club; the members greeting us cordially, and we receiving every benefit arising from the agreeable union now formed. Occasionally we would dine at the restaurant — contrasting it with Club-life. Our lately engaged rooms we had not yet occupied, not being fully convinced we should continue to be pleased with our new style of living. Meantime we were occupying rooms at a comfortable hotel, paying for lodgings only.

We had about decided to make the Club our future place of resort, having become tired of the noise and clatter forever encountered at a restaurant; the never ending cry of a dozen voices simultaneously calling for “one fancy;” “two turkies;” “single biscuit;” “plum without;” “hot potato, — in a hurry;” with the never ending jog of our memory, — after ordering all we require, — if “you’ll take coffee or tea,” when we desired neither. These sounds had become stereo-

typed on our minds, and we determined to leave such scenes for those of a more quiet and attractive life. True, we did not obtain so large a "plate" at the Club-House, as at the restaurant; but it was "brought on" in better style, although accompanied with too much outward display; indeed, much more than I approved of.

Mr. Doolittle and myself often talked over this, and other useless extravagances. Had I possessed the power, one-half of our help would have been dismissed. I should have divided the napkins into four equal parts, torn off not less than half a yard from the sides and ends of each damask table-cloth, adding thereby not less than a hundred excellent towels to the effects of the "Corporate Body," sold every wine and champagne glass belonging to the establishment, let each member look after his own hat, coat and cane, shut off a portion of the gas at midnight, and not kept fifty or more burners under full blast until morning.

This is what my friend Doolittle and I intended to do, should either of us be elected to the Presidency of the association. At the

expiration of the first month — we having joined the Club about the eighth day of the same — a bill of “extras” was presented to each of us, one of which is as follows.

“TIMOTHY THISTLE, Esq.,

To Corporate Body of Select Few, Dr.

To proportionate expense of entertainment,	\$145.50
Do. Extras during the month,	20.50
Do. Replenishment account,	5.25
	<hr/>
	\$171.25

All dues remaining unpaid at the expiration of fifteen days from this date, will be assessed ten per cent. in addition.

Rec'd Payment.”

Of course, we at once returned the same to the President, with our compliments, stating a mistake, no doubt, had been made in the use of our names, as we never kept a “Replenishment account;” invariably settled for every article called for at the time of so doing; had never ordered any “extras” — neither of us using wine or cigars, and had never given an entertainment to our knowledge, in our lives.

These bills were immediately returned to us with the following incomprehensible letter.

TIMOTHY THISTLE, and SOLOMON DOOLITTLE, Esqr's.

GENTLEMEN : — Enclosed, please find bill “extras” which I hereby return; the same

having been submitted to our Secretary for his examination and found entirely correct. Permit me to remind you, gentlemen, of the evening entertainment on the 8th ult. The expense, thus accruing, you forget should be charged to your *individual* account; otherwise, there would be entailed expenditures on the part of many gentlemen not present, *and who took no special interest on that occasion.* As you must acknowledge you were the "cause," you will not be long discerning the "effect." It is also customary for each member elect, whether as an honorary or active member of the "Corporate Body," to thus recognize the hospitalities extended towards him on our part. Our Secretary has therefore divided this expense and assessed you in equal sums.

The attention paid to several Government officials, and various distinguished invited guests during the month past, necessitates a small assessment, to defray the current expense of these pleasant obligations. I am happy to say, the item, however, is smaller than usual at this season, and amounts to a trifle for each, when divided among so many



honorary, active and fine-members. The item referred to under the head of "Replenishment account," is under the more immediate control of the Steward, and the assessment only covers the running expenses of his department, embracing that of broken-crockery, furniture, &c.; contingent expenses connected with our prosperity. You will, I trust, acknowledge great propriety and consideration on the part of every official duty connected with our association, and though the charges may appear proportionately large, not the less just. With respect, I remain,

Your Ob't. Ser'vt.,

GEORGE WASHINGTON SMITH, *President, &c., &c.*

Immediately on receipt of this letter, I sent for Mr. Doolittle, who lost no time in calling at my room. The second scene in this new drama here took place. The letter from the President was read and re-read, and voted to be laid under the table; whereupon the "House" resolved itself into a committee-of-the-whole, to take immediate action thereon; Mr. Doolittle, drawing a chair to one side of the fire-place while I occupied another on the opposite side, we sat and looked at each other

for the space of five minutes without a motion being made, although a good deal of emotion was experienced. Finally, said I, "Mr. Doolittle, what have you to say to this new development; this imposition just brought to light? Were not my former surmises correct, and do we exist in the body? Did I not, after all, pass over the river, and have I not landed on an island inhabited by the most depraved spirits?"

"Mr. Thistle," said Mr. Doolittle, "I am hourly more convinced of the total depravity of the human heart, the complete fall of man, and the most urgent need of a regenerating influence that has not reached our extreme necessities. *I* am satisfied of an earthly existence, for no such imposition as this would be perpetrated in any other sphere. I have no doubt as to the custom referred to, in the President's letter; but the 'justice,' to which our attention is called, is not in accordance with my sentiment of right.

We have each paid the sum of twenty dollars, 'entrance fees,' and any farther demand upon us is clearly extortion. 'Government officials and distinguished invited guests,' I

have never heard of until now. I remember seeing a happy set of faces moving about the premises, beneath which various decorations were constantly displayed and confess that during my intercourse, I was pleased with all whom I met. But let us analyze this letter; 'there would be entailed expenditures on the part of many gentlemen not present, and who took no special interest on that occasion.'

That appears to meet our case, Mr. Thistle. As for the 'Replenishment account,' we will repudiate such an absurdity: neither of us has broken a single article of crockery or glassware, nor injured the furniture of the association to the value of one farthing. We will repudiate the entire bill; and as we witnessed 'cause and effect' on a previous occasion, we will now take a second look at the same."

"Mr. Doolittle," said I, "You talk like a philosopher. Only words of wisdom fall from your lips; your mind is fertile in practical resolves, and we will repudiate this unheard of demand. That's the word, 'repudiate!' Advise President Smith, at once, of our determination." "If such is your desire, Mr.

Thistle, I will do so ; as for myself, I am determined never to pay this bill," said Mr. Doolittle. "It is not only my intention," said I, "to follow your example, Mr. Doolittle, but I ask you to join with me immediately in sending in our resignation as members of the Club. I will not associate with such unscrupulous persons. We were never notified of such expectations being met on our part, and without further hesitation, we should advise the proper parties, that we no longer retain membership, and solemnly repudiate the demand."

Seizing a pen, Mr. Doolittle wrote the following communication, and immediately dispatched it to the President's room.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON SMITH, ESQ., Prest. C. B. S. F.,

DEAR SIR:—We are in receipt of your letter, in response to ours under date — ult., informing you of a supposed error existing in sundry charges, to which you again call our attention, desiring us to notice the 'propriety' and 'justice' as shown therein.

Neither of the undersigned can discover the 'propriety,' much less the 'justice,' alluded to, and can only discern great *impropriety* in this unlooked for assessment.

Who, we ask, ordered the entertainment on the evening of our second appearance at the Club-House? Who,—to bring the illustration of ‘justice’ nearer home — invited ‘Government officials and distinguished guests,’ to partake of hospitalities at our individual expense, and who took ‘no special interest on that occasion?’ how many broken goblets, plates, looking-glasses, or chairs, should we be accountable for, having ‘no special interest on that occasion?’

You will convey our profound respect to the Steward, having charge of the ‘running expense,’ connected with his department, and add our opinion, that the prospect of the race has the appearance at present, of lasting at least ‘thirty and ten days.’

Respectfully, but most decidedly do we repudiate the bill: declaring our unwillingness to pay the same, and tendering you our unqualified withdrawal of membership from the ‘Corporate Body of Select Few,’ over which you have the honor to preside.

Respectfully, &c., &c.,

SOLOMON DOOLITTLE,  
TIMOTHY THISTLE.”

This letter was read by the Secretary of the Board, at the next meeting of the Directors. In consideration of what had passed, it was deemed best to grant our withdrawal, and drop the subject entirely. A letter couched in respectful language was received from President Smith in reply, conveying the kind wishes of the members of the Club, regretting our determination, and granting us an honorable discharge, with the privilege to use the initials of the "Corporate Body." Since then, neither Mr. Doolittle nor myself has met at the Club-House.

Occupying the same room at the hotel, as I formerly did, we daily take our meals at the restaurant; where we listen to the same clatter of dishes, and the urgent call, as of yore, for "Pork and Beans, with plenty of pork." How often have I wished that such wants could be made known by "signs and symbols."

Colonel Thompson and lady, residing in a suburban district,—where they enjoy not only the comforts, but also the luxuries of life—invited my companion and self to pass a few days, as their guests. The Colonel

having once been a member of this "Corporate Body," and learning of the late irregularities of the association, desired a true version of the circumstances from our own lips; we therefore willingly recited our adventure to the family while all were seated around a cheerful fire; after which our conversation naturally turned to the subject of boarding.

Few persons possessed the will, as well as means, to carry out such genuine hospitality as did Colonel and Mrs. Thompson. The buoyant disposition of both, — reflecting far and near — cast a halo of light around their acts, and the fortunate guest of the Colonel and his wife, was a happy and enviable person in society.

During a conversation regarding marriage, the Colonel advanced strong arguments in favor of forming such association in early life. Mrs. Thompson produced arguments — equally convincing — in favor of a more deliberate and cautious course to be pursued, in reference to the selection of a partner for life. "Why!" said the Colonel, "what's the use of deferring these matters; a lady of

eighteen is as well fitted to *begin* presiding over her household, as she will be at five and twenty; all must learn, and the earlier the lesson is taught, the better and more effective will it be. A lady of eighteen can entertain her friends, look after her "help," darn a stocking, sew on a button, and make her husband as comfortable, as a woman of five and forty." "Not 'five and forty,' Colonel," said Mrs. Thompson, "say five and twenty." "Well; 'five and twenty,'" responded the Colonel. "A single woman who has seen twenty-five years, may have experienced seven years of "dissipation," that should have been put to a better purpose. I married you, Mrs. Thompson, at eighteen. What have you to say to that?"

"I should have been better prepared to have filled the important sphere," said Mrs. Thompson, "had I waited until I was twenty, or two and twenty. Now listen," she continued. "A lady of two and twenty, who has received a good education,—been reared under proper influences, ever free from contentions, and who is amiable in her disposition, domestic in her habits, and possesses



good common-sense, is to be the subject of my eulogy. Such will have seen *something* of the world; the glitter of external appearances will have few attractions for one who has placed 'happiness' — in its most exalted sense, as the great aim of life — in the scale, and watched the immovable balance, as Rank, Wealth and Power, with their broad alluring avenues, leading even to Thrones, each in their turn, unable to outweigh this priceless, heaven-born inheritance.

Position in society is desirable; but it must spring from personal worth; then, the great banker of human destiny will never dishonor the draft, for there must ever be found a safe balance to the credit of the owner. At eighteen, few girls know themselves; to such, attentions are dazzling; features, forms and estates, are about all that they think of, while the two former are sufficient to captivate most young ladies of the present day."

Turning to me, Mrs. Thompson asked, "Mr. Thistle, do you know what constitutes a marriageable lady, of the nineteenth century?" I looked at my friend Doolittle, and he at me; we both turned our eyes towards the Colonel,

and then, all of us, upon those of Mrs. Thompson. I knew what a woman should be, but possessing little practical experience of what she is, I was obliged to acknowledge, I did not know. "My friend Doolittle," said I, "is a better judge, as he has been engaged four or five times, while I never realized that pleasure, or experienced the chameleon changes naturally contingent to such a variation in feeling." "Well! gentlemen; let me give you *my* opinion," said Mrs. Thompson, "and if wrong, the Colonel will correct me, and if not correct in your opinion, you can easily convince me, by a fair refutation of the views I entertain.

Every woman at the age of two, or five and twenty, must possess some knowledge of household duties. Home lessons only, will have prepared her in the first steps of this obligation. I say *obligation*, for it is her duty to have acquired sufficient knowledge in this respect, to commence house-keeping, however humble the condition. She should understand,—if not called upon to execute—all the ordinary duties connected with every department of her charge. Menial occupation

is not her sphere ; those whom circumstances designed to perform this labor, should be under the guiding hand of economy and the watchful eye of frugality ; while good common-sense should direct reason, to open or close such avenues, as shall only connect a *practical* use of all things, with life's duties. True, experience will become the great teacher, after all ; but experience can only be known by seeking its acquaintance. Turn whatever way we may, this monitor through life, — often encouraging in its prospects — is still no less constant and remindful in its warning.

Disposition, — natural or cultivated — is one of the greatest requisites to life's success. Turbulent, revengeful, unforgiving, fault-finding, jealous and meddlesome people, can only meet fit companions among those, who possess little self-regard, and as little self-control.

To these desirable traits, if we add the graces of charity, and unselfishness, sincerity of purpose, fidelity of action, and firmness of character, we combine the essentials of what should constitute woman's character ; and she, who has lost the key to either of these treas-

ures, must live, deprived herself, and depriving others of its advantages. The word "Home," with its suggestive claims, — not its 'too often attending circumstances — demands from you, who are single, the fulfillment of an obligation to society, and that you no longer place your light, however brilliant, where so little reflection can be seen by others, or conceal your treasure in a napkin."

"Mr. Thompson" said I, "does that lady come up to the standard of her teachings; does she approach the portals of that temple illumined by such a divine ray?"

"Yes, sir! and more too," said the Colonel.

"Mrs. Thompson," I inquired, "have you any unmarried sisters, and if so, would a single gentleman of five and forty, have acquired sufficient experience to combine his destinies with one of them, or with any other of your female relatives? I have no doubt my friend Doolittle would accept the refusal of another."

My remarks caused considerable merriment; I had become worked up to the idea of marriage within the last five minutes, and all through the glowing representation to which

I had attentively listened. My friend Doolittle looked a little gruffly at the unsolicited proposition, I had made, in his behalf, regarding a "refusal;" having in my mind the room he had lately engaged on certain conditions, and not dreaming of the several broken engagements to which my remarks would seemingly refer.

"I should be most happy to introduce you, as well as Mr. Doolittle, to any of my female friends," said Mrs. Thompson; "beyond that, gentlemen, I leave parties to make their own selections."

"Mr. Thompson," said I, "you never found such a treasure as your wife, in an ordinary 'napkin.' I have been opposed to too much cloth, generally displayed in dining-room furniture; but an entire table-cloth would never be sufficiently large to conceal her." Finding myself a good deal animated on this occasion, and fearing my compliments would be misconstrued, and that my habits had become "fixed," I thrust both hands beneath the skirts of my coat, and walking to the window, attempted to hum off the perfect whirl of thought in which I found my brain.

By the watch, I discovered my pulse now reached eighty; and as sixty-seven was the usual pressure carried on ordinary occasions, I could see that something was wrong somewhere. Thanking Mrs. Thompson for the new light she had thrown upon married life, and proposing a walk over the grounds attached to the house, Mr. Doolittle and myself passed out of a side door and soon found ourselves in further discussion of this interesting topic.

I advanced the proposition to immediately change our state of single unusefulness for one possessing all the advantages so attractively pictured to our minds. I saw before me a world of comfort, a sea of bliss, a haven of rest. Mr. Doolittle endeavored to persuade me to act with due caution and great deliberation.

He had been on the "verge of ruin" several times, knew hundreds of married men who were as unhappy as they could be, and could not conscientiously coincide in my proposed plans. He cited the example of Colonel and Mrs. Thompson's married life as one in a million, and the latter's equal, not to be found on the face of the globe. — Would not deter

me from *duty*,—did not blame any man for putting his light on the top, rather than under a bushel, if it would only burn there ;— had several times placed his own candle in a conspicuous place, but a sudden gust of wind, or the turning upside down of the measure on which it stood, or the stumbling up stairs with the candle-stick, (but oftener *down*, I should judge, from the nature of the bruises represented) had convinced him, that his present course was,— all things considered — the wisest.

The last “engagement” which Mr. Doolittle appeared to take much interest in, he said would have been a success, “had it lasted a trifle longer.” The candle, in this instance, having already burned to the socket, all that remained, I infer, dropped through, or perhaps smoking badly, it was found expedient to place an extinguisher on the “flickering flame,” but if so, he did not state who performed the last humane act.

Returning to the city, Mr. Doolittle and myself separated at the depot, each to attend to his ordinary vocation,— my time being mostly engaged in procuring subscriptions in

behalf of a great reform measure which was to be brought to the notice of the "General Court" at their next general sitting.

Massachusetts has been and ever will be, the great pioneer in the cause of right and justice. The laws enacted by the "Court," are generally adopted by other states. The first duty of all other legislative bodies on this continent, has been immediately after convening, to order the reading of enactments sanctioned by the "General Court;" and, in several instances, this duty—very appropriately—has taken precedence of the delivery of the Governor's message.

The measure to which I refer, (and I here give publicity to this anticipated reform, trusting thereby it may receive the early attention of our friends on the continent, and so meet with their approval as to merit pecuniary aid, of which we stand in pressing need) is, the revival of the wholesome laws, held so sacred by our illustrious sires, and by some oversight, disregarded by many of their degenerate sons: I refer to the "smoking or chewing of tobacco, within the distance of two miles of any habitation."



We are sure of the passage of *this* law, but “wolves in sheep’s clothing,” have weighed it down with the addition of a clause, — taken from the “Puritan’s Guide Book” — to prevent a man “kissing his own wife on the Sabbath,” the continuance of which practice, they claim is in direct violation of the fourth commandment, and by this one offence breaking the entire Mosaic code. The enthusiastic individuals who drafted this bill, omitted every thing referring to another man’s wife, wherein the greatest danger exists. Should the “General Court” adopt the present language of the framers of this proposed new law, considerable work, no doubt, will at once fall into the hands of the State Constabulary, which I am proud to say, is composed of a most zealous and disinterested band of brothers, who swerve not from performing their duties, without fear or favor. The last word should be printed in italics; I notice, however, it is not customary to discriminate, when every virtue stands out equally prominent.

The words of Mrs. Colonel Thompson were constantly in my thoughts. The picture of

perfect bliss so artistically drawn, — the realization of which would prolong life and give to my existence that wanting link, connecting the soul with things ethereal — became a subject of deep and earnest meditation.

Mr. Doolittle's experience I valued; but, as he had never *possessed* these joys, as he had only grasped at the shadow without reaching the substance, I did not seek his advice on this occasion. I remembered the care-worn appearance of the several married gentlemen I had formerly met at the Club-House, and their words of devotion for their families, — which at this time I realized — had great weight on my mind. I did not feel inclined, however, to become too much attached to woman, or even to any one object; and wondered how I could reconcile my former ideas of married life, with that represented as being the only true one, and possessing such unalloyed happiness.

Saying nothing to my friend Doolittle, I called on Mrs. Thompson, who, agreeably to her promise, introduced me to several of her acquaintances, regretting she had no sisters to add to the attraction. It was not long

before my intentions became known, as it was circulated I was "in the market." Invitations began to flow in, parties were given especially for my entertainment, picnics planned two seasons in advance, European tours traveled over and over on the map, until the attractions connected with Palestine and Jerusalem had become as familiar as those surrounding the Frog Pond on Boston Common. It was "Mr. Thistle" here, and "Mr. Thistle" there; I never imagined I was entitled to one hundredth part of the honors now showered upon me. I began to think I had better elevate my "designs," and when I should propose, do it in view of the lady's *temporal* as well as spiritual comfort, as I had discovered it would cost something to realize the ordinary comforts of life, to say nothing of the anticipations of many, whose acquaintance I thus made.

Every one, unfortunately, had formed an idea I was quite wealthy, but no one could describe *exactly* in what my property consisted; and therefore concluded my means must be invested in Government securities.

During all this time, it was difficult for me

to engage in my correspondence, owing to the frequent calls of my friend Doolittle. He was never inquisitive, although often expressing his surprise at the diligence manifested on my part, while engaged in writing at my table. He thought I had a good deal of scribbling to perform all at once, and advised me to use larger sheets of paper, so that I could say more at one time, and not be constantly writing on such small and nonsensical "scraps." He even volunteered his opinion as to the manner of folding my letters, and thought the style of envelopes I employed unbecoming that of a "business communication." Taking up a blank sheet of note paper and discovering a large "T," highly colored, at the top, he remarked, I had become extravagant or else I was in love; and that either was equally expensive and about as useless. "However, go on," said he; "put your candle-stick as high as you please, Mr. Thistle, and when you require any advice regarding love-affairs, please send for me. I profess to have had some experience in such matters."

The glance Mr. Doolittle gave me, I shall

never forget. This man, thoroughly disappointed, — who had gone the wrong way to work to accomplish his designs, — often did not wait long enough for engagement ideas to culminate, — sometimes deferring action until two ideas could not be found worthy of being united, what did he know, I asked myself, about the refulgence of that light, darting from a ray of ethereal bliss? How could he judge her whom *I* should select, and who would possess the attributes of Perfection?

“Friend Doolittle,” said I, “I am unable to state what may be the result of my correspondence. I don’t know that I shall ever realize one-half of my anticipations; but I am determined to try, and see for myself.” “No objections, Mr. Thistle,” said my friend, “I would recommend rather than dissuade. Continue to cherish your glowing expectations, but when you are entirely through, mark the similarity existing between this play, and the honors conferred by taking the degree of ‘Companion of the Corporate-Body of Select Few.’ You’ll want a ‘Sign of Distress,’ Mr. Thistle, in this new ‘journey’ of life, and perhaps somebody else may have possession of the secret.”

Such insinuations caused the immediate concentration of gun-powder within me, and I frankly told Mr. Doolittle that every one, making such selections as he had, and conducting engagements in the manner related by him, deserved disappointment through life. "You should have been *sure*, Mr. Doolittle; *certain* of what you were doing," I added.

"So I was 'sure,' and very 'certain' I was making a mistake, Mr. Thistle, and I have never regretted the result in either case," said my friend.

From this time Mr. Doolittle did not refer to my course of action, but left me to work out my experiment entirely in my own way. Several weeks had passed, before I fully decided to whom I should make proposals of marriage. This accomplished, I desired as brief a period of correspondence as possible, having already exhausted every topic I could think of.

My intended, Miss Stebbins, I understood had inherited about thirty thousand dollars; the income of which, together with the percentage received on my subscription-list for

moneys thus collected, I deemed sufficient to support us comfortably. Even throwing aside the income from my own estate, — consisting of half an acre of swamp-land — and the probability of not much resulting from my collection fees, I considered the circumstances favorable, quite as much so as I could expect, if not *fully* up to my “designs.”

Passing the door of an auction-room, I entered, and moved toward the seller’s stand. I heard, “twenty dollars — do I hear no more? Twenty dollars once: Twenty dollars twice; Why! gentlemen; this lot of household-furniture cost five hundred dollars. Every article is not only useful, but absolutely necessary for house-keeping purposes, and I am only offered twenty dollars. Who says *twenty-one*? One shall I have? *Twenty-one*, and down she goes. Mr. Thistle, is that you? for once, you are the right man in the right place. Here’s a lot of stuff you can’t do without; you’ve got to buy them some time, any way: wash-tubs, flat-irons, mops, bathing-tub, kitchen-table, half a dozen sets shovel and tongs, a couple of coal-hods, snow-shovel, sardine-opener, a superb lot of

blankets and window-shades, a capital ice-chest, lot of assorted jars, two knife-boxes, table-brush, kitchen clock, &c., &c., too valuable, and too numerous to mention, and I'm only offered Twenty dollars: shall I say *Twenty-one*, Mr. Thistle?"

I nodded my head to the auctioneer, and, *presto*, I realized I was almost a married man. "Twenty-one dollars and given away: walk round this way, Mr. Thistle," said the auctioneer, pointing to the cash-clerk, "and you'll receive a bill. As the articles are rather varied, Mr. Clerk, you'll please lump the whole affair."

Slightly overcome by the sudden transformation experienced in my case, I sat down on one of the articles, which I afterwards took to be a bread-trough on rockers. Finding my seat uncomfortable, I was about moving, when an elderly lady accosted me, and inquired, "Mister, about what would be your price for this 'ere cradle, if I should conclude to take it?" "That's a bread-trough, marm," said I: "you never saw a cradle built in that shape."

"A bread-trough," responded my aged female adviser, "why! my good man, that



'ere cradle's been in our family a-more nor seventy years to my knowledge. I was rocked to sleep in that same 'bread-trough,' as you call it, and that's the reason I prize it. I don't want to part with it, if the officer did attach it." "I understand; you were the owner and desire to retain the thing," pointing to a box large enough to rock an entire generation in at once. "You may have it, marm: take it away, and every thing else belonging to that specific article of furniture that I may have purchased."

I was a good deal relieved at my timely discovery and disposal of such a useless piece of furniture. How would I have felt, thought I, to have invited Miss Stebbins to look over my entire purchase? and what would Mr. Doolittle have said, had he heard of it? The furniture was removed by my carman, and hurriedly thrown together on the floor of a vacant store-room.

Miss Stebbins was immediately sent for, and an examination of the furniture made, when nearly every article purchased was found either broken, or so completely worn and useless as to be of little or no value.

My intended, tossing her head and snapping her handkerchief, shrugging her shoulders, and compressing her lips into an ironical smile, finally recommended me to "try again." She did not appear to place much value on this, my first speculation; said little, but insisted upon my sending the "traps" to an open lot, and making a bonfire of the whole.

I felt a good deal mortified; and as soon as circumstances permitted, I made an effort to dispose of the "traps." Accordingly, accompanying a dealer in second-hand furniture to my store-house, I exhibited the lot, extolled their usefulness, spoke of their original value as represented by the seller, and asked him what he would give.

"Those two trundle-beds," said he, "are out of date. That crib isn't worth store room; nearly every hoop is off the wash-tubs; that old ice-chest I've seen before; lining completely rusted out. The blankets are shoddy affairs, moth-eaten, and have seen a good deal of army service. Bath-tub's bottom is decayed; turn it over, and you'll see how it looks. Window-curtains good enough, except for the lettering, 'Wines, Liquors and

Cigars:’ can’t sell these things in Boston. That kitchen-table has but three legs. You bought these at auction?”

“Just so, just so,” said I; adding, “How did you know where they came from?” “I sent a good many of these articles there, myself,” said my furniture dealer, “to be disposed of; sorry I did not know you were buying; could have saved you something.”

“Well! you could,” I remarked, “and you could have saved me a vast deal of mortification besides. My intended has seen these things, and returned home, having formed an unfavorable impression, I fear; indeed, I might say she has,—quite so; she even recommended me to burn the entire lot.”

“Well,” said my furniture dealer, “I think her opinion worthy of consideration; I would recommend pretty much the same course to be pursued. These traps are not worth, Mr. Thistle, five dollars all told. I would not offer that for them.” “Did I understand you to say,” I asked, “there are ‘trundle-beds,’ ‘cribs, &c.,’ embraced in this purchase, exposed to your view, and which you recognize as such?”

“What once were, Mr. Thistle; but not much left of them now. That ice-chest, however, can be repaired, but it will cost as much as it comes to. The army-blankets are worth nothing, except for horse-blankets. Twenty flat-irons, worth two cents a pound, for old iron. These jars may bring fifty cents, for the lot. I’ll give you, for all, four dollars and a half, and pay cartage, and not a farthing more. All other articles I see are not worth their moving.” I told Mr. Furniture-man—and the original proprietor thereof—to take them off my hands at his own price. He passed me four dollars and fifty cents, but here did not end all the circumstances connected with this unfortunate purchase.

For several days previous, Miss Stebbins appeared more distant in her manners; less attracted by my efforts to please, and disposed to write me short and rather formal letters. In character, she had been recommended as the embodiment of Mrs. Thompson’s idea of what a woman should be; and, indeed, I had until within a few days considered her as almost perfect.

Receiving a note, requesting me to call at

Miss Stebbins' residence, I hastened to comply, but received, unexpectedly, a cold and comfortless reception. An idea occurred to me, that this might be done in order to test my feelings of sincerity ; and, perhaps, to see how far she could advance in the way of promotion to the Captaincy of the company, of which she had been, thus far, an active member. I listened to all that was said, and though "feelingly expressed," I could not make up my mind that her remarks were in earnest. She alluded to the unfortunate advertisement, the more unfortunate "introductory exercises," the nature of my business, expressing some doubts as to the adequacy of my income to meet family expenses.

Miss Stébbins, I perceived, had received a good deal of valuable information from some source ; but I endeavored to explain away the unfortunate events that had occurred, freely acknowledged my personal income to be small, but expressed myself as placing great confidence in her ability and disposition to supply every such deficiency on my part, through her own personal resources.

If I had touched off a powder-mill, while

standing within the walls of the same, I could not have been blown higher, or more effectually out of sight. "Amiability of disposition," and every other cardinal virtue, exploded in rapid succession. I sat down, and after collecting my scattered ideas, inquired if she was in earnest, or doing all this simply to test the state of the condition of my present internal organization.

Throwing a package of letters into my lap, also a small package containing a copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," an argument against the use of Tobacco, and in favor of the passage of the law about to be brought to the notice of the "General Court," and a lot of tin-types of myself, which I had presented to her for gratuitous distribution among inquiring friends, she marched out of the room, slamming half a dozen doors after her, as if determined to seek an exclusively retired spot.

The powder in my composition had now commenced concentrating. I was more provoked than mortified, and felt thankful that my friend Doolittle's prediction had developed itself at so early an hour. But where is Doo-

little himself? thought I. Something must be done on my part. An extinguisher had been put on my candle, by completely reversing the position of the luminary, and thrusting the wick-end, — already blown out — as far into the socket as possible.

No tumbling headlong from attic to cellar, with a candle stick in both hands, no typhoon tempest of the China sea, could have so completely wrecked my anticipations, or more forcibly convinced me of the utter uncertainty of all "temporal blessings." Doolittle, thought I, *will* sympathize; to him will I reveal this present load of affliction. Woman! how distrustful, how dangerous, how sensitive about small things, how awfully explosive! Gathering up my several remembrancers, I hastened to my room, and prepared my mind for a full recital of all that had transpired. I left Miss Stebbins without saying another word; in fact, could not find a member of the family to whom I could speak, had I so desired.



She marched out of the room, slamming half a dozen doors after her.  
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## VII.

**H**OW to broach the subject of my late disaster when next meeting Mr. Doolittle, was a question now to be decided. The early hours of the evening of my discomfiture, — the result of my last interview with Miss Stebbins — I passed in mental agony, while nervously pacing the floor of my apartment and realizing, for the first time, my complete isolation from the world. Life and beauty heretofore exhibited in everything around me, now wore a cold and gloomy garb; while the deathlike aspect pervading all external things, proved only the reflection of my own frozen heart. The sound of footsteps was but the moving of some dreaded spirit, possessed of fire unquenchable: the whisper of a voice was the premonition of an outburst of fury, only requiring the Crater of Vesuvius through which to rage, to equal its volcanic thundering or calcining power. In my dreams I seemed

to see a host of objects black, deformed, and fiendish in their looks, taking possession of the place, where I was king. Their incantations, — not for raising, but tormenting spirits — consisted in the howling of my name.

Starting from these terrible visions, I awoke, but only again to realize deep mortification and disgrace that appeared utterly insurmountable. How, thought I, could Mr. Doolittle survive five attacks? No doubt one or more must have approached the horrors of this I now experience. — “Where *is* Doolittle,” I muttered, “where’s the philosopher, the friend of my youth, he who has had an unequaled experience in matters of this kind?”

As soon as politeness would permit, I dispatched a note to my friend’s place of business, soliciting an early interview, as I had an affair of vital importance to present for his consideration.

About nine o’clock Mr. Doolittle made his appearance. A patient, suffering from a combined attack of tooth-ache, neuralgia, rheumatism, gout, and cholera, each doing its utmost

to excel the other in proof of single devotion to the cause, and attachment to the possessor, could not have been more depressed in receiving a visit from the entire medical fraternity, than I was elated and consoled when this unaccountable, philosophical, humane being, so seasonably entered my room. I had made up my mind to control my feelings, if possible, and submit to a thorough probing, even to dissection, if absolutely necessary.

No man, thought I, can experience many such attacks without possessing an alterative, probably only known to a dealer in patent-rights. Mine was a case requiring decisive and immediate action; not one to solicit the advice of one physician while purchasing the nostrums of another and finally discarding the administration of both, which latter course, if practical in general, would certainly prove fatal in this instance. Besides, I could not afford to expend much money in my present researches after consolation.

A person possessing only the income derived from a per-centage on all moneys received in aid of the cause represented on my anti-tobacco subscription list, together with

the mere expectation of eventually being able to rent a half-acre of swamp land, while still suffering great depression in mind from unrealized anticipations relating to pecuniary and domestic interests, must live within his resources, and mine were now somewhat limited.

Between Mr. Doolittle and myself, little ceremony existed. On entering my room, he threw himself listlessly into an easy chair, seized a morning paper, lifted both feet to the top of the grate, and without removing his hat commenced running over the shipping list of "Arrivals and Departures." My face was turned from him at the moment he entered the room, — being engaged in tying up a package of letters which were intended soon to be returned to the infuriated authoress herself.

"What's up, friend Thistle?" at length asked Mr. Doolittle, then without pausing for an answer, he continued, "I see there's considerable activity among shippers;" (reading aloud) "'The Bark Thistle!' — Why! here's your name — 'receives quick dispatch;' — and here's your intended's name; — singular coin-

cidence ! ‘Clipper Ship Stebbins,—no commander yet secured ; up for a new voyage ; taken off the old line ; will receive an entire new outfit ; thoroughly coppered and copper fastened, also to be fresh painted, &c.’” Turning the paper over, he continued, “‘Domestics on the decline ; hops active ; thrashing machines, enough for present demand ; vinegar quick ; vitriol abundant.’”

You’re a nice man, friend Thistle, engaged to be married for over four weeks, and yet have never permitted me to condole with you. By the way, I am well acquainted with your intended. How do you both progress ? People say that she’s already been engaged several times ; I know of one engagement only, besides that of yours, which I can speak of with any certainty, and judge from what little experience I possess, you won’t have much care after being married. I reckon she’s a capable, active, thoughtful and *expressive* woman ; any thing she lays her hand to, has to move. Hope you’ve struck ——”

“Stop ! stop !” said I, “stop right where you are, Mr. Doolittle. I’ve listened ; — I’ve kept cool, — I am cool ; — I’m not excited in

the least, — I'm calm, perfectly serene. Look at me! look at *me*, Mr. Doolittle." Here I sank to a chair, folding both hands on my lap, while my disheveled hair looked as if belonging to an upholsterer's stock of picked stuffing material, and my eyes as if out on a furlough from some Insane Asylum. "Gaze on me, Mr. Doolittle," said I, "and *weep*."

Mr. Doolittle had dropped the paper when first interrupted by my appeal, and turned his head partially towards me, his countenance immediately assuming an ironical smile. He still continued unconcernedly to sit there, playfully striking the tip of his boot with a light cane which he occasionally carried. "What's up? what's broke now?" he finally inquired.

"It's all up," said I, "the engagement is broken, everything is in a most terrible condition; my head is crazed, I'm a deranged man, Mr. Doolittle; and pray tell me why *you* have not long since been an inmate of a Lunatic Asylum?"

"Do I understand you to say," inquired Mr. Doolittle, in a remarkably slow and plaintive manner, "that the engagement heretofore

"Stop, stop!" said I; "stop right where you are, Mr. Doolittle." — PAGE 165.







existing between yourself and Miss Spitfire Stebbins is now brought to an end?" "I suppose," said I, "that is the present state of the case; you've had a good deal of experience and I want your opinion."

I here related all the circumstances of our engagement, from the commencement; read several of her letters and was proceeding to read others, when Mr. Doolittle informed me it was not necessary to continue, in order for him to form a correct opinion in regard to the affair.

He proceeded: — "Well, I've had just such a fuss with that Spitfire myself; and the letters you have read are almost a correct copy of those I received, with only the change of names. Did you know I was once engaged to this same Will-o-the-wisp?"

"I did not; I did not, I assure you, Mr. Doolittle," said I; "will you continue your remarks? they appear to be of such a nature as may bring consolation in my case."

"To make a long story short," said Mr. Doolittle, "neither you nor myself can spend time to talk over this matter; you have made a fortunate escape. Miss Spitfire is all palaver,

smiles and deceit. She's possessed of a good mind, it's true; and of graceful, attractive manners; but she's not the owner of a thousand dollars in her own right, as the investment of her funds proved a ruinous speculation, for which she has no one to blame but herself. I was engaged to this same person, and although I never mention names until necessity requires, as in this case, may I ask if she never alluded to me during your acquaintance?"

"Never! Mr. Doolittle;" I replied, "never in her life. I once indirectly spoke of you in course of conversation, but she requested me to preserve the greatest secrecy regarding our affairs, and be very particular never to allow her name to fall from my lips in the presence of any one. But tell me, Mr. Doolittle, what shall I now do to occupy the same position in society as I formerly did? How can this whole matter be settled, my mind relieved from this terrible excitement, and I, once more, restored to the confidence of the public? What you have intimated has already removed a mountain of care and anxiety from my mind. Give me your recipe for a complete

recovery from this disease and I shall be the most grateful of all mortals."

"I will do so," said Mr. Doolittle. "First, place that package of letters—intended I judge for Miss Stebbins—in the fire place. Next, put your candle back under the bushel where it rightfully belongs, and don't forget what I shall now say. Hereafter, keep your mind on your business; if your business is in that half-acre of swamp land you own, borrow a hoe,—if you do not possess one—and commence digging immediately for a deposit of cut-diamonds; when you find *these*, you may place confidence in woman, generally, but never until then. Not one woman in twenty deserves a husband, and not one husband in fifty is fit to live with his wife. So keep single. About all you'll have to do, in fact, will be to look after your washing, sew on a button now and then, and watch the dilapidated state of your stockings; add a quarter of a dollar weekly to your laundry expenses, for buttons, yarn and labor, and you'll be relieved even of this responsibility."

I listened to all that this wonderful man said, determined to profit by it. I burned

the letters, resolved to add twenty-five cents a week to laundry expenses, and to pursue my vocation with renewed zeal and courage. I now began to think I was not required as an auxiliary to the comforts of another, and to induce a change in my habits I considered it necessary to discover attractions beyond the realization of the past, and fully up to my newly formed standard in the future.

My friend Doolittle left my room, advising me to think no more about the affair ; adding, by the time I had experienced four more such attacks, I should become accustomed to this old fashioned "chill and fever," and find it quite easy to shake them off. Several of my intimate friends recommended me to seek different employment from the one then followed, and give up the "fanatical project" of preventing the use of tobacco, which so long had been one of the greatest objects of my life.

The late acquaintance made through my connection with the Club, brought me in contact with several business men of our city, among whom was a Mr. Sprout, who held out

to me flattering encouragement to enter upon a more lucrative employment. This gentleman offered me a book-agency, and a salary of fifty dollars monthly, if I would enter his service. I conversed with friend Doolittle and from him received no little encouragement, at least to make an effort, and see what could be accomplished. I accepted the generous offer of Mr. Sprout,—having already abandoned the idea of occupying the rooms which Mr. Doolittle had obtained the refusal of—and as I still remained at the hotel, I was not long arranging to leave for this new field of labor.

Mr. Sprout was engaged in publishing a series of Reading books. Obtaining a set from the publisher, I earnestly set myself to work in order to become thoroughly master of the elocutionary principles. Having had no little experience in my earlier days in teaching this branch, I presumed I should meet with a welcome as well as with success among the educational community, and felt assured the arrangement entered into between employer and employé would result in our mutual benefit. The Readers for which I

enlisted were known as the *new* "Sampsonian Series." The old books, by the same author, met with several mishaps, and after severe criticism, were discarded and entirely abandoned.

I devoted many hours to the study of these books. The primary works were fair, but I could not discover any very strong indications of practical knowledge displayed by the compiler, for *I* found little or nothing to entitle the maker to be called an Author. As the higher books of the series puzzled me still more, I obtained the assistance of an eminent elocutionist, engaged in bringing forward several standard works on this subject, who gave me lessons in reading. I then ventured to commence my labors in pursuit of some one who was suffering for more light and greater knowledge than could otherwise be obtained from any other elocutionary work extant.

My first visit was made to the town of ——. Calling upon the Superintendent of Schools, I put on one of my blandest smiles and inquired if a change of Readers, in his schools, was not absolutely necessary.

I at once exhibited the books of the series

for which I was engaged, and after an hour's conversation, I inferred from his silence a favorable impression had been formed. The Superintendent suddenly rising from his chair, remarked, "these books possess no advantage over the books now in use in our schools. I don't believe we should wish to change at present, nor do I think much of the elocutionary arrangement over which you have made considerable talk; in fact, it is an old system and not so clearly illustrated as you imagine. Your primary books contain nothing new; most of the selections, I notice, are from the old 'Sampsonian Series,' or copied from other authors. No, sir; we don't want your books."

"My dear sir," said I, "allow me to convince you. This series, in reality, is the work of several of the most distinguished educators ever known to New England. The elocutionary system is far superior to any extant; a little old, so too is the Koran, but not the less serviceable. The pictures have been drawn by our best artists. The books bound by the first mechanics in the art, and should it meet your pleasure I would be happy

to declaim a few pieces illustrative of the system we have adopted. This, too, is my first visit to secure their introduction, and if you can't adopt the entire series, can I not persuade you to take the Primer?" With a significant look, I inquired if he possessed a dictionary. He said he did not. Developing myself at this response, I remarked, I would allow him anything for his services he might require, and send him also a vocabulary of the English language, gratuitously, if he would introduce the whole or a part of the series.

"I don't do my work," said the Superintendent, "on conditions first proposed; as for the dictionary, the 'gift-enterprise business' has become so common, a school committee-man couldn't have one in his possession, unless every person seeing it would suppose it the result of an investment in that direction, if not a present for the sake of Auld Lang Syne; although I never saw *you* before in my life, I want to give you a little advice," continued the Superintendent; "don't expect in your travels to catch every man you meet by such offers."



“You misunderstand me, altogether, my dear sir,” said I. “The gratuitous offer I made you is for your unbiased influence in their favor, while the vocabulary is for reference only of children attending the common schools; it would be best, I thought, to keep it at your house, as the most convenient place and the easiest of access. No; no; don’t think me disposed to make any improper advances; I am above suspicion, I trust.”

My school committee-man at this juncture, having a sudden engagement at a neighboring house, and one, I thought from his actions, requiring immediate attention, left me quite abruptly, not even bidding me “good morning.” I gathered up my books and started by the nearest possible route for the depot, taking the first train for an adjoining town.

On my journey I chanced to meet a gentleman engaged in teaching school in the very place I was about visiting. After enlisting his sympathy and securing, as I supposed, his influence, I said to him, “you are just the man we want in our city schools, and I am instructed to secure the services of those I think proper, and, so soon as you have intro-

duced the 'Sampsonian Series' into the schools of your town, by personal labor, or influencing the Superintendent to adopt the same, if you will call at our office you shall be placed at the head of the best school in the city, or provided with a book-agency which will prove equally lucrative."

Giving him an order for a set of the "Sampsonian" books "for examination with a view to their introduction," I noticed, he — unintentionally, no doubt — dropped the paper on the floor of the car, and turning to his friend, I thought I heard him say, "such things are about played out." Continuing my journey, and passing the town in which the teacher resided, I felt confident I had misunderstood his remarks, as he appeared so gentlemanly, and that the books would be adopted through his instrumentality. I did not clearly conceive how many teachers could find ready employment, should I engage their services; but my publisher, no doubt, understood his branch of the business.

Taking up a paper I noticed a meeting of the Board of Education of a neighboring state about to take place. This, I thought, would

enable me to introduce my new "Sampsonian Series" to the notice of the members of the Board, and I thought as they were so "superior" in merit, these excellent books no doubt would be immediately recommended for general use throughout the state. Without a moment's loss of time, I started for the town in which the Board were to hold their session. Arriving at the hotel, I found it filled with book-agents of all sorts. A few were jolly and full of expectations; others, solemn as the grave; while very many looked as frightened as if just chased by a bear.

I moved about unknown for a while, keeping my eyes open and watching the artful dodges of the enemy. Secret meetings by book-agents were being held in nearly every room in the house; first, one plan would be devised to cut off the encroaching invader of another's rights; next, a trap would be laid for the accomplishment of some grand scheme, while five minutes later, every agent would be running to and fro, to ward off some newly discovered plot for a perfect annihilation of their newly conceived plans.

The principal books I had to compete with,

I supposed, were the "Noah-antic Series." The Board, meantime, were in secret session, except to hear what each representative of a book had to say in favor of its adoption. Sending in my name, as the general agent of the "Sampsonian Series" of text books, I was soon admitted to an audience. I found the majority of the Board to be men possessing discriminating and comprehensive minds; men evidently knowing their duty and determined to perform the same, without fear or favor. After spending an hour eulogizing the reading books, dwelling at length on the elocutionary principles therein taught, during which time I received the attention of the full Board, I majestically bowed, and retired to await its decision.

Several days had thus been passed in deciding upon the books best adapted to the wants of the schools, and from the appeal made on the part of various representatives, one would suppose each series, in its turn, was not only decidedly superior to the one last heard from, but the only one then in use in every school in the country, and contained more "practical lessons" than could be absolutely taught, or

understood by the agent himself. "The Noah-antic Series" contained as many pictures as a family bible, while in binding, "great superiority" existed in each series presented. An unfortunate event occurred, however, on the part of the agent in presenting the Noah-antic Series, who, in opening a book to a too great extent, caused thereby an entire "form" to be loosed from the cover, which dropped to the floor.

It is sufficient for me to add, in conclusion, the "Sampsonian Series" and the "Noah-antic Series," were both rejected by the Board. All said I had acted my part nobly, especially the landlord, as he handed me a receipted bill for a week's entertainment.

My success in book-agency I found would not amount to much, and retracing my steps to the city I was early informed by the publisher, I had better seek some other employment. I "concurred most fully," having discovered he knew best as to my qualifications, nor was I long in comprehending the meaning of his remarks.

Leaving the book-agency, I returned to private life, but for a few days only. A friend

having composed a set of "Business Rules," for the sale of which I was appointed General Agent, a few hundred copies only were printed, in order to test their acceptance in the estimation of the public. The first edition was sold in two days' time; a second edition of ten thousand was then ordered to be printed, and sub-agents were appointed in various cities and towns for the distribution and sale of the same.

Here commenced a new era in my life. The "Business Rules" found a ready market, and orders were received beyond our ability to meet. Profits began to increase, and I found myself the possessor of ten and sometimes twenty dollars a day. Perhaps no space can be better occupied than by a record of these Rules,—permission having been granted me for this purpose by the copyright owner, and which, have served as the ground work of my success.

BUSINESS men, in business hours, attend only to business matters.

Social calls are best adapted to Social Circles.

Make your business known in few words, and lose few moments in so doing.

Let your dealings with a stranger be carefully considered, and tried friendship duly appreciated.

A mean act will soon recoil, and a man of honor will be esteemed.

Leave "Tricks of Trade" to those whose education was never completed.

Treat all with respect; confide in few; wrong no man.

"Be never afraid to say No," and always prompt to acknowledge a wrong.

Because a friend is polite, do not think his time valueless.

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Having been successful in this enterprise, I was tendered positions of greater responsibility in various mercantile and other interests. Accepting one best adapted to my acquirements, taste and education, I performed the duties incumbent, with profit to the employer, and I trust with honor to the employé.

The result of the past few months convinced me that worldly possessions are not all we require to complete the "journey

through the wilderness." The bandage removed from our eyes, the disguise of false custom thrown off, with the fraternal "grip" of honesty and friendship in our possession, with the true "pass" to morality and virtue revealed to us, with the "sign" of Christian charity and brotherly love exemplified in every act, the great end of life can only be attained through these exalted traits indelibly written upon the folds of that standard, which, floating over us, will constantly inspire man to nobler deeds, but trailing at his feet, will impede progress and convert manliness into cowardice, and cowardice into crime.





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