

①

Holder for Scorpio No. II

Great Britain



PS3505
H2542
1918.

Copyright, 1918
John Armstrong Chaloner.



©CLA508115

NOV 12 1918

2011

The writer—some twenty years ago—had an experience similar to that of the hero of Charles Reade's novel "Very Hard Cash"—which novel led to a reform of the treatment of persons confined in Insane Asylums throughout Great Britain.

Not being a lawyer, the gifted author of "Very Hard Cash" was not equipped to pierce the sophistry and fraud which has gradually crept into English legislation with the growth of Private Insane Asylums, and the increase of that section of the Medical Profession which makes a specialty of running sane men and women into Private Madhouses for life, on a perjured charge of insanity, for a handsome consideration—a heavy fee.

The writer—being a law-writer by profession, and author of "The Lunacy Law of the World"—a law book of some four hundred pages—treating of the Lunacy Laws of Great Britain, France, Italy, Russia, Germany, Austro-Hungary and the United States—the author—in order to write "Chaloner on Lunacy, or The Lunacy Law of the World," aforesaid, was forced to penetrate the fuliginous regions of Parliamentary enactments of the past seventy-five or a hundred years—the period in which the healthy and sound English laws concerning Lunacy were surreptitiously undermined by interested parties, *i. e.* proprietors of Private Madhouses, Lunacy Quacks, and that branch of the Legal Profession sufficiently debauched to aid and abet their villainies—and in their stead, the infamous travesties of justice now in force in England raised their poisonous heads, and deprived a sane man or woman of notice in a proceeding against his or her sanity, as well as of opportunity to appear and defend himself or herself against the charge which would imprison him or her in a living Hell—a Madhouse cell—for life.

The situation is equally damnable the world over.

A glance at the critiques by the Law Reviews of "Chaloner On Lunacy" will show how wide-spread is the evil.

Reform is notoriously slow. The greater the abuse—the more deeply riveted in wealth and power and prestige—the mightier will be the resistance. Therefore, it should surprise no intelligent reader to hear that the writer is now in his twenty-second year of legal warfare to repossess himself of his property rights in New York State—he having been illegally declared insane there on March 10th, 1897, after having been corruptly lured there from his home at "The Merry Mills", Cobham, Virginia, on February 13th, 1897, by his false friend, the late Stanford White, acting in collusion with his—the writer's—long estranged, and hostile brothers and sisters, who, although each a millionaire in his or her own right, nevertheless coveted the million or two—by recent legacies it now amounts to two million dollars—of the writer.

The writer—on the court record of the past twenty-two years—never did or said an irrational thing. Therefore, his hostile brothers, and a hostile male cousin were forced to perjure themselves in order

to "run the writer in". This they made no bones about doing. And since—woe is me!—a member of the New York Bar since 1885, and in good standing—and since—woe is me!—to have to confess it—since perjury is practically unwhipped of justice in New York State—the statistics showing that it is committed—and nothing said—nothing done by *anybody*—the statistics showing that it is committed at a conservative estimate, in seventy-five out of every hundred litigated cases in the "Empire State"—in the State of New York—therefore, *unlike* Great Britain, where perjury is a dangerous thing, and relentlessly pursued by Justice, even to the ends of the earth—the conspirators against the writer's happiness, health, liberty and property, triumphed. The victim of a lie was haled to a Madhouse Cell for life, March thirteenth, 1897, without ever seeing the inside of a court room, or the outside of a Judge of any description—to say nothing of the pettiest kind of a petty jury!

After four years of imprisonment *at over a thousand pounds a year for the privilege*—said sum being paid to the Proprietors of the Private Insane Asylum in which the writer was confined—to-wit: The Society of the New York Hospital, of 15th Street and Fifth Avenue, New York—falsely called "Bloomingdale"—at White Plains, Westchester County, New York, where the Insane branch of the New York Hospital is situated—twenty miles from the metropolis: after some four years imprisonment at White Plains, aforesaid, and a forced mulct of his estate to the tune of some four thousand pounds, the writer made good his escape, and, after a series of adventures, fetched up in Virginia, September 20th, 1901, in the County seat of his County of Albemarle, to-wit: Charlottesville, the home of Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and on November 6th, 1901, was tried in open court by the late Judge John M. White, Judge of the County Court of Albemarle County, Virginia, and pronounced sane and competent to manage himself and his affairs.

Since then, the weary fight has gone on and is still going on. It has cost the writer in lawyers' fees and expert Medical fees alone, some fifteen thousand pounds. It will require three years more for his case to run its course through the law courts. He firmly anticipates defeat in each and every court. Why, it is not necessary to state. At the end of this time, the Great War will be over—when he proposes to bring his wrongs to the attention of Congress—Congress by that time being able to take its mind off this frightful war—and give the people's Representatives and Senators a chance to remedy an evil the courts—both State and Federal—both of the State of New York and the United States—were powerless to remedy.

The writer described the situation in a book of some five hundred pages entitled "Four Years Behind the Bars of 'Bloomingdale'" or "The Bankruptcy of Law in New York". Said book was published in 1906, and sent to some fifty or more of the leading newspapers of the United States. So startling were its revelations regarding high society in New York, that only some *five* out of the fifty dared to notice the book. These five gave the book marked praise.

It therefore occurred to the writer, seven years later, to try the effect of verse on the phlegmatic American press. He therefore composed the *pièce de résistance* of *Scorpio II*—at least in a satirical way—to-wit: the sequence or chain of seventeen sonnets, treating Lunacy Legislation in England and—more particularly—New York State—and—woe is me!—once more—some 40% of the States of this Union—beginning with sonnet No. 74: “Broadway, or ‘The Great White Way’—to Hell”, through sonnet No. 91, which concludes the sequence of ten sonnets entitled: “The Scarlet Women”.

These seventeen sonnets paint the situation allegorically—but somewhat luridly—if we do say so, who should not.

A second sequence of ten sonnets, running from sonnet No. 92 through sonnet No. 101, entitled: “A Missionary”—also paints a subject very dear to the writer’s heart.

We mention these sequences on the same altruistic, philanthropic impulse which impels a miner to send a man with a red flag to each end of the road before touching off a blast of dynamite.

We are aware that British reviewers are, as a rule, averse to reviews being assembled at the rear of a work, and we had made up our mind to humour said prejudice and call down no more lightning upon our head by assembling any more reviews. But, upon reflection, the meat is so strong in *Scorpio II* that the British reviewer may need a friendly arm to lean upon at the first shock. Hence, a carefully curtailed band of American stretcher-bearers—American reviewers—is ready to give first aid to the injured of their braw British Allies. If this sounds flippant, we withdraw it, with an apology. But the language of one or more of the said stretcher-bearers prompted it. He—or they—was—or were—concerned.

Should the British reviewer agree with his American ally that the language is too strong, the writer has only this to say. He goes on record that the fighting of the Americans, from now till the victorious close of this dread war, will be a revelation to the heroic allies—to say nought of the Hell-doomed Hun—a revelation of ferocity—of *gaudia certaminis*—of joy of battle—almost Homeric in its scope, intensity and force. Nothing could surpass the courage of the British, the French, the Belgians, the Italians and the other Allied nations—theirs is a valour *sans peur et sans reproche*. But it is a calm valour—in the British case—a good-natured valour. Whereas with us it is a hot valour—a valour which shys at taking prisoners—to put it somewhat veiledly. And, as the American fights—he writes—shouting his battle-cry: “A Swift! A Swift! A rescue! A rescue!”

Hinc illae lacrimae! Salaam.

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER

“The Merry Mills,”

Cobham,

Virginia.

August 21, 1918.

L'ENVOI.

“Roi ne suis, ni Prince, ni Duc, ni Comte aussi, Je suis le sire de Coucy.”

I am “the Master of ‘The Merry Mills’
Which newspaper line tale tells and our rôle bills.

A MODERN FREE-LANCE.

I’m “*L’Enfant Terrible*” of literature,
Who to high-placed rogues spells discomfiture.

J. A. C.

The Troy RECORD, Troy, New York, October 16, 1915.

The Serpent Of Old Nile. By John Armstrong Chaloner. The Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C.

Mr. Chaloner may be called the *enfant terrible* in literature. His latest *tour de force* consists of two blank verse dramas—*The Serpent Of Old Nile* and *The Hazard of the Die*. Few will deny that sometimes he succeeds in reaching very high levels in the management of his characters, and in the style of his verse, and the unique personality of the author.

THE TIMES-UNION, Albany, New York, August 4, 1913.

Scorpio. By J. A. Chaloner. \$1.50. The Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

“Scorpio” is a volume of sonnets in which the author’s talent as a satirist has been given full play. He is merciless in his attacks upon the frailty of man, and his puny indifference to big, vital matters *which are slowly, but none the less surely, sapping our nation’s strength*. Yet, true poet as he is, no one could revel in the beauty of lighter or more delicate fancies, when he turns his thoughts to things that are not man-made. As he writes of Kipling, it can be said of him: “His work is palpitant with strength and blood; elastic vigor leaps in every line”.

KIPLING.

Thy work is palpitant with strength and blood
Elastic vigor leaps in every line.
There fire of Elizabethan hardihood
Far-reaching and vig’rous as of yore, doth shine.
There glint of bayonet and roll of drum—
That world-encircling drum-tap of the race—
Flash on the eye and pulse-stir with their hum—
There strides the British soldier’s sturdy pace.
New life didst thou impart to British verse.
In Alexandrian doldrums did she swoon—

“In irons” to Formality’s cold curse—
 To her fair sails you came a breezy boon!
 Long may you live to voice your peoples’ will
 A voice whose utterance needs not strength but skill.

Mr. Chaloner is a graduate of Columbia University and a member of the bar. He comes of distinguished ancestry, being the lineal descendant—on the distaff side of the house—of Peter Stuyvesant, the last Dutch Governor of New York—then New Amsterdam—and John Winthrop, appointed by King Charles II, Governor of Massachusetts, besides being a blood relative of the following three prominent Generals in the Revolution: General Nathaniel Greene, recognized as the second General on our side, after Washington—General Francis Marion, of South Carolina, known to History as “The Swamp Fox”, from the trouble he gave, and the chases he led the superior British forces, through his native swamps, at the head of his small body of horse—which makes our author a blood relative of Charlotte de Corday, General Marion being of French Huguenot ancestry, and, through the Heroine of the French Revolution a blood relative of the greatest of French dramatists, Corneille. Lastly, John Armstrong Chaloner is the great-great-grandson of General John Armstrong, on Washington’s staff at the British victory of the Brandywine; and author of the famous Newburgh Addresses, which came near splitting the new-born American Republic in half, by raising such resentment in the breasts of the officers and army when stationed at Newburgh-on-Hudson (after peace with Great Britain) because Congress refused to make good the arrears of pay of the men who had saved them from the halter—that the army was ripe for taking their pay at the point of the sword—and nothing but a hurried trip to Newburgh, and the prayers *and tears* of Washington, saved the situation. Mr. Chaloner also claims relationship with the oldest and wealthiest Knickerbocker families.

THE BIRMINGHAM AGE-HERALD, Birmingham, Alabama, August 10, 1913.

Scorpio, A Book of Sonnets. By J. A. Chaloner.

J. A. Chaloner has arranged in book form a number of his poems entitled “Scorpio” (Sonnets) and among them are some very clever verses.

Perhaps the best one is entitled:

OPPORTUNITY.

Opportunity, thou Mother of events!
 Who bides his time eventual wins his game,
 Sternly refraining from sundry—all attempts,
 Till Opportunity doth back the same.

Opportunity's the beck'ning on of Fate,
 The mystic harbinger of sure success,
 When that clock strikes let no one dare be late,
 Or this world's chances risk beyond redress.
 Opportunity's the Hand of the Unseen,
 Of Nature working with the world of men,
 Her fair Excalibur of metal keen
 Presented once at least to each one's ken.
 Observe the times with patience back'd by nerve,
 When the time's ripe—dart forward!—sans a swerve.

COLUMBUS, OHIO, JOURNAL, Sunday, August 3, 1913.

Scorpio, A Book of Sonnets. By J. A. Chaloner.

Sharp, biting, stinging sonnets that lash and bring the streak of blood to the surface—such are these. Administered with a smirk of scorn, with the lips upturned and teeth showing from between a snarl. Unrelenting, they strike to right and left, always with the same crackling stroke that makes one wish to flee from them and yet attracts because of their hideousness. Merciless they are. Fearless they might be were there any possibility of anyone's resenting their attacks on present day objects and subjects. They are truly whip lashes as the title suggests, and the reader is as glad to quit reading them as he would be to escape from beneath the blows of a cat-o'-nine-tails.

The life story of the poet is interesting, for he is legally sane in Virginia and insane in New York. Four years he spent in "Bloomingdale" where he had been committed by designing friend-enemies, he charges. He is heir to millions, and a number of years he has spent in crying his case from the housetops. Truly an interesting man, good for study of psychologists, but as a sonneteer—ugh, disagreeable. His misfortune, his bitter mind, surely should not be foisted as foundations for, as the reason-for-being for these formally neat sonnets.—W. M. K.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, August 3, 1913.

Scorpio and other sonnets. By J. A. Chaloner.

This is another of the amusing brochures in which Chaloner, who has been declared insane in New York and sane in North Carolina and Virginia, pays his respects to his critics and incidentally prints some sonnets of varying quality. The book is amusing because of the author's frankness and his ability in repartee. It certainly demonstrates that he is in full possession of his faculties.

NEW YORK CITY MORNING TELEGRAPH, Monday, July 21, 1913.

Oh, that our sane and smug citizens could take a leaf from the book ("Scorpio") of John Armstrong Chaloner, who, though officially aberrated in the State of New York, is unofficially and tremendously sane and interesting in all other States. For Mr. Chaloner, it may be said in truth, that he is never dull. I cite a specimen of his verse aimed at one held by the mob to be truly great.

It is his twenty-third sonnet to "The Shaving of Shag Pat"

'Gainst shag "Pat" Shaw take I the field once more—
 The tail of "Scorpio" begins to swish—
 In that "bum" dramatist and bloody bore
 To plant its sting the Zodiac doth wish.
 To be quite frank Shaw is its chopping block
 It's "easy mark" and "good-thing-to-push-along"
 Pat Shaw, whose "bum" dramas are but poppycock
 And hypocrisy, mendacity, stink strong.
 The Shaviad of Shag Pat Shaw this starts—
 O' my fights with smug Pat Shaw the Iliad—
 Divided up in books, cantos, stanzas—parts
 Wherein Shaw "takes the count"—this Shaviad,
 By "Scorpio" Pat Shaw will be *razé*,
 This brazen "*Zingeur*" will be *bien planté*!

I'll wager that Shaw finds in Chaloner his true discoverer.

Another sonnet called "Sans a Wedding Garment" is as sane and as able a handling of the Jap question as it has been my pleasure to see.

It's rather too bad that there are not more persons afflicted with the same able brand of insanity.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, SUN, Sunday, August 3, 1913.

Weird and daring "Scorpio" and its author.

John Armstrong Chaloner, author of "Scorpio" and whose ancestral estate is "The Merry Mills", Cobham, Albemarle County, Virginia, is a gentleman of birth and breeding whose unusual experiences of life have set him apart from other men in a somewhat pathetic way. Married in 1888 to the authoress, Amèlie Rives, and divorced from her in 1895, owing to incompatibility of temper, adjudged insane by New York law and accounted sane in every other State in the Union, John Armstrong Chaloner, master of a fortune committed to the guardianship of others, is a man who has broken his way from asylum captivity to freedom and who, entrenched amid his native hills and supported by his fellow citizens and neighbors, has used his legal education and training to attack with unanswerable arguments the present laws of the United States as they pertain to the commitment of those adjudged insane to lunatic asylums.

Originator of that historic question, "Who's looney now?" Mr. Chaloner, while incarcerated in "Bloomingdale", applied his active mind to self-development and the acquirement of the art of writing sonnets. He has conceived the idea of publishing a poetical quarterly—an idea evolved, he says, by Lord Byron, but never carried into effect by that poet.

To this end, Mr. Chaloner has published "Scorpio No. I", containing "A Poet-Caravan", and other sonnets to the number of fifty-six, some of which were written during his detention at "Bloomingdale" and others as late as June of the present year. In these the author has certainly exhibited the courage of his convictions in the matter of unrestricted criticism and lampooning of people and things that fall beneath his displeasure.

In a prologue of some thirteen pages the author flays without reserve the system and persons instrumental in having him adjudged insane in New York State and confined as a lunatic in "Bloomingdale" Asylum. The board of Governors of the institution and others connected with the case he calls "as gilded a set of rascals as ever glared a reader in the eye!" and of them he says:

"Such gay birds of gilded plumage plucked us neatly of some \$20,000 in coldest cash, mulcted from us as we lay helpless in a cell, at the hands of Stanford White—since gone to a higher tribunal—and later by his brother-in-law, Prescott Hall Butler, also dead."

His immediate family fare no better at his hands, since at their instigation the charges against his sanity were made. In sonnet XXXIV he writes:

THEY ARE SEVEN.

With seven brothers and sisters am I curst,
 My juniors, they, and all are fair to see.
 In them doth beauty make of mask the worst
 That e'er in noble guise hid treachery.
 The women charming as the men are brave—
 Two have brave records in the Spanish War—
 With charm which the beholder soft doth lave,
 As cooling unguents o'er a burning scar.
 Yet these lovely ladies left me to dry-rot
 Linger and perish in a noisome cell
 And yet these warlike brothers blood forgot
 And doomed me untried to a living Hell!
 Three ladies and four gentlemen's the roll
 Their record's knell do I now slowly toll.

Humiliation over the charges against his sanity have caused Mr. Chaloner to revert in the spelling of his name to ancient usage† instead

† The author is sprung from the Chaloners of Denbighshire, Wales. Before emigrating to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1710, the family name was spelled Chaloner—thereafter corrupted to Chanler.

of continuing to write the name Chanler, as other members of the family.

He is the eldest of eight children of the late John Winthrop Chanler, of New York and Charleston, South Carolina. Through his father he is descended from John Winthrop, the first Governor of Massachusetts, and from Peter Stuyvesant, the last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam. His mother was a granddaughter of the original John Jacob Astor, and upon reading, he says, June 21, 1913, in a London dispatch that William Waldorf Astor had acquired the London "Morning Post" in addition to already owning the London "Pall-Mall" Gazette and the London "Observer", he notes the event in sonnet LVI after the following satiric fashion:

THE FUTURE DUKE OF ASTEROID, OR "COUSIN WILLIE".

Bravo! Cousin Willie! *Punch* 'em once again!
 Buy another paper, and then keep on!
 And show these "bloomin', perishin'" Englishmen
 You're *bound* to win the game you're bent upon.
 And when you're made the Duke of Asteroid—
 The Duke of Astor'd be too big for you—
 See that a cleaver's on your arms deployed—
 A butcher's cleaver thereon doth spring in view.
 The Butcher of Waldorf's son a genius was—
 No greater Merchant Prince did ever live—
 So of this genius give the natal cause
 To axe and chopping block all honor give!
 That my blue blood mingled with thy humble strain
 Doth please me much—I love the people plain.

For the press in general he expresses undying gratitude, calling newspapers "The Watch Towers of Liberty", as in sonnet XIX:

A PANEL HOUSE.

The Watch-Towers of Liberty—the Press,
 Those mighty bulwarks against tyranny—
 Whose power for good doth all men deep impress
 Some outposts have that won't stand scrutiny.
 Instead of Watch-Towers these things are "dead-falls"—
 Oubliette-dungeons of a panel-house!
 To sweep whom the besom of destruction calls
 As loudly's cleanliness against a louse!
 By nature these are grinders of the poor
 By nature these are toadies to the rich
 And to tyranny and crime push wide the door
 And for furtive murder have an eager itch.
 Such an one is the "Times," of Brockton, Mass.
 In Shoetown did said dark crimes come to pass.

He asserts:

“ ’Tis an axe I use when I go after Shaw.”

The vulgarity of the “turkey trot” moves him into forceful speech and his sonnet XXXII is about as stern and correct an estimate of that perverted form of entertainment as we have yet seen:

THE TURKEY TROT.

Vulgarity, debauchery, hand in hand
 Now whirl their way down Gotham’s gilded halls.
 The spectacle so shocks it makes us stand
 At gaze in horror! So the sight appals!
 Debauched cads enticing maidens on
 To “trot” and “hug” in most unseemly maze
 And all the meretricious airs to don
 That meet the Cabaret’s licentious gaze!
 To writhe and squirm and wriggle, turn and twist,
 To faint and languish in their partner’s grasp,
 T’ obey the guidance of an amorous wrist,
 As hip to hip their yielding forms they clasp!
 This sight in New York’s seen ’most any day.
 Hip! Hip! “*Hooraw!*” it makes the demons say.

A talent for sonnet-writing developed in an Insane Asylum could scarcely be judged by literary standards applied to the gifts of poets nurtured in happier circumstances. That the author is an embittered man is but natural; that he is a keen, observing, and scholarly man is evidenced by what he writes.

“Our motto—originated by ourselves—is: ‘Leave Me Alone,’ which has for crest the figure of a grizzly bear, walking quietly along.”

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, ADVERTISER, Saturday, December 20,
 1913.

We are sweetly toasted by John Armstrong Chaloner in “Scorpio No. 2” (Palmetto Press):

THE TOURNEY.

I love an enemy that strikes out bold!
 To th’ Boston “Advertiser” doff I my hat
 E’en tho’ he lives where one eats beans grown cold
 Or beans e’en hot as H—I—“all’s one for that.”
 I love the shock and clamour of the joust!
 I love the roar! I love the battle’s din!
 As they charge at me from my *selle*† to oust

† Saddle.

As I hold firm my pen to keep *selle* in!
 'Midst press o' th' knights o' th' pen I love to ride
 Where sword meets sword, or spear, or gleaming crest!
 Where the good red blood flows in a silent tide
 Where each grim swordsman doth his d—dest best!
 I' th' thick o' th' press o' th' knights I love to be
 When I feel my snow-white charger under me.

By this time Mr. Chaloner must be riding in gore to his stirrups. With his broadsword, or stiletto, or lance, or club, or snickersnee, or shotgun, he is daily as diligent as a bookkeeper at his desk. Now that he is paying his militant respects to States and cities as well as persons, there's no end to material. We are gladdened with a promise of "Scorpio No. 3."

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, EVENING JOURNAL, Wednesday, November 19, 1913.

Scorpio No. II. Containing "The Epic of Waterloo," "Surcease" and Other Sonnets. By John Armstrong Chaloner. 1913. Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. 194 pp. Paper, 35 cents.

This second number of Mr. Chaloner's "poetic quarterly" is not different in policy from the original "Scorpio," but it is new in contents, and therefore deserving of a new review.

What attitude to adopt toward Mr. Chaloner's work is a puzzle. Once adopt an angle of vision, and it is easy to proceed to criticism. Some will be whimsical and slyly dodge the issue. Others will be facetious and with sheer cunning fail to face the facts. A few will hail him as a martyr too long silent and now justly vocal. There are those who find in his work real merit, and can point you to passages of rare appreciation of nature and love of humanity.

But whatever the critic's attitude will be, this much seems certain, that in any consideration of Mr. Chaloner's output a clear line of distinction must be drawn between the motive behind the verses, and the intrinsic worth of the product itself. We are disposed to treat Scorpio No. II with consideration in the first of these counts.

Whether Mr. Chaloner is insane in New York and sane in Virginia, or insane or sane in both States, it is certain that his nerves are exquisitely high strung. The tension is almost at the snapping point, as exhibited in his verses. He is a poet of the individual, for all his show of defending the universe of mankind against the foes who have harmed, after all, only him.

The personal equation could not be more potent with a writer than it is with Mr. Chaloner. All he does is colored with his own loves and prejudices, instinctive with his especial promptings. His songs spring from his breast alone. When it is remembered that his breast has borne

sorrows of peculiar poignancy, whether rightly or wrongly, the virulence of his attacks can be accounted for.

We do not know that excuses for the motive of this author's verses are necessary, but we have made this explanation rather of the cause of their characteristics.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti's sonnet on the Sonnet is:

"A sonnet is a moment's monument,
 Memorial from the soul's eternity
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,
 Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,
 Of its own arduous fullness reverent.
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
 As day or night may rule; and let time see
 Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
 A sonnet is a coin; its face reveals
 The soul, its converse, to what power 'tis due;
 Whether for tribute to the august appeals
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
 It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous breath,
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death."

The sixteenth of the sonnets in Scorpio No. 2, is entitled "The Macedonian Phalanx of the Muse; or the Sonnet." For the purpose of contrasting the two conceptions of the sonnet and to show Mr. Chaloner's reason for adopting the form for his scourgings, we reproduce the piece:

"The three marching Quatrains and then—their charge!
 The headlong fiery dash o' th' couplet's rush
 O' th' sonnet, doth 'arms and the man' enlarge—
 Enables him all enemies to crush!
 Upon its onset do all foes go down
 Pierced by the spears which follow rank on rank
 Firm as the spears of him of Macedon—
 Of glitt'ring steel a rhythmic moving bank!
 The tread of marching men is in the beat
 O' th' Shakespeare sonnet's decasyllabon
 Within its numbers do all measures meet
 For him who th' strings o' th' lute can play upon.
 The foe is broken by the sonnet's charge,
 As break the waves upon the sea's calm marge."

Walt Whitman, than whom there has not been a truer poet, himself confessed to a "barbaric yawp." Mr. Chaloner strikes you as a sort of newer Whitman. But his language is much plainer, his terms are much more naked, the red blood seems to flow curdled in his veins and behind his "barbaric yawp" there is none of Whitman's soul and strength and love. Instead of love Mr. Chaloner would use hate, and no malcontent can long gain the public ear.

This man can never be a poet while he discredits all of humanity, and will call every man a villain:

'TIS BUT A SPAN.

But brief sojourners on this bank of Time
Which borders on the stream Eternity
'Tis but a span from babyhood to prime
From prattling childhood to maturity.
'Tis but a span from then to hoary age—,
That sombre ante-chamber of grim death—
Where is prepared the last act on the stage
The final dread surrender of the breath.
This being so, 'tis droll that people act
As tho' each held life-lease an aeon long
And had with God Almighty a compact
That held each guiltless of each dirty wrong
Man's but a fool—when all is said and done
And 'tis as fool's his course on earth is run.

The author's eternal cry is of wrongs done to him. Whether one of the sonnets starts with Napoleon or a green parrot or a slit skirt, in the majority of cases some personal grievance, which he seeks to elevate to universal proportions, will be aired and driven with the "sonnet charge" in the couplet. Note in this connection the following:

ROBINSON CRUSOE.

O' th' human voice I've grown so deadly sick—
Sick of its lying and chicanery—
That I've bought a parrot—yes—I've done the trick!
The royal bird now appertains to me.
Th' imperial bird hath from the tropics flown—
On em'rald wing shot o'er with ruby red—
And ta'en his perch within my merry home
And swings beside me as I write in bed.
His warlike eye doth blaze as he thinks o'er
The wrongs that have been heaped on martyred me!
The emblem he of internecine war
'Twixt me and th' thieves who hold my property!
From time to time I'll sing what he doth say—
I'm frank to say 'tis anything but pray.

Some are moved to pity by a tale of woe, and will remember the teller with sympathy for a while. But this thing of continued incessant ding-donging on private ills makes poorly relished poetic food for the public, and we are so free as to predict that each of the numbers of Mr. Chaloner's "poetic quarterly" will meet with less and less favor so long as he continues in this strain.

Mr. Chaloner's attitude toward the adverse ones among his critics is not to be justified on any grounds. The fierceness of his retort and

the consummate conceit of his verse are both shown in this reply to a criticism in the Cleveland "Plain-Dealer," sub-titled: "A Cry from the Small Unwashed."

"John Armstrong Chaloner has posed before the public in various guises, most of them unpleasant. In 'Scorpio No. I' he appears as a cynic, flaying folly with the scorpion whip and using verse, or, at least, rhymes, as his jolting vehicle. Enough to say, it is all very Chanlerish"—Cleveland "Plain-Dealer," August 16, 1913.

How much did Rockefeller pay to you
To lie about me in that barefaced way?
Notorious 'tis my rhymes are clean put through,
There's ne'er a "jolt" in anything I say.
Rhyme comes as easy-natural to me
As second nature, as to you a lie
So ne'er a "jolt" in verse by me you'll see—
As rare in me as truth by you's come by!
Rockefeller hung shall be by my strong pen
As high's his brother Haman in his day,
In spite of subsidized newspapermen
Who lick his boots with gusto, day by day,
Scorpio's lash their unwash'd back doth feel,
Hence we're amused by a *Plain-Squealer's* squeal.

If the critic of the "Plain-Dealer" is so deserving of utter scorn, why ever did a poet to whom rhyme comes as "easy-natural" as second nature squander as many as fourteen lines on his accursed head? If Mr. Chaloner had stopped to think a moment he would have known that some tired servant of the typewriter, though subaltern and himself little protected, sought to protect a royal purple pamphlet from all the attacks he could by sawing off his criticism before his anger had reached its force, and that the Oil King's money had less to do with the remarks to which Mr. Chaloner takes exception than anything in the world.

There is no need to mention the instances where phrases absolutely unpoetic, not to say vulgar, are used in Mr. Chaloner's sonnets, or to comment upon his sallies at Jerome and others who have aroused his ire. The whole effort is sad—and the sadder because the author has an astounding vocabulary of its sort, a masterful vivacity of diction, and an aptitude for occasional writing that is unusual.—B. M.

BALTIMORE SUN, Sunday, November 23, 1913.

CHALONER BREAKS OUT AGAIN IN TORRID VERSE.

Scores New York Society, Lawyers, Insanity Experts and Newspapers in "Scorpio No. 2."

John Armstrong Chaloner is a poet who wields words like a whip, entitling his volumes "Scorpio." Number Two, has just appeared, with

food for indignation on the part of those stung by his lash. The London "Academy" calls him a "metrical bruiser" who has come to the conclusion that you can "put a man to sleep" with a sonnet, as a prize fighter does with a finished blow. Mr. Chaloner's sonnets are blows. His opinion of New York society, lawyers, newspapers, and insanity experts has not lost one degree of its heat. In this number, he has sonnets on Waterloo, giving Napoleon quite a good write-up, on "Alec in Wonderland," eight of these; Hannibal, Hasdrubal, and Hamilcar; and a long "Tale of Israfel," on war-rant Mexico, and 100 others, but it is in tender passages like this that he excels:

JAIL BIRD JEROME.

(Evidently referring to the poker episode of Coaticook.)

Who'd ever guess that phrase would near-fit thee!
 And yet it doth, and close as a skull-cap!
 To deny the soft impeachment may not be
 No matter how much bluff thy lie doth cap.
 To spend thy life in jail would do no harm—
 No harm to thee and surely none beside—
 But your big rascal clients would take alarm
 And said suggestion *fearfully* deride!
 The ruffling robbers of the Poultry Trust—
 The rogues who pushed up eggs—when chance they saw
 And who in limbo were so promptly thrust—
Such are the clients that *you* choose in law!
 In landing thee in jail in Coaticook
 Destiny on thee Poetic Justice took.

And thus he pays his respects to the press of New York:

I'M NOT THE MAN THAT WROTE "TA-RA-RA-BOOM-DE-AY."

Not the man that wrote "To-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Ay,"
 I'm not a Cohan and I'm not a Strauss—
 But I *am* the man "The Yellows" holds at bay—
 Reduced them to the silence of a mouse!
 The critic of the Evening "World" sulks deep
 Lo! his torrential pen hath ceased to flow!
 From out his leathern lungs one hears no peep
 When *he* sees "put across" red "Scorpio"
 The Evening "Journal" is in the same plight
 Great Brisbane's fluent pen is clean gone dry
 It makes me smile—as these lines I indite—
 It truly doth—so help me Jimminy!
 Not the man that wrote "Ta-Ra-Ra- Boom-De- Ay!"
 But "on the job" when 't comes to free pen play!

"The way is very lone," sings Chaloner, "since Swinburne died, scarce poet do I see."

A WANDERER.

I wander o'er the paths of History
 Led by the beck'ning finger of the Muse
 O'er fairy regions—Romance—Mystery
 O'er all the facts of life do I deep muse.
 The field is wide! The way is very lone
 Since Swinburne died scarce poet do I see
 So make I o'er this realm my way alone
 The Muse alone have I for company.
 Sometimes the way is fairy-like forlorn
 Steeped in the haunted moonshine of moonbeams
 Sometimes the way is black as night with storm
 As o'er the billows the storm-petrel screams.
 Moonlight or dark the way gleams brilliantly
 For the Muse's torch is beacon unto me.

BOTANY BAY or THE PRESS MURDEROUS.

(Dedicated to the Philadelphia "Inquirer.")

"Ever since reading some of John Armstrong Chaloner's poetry we have been at a loss to know on what grounds it was that Virginia brought in a minority report on that chap's sanity."—Philadelphia "Inquirer," July 25, 1913.

Some members of the press are criminal!
 For them Journalism 's Botany Bay—
 Receiving-House for felony, crime and all
 Dastardly tricks at which the wicked play!
 Near-murderers—rapists—incendiarists—
 Who'd fire tenement of a thousand lives—
 Forgers—thieves—perjurers—plagiarists
 Who, if they had their choice would sleep in "dives"†
 The *scum* of letters, is in short, *thrown up*
 Spewed out—*vomited* on *affronted* earth!
 One wonders where such *offal* did spring up
What criminal purlieus blushed e'en at their birth!
 The black lies i' th' Philada "Ink-Liar"
Pale Ananias' fires as a liar!

But he calls himself "A Maker," which, as he explains is the Greek origin of the word poet, and sings:

† Dive, a place of low resort where drunkards and harlots consort together." New Websterian Dictionary.

A MAKER.

(The Greek origin of the word poet.)

When I write sonnets I review the world
 From Adam's time even unto today.
 That's why my brow with beady drops is pearled
 That's why a sonnet leaves me *fatigué!*
 I do not mean by this that I'm played out
 By worshipping the Muse in fourteen lines
 But that I feel something I've been about
 That something I've been at, my mind opines.
 The wealth of all my learning is gone o'er
 The years I toiled at University
 The years that—since—I've toiled o'er musty law
 And the years that teeming life observed have I.
 My life of fifty years—of years *full round!*
 Is swift deployed when I the sonnet sound.

Mr. Chaloner is rather more than frank in his opinion of New York society, expressing his opinion in this sonnet on "A Modern Medusa, the Female Face of the New York '400'":

A MODERN MEDUSA

Or

THE FEMALE FACE OF THE N. Y. "400."

Hard 's a "pelter's" is its physiognomy!
 And just about as bad as "pelter"—*some*
 At this, some critics may cry out "Oh, my!"
 How *can* he The '400' so sore sum!"
 To which I swift reply, "Not *all*, my friend,
 Are thus intended to be limned by me,
 Tho' some—if truth be told *must* be so penned
 Although the penning grieve me grievously,
 Purse-proud conceit and coldness—*hearts of flint*
 Mean-birth—by Fortune's wheel made sudden rich—
 Are on their faces stamped by Nature's mint
 Whilst of charity show they less than witch!
 The daughters of the poor do stand aghast
 As o'er their doings their pure eyes are cast.

BROOKLYN EAGLE, Brooklyn, New York, November 13, 1913.

A SECOND "HUDIBRAS."

John Armstrong Chaloner has taken to issuing (through the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C.) a quarterly in verse which is called "Scorpio." The second number contains a series of sonnets, in

which he expresses his dissatisfaction with, and contempt for, most social and political institutions. He seems to go back for his model, in some respects, to "Hudibras," and his verse is not without wit, although often without justice. His vocabulary is often the English of the eighteenth century, and the pamphlet becomes interesting as a literary curiosity.

PENDANTS TO SONNET "OPPORTUNITY," p. 7.

OPPORTUNITY.

II.

'Twas opportunity gave Cromwell play
 Opportunity made Napoleon
 Gave each field of battle on which to display
 The gifts Fate's hand had each rich showered on.
 'Tis opportunity that makes the man
Never can man make opportunity
 From the knees of the Gods descends the plan
 In accord with which whirls the world—*pardie!*
 To think otherwise is to think like fool
 And lie in one's heart like a *damnéd* knave
 History proves what we say is the rule
 And the converse, a drunken doggel stave.
 Fate in her womb forms the times and the man
 And when time is full ripe, hands him Her plan.

OPPORTUNITY.

III.

An opportunist is a gambler fell
 A lousy rascal that lacks principle
 A dirty dog whose soul is food for H—l
 Who'll piper *pay—interest* and *principal!*
 A rev'rent waiter upon Destiny
 Until the dread hour on Fate's clock is struck
 Is one the Gods regard with sympathy
 Graciously smile upon, and wish him luck.
 'Tis such an one who keeps his weapons bright—
 Sword, shield and armour burnished for the fray—
 Whose mind is firm made up—and made up right—
 To dash at once where Conscience points the way.
 Who holds in leash his passions—*Dogs of War*—
 Till Fate cries: "Havoc! And let slip! *Go far!*"

J. A. CHALONER,
 "The Merry Mills."

August 22, 1918.

2

NEWSPAPER REVIEWS

OF

"FOUR YEARS BEHIND THE BARS."

NEW YORK WORLD, November 11, 1906.

"One may search fiction high and low for a case like this one in real life. It is one of the most remarkable stories of modern times. Here is a man of independent means, a man of affairs, a brilliant writer, an ardent sportsman and clever raconteur, sent to Bloomingdale, adjudged hopelessly insane, 'progressive,' the physicians call his case."

"NEWS AND OBSERVER," Raleigh, North Carolina. October 18, 1906.

"Readers of the News and Observer will recall the mysterious sensation occasioned ten years ago by the incarceration in Bloomingdale Asylum, in New York, and the subsequent escape of John Armstrong Chanler, the wealthy Virginian and member of the New York Bar. His story is fraught with romance and mystery.

Author of Distinguished Ancestry.

As stated, Mr. Chanler is a citizen of Virginia, where he still resides at his four hundred acre estate, "Merry Mills." He is a mixture of distinguished Southern and Dutch ancestry, and his blood is such as to warrant that he will make an unrelenting fight for what he conceives to be his rights and against injustice. His parental grandfather, a personal friend of Calhoun, left Charleston, South Carolina, where his forbears had steadily resided since about 1710, when they first left Wales for the New World, about 20 years before the war between the States, came to New York to live and married

into the New York branch of the Winthrop family. The first of that family to come to this country was John Winthrop, first Governor of Massachusetts. This marriage also connected the Chanlers with Peter Stuyvesant, the last Dutch Governor of New Amsterdam, now New York. In Charleston, the Chanlers had always been members of one of the three learned professions, the Church, the Law, or Medicine."

RICHMOND EVENING JOURNAL, April 15, 1907.

TELLS WHY THEY SENT HIM TO AN ASYLUM.

John Armstrong Chanler's Strange Book, "Four Years Behind the Bars of Bloomingdale"—What Experts Say.

It is seldom, indeed, that one finds such strange—almost fantastic—reading as that included within the two black covers of John Armstrong Chanler's remarkable book "Four Years Behind the Bars of Bloomingdale, or the Bankruptcy of Law in New York."

This volume, the publication of which has time and again been discussed in nearly all the newspapers of the country is no figment of the author's fancy. It is based on facts, yet stranger facts ne'er were printed, and had the work been advertised as a mere romance, critics would have scoffed at its improbability.

The story of sane men being imprisoned behind the bars of lunatic asylums is nothing new. Charles Reade threshed out this subject many years ago, and following his story, "Hard Cash," came numerous newspaper controversies anent the treatment of the insane and the alleged insane.

DOCUMENTS IN EVIDENCE.

But in the Chanler volume we have something tangible—something definite—with all the "documents in evidence." In fact, the book, which the writer styles a "Human document," is based entirely on court papers, as follows: The

New York proceedings in 1897 and 1899 and the proceedings in Virginia in 1901 and in North Carolina in 1905.

Apropos of "documents in evidence," it may be well to say right here, that "Four Years Behind the Bars" is a wretchedly arranged book, which carries a good deal of superfluous matter in the way of notarial acknowledgments, clerks' certificates and legal verbosities.

Mr. Chanler started out at the outset with the determination not to ask his readers to take anything for granted, and so he presents every paper in duly authenticated form. In the case of so high-minded a gentleman, we would have been willing to accept his word in every instance and not to have required the proofs.

Some friends should have tackled his manuscript with an axe and chopped out all this useless verbiage, for it is a positive disadvantage to the volume, and will scare off many readers.

The author should have said his say in a concise preface, and then let the legal papers follow in the form of an appendix.

All this criticism, mark you, pertains to a defect which in no way involves Mr. Chanler's literary style. It is meant in the kindest spirit, and as an explanation to people, who otherwise might be scared off by what, at the first glance, looks like a very ponderous effort.

A MASTER PENMAN.

And now to come down to the heart of things: If the reader once gets the swing of the volume, he will find it weirdly, fascinatingly and entrancingly interesting, and what is more, he will quickly perceive that this so-called madman Chanler is a master penman—a man who is capable of expressing the most subtle ideas and the most delicate distinctions of thought in the choicest language.

The reader will also find himself borne swiftly along in the current of thought by a wondrous vocabulary, which flows as musically and with as swift a current as a mountain stream. At times, indeed, the stream grows turbulent and ebullient

and fretful, but it is always clear, always masterful and always fascinating.

Apropos of all this, it may be said that Mr. Chanler owes his strange fate in life to these very qualities, and to his remarkable mind, whose febrile activity is so strikingly unusual that it has led many people, doubtless in good faith, to mistake his eccentricities for symptoms of aberration. In short, the author, as one of the experts who examined him has said, first attracted attention and brought woe upon himself by having an intellect far in advance of most of his brethren.

It is not within the scope of this criticism to detail Chanler's life story. Suffice to say that he, the scion of wealthy and aristocratic forbears, was committed to Bloomingdale Hospital, New York, in March, 1897, and detained there nearly four years, when he made his escape and hurried under an alias to Philadelphia, where, of his own volition, he remained six months under the supervision of alienists who pronounced him absolutely sane and entirely capable of managing his own affairs.

From the Quaker City the fugitive—for such he was in every respect—went to Lynchburg, where he remained several weeks under care of another alienist, and then he reappeared before the public gaze in Albemarle and instituted those court proceedings which focused so much attention upon him.

The Virginia courts, as well as those of North Carolina, made a thorough examination into the mental condition of Chanler and pronounced him sane. But the man is still "civiliter mortuus" in New York—that is, still legally a lunatic in that State, and he dare not go there for fear of re-arrest and a second period of confinement.

HIS OBJECT IN WRITING.

Mr. Chanler's one object in life now appears to be the establishment, beyond a peradventure of a doubt, of the popular belief in his sanity. Incidentally, he also desires to let the public know how badly he has been treated—or thinks he has been treated—by some of his kinspeople. For the most

part, he lets other folks—witnesses, physicians, and lawyers—tell his story, though his own interpolated explanations lend special charm to the volume. The book at times is successively abusive, aggressive, ironical and savage towards those who, in the author's opinion, have done him wrong. It would hardly be fair to discuss this feature of it here.

The thoughtful man undoubtedly will derive more pleasure from reading the splendidly written opinions of the many experts who have examined Mr. Chanler.

In June, 1897, while the author was confined in the asylum he surreptitiously prepared and sent to Captain Micajah Woods, the famous Charlottesville lawyer, a thirty-seven-page letter, setting forth the facts leading up to his incarceration and pleading for help.

This communication is a masterpiece of English, and withal so irresistibly interesting that no reader can lay it aside. In the letter Chanler goes into many details about his psychological and metaphysical studies—the researches which ultimately caused him so much trouble. The following paragraph is characteristic:

“I must tell you that for some years past I have been carrying on investigations in Esoteric Buddhism. You must not imagine from this that I am not a Christian, for I am a communicant in the Episcopal Church. My investigations were entirely scientific in their nature and totally free from any tinge of religion. They supposed a state of mind open to impressions and free from prejudices.”

Then he tells how Stanford White, his friend, and the man murdered by Harry Thaw, coaxed him from Virginia to New York, where he was seized and taken to the hospital.

A little later Chanler explains that some time previous to this incident, his eyes had undergone a remarkable change of color. They had turned from brown to gray. It was his comments on this fact which led people to think that he was a victim of dementia. In his letter to Captain Woods, he says apropos of this:

“At all events, they were light brown. The extraneous and corroborative evidence of this fact is a description of Dering's eyes on page 39 of the latest edition of ‘The Quick or

that to this day is insane—in the teeth of the decree of the County Court of
 Small County, Virginia—this County—seventeen years ago—declaring him
 sane and competent—under the jurisdiction of which Court he has ever since
 resided. The conspirators presumably do this foolhardy thing on the principle
 “Tell a lie and stick to it.”

the Dead,' which I enclose, having been sketched from me. I allude to the features, of course, the occurrences in the book being entirely imaginary. I have the Princess Troubetzkoy's word for this; it is also a matter of almost common knowledge, the New York World having published an article on the Princess Troubetzkoy in February, 1896, if I remember rightly, which quoted as descriptive of me the passage above referred to on page 39 of "The Quick or the Dead;" and the writer of the said article vouched for its correctness as a description of my personal appearance in the article itself.

"You will observe that Dering's eyes are described as the color of 'autumn pools in sunlight.' I need not say to a Virginian that the color of autumn pools in the sunlight is brown—a sparkling or bright brown. The pools meant are the deep quiet places in the streams into which the dead leaves fall, covering the bottom and giving a dark brown appearance to the water, which is lightened or brightened when the sun plays upon the pool."

A foot note following this paragraph quotes an affidavit from the Princess Troubetzkoy, which substantiates what the author says.

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

The documents published in connection with the court proceedings, for the most part, give the views of expert alienists who examined Mr. Chanler. Here is what Joseph Jastrow, professor of psychology in the University of Wisconsin, says of the author: "Mr. C., according to his own account and in conformity with the evidence which has been submitted to me, exercises a form of automatic activity known as automatic writing, and by some writers called 'graphic automatism.'" He is able to produce, and apparently at almost any time at request, a form of writing in which his intentional and usual control and direction participate to a reduced extent, and may be almost absent. Such automatic writing is a well recognized phenomenon occurring not rarely, but yet unusually, and finds its place among a series of psychological activities, which are in a large part of a complex co-ordinated and reasoned type, but which are none the less not the intentional expression of the ordinary, fully conscious thought."

A MEDIUMISTIC TEMPERAMENT.

Dr. William James, professor of psychology at Harvard, in his written opinion of the author, says, among other things:

“Mr. Chanler is evidently possessed of a strongly ‘mediumistic’ or ‘psychic’ temperament, but whereas most mediums promptly adopt the theory, current in spritualistic circles, that these automatisms are due to spirit-control, Mr. Chanler, prepossessed against that hypothesis, appears to have set to work systematically (and as would appear from his narrative, critically) to explore them and determine their significance for himself.

In this attempt he seems to me to deserve nothing but praise. The only question is of the amount of judiciousness shown in allowing the subject to absorb him so continuously. The most injudicious act of which he is accused is the experiment with fire. As described, its motivation was rational and its results interesting, and but moderately harmful. It seems to me a monstrous claim to say that a man may not make experiments, even as extreme as that, upon his own person, without putting his legal freedom in jeopardy. The Napoleon experiment (going off into a trance-like state), falls strictly within the limits of praiseworthy research.”

ANSWERS OTHER SIDE.

Other alienists of equal fame and ability as those quoted have also submitted their views as to Mr. Chanler’s condition, and all these appear in full in the volume, but their opinions cannot be given here.

Suffice it to say that the author produces a powerful array of authorites to show that he has been unjustly dealt with.

Nor does he flinch at presenting the other side of the case, too. The reader is allowed to peruse the testimony of those who thought that Mr. Chanler should be confined in Bloomingdale. This evidence is discussed by the author with a power of analysis which could not be surpassed, and a degree of acrimony which shows how bitterly he resents the course of those who thought him ‘non compos mentis.’

As one goes deeper and deeper into the strange volume which has no parallel in literature, one finds himself thoroughly engrossed with the unusual subject-matter, and almost from the start the reader's sympathy is insensibly drawn towards Mr. Chanler. Truly, he is one man in a million, while his life-story is little short of thrilling. But after all, it is the wide scholarship of the author which makes him command attention and adds luster to his every paragraph.

As the volume contains certain passages wherein Mr. Chanler's indignation seemingly makes him almost libellous, the book will not be handled by any of the Richmond houses. It can, however, be procured by writing to the Palmetto Press, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. Those who wish to burn the midnight oil over something unique, should get it."

"EVAN R. CHESTERMAN."

“No Times for the Satirist.”

“LITERARY DIGEST,” New York, September 28, 1918.

Satire as a literary form is seen to be proving itself fit only for the piping times of peace. And it apparently takes itself too seriously even then. Given a cataclysm like the present war and this literary instrument which took itself on occasions as the most powerful in the writer's armory, appears puny enough; while all the evils it ever thought itself born to combat become more like Don Quixote's wind-mills than real soldiers. A rather wide range of examples in proof of such contentions is gathered up by a writer in the New York “Evening Post”; ‘with such gigantic evils stalking at large, with brutality, lust, and every other passion loosed, with millions facing the foe in hot anger, satire seems a trumpery rapier’. Naming over the professional satirists who gave the world some few thrills to relieve its boredom, this writer observes that ‘Since August, 1914 unchained the terrible wickedness that had been sleeping before, the favorite satire of pre-war times has taken on a look of puniness’. Here we have not had a satirist to do what Cervantes did for the literature of chivalry, Butler for Puritanism in ‘Hudibras’, and Voltaire for formalist superstition in ‘Candide’. But after all, satire cannot cope with cataclysms. *The immense abuses connected with or sheltered by the war our foe is waging are beyond its province; they demand the thunderstones of a Carlyle or Isaiah in overwhelming denunciation. We cannot be ironic, sarcastic, or invidiously witty about such evils; we must show a blazing indignation — — —. ‘A great conflagration of wrath is needed’.* The old boastfulness of satire ‘appears more than a little ludicrous’, says the writer here, and few will gainsay him.”

Do we fill a long-felt want, peradventure, in “Pieces Of Eight,” and “Scorpio”, or does this question suggest “the old boastfulness of satire” as peradventure—“The Scarlet Women” and “A Missionary” emphasize its puniness?

J. A. C.
“The Merry Mills,”
September 25, 1918.

DON QUIXOTE UP-TO-DATE.

“Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away.”
—“Don Juan”—Lord Byron.

Cervantes, I have turned the trick on thee!
By chivalry *laugh* I at foul today
And paint the sordid villainies I see
By use of metaphor and roundelay.
The d—d accursed mercenary *lech.*,
That marks these villainous commercial times
Affords my Muse the chance her wings to stretch
And ring the changes on her silv'ry chimes.
Mounted on Pegasus I *charge a-main!*
And with my steel-tipped lance† attack the rich—
With it I search their *vitals—give 'em pain.*
Meantime, the doing o't doth the Muse enrich.
An old-time knight-errant to th' manner born
I make knaves *sweat* when I do wind my horn!

† Pen.

“Scorpio No. II.”
Sonnet One Hundred and Sixty-seven.

④

Holder for Scorpio No. II.

France

The unusual course of sending three books to the press at one and the same time has been followed for the reason that two of the said books have already been sent to Great Britain and—as the reviews accompanying them indicate—very well received by our British ally—and the third started for Liverpool only a short while ago.

The two which already have been reviewed—and in the same order—in Great Britain are “Pieces of Eight” and “Hell And ‘The Infernal Comedy’ ”.

Since “Pieces of Eight” is even more ferocious than “The Hymn of Hate”, and antedated the Hun effusion by a year or more, if we remember rightly, it occurred to us to allow our fair and dauntless ally, France, to see how fiercely we yearned to leap to her aid in August, 1914. We said nothing about said desire openly—but a blind man, almost, could read our passionate desire so to do between the lines. We said nothing, because we knew full well that in his “Farewell Address” Washington’s dictum “no intangling alliances”, with foreign nations, was so bred in the American bone that nothing short of an act of war by the Hun could urge us into war. Times have changed—“tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis”—and cynical and distrustful as we are of anything resembling rose color, we can assure France that the sentiment is crystalising day by day in this country in favor of universal conscription, and an adequate navy, so soon as the Great War is over. *The United States has been caught napping for the first and last time.* France is our Historic Ally, and will ever so remain.

May the God of Battles grant that America may be able to be as prominent in restoring Alsace and Lorraine to France as France was in restoring liberty to America. The start that General Pershing has made to that glorious end on the Lorraine front, two days ago, is eloquent of promise.

Since “Hell And ‘The Infernal Comedy’ ” had also been sent to Great Britain, and favorably reviewed, and also because at the rear it contains a very full line of reviews of our various literary work of the past ten years, we concluded to send it to France with “Pieces of Eight”. And since “Scorpio No. II” has scarcely left the port of New York for Liverpool, we concluded to include that pungent—at times, shall we say? slightly Rabelaisian—body of one hundred and sixty-seven sonnets. *Rabelais had occasion to laugh heartily at the administration of justice in his day—so have we.*

In conclusion. There are half a dozen or so sonnets written in French in “Pieces of Eight”, and since writing same we have discovered that there are, here and there, typographical errors, and here and there, grammatical ones. We wish to apologize for our audacity in attempting such a daring thing, and offer our only excuse, to-wit: *our French blood cried out for expression in that blood’s own lovely and difficult tongue*—we are a blood relative of Charlotte Corday d’Armont, and, thereby, of Pierre Corneille. (pp. 146-148, “Hell And ‘The Infernal Comedy’ ”).

We spent five years in Paris—five of the most glorious years of our accentuated and highly varied existence—and the Quartier Latin is as familiar to us as that of L'Arc de l'Etoile. We finished off our education in Paris. After three years at the military school of "St. John's School", Ossining-on-Hudson, New York, and two years at Rugby School England, and after acquiring an A. B. degree, and also an A. M. degree, at Columbia University, and thereafter being admitted a member of the bar of New York, we again crossed the ocean and haunted the museums and ateliers of painters and sculptors, for years, in the City of Light, and one winter took a course at the Sorbonne on the Psalms; at the College de France on the Crusades; and at l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques, on European diplomacy from Waterloo to date—under the late great Professor Leroy Beaulieu.

Since we have not crossed the Atlantic for over twenty years our French is rather rusty, but we respectfully submit that said errors are more or less superficial, and with proper supervision by a French scholar our Muse can sing as passionately in the language of Corneille as in that of Shakespeare. Had a French scholar been within reach he could have filed away the roughness in the French sonnets in "Pieces of Eight".

We have had the audacity to humbly follow in the footsteps of both Corneille and Shakespeare; and in our four blank-verse dramas: "The Hazard of the Die", "The Serpent of Old Nile", "Saul" and "Saul and David"—extracts from the first three of which are given at the rear of "Hell And "The Infernal Comedy" we have aimed at combining the *longer speeches of main characters of Corneille with the Shakesperian form*. To our mind, Shakespeare's speeches are too short—with the single exception of "Hamlet". The Bard of Avon stops his divine music too suddenly; shuts off his speeches too soon.

JOHN ARMSTRONG CHALONER,

"The Merry Mills,"

Cobham,

Virginia.

September 15th, 1918.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 988 416 8

