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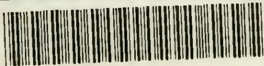

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PERSONAL PREJUDICES

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by

Mrs R·CLIPSTON STURGIS

The Author

of

THE RANDOM REFLECTIONS
OF A
GRANDMOTHER

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TO

HARRIET LOCKWOOD CARTER

HER MOTHER AND MINE

HER GRANDMOTHER AND MINE

I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE BOOK IN MEMORY OF

THE UNBROKEN FRIENDSHIP OF

THREE GENERATIONS

PREFACE

BY THE AUTHOR'S HUSBAND

THE woman who wrote this book is a past-mistress in the arts of her sex; delicate flattery and gross exaggeration come with equal facility. I fancy she was tired of writing the book before she had finished the last chapter (or the first, I forget which), so, when her publisher suggested adding a preface, she at once turned her attention to me.

She began with the familiar phrase, "Do you love me, dear?" and I promptly replied, "Not if it's upstairs." Then followed the usual process of persuasion on her part and clumsy, futile effort to escape on my part. From the first gentle phrase until my complete acknowledgement of defeat, there was not the shadow of a doubt about the result. I would do what I was told to do, and do it with a cheerful countenance. The attack (after that gentle opening phrase) began something like this: "I have always

admired the way you work on the train; I think your ability to concentrate in such a place is marvellous." It seems absurd, but you know how it is; this indelicate flattery made me feel that my fine qualities were really appreciated, and although this simple little method had been applied over and over again, it was just as effective as if it were brand-new. Well, it is no use going on and explaining this familiar process; it is, I fancy, not unfamiliar to the male readers of this book, and it explains why I am writing this preface.

Let me say at the outset, with her favourite ascription of "Thank the pigs," that this book at least is not about me, and I shall not be looked upon as pusillanimous because I do not apply for a divorce, or even enter a suit for libel, as was the case with her first venture. We all like to feel that we have our private virtues, but from the first page of that book to the last there was no privacy left. My innocent love of the country, my kindness to and thoughtfulness for her (for after the first twenty-

five years of country summers I no longer insisted upon her accompanying me), my cheerful acquiescence in her long absences, even across the water, all were as nothing compared to her desire to see me writhe under her facile wit.

So, thank the pigs, I say, I am out of it this time, and others take my place. I can therefore cheerfully recommend this book to any readers. It is not immoral, and therefore not really modern; but I have an idea that we are returning to a saner point of view, and good and homely qualities are once more coming in for their share of attention. This prohibition craze is one of the symptoms of returning health; we are all apt to overdo things when we are carried away by an idea, and a little purging, like the blood-letting of an earlier generation, will do no harm. We old folk will manage to get along, and the next generation, or the next after, will return to a sane temperance.

So this book is quite harmless; any one can use it with propriety; even those who

were shocked at the loose morals of dear Ethel, the "Young Visiter," will find nothing here to bring a blush of shame to the cheek.

The victims will suffer, of course, as I did before, but also like me, will perhaps rather enjoy the suffering for pride in the skill which so accurately picked out the best places to stick the pins in.

I am directed to make due acknowledgement to the *North American Review* for permission to reprint the chapter "Quality *versus* Equality," and I am impelled by my own sense of justice to make acknowledgement to the favourite nephew and niece and to the dear lady around the corner for having allowed themselves to be butchered to make a lady's holiday and to furnish objects for the betterment of mankind.

Since writing the above — and I confess I thought my job was done — I have glanced through the book, and find to my dismay that I did not get off scot-free even this time. "Gardens" has a rather familiar

sound, and I suspect I am buried somewhere in that garden; and if I had even glanced at the title of "Husbands and Housekeeping," I might have guessed that if she was going to make use of anybody's husband, it would probably be her own. Notwithstanding this, however, I can still recommend the book to the earnest consideration of the reader. Many a true word is spoken in jest, and many a statement which the world calls false is in reality the deeper truth.

One thing I sincerely hope this book will help to do, and that is to awaken afresh that unselfish and patriotic enthusiasm which carried us into and through the War, which brought us so close to England and France and Italy, and made us feel the deep, true, human friendship between all those nations who stood so firmly together for Truth, Righteousness, and Honour.

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PERSONAL PREJUDICES

I

GARDENS

PERSONAL PREJUDICES

I

GARDENS

A FRIEND has submitted to me for criticism a manuscript, the subject-matter of which deals with Gardens. Not just plain gardens, you understand, but Gardens, with a capital.

I am a good deal flattered by this tribute of its author to my sense of honourable impartiality, because my views on the subjects of the country in general and gardens in particular are not looked upon with the respect that I feel to be their due. I seem to have given the impression that because I object to the necessity of taking a train journey to town every day I do not love the country, and because I dislike the smell of manure I must perforce have a repugnance to flowers. I prefer not to argue the matter. I merely state my conviction that just because I stand aside

from a too intimate association with the country on the one hand, and do not personally tackle the manure-heap on the other, my judgement with regard to both is unquestionably the less prejudiced and more impartial. In fact, I claim that breadth of vision which, proverbially, is impossible of attainment when there is a too great familiarity. I also vehemently deny the accusation of my friends that my breadth of vision precludes the possibility of any knowledge of such matters, and I deeply resent their implication that, for the same reason, my judgement in all other affairs of this world is thereby necessarily impaired.

I had an argument about this the other day with a dear friend, whose kindly heart is much troubled over my delinquencies in many matters other than gardens and the country. In a cosy, tea-table discussion of our various friends, she expressed warmly her approbation of those who made a practice of spending every week-end throughout the winter at their country places,

saying that she thought it such a healthy and wholesome thing to do. I made no rash admissions, but told her I would grant her this simply for the sake of argument; and even if such were true, what in the world had my feelings with regard to the country got to do with my opinions regarding the restlessness of the human race? I tried to point out to her that my conclusions might be the same if the people who lived in the country took to spending their Sundays in town, only I should feel that it would be less of a change and excitement for them, as they spend most of the week in town anyway. I offered all this humbly, just as a possible one among a number of different opinions, but she would have none of it, and turning her conveniently deaf ear, she left me, quite convinced that because I am accused of not loving the country, there is nothing of orthodoxy about me. As her opinion is shared by the majority of my small world, I live a life bowed down by obloquy; consequently the subtle flattery of my friend, the author of the manu-

script in question, is all the more gratifying, and I am convinced that he has written a most charming and valuable article.

I am not sure that I am entirely qualified to soar to the empyrean heights to which he would carry his readers for, starting with the Garden of Eden, he ends up with a satisfactory resting-place for his soul. I have pondered over his theories, and I believe that I can meet him in his conclusions, though my path to that desirable end may not be identical. I truly feel that if all gardens behave as do those in which I take a personal, if vicarious, interest, they must be excellent discipline for anybody's soul.

I have seen my husband dig in the earth with his own hands, in order to save the cost of paid labour, till the honest sweat poured from his brow and his hands were blistered, only to find that nothing short of a seventy-five-dollar load of manure would render his plot of ground habitable for the flowers he wished to grow. I have seen a friend arise at 4.30 A.M. day

after day of glorious summer morns, to tend with sleepless care her charming and very large garden of old-fashioned and sweet-smelling flowers, only to find, when at its height of bloom and beauty, that it has been attacked and exterminated in a single night by battalions of moles. I have seen my sister industriously plant blue asters, only to have them come up a peculiarly unpleasant admixture of purple pink and magenta. Even I have had my own personal experiences.

I was called upon by a despairing friend, one very hot day, to fill, with two or three dozen plants of the last-named variety, a yawning hole in her garden caused by one or another of the many vicissitudes attendant upon the joys of gardening. It was warm — oh, very warm; the kind of weather in which even to sit still induces a healthful activity of the pores, but I was fond of my friend, and very sorry for her.

The three dozen infant plants were presented to me in a large basket, heavy with

the implements attendant upon their birth into the garden world. I lugged them across the spacious lawn and down the long garden path, and, mopping my brow, I dwelt in thought upon the loveliness of the little baby buds, just pinkly ready to burst into flower. I mused upon their poetic mission to beautify toil and rehabilitate with bloom the waste places of the earth, and as I toiled I pictured the brave show that would greet the envious eyes of the members of the Garden Club at their meeting a few days hence.

My task was not brief, and was not accomplished without much mental and physical discipline, but at its end I surveyed my work with pride and admiration. I felt that I had earned a rest, and retired to the bathtub with a strong conviction that I had acquired much merit. Two brief hours later, cooled off and refreshed in body and temper, I revisited the scene of my labours. Every single one of those sturdy little plants had been eaten, by the grasshoppers, down to within an inch of

the ground. No wonder my friend the author writes feelingly: "Only in the garden that we plant with our tired hands and water with the tears of frequent disappointment, can we gather the flower of a responsive soul." I feel just that way about it myself.

My friend writes feelingly and from the heart, for he has a charming garden of his own. From the doorsteps of his picturesque white cottage drop three slightly intoxicated but truly friendly little terraces, each with its special duty to perform. The first is the custodian of two ancient hawthorn trees, said to have been in existence when Louis-Philippe abode for a time in the modest obscurity of this humble home. The legend runs that branches of these, in full bloom, were sent to him in Paris on a later and more public occasion, and my practical mind wonders as to their condition upon arrival, after a voyage the length of which must have rivalled in time that of the boats of these post-war days. One of the trees is pink, the other white,

and when they burst simultaneously into full bloom, their dainty loveliness is equalled only by their perfume, which is of such a nature that the windows of the cottage must be kept closed and the inhabitants thereof hold their noses when they take their walks abroad.

From these ancient sentinels a flight of grey stone steps, uncertain as to pitch or level, lead down to the second terrace which is the home of the flowers. A hedge of English box guards the beds, and nobly strives to fulfil its duties in spite of many vicissitudes. To the best of its sturdy ability it braves the north-east storms and sub-zero temperature, but an occasional plant will perforce succumb and die, leaving a gap like that of a lost tooth. Here, my friend lets loose his love for flowers, and from the lowly pansy he riots madly up through lilies, poppies, peonies, and foxgloves to the towering blue larkspur which gives the final obliterating touch to any effect of terracing; but, as he wisely says, "Anybody with a soul prefers a

frenzy of flowers to a sense of proportion"; and he is quite right.

From this flowery terrace a flight of six or seven steps, that aspire to better level than their more ancient brethren above, drop to the third terrace, a grassy spot, permitted, as to decoration, only an edging of flowers on one side. It is surrounded by a lilac hedge some eight feet in height which, being subject to birth control, is not permitted to flower, and so devotes all its energies to growing fat and flourishing. It surrounds a good-sized plot of lawn destined, I believe, for the ancient and honourable game of bowls, but a certain bumpiness of the sward seems to have discouraged the effort. On these three fragrant terraces I have watched my friend dig with his own tired hands and water with the tears of a whole lot of disappointments, till I have seen that responsive soul rise before my very eyes. It looked just like mosquitoes.

My friend is of a poetic temperament, which leads him on from flight to further

flight, in the likening of the lover of a garden to that of a lover to his maid. There may be something in this theory. He speaks of the "hectic days of doubt," and voices in chaste metaphor the really intelligent discovery that quite often what agrees best with a maid, as well as with a garden, is to be let alone for a while and not to be bothered with too many attentions. Now this is really practical and to be commended, but when he carries out the simile to its logical conclusions, and compares a later relationship to the "security" of married life, I don't feel so sure about it. I only know that if any wife of mine behaved with the exasperating perversity of some gardens, my present views on divorce would undergo a radical change.

I can quite see that gardens are a good deal like women in that one never knows what they are going to do, but while I acknowledge this element of surprise and unexpectedness to be one of a woman's chief charms, it does not appeal to me one bit in a garden. It must be so disconcerting

to plant blue asters and have them come up magenta, or to plant celery and have it turn out to be a squash. That this frequently happens I am quite sure from my experiences with the vegetable garden at our country place, in which my husband takes such joy. For some years now he has industriously planted peas, a vegetable to which I am particularly addicted, and of which he annually promises me a generous supply, but somehow or other, by the time they get into glass jars and up to town, they have all turned into string beans.

I think I must submit this manuscript to a particular friend of mine who is a farmer — a real one — and get his opinion about it, for I am sure the author would be benefited by the criticism of a practical gardener, and the gardener would be — well, I am not quite sure what he would be, but I should love to see the expression of his face if I attempted to persuade him that his cabbages and onions had souls. I have never happened to meet a really soulful grower of vegetables, and perhaps this

is the reason why my author friend omits all mention of kitchen gardens in his elevating article. I regret the omission deeply, for I feel that I could be led to wax exactly as poetic over green peas and asparagus as over poppies and peonies. If I could have carried something of the kind to my farmer friend, it might cheer up his outlook upon life, which is just now one of the deepest pessimism. I tried to buy a few cabbages from him last autumn, and he enquired sardonically if I s'posed he was goin' to grow kebbidges when every durn one he riz jumped his taxes on him. It took a little lightning calculation on my part to connect cause and effect, but when he added that he had just made out his income-tax papers, I understood and sympathized. He grew quite eloquent beneath the warmth of my sympathy, and proceeded to explain matters from his point of view.

"Now, you jest look at that there kebbidge," he pleaded. "It takes me and three other farm-hands to raise it so's it'll be

like what it oughter be — a good, self-respectin' kebbidge, so to speak; where 'm I goin' to get the men to work? An' if I get 'em, how in thunder 'm I goin' to pay 'em the wages they want? More 'n that," he continued, "by the time that kebbidge gets to the table o' any o' you city folk, it 'll ha' ben handled by six other fellers after it leaves my farm, an' every dum one of 'em gets more out o' that kebbidge than either you or me ever does."

This was coming down to practicalities with a bump.

"What are you going to do about it?" I enquired.

He shifted his quid of tobacco and so surprised a potato-bug strolling on the cabbage in question, that it tumbled off backwards. "Nothin'," he replied laconically.

"But in that case," I wailed, "where shall I get my cabbages?"

"Grow 'em yourself," was the firm reply; "it's what all the folks 'll have to be doin' pretty soon."

Evidently the practical farmer under-

estimates that joy in labour, which is pictured by the author when he attributes to Adam and Eve a growing satisfaction in work after their expulsion from Eden. My personal experience with farm-hands is limited, but I can quite understand that they seldom burst into poetic paraphrase upon the birth of a carrot, and I am perfectly certain that posterity, in any line of labour, is scandalously content to "eat dates" whenever, and for just so long, as they are paid for doing so. I think that on the whole it would be better not to show my author friend's article to my farmer friend; I am afraid he would not appreciate it. I shall send it instead to the Department of Internal Revenue in Washington where they are even more sadly in need of souls.

In his closing paragraph my friend the author attempts to carry me into a realm of imagery where I am incapable of following. He writes:

"Delights and discouragements, rewards and failures, smiles and tears, these are the elements out of which is created the soul of

a garden, and as each is met with patience and humour, work and play, we find that we, in turn, have found the garden of our souls."

I am sure that this is a perfectly beautiful thought, but as I labour to reduce it to a working formula, I find myself helplessly perplexed. Am I to create a soul for my garden, and then go and plant my own ready-made soul alongside it? I should hesitate to do that because, after my personal and vicarious experiences, I should feel no certainty as to what my soul would come up after I had planted it. I might plant my pure, white, woman's soul, and then, like those blue asters that came up magenta, it might come up a pink he-devil. Fortunately I am not gardening just at present, and there is plenty of time to consult my friend about this.

It is a good article, though, and I shall certainly advise its publication.

II

HUSBANDS AND HOUSEKEEPING

II

HUSBANDS AND HOUSEKEEPING

I HAVE just returned from a delightful summer vacation. For two glorious months I have repudiated my family, my town house and my country house, and have sat placidly in the homes of various hospitable friends and relatives, watching with an interest, not untinged with vindictive glee, their wrestlings with the various problems, domestic and other, which beset my own path through these days of questionable peace.

I refrain from mentioning the condition in which I found my town residence when I regretfully obeyed an inconvenient conscience and returned to duty. In a weak moment I had yielded to the pleadings of my men-folk to allow them "just to sleep in the house" throughout the week. "Who will make your beds?" I enquired. "Oh, we will make them ourselves," was the eager reply. I have seen beds made by

"ourselves" before, and regarded those two men with a stern and ironic eye, but their faces showed such pathetic pleading that I hesitated and was lost. Untrue to every principle within me, I compromised. I procured the services of the caretaker of a neighbouring house to come to my assistance, and she contracted to make the two beds, restore to their proper bars the bath-towels that a man invariably hangs up on the floor, and to keep clean a limited section of two dressing-tables. I said nothing, either to her or to my men-folk, about keeping the windows closed during the day in order to keep out the dust, because I knew full well that in one case it would be a mere waste of breath, and in the other would probably be regarded as too much work. I judged upon my return that they had remained permanently open throughout the months of July and August.

We have lived in this house a good many years, and owing to war and other exigencies we have not been able to keep it up as we could wish, consequently dilapida-

tion verged upon decay, and repairs necessitated the presence of workmen in pretty much every room in the house. I have been married some forty years now, and I ought to have known better, but I was weak-minded enough to urge my husband to get the work started in good season. Also I was so ill-advised as to allude, just once, in my letters to him throughout the weeks of my absence, to some rugs that were to be sent to the cleaners. I received in reply one of those I-must-bear-with-her-patiently letters saying, "PLEASE don't WORRY about those rugs; they have gone." They had; but they did n't come back till I went after them. Most of the repairs were partly finished upon my return, which is doing pretty well for a man, but they did not begin to work on the furnace — which necessitated running new pipes up through the house — until after I had cleaned the two top floors. I finally got the workmen out and the house fit to live in, but there are times when I feel that house-cleaning is an unappreciated phi-

lanthrophy. I, personally, with my own hands, cleaned some fifteen hundred of the several thousand books in our library. I removed them singly from the shelf, wiped, on both sides, top and bottom, every individual book, washed the shelf, and gave a final wipe to the book before returning it to its place, and when I had finished, I regarded the shining rows with aching pride. Upon my husband's return I pointed out to him my achievement, and suggested a few changes that I thought might be made to advantage in the arrangement of the volumes. He quite agreed with me, and as he replaced the last book a friend dropped in to welcome us back to town. My husband went forward, all charms and smiles to greet her. "I am so sorry I can't shake hands," he said, waggling his hands suggestively in front of him, "but I have just been handling these dirty books."

I am obliged to add a new maid to my staff this year. This is unfortunate because nobody wants to go into domestic service any more; however, I sent out my

appeal for help. The first applicant rang the doorbell, and I opened the door myself. The figure that stood there wore a large hat, with feathers of such dimensions that my eyes involuntarily measured the entrance in hasty calculation. A rather pleasant face looked out from beneath the structure on her head, and she announced, a little questioningly: "I'm the lady that heard help was wa-anted here." "Oh," said I. "Well, I'm the woman that wants it. Come right in."

She had her points, so I engaged her; this was Wednesday, and she promised faithfully to come on the following Monday. Having settled the matter I devoted my mind to other affairs, not omitting an occasional expression of gratitude to a kind fate that had placed no greater difficulties in my way of obtaining domestic assistance. On Saturday afternoon I answered a call on the telephone. "I'm the wan you was talkin' to the other day, and I've decided not to come." I opened my mouth to make remarks, but promptly

shut it again, and silently hung up the receiver. Really, there did not seem to be anything to say.

My next applicant was a very nice-looking young woman who had never "lived out before," but had kept house for an uncle. She was entirely untrained, and admitted quite frankly that she would have to be taught every particular of domestic work, but of course the wages were to be the same as those of a perfectly trained and responsible woman. That was inevitable, and I agreed; after which I considered that it was my turn to make demands. "What wages do you propose to give me for training you?" I asked with smiling firmness. "I do not expect you to work without wages — why should you expect me to do so?" That young person was endowed with a decent sense of square dealing, so we came to an amicable arrangement on the above basis, and she promised faithfully to come to me bright and early on the morning of three days hence. I spent the night before that prom-

ised day out of town, and I arose with the lark in order to be at my house in good time to receive the new inmate. I arrived there even before the postman who, when he came, delivered to me a postcard containing the information that — "My sister won't hear on me living in the city." Truly, I consider it quite altruistic on my part that my first thought should have been a hasty mental survey of my suburban friends in search of any who might avail themselves of this domestic phenomenon. Usually it is impossible to find a maid who will even consider living out of town, and most of my friends and acquaintances who love the country so much that they live there, are doing their own work.

I have now engaged a third person, who has "faithfully promised" to come on a certain date, but I have no reason to suppose that she will do so. I wonder what we are going to do about it all. Most of us have theories on the subject, and many of my friends have various suggestions to offer in the line of reform. One of the sug-

gestions is a plan to have a sort of factory-like arrangement, where domestic service will be carried on in shifts of a certain number of hours. I understand that one batch would come in and work two or three hours, and would then be succeeded by another batch, and the process repeated until the employers of each family-factory-force are ready to go to bed. Of course this arrangement might conceivably succeed in getting the work done, after a fashion, but it does n't permit much of the human element to enter in. Heaven knows, there is little enough personal attachment between servants and their employers as it is, but if this sort of thing obtained, one might just as well be served by a hay tedder — and I am inclined to think that the dinner dishes would be handled in much the same fashion as is the hay. Another trouble would be that one could never remember the names of the individuals of some four or five shifts of four or five persons each. I am already getting to that age when I begin with any familiar name, and go

through the nomenclature of the family till I inadvertently strike the name I want: "Jenny — Bessie — Margaret — MARY." It would be a fearful mental effort to learn all the names to begin with, and never in the world could I find time to go through ten or fifteen names for the purpose of giving an order in a hurry. I don't know what is supposed to happen if one is taken ill, or needs any service in the night. I only know that if my family were all away, I should object strenuously to sleeping alone in the house, and that under no circumstances whatever could I be induced to arise from my bed and crawl through the unwarmed passages of a dark house at 6.30 of a cold winter's morning for the purpose of admitting the first shift at the back door. No. I have no opinion at all of that plan for the betterment of domestic difficulties. Personally I have not got much beyond theories of cause, but until I can think of some better suggestion than this, I make no apologies for keeping quiet.

I am inclined to think that the cause may

lie partly in the world-wide spirit of unrest which pervades every age and every class, and is as rampant among the rich as with the poor. Youth is fidgety beyond expression, and we older ones escape it only in the degree to which we are lazy or energetic. I have a young friend who could not sit still for five minutes if she tried. She has a house in town, a house in the country, where they often spend a few days, and a house at the seaside, where they frequently spend Sundays. And she has let her town house and hired another around the corner to live in. I enquired about her domestic arrangements with a good deal of interest, but she did not seem to be very clear in her mind about them. So far as I could understand, a telephone operator was taking care of the children. I was anxious to know the *modus operandi*, but was left in doubt as to whether the operator had left her post or was caring for the children by telephone.

Personally, I find it bad enough to take care of my one town house (I have shuffled

off the care of my country house on to the shoulders of my favourite niece) and nothing would induce me to own three houses and hire a fourth. I passed my young friend sitting on the steps of her house Number Four, gloomily surveying a procession of furniture and household effects being carried in at the front door. She was arrayed in a pair of green knickerbockers ineffectually concealed by a raincoat; her pretty hair curled fluffily against the green facing of her hat, and the expression of melancholy that overspread her face only added to her charms. I asked if she had yet succeeded in getting a cook. "No," she replied in a tone of hopeless discouragement, "nobody seems to want to take the place." I was deeply sympathetic — with the cook. I doubt if I should like that situation, myself.

I am not making any remarks about the wages that obtain to-day, the sum demanded being the same for trained and untrained work. We keep as few maids as possible in my household, and in order to

pay them we go without all the other necessaries of life. I have not bought a hat for three years and my husband has not had a new suit of clothes since the year of our Lord 1914. I cannot say that the rise of payment for labour is none of my business, exactly, but I decline to accept any responsibility for it; it has been none of my doing; but I am a very much mistaken old woman if the labour powers that be do not find, some day, that the trained workers of all industries will rise up and forcibly impress upon them the injustice of the present rate of payment. They will have my warm sympathy, too. For a well-trained, well-mannered parlour-maid, for instance, who knows all the ins and outs of her work and does it well, to feel that any little red-headed, snub-nosed chit, fresh from a bog in Ireland or anywhere else, can demand and get exactly the same wages that she herself receives, must be too exasperating to be borne. If I were a well-trained servant, I would not put up with it for one minute. If domestic-trained labour were to

make a stand against such injustice, we employers would be none the worse off so far as money is concerned, for nine out of every ten employers could not possibly afford to pay a penny more than we pay now, so we should be obliged to content ourselves with untrained work, and the trained servant would be obliged either to marry, or to force her untrained sister into her proper place.

I am occasionally tempted to wish that I were less conservative in the selection of the class of service I employ. It is really an obsession to feel that one can be served only by certain races, of a certain colour, and an approximately similar creed. A few of my acquaintances are broader-minded than I, and in their frequent chats over my afternoon tea-table wave flauntingly in my face their one Japanese servant who is butler, chambermaid and cook, or their Chinese cook who is an equally clever coiffeur, but I don't know; somehow or other I would as soon think of engaging a baboon to wait upon me. Also, I observe

that they come to our house for meals a great deal more often than we are invited to theirs.

A friend of mine has returned to first principles and, temporarily at all events, is at rest. She has a large farm on the outskirts of a small town, and her struggles with the domestic problem were rapidly bringing her to an untimely grave. She imported maids from Ireland, she brought them over from England, she sought them out in the fastnesses of the mountain range that looms above her home, but each acquirement was more incompetent, and drove her more nearly distracted than the last. She has Southern affiliations, so it was not unnatural that in her desperation her mind should have turned in that direction for inspiration. After a few tentative experiments she succeeded in transplanting a sort of "ole Virginny plantation life" into the slightly scandalized environs of an abolition town. She "owns" a middle-aged negress who adores her mistress, believes in a personal and material devil, and prefers

to do the greater part of her work between the hours of 10 P.M. and midnight. This invaluable person brought with her three very young girls of willing heart and questionable relationship to her and to each other. For each and all of these young relatives she is entirely responsible, and if they do not behave, she disciplines them with the business end of the coal shovel. Her cooking is No. 1 A, Southern, and if the meals are not served with that meticulous attention to the clock that obtains in the North, they are without question worth waiting for. I hastened home from a drive one morning, my lips framed with apologies for being five minutes late for the 1.30 luncheon hour, and was met by my hostess with a serene smile. "I am afraid luncheon will be a few moments late to-day," she said unapologetically; "Rose has just gone out to the garden to pick the corn." We sat down to our meal at 2.20, but any one who had the privilege of eating that dish of baked corn was oblivious of time or the hour. Any one of the four is willing to wash

the dogs, run on errands, hunt for mislaid spectacles, or weed the garden, and I have not the slightest doubt that they would milk the cows or feed the pigs, were they told to do so, and do it very well, too. Rose guards her mistress with ferocious care, and is so careful of her property that my friend is frequently unable to effect an entrance into her own house; but there are no strikes in that household, and no uncertainty as to who is mistress and who is maid. My friend may be reactionary, but she is uncommonly comfortable.

III

AUTRES TEMPS, AUTRES MŒURS

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AUTRES TEMPS, AUTRES MŒURS

"THE truth is," I remarked reflectively to a friend and contemporary, "I ought to have died fifty years ago."

"In that case you would not have had a very long life," he replied. (I do like men!) "Why?"

He is as old as I am and has nearly as many grandchildren, but I was obliged to explain to him that I am a peace-loving and agéd woman, and that the turmoil and unrest of to-day were too new and too strange to be endured by one whose youth had been passed in decent and respectable times.

It was a pouring, rainy day, and possibly this may have helped to cast a gentle tinge of melancholy over our reminiscences of the past and discussion of the present. There was no lack of material for either, and I really enjoyed talking to him, for though he is unfortunate in that he does not live in Boston, it is broadening to the mind to get

an outsider's point of view occasionally. Besides, he is one of the few men I really trust. His wife is a suffragist, and if anybody wants an illustration of real tact and discretion, they will find it in the fact that, despite our intimacy of some forty years' standing, I have never been able to ascertain his personal views on the subject of suffrage and the vote. We began on this subject because I had recently been attacked from that direction by a near relative with whose views I do not agree, and I was still a bit sore about it.

It is infinitely more satisfactory to talk to men than to women because they do not take one so literally as do one's female friends, and the quiet self-assurance of their superiority is always restful. I am apt to accept their opinions (with reservations), so I naturally laid before my old friend some of the difficulties that I foresee in this evil of suffrage that is about to fall upon my sex. I am distinctly troubled by the prospect. When I was young, right was right and wrong was wrong, with the line

as clearly marked as between black and white; life did not get all mixed up into a dirty grey as it does nowadays. If a matter was right, it was right; if it was wrong, it was wrong; if two duties clashed, we cheerfully selected the most disagreeable, happily convinced that the most disagreeable was the most virtuous, and let it go at that, simple souls that we were. Now, however, I find myself confronted by a situation in which I am going to do wrong whatever I do. No conviction that I own is more deeply rooted within me than the belief that for a woman to vote, is for her to commit a Sin. Not just a venial offence, but an act which comes under the head of some one, if not all, of the seven deadly sins. Now I am a loyal and patriotic soul, and if this amendment is irretrievably added to the Constitution, it becomes obligatory by law for me to vote; so there I am, on the horns of a dilemma. If I do not vote, I commit the deadly sin of breaking constitutional law, and if I do, I am perfectly sure that I shall commit every sin known to man — and

there are plenty of them. Apparently my soul is headed straight for perdition in any case. I am full of resentment, anyway, that this burden of purifying politics should have been placed upon the shoulders of the oppressed and down-trodden race of mothers and housekeepers; of all the problems in life that we are asked to tackle, this should have been the very last. Perhaps it is, for by the time we have solved it our race will be rendered extinct. I have no objection to picking up the loose ends and polishing up a man's job when he has done his share, but with all the other things I have to do, I see no reason why I should do his work as well as my own; and if politics is n't a man's job, I should like to know what is. Besides, it takes so many men to accomplish any one thing that I should lose all patience in working with them; which conviction was borne in upon me the other day when occasion arose to lay some brick outside my house. The space to be covered was one foot six inches by two feet six inches, and the number of bricks required

was fifty-one. I know because I counted them after they were laid. I happened to be standing at my front door when the outfit arrived, and I watched the process with interest. A large two-horse team was halted, in its leisurely progress, before my house, turned (much to the annoyance of passing traffic), and solemnly backed up to the kerb. It contained one pail, one shovel, the requisite number of brick, and three stalwart men; one to carry the bricks a distance of fifteen feet, one to do the work, and the other to look on; and it took them one hour and a half to do it. I could have carried the bricks home from the kiln, and done the work with my own two unaided hands in half an hour. I would have done so, too, only that the place was in the front of the house, and I am too considerate to scandalize my neighbours. It was a beautiful illustration of the masculine method in politics. Men do love to think they are busy; so, instead of being content with voting on election days, they go busily to work and hold something called primaries, where they

proceed solemnly to vote who they would vote for if they were voting for anybody. It must be a hollow joy. Shall we women have to do that, too, I wonder? If so, the men need not trouble themselves over the suggestion to scrap the primaries; the women will do all the scrapping necessary. "How," I enquired of my friend, "could I find time to carry on work in such fashion? Last year I was an orphan asylum; this year I am a lying-in hospital; I have charity board meetings, sewing circles, health committees to attend; meals to order and a husband to reckon with; kindly tell me when I should have time to do real voting, let alone primaries?"

Personally I should find it a fearful mental strain to decide which candidate I liked best, and whether it was my duty to stick to my party or to my preferences; and somehow or other I have a feeling that a woman's judgement would not be altogether unbiassed in such matters. The near relative, alluded to above, came and sat on the edge of my bed before I was up the other

day, bursting with enthusiasm over a recently returned and very charming colonel of the A.E.F. She said that she thought he would make the finest President that the United States could possibly have, as he possessed exactly the qualities that would fit him for it; keen judgement, wonderful penetration, intimate knowledge of men, and marvellously wide sympathies. She glowed with pride as, in illustration of the last-named attribute, she described his interest in her grandchildren, and how instant had been his realization of the cleverness of one, the precocity of another, and the beauty of them all. "Did he, by any chance, tell you that they strongly resembled their grandmother?" I enquired. "Why — yes," she replied with a charming little elderly blush; "why do you ask?"

I would really have liked advice on this vexed question, but the only suggestion my friend could make was that I might become a conscientious objector. I do not think, though, that I have fallen as low as that yet. I observe that one's conscience is

most apt to object when the call upon it is something that one does not like. No; I should prefer to fall back upon protoplasms. Scientists tell us that the human race is evolved from two protoplasms, one created to vote, the other not to, and it is of no use trying to get behind protoplasms; one is so apt to find nothing there.

Thinking the matter over seriously, I am inclined to feel that it would be of little use trying to reform politics unless one first reformed the newspapers of today. "There," said my friend, "you appeal to my prejudices as well as to my principles." I was glad of that. I always did prefer to appeal to a man's prejudices rather than to his principles; there are so many more of them, and in this matter we agreed perfectly that the influence of many modern newspapers was pernicious in the extreme. Possibly they may be no more a real woman's province than are politics, but I have my opinion of them, all the same, and they are one of the trials of my life. One cannot refrain from reading them, and the

mental effort of subtracting the possible grains of truth from the tissue of journalistic imagination is equalled only by the mental gymnastics required to chase the article in which one is interested, as it skips gleefully from column to column on widely separated sheets. The front page of my beloved "Herald" is strongly suggestive of a London 'bus, and though nothing could be more pleasant than such association, the one is as confusing in the search for knowledge as is the other in the quest of one's destination. One acquires quite startling information at times. I had no idea, until I read it this morning, that "the effect the suspensions would have on the graduate accumulation and resultant congestion of goods at Atlantic and Gulf ports would be the (continued on page eight) largest sale of any high-grade caramels in America." This is interesting and, probably, quite true, but I have often wondered if this rending of continuity in journalism may not be responsible for a man's method of reading the newspapers. Of course they

cannot be read peacefully, page after page, as one reads a book, because one has to turn and re-turn and play leap-frog generally, in order to follow the article from page 1 to page 9 to page 37; but just why a man should pick every section to pieces and carpet the entire floor with them is one of those things that he is unable to explain. I never have time to go to church on Sunday, because my entire morning is occupied picking newspapers off the floor.

But this is irrelevant. Both my friend and I felt that the newspapers were not invariably on the side of law and order, and that at times they permitted themselves a licence that is subversive of discipline. So far as I can see, discipline exists nowhere in these days except in the army, and if I am ever obliged to imperil my soul by voting, I will do so cheerfully if my vote will ensure conscription. The army is pretty nearly the only institution in the country in which one may safely place one's faith. We have behaved uncommonly well in Boston during a recent unpleasantness, but the

situation might have been deplorable had it not instead been rendered distinctly agreeable by the presence of that first cousin once removed to the army, under whose charge we are at present luxuriating. They are not only efficient but adorable, and their fame is spreading throughout the land. A lady from New York was obliged to visit Boston when our troubles here first began, and the perils of a visit to Boston, as predicted by New York, were such that the valiant lady made her will and ensured her life before she bought her ticket. After a few days in this perfectly quiet and well-conducted town, she expressed herself as totally unable to understand the law and order that reigned throughout the place. "Why!" she exclaimed, "if this had happened in New York —!!!" But she left the rest of the sentence to our imagination. I entirely agreed with her. I stood one day at a particularly congested street corner, watching an extremely good-looking young mounted "veteran" directing the traffic.

I was so absorbed in admiration that I

lost all track of time, and was only awakened to a realization that I was blocking the pavement by a pleasant voice that made itself heard beside my shoulder. "Please," said a uniformed figure with an alarming-looking bayonet over its shoulder; "would you be so kind as to move on?" I am perfectly certain that a New York policeman would not have put it that way; even a London Bobby might have said — "Move on there!"

Of course I do not wish to assert our superiority, nor to draw any derogatory comparisons. I observed broad-mindedly to my friend that Boston had troubles of her own, and that every city in the Union seemed to have gone crazy. He assented to this, and in proof of our assertion produced a letter which had recently been sent him from Washington, and which he read aloud to me:

". . . We have had another toilsome, troubled week. The great difficulty of obtaining good and willing servants is annoying and vexatious. To serve is no part of the

intention of a large portion of the hired help or assistants — or only to serve according to their own pleasure and on their own terms. The great object is to render the least possible service and to obtain the highest amount of wages obtainable. . . . This, especially the shirking part, is particularly the case with the Irish — more so than with American or other nationalities — and the difficulties are on the increase. . . . There has been a class of demagogue politicians who have contributed largely to this state of things by which all affairs — domestic, political, and other — are disturbed without benefit to employer or employed. The teachings and influence of the 'New York Tribune' have been pernicious. B—— and a class of demagogues in Congress have enacted a most outrageous law —"

But that was as much, and more, than I could bear, and at that point I gave way to unmitigated pessimism. I doubt if even Mr. Morrison Swift views modern life more gloomily than I did at that moment. "It is

alarming beyond expression," I declared lugubriously; "fifty years ago we were an honest and respectable people, and to-day we have deteriorated until there is neither honour nor honesty left in the race. What a pitiful contrast!"

"Perhaps," he replied thoughtfully, with a hateful little masculine twinkle in the tail of his eye; "but the date of that letter is June 3, 1869."

IV

THE LOST ART OF LETTER-WRITING

IV

THE LOST ART OF LETTER-WRITING

WITH the never-dying interest felt in the subject by the female mind, I read a thrilling scene in a novel the other day, in which was depicted a difference of opinion between a man and his wife. When the climax was reached, the lady, with great dignity and propriety, remarked to her husband that he must choose between her and the *tertium quid* in question; and the husband, with time-honoured propriety, chose his wife. It was all very pleasant reading, and one closed the book with a sense of having been truly uplifted. That course of action always seems to work beautifully in novels, but in real life it sometimes misses the mark, as I found when I tried once to work it on the husband that happens to belong to me.

Some years ago we had, as head gardener, or farmer, a man who was so unsatisfactory

(to me, at all events) that one summer matters came to a head. Apparently the farmer considered that it was my personal duty to remove the — the — refuse from the back piazza to the pig-stye, and he absolutely refused to black the boots. My dear father took this last-mentioned duty upon himself, and an early riser might have had the privilege (provided my father did not hear him coming) of seeing an extremely aristocratic old gentleman, arrayed in the briefest of shirt-tails, seated on the back stairs with a blacking-brush in one hand and a guest's boot balanced on the other. An English friend once remarked that he thought it the most graphic picture of a duke in reduced circumstances that he had ever seen.

Finally, however, the relations between the farmer and myself became so strained that I could not bear it another minute; so with all the time-honoured dignity (that I could muster) I told my husband that he must choose between the farmer and me. He chose — the farmer! That fussed me up a good deal because I had no precedent to

go by; but I was n't going back on my dignity, and as the farmer would not leave, I had to. A few years later he was dismissed (in disgrace), but I am much relieved, even at this late date, to make public my action, as for several years I have lived before the world a misjudged and misunderstood woman. You observe, I left. I have a perfectly good family of assorted consanguinity who are all quite capable of filling my place in the household, so I refused to be a little martyr any longer, and arranged that hereafter my summers should be really enjoyable. Consequently, as I was not at the farm, and my husband was toiling between there and the town in the hot train and making believe he loved it, of course it was necessary to arrange for a correspondence between us.

I apologize for the *banalité* of the remark, but it has been borne in upon me during past years that letter-writing is a lost art. The observation is more than banal; it is an aphorism, and the truth. My husband is not one bit worse about it than

anybody else, but having recently returned from a two months' holiday, I have become convinced that there is a brevity and lack of detail in the letters of to-day that leave much to be desired. On thinking it over, I conclude that the lack I find in letters from my friends evidences an absence of egotism on their part. Now, when anything interesting or of interest happens to me, I am instantly seized with an irresistible desire to sit down and write my long-suffering friends all about it, with all the pros and cons, details and ornamentations. Then, after an interminable interval, during which I fly to the door every time the postman comes, expecting a ten-page letter of sympathy, I receive, at the end of ten days or two weeks, three pages of three words to a line, about something else, and either no allusion at all to my thrilling news, or possibly a three-word postscript tucked illegibly into a corner. As for getting anybody to answer a question in a letter, I have given that up long ago. If an answer is imperative, I write my question on a return, self-

addressed postcard, and if I am lucky, or my correspondent has even an embryonic conscience, I may receive a reply in the course of a week or ten days. It does not, even then, invariably bring the information requested. A short time ago I wished to verify the name of a gentleman in the Bible. I knew approximately where to find him, but I was comfortably curled up in bed, writing, and my Bible was tidily reposing upon my *prie-dieu* across the room. So I picked up one of the above-mentioned postcards, of which I keep a supply at hand, wrote down my question, sent it to the post, and dismissed the matter from my mind. At the end of a week or ten days I received the torn-off card bearing the terse reply: "If such a thing as a Bible can be found in Boston, see II Kings, chap. —, verse —." I knew pretty nearly as much as that myself, but did not want the trouble of looking for it. However, this was the same friend who once wrote me that, having a bad cold, she "had retired to bed with S. Paul on one side and Bismarck on the

other," so I had not expected too much from a lady of such tastes. In any case, I regard a postcard as little short of an insult, and would prefer to receive even a bill; it tells one more. I am a convert to the picture postcard when it is bought by one's self for one's self as a reminder of a place, but to send them from abroad to one's friends at home, with some such remark written upon them as "Here yesterday. Is n't it lovely?" — fills me with exasperation. I usually reply by returning another picture postcard of Long Wharf, or some equally unfrequented portion of Boston, with the enquiry, "Does n't this make you homesick?"

Letter-writing is a real art and should be cultivated, both as to writing letters and as to enjoying them when received. Naturally they should be legible, and about this I am myself very particular. One of my dearest aunts implores me to use my type-writer when I write her, and another dear friend tells me that my letters are "perfectly charming" (usually underlined), and that

she enjoys them immensely, only she cannot read a word of them. Possibly this may be the reason she enjoys them so much, but I keep bravely on, hoping that time and study may accustom her to the originality of my handwriting, and anxiously accepting the risk that greater legibility may lessen her appreciation.

My husband is an extremely busy man. He hates nothing so much as to write letters, and his idea of an earthly Paradise is an inaccessible island where any approaching postman would be shot at sight. It can easily be imagined that for him to write his letters to me with his own hand instead of dictating them, to be written by the typewriter, is flattering to me in the extreme, and I really do appreciate it. His calligraphy is as beautiful as one can expect from a gentleman who still persists in using a quill pen, — it is the only sign of age that he shows, — and his letters run somewhat as follows:

"Dear," "Dearest," or "Dearest Blank," (according to the amount of time at his disposal — or possibly to the degree, Fah-

renheit, of his affections at the moment). "Had a fine day yes'day at farm. Apps. com'g on in fine shape. Finshd-wk. on celery bed & weeded garden. Hollyhks. superb. Had int'view c Blank at office, argn[d] about plmbg. Tho't he'd make more trouble but he agrd. to everythng. A. came out of ether beautifully — doing O.K."

Now that was truly interesting, only I wondered what "A." had gone under ether for. The last time I had seen him, a few days previously, he appeared to be in the best of health and spirits. Nothing would have induced me to telegraph enquiries as to what had happened, because I knew quite well that I should be accused of worrying, but in every letter sent to my family during my absence I mentioned that I was of an inquisitive disposition, and would love to know what had happened. Many friends wrote me of how well he was doing, and how thankful I must be that it was no worse, and in almost every letter I had from the family I was told that he was doing finely and that I was not to worry. I did n't; but

I did not learn what had happened till I got home and pinned "A." personally into a corner where it was impossible for him to get away from me.

One of my friends is in such a hurry to get through the irksome task of writing a letter that she leaves out most of her words, and as they are usually the important ones, I frequently have brain-storms in my efforts to ascertain what she is writing about. I had a letter from her the other day in which she wrote: "I clean forgot to offer my letter of yesterday — a monstrous oversight — but my go to you with my best wishes to you and your's. . . . I wonder Browning and Noyes fall down before such poetry." It was a really interesting letter. I have known her for more years than she will permit me to mention, so I can usually read her mind and know what she means; I also happened to remember that I had recently celebrated a disagreeably advanced birthday of my own, so I was able to supply the felicitations (or sympathy) that should have been sent in

the letter received the day previously; but I waited with pathetic interest to see what was coming to me with her good wishes. I thought it might be a new motor, or a diamond necklace, or even a jar of her sweet pickle, which is popular in my family and would have been most welcome, but nothing ever came. The last sentence I am still working over as, owing to a certain lack of punctuation, I do not elicit her meaning with my usual quickness of grasp. I cannot think why she is in such a hurry to finish her letters because they are so delightful in their wit and humour that she ought to enjoy writing them; and if she would only refrain from licking the envelope flaps till they stick from end to end, so that it is impossible to open them, they would be quite perfect.

It is not only my contemporaries who scatter these flowers of literature along the path of my declining years. I am also privileged to include a large number of youthful friends among my correspondents, and we discuss all sorts of subjects. Not being rel-

atives, they are willing to discuss even the education of their children with me, and one of them once took my advice. I am really very respectful in my attitude regarding the education of to-day; it is so superior to anything we had in my time and so superlatively putile. (I invented that word myself and being translated, it means a mixture of "puerile" and "futile.") I happen to be corresponding with one of them just now upon education, and I find it most edifying. In one letter I asked her how much her daughter, aged six, learned at kindergarten, and the reply came back in one word written in the middle of a large sheet of paper:

NOTHING

I had been inclined to suspect as much, and chuckled. I replied that I thought it rather hard that she should have to pay out one or two hundred dollars a year for the attainment of such an immaterial object, and further enquired as to the curriculum of her older daughter, aged about ten.

"English, History, Latin, Geography, a mixture of Arithmetic and Algebra, and French." I studied the list thoughtfully. "English," I suppose, includes grammar, and I could only trust that the "History" was not of the American variety prevalent in our schools. It seems a bit supererogatory to devote much time to Geography just now, because there is so little of it, but I regarded my friend's child with respectful awe that at ten years of age she should be tackling Algebra. French is most useful, and a knowledge of it cannot be too early instilled, but, as I pondered over each lesson set, I did not seem able to find a single one which might possibly conceal spelling or writing beneath some more imposing title. I have frequently been assured that one is born with or without a gift for spelling, in which case the Spelling Fairy must have worn herself out attending the christening parties of the older generation, and is able to be present at only a limited number of such occasions in these days. Either this, or something else, must account for

the lack of the gift of spelling in some of my young friends. I had a letter from one the other day which was really quite unique. She confided to me that she was "writting" in a hurry to tell me that she "thoght" she had about "desided" to take up "litterature" as a "proffession." I could only reply that I was greatly interested, and that I did hope she would be fortunate enough to find a really good proof-reader.

But, dear me, what do such trifles as contractions, omissions, and misspelling matter! The affection is expressed in just as full measure, and interest is always to be found. If people could only be convinced that "battle, murder, and sudden death" do not constitute the sole interest of a letter. Never shall I forget a letter from my father, the very best of old-fashioned correspondents, written to me when I had been living abroad for some years. There was little of excitement in the ordinary sense of the word. He mentioned just in which room and upon what chair my mother was sitting and what she was doing. He made a few

pungent remarks upon the choreman who had broken a large pane of glass (my parent was a very real man); and he observed that he had just glanced out of the window and had seen Mr. Blank's cat crawling along the communicating steps of the houses opposite. I never in my life was so interested — specially in the cat. I knew just what he looked like, and just the holes in the iron railing through which he would elect to crawl. I read and re-read that letter till it was almost worn out, and though it was written some thirty-seven years ago I have never forgotten it — or that cat.

Few people keep letters in these days, and small blame to them; few are worth the keeping. Were more of them like those of my father's and "Mother Auton's," few would be destroyed.

"What a correspondent she was, to be sure! 'Wait for Mother Auton's letters, if you want to hear the truth about it,' was the common shibboleth in the family. Her epistles were comforts to the homesick school-boy, the delight of her children in

foreign lands, and became valuable transcripts of the current history of the whole Auton tribe. For forty years she wrote a weekly bulletin to her absent ones, bringing to their anxious hearts fresh photographs of home.

"Mother Auton would never sit at a desk. Neither 'secretary' nor 'davenport' suited her purpose. . . . She took her writing-materials on her broad, motherly lap, pushed her cap-strings from her face, adjusted her gold spectacles over her ample nose, dipped her pen daintily in the ink . . . and away it ran so merrily over the paper that she would be on her fourth page before we children, who were seated around her, had half gotten through sucking our oranges. People write letters now, lots of them, heaps of them; but I very much doubt whether they contain one half the valuable news — the harmless gossip, the genial spirit — which flowed so readily from Mother Auton's pen.

"There she sat in her chair every Sunday morning for over forty years, writing the

weekly epistle, with bended head and benign expression, while the wood fire hissed and sputtered, and the old canary sang in the sunlight."

V

MY BOLSHEVIST

V

MY BOLSHEVIST

QUITE recently my husband attended a large dinner-party where he had the pleasure of hearing a speech made by Mr. Gompers, and returned to the bosom of his family in a frame of mind regarding both the manner and the matter of the address, that bordered upon enthusiasm.

My husband has always been a (moderate) upholder of the labour unions and, being a dutiful wife, I have endeavoured to be guided by his convictions on such occasions as I have not felt that he would do better to be guided by mine, so I am bringing my mind to bear upon the matter in order to decide which of the two above-mentioned courses it is best in this case for us to follow. It is a difficult matter to determine, both as regards my husband and the subject in question, because my husband usually decides first and talks about it afterwards, and also because my point of view with re-

gard to labour, socialism, and Bolshevism is entirely that of the amateur. Even in my proper sphere of domestic labour, I have had but one experience of labour difficulties, and that episode was caused by outside interference and not from within — as is usually the case. I settled it by paying other people and doing the work myself till the atmosphere cleared, and then everybody settled down; but I quite realize that such a course is not always practicable, and I feel that I must take a wider view of existing circumstances.

This, also, is a bit inconvenient because I am too busy to attend labour meetings, and I find it impossible to read the articles provided for me by my socialistic friends and relatives because they exasperate me to such an extent that my calm judgement is upset, and they only cause me to yearn for a Czar or a Dictator. At any rate, I prefer to make my investigations at first hand and to judge for myself, which I do by holding long and exhaustive conversations with the workmen of various trades who

haunt my house in one or another capacity. This is nothing new on the part of either the workmen or myself. We have had pretty much the same set of men for the past forty years, and we have grown up together, so to speak; consequently I dare say I do not meet the modern and more ambitious men who are reforming the world so uncomfortably for themselves and us; still, my workmen friends are not yet superannuated, and I am both interested and edified by what they have to say.

I cannot, at this moment, remember a single one of these men who has expressed more than a very qualified approval of the present demands of labour, and the majority are almost as sceptical of its rights as I am. To be sure, in spite of the encouraging orthodoxy of their opinions, they charge me just the same for their labour as would the maddest socialist, but I am willing to admit that I don't see how they can very well help it. The only trouble I have is that I never seem able to make it clear to them that, while I quite understand that I must

pay them more because they are obliged to pay their men more, nobody pays me one bit more, and that it is I who suffer. I get quite a good deal of sympathy, but I do not notice any diminution in the amount of the bills.

It may be a femininely broad statement, but it is quite true that I have yet to meet a working-man who is an advanced socialist. My personal experiences with such are confined to a few near relatives, and one or two people like a certain Bolshevist gentleman, with whom I long to make a closer acquaintance than he has permitted me. I have several really dear friends whom I have never seen, and with whom my friendship is based solely on an interchange of letters, but the gentleman of whom I speak gives me no opportunity for reciprocity, as when he wrote me his long and interesting letter, he carelessly neglected to give either his name or address. I feel quite badly about it because I am sure he misunderstands me, and he distinctly damped my ardour of patriotism, the expression of which brought me under the ban of his only

too evident displeasure. I take for granted that he is not a member of the Y.D., as in that case I am sure he would have been more sympathetic with my humble desire to please.

The occasion of his criticism arose at the time of the return from abroad of our New England Division of troops, and the day selected for the triumphal parade was as cold and disagreeable as Boston could produce. Part of the procession formed in front of my house, and as I watched them from my library window I bethought myself of the populace sitting on the five miles of grandstand that had been built from which to view the four miles of parade. They did not worry me any because I regarded anybody who elected of their own free will to sit there for five mortal hours in such weather to be deserving of all that was coming to them. My maternal heart, however, did yearn over those returned boys, whose C.O.s may have been admirable officers in war, but did not know enough to put overcoats on their men in peace. I watched

till I could not bear it another minute, and then sent out to collect a dozen or so and bring them in to get warm by the big open fire. I make no remarks about them. When a woman gets a Colonel and a Major, a couple of Captains, half a dozen Lieutenants and six-foot two of an adorable Chaplain making themselves agreeable, it is no time for words, but action. I again sent forth my emissary to procure a few of the best-looking Y.M.C.A. girls waiting about to feed the men, and with these on the spot the situation was rendered entirely satisfactory. Flushed with my success, my heart opened still wider, and seeing those poor, shivering privates trying to eat the somewhat unsympathetic luncheon provided for them, I threw wide my front door and invited the entire battalion to make my house their home. My heart, however, being considerably bigger than my house, only some twenty-five or thirty of them were able to squeeze within the doors, and though the accommodation was not luxurious, the men were at least sheltered from

the bitter cold and piercing wind. I was really a proud woman that day, with my house filled upstairs and down with the American Expeditionary Force. Not only were they all such clean, trim, fine-looking men but their manners and ways were above reproach.

When they had thanked me civilly and gone back to their ranks, I looked around my hall and thought I must have dreamed it all. We have a good many young people in our house at one time and another, and after a similar gathering among my own circle of friends, my first act after their departure is usually to summon all the maids and a char-woman or two and clean up. I gazed about me with bewildered eyes and fled to my writing-desk, where I burst uncontrollably into next morning's "Herald" with the following outbreak of patriotic appreciation.

"*To the Editor of the Herald.*

"I must confess to having been a trifle satiated with the laudations of our troops

returning from overseas. They seem to me to have been rather overdone and exaggerated, but since the parade last Friday I should like to express my praise and approval of the training and discipline of the U.S. Army in a matter which I consider as being of primary importance and really deserving of praise.

"The day of the parade was unkindly cold, and it would have been blatantly inhospitable not to have brought some of the shivering men into one's house to get warm. (Incidentally, had I been the C.O., I should have ordered overcoats to be worn.) Batches of blue-nosed officers warmed themselves at our library fire and (to my unaccustomed eyes) a whole battalion of enlisted men ate their lunch, drank their coffee, and smoked their cigarettes in our front hall. Now, observe. After all those men had civilly thanked us and gone, not one burnt match, nor cigarette stub, nor crumb of food was found, and every little empty lunch-box was neatly piled, one upon the other, at the side of the hall fire-

place! May I enquire if the U.S. military authorities could be persuaded to receive young civilians for training in domestic principles?" To which I appended my signature and address.

My enthusiasm for the A.E.F., who had so appreciatively accepted the best I had to offer, shed a glow of warmth throughout my patriotism, and I had that rare but pleasant and self-satisfied feeling that steals over one when, having given of one's best, it has been appreciatively received. I had no doubt but that Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics had pervaded my house on that day, but I swelled with pride to think of the civilizing and ennobling effect that a residence in the U.S.A. had worked upon them, and I began to think that perhaps, after all, this great and free country really was the true Democracy that it believes itself to be. A few days later I did not feel quite so sure about it. I received through the mail a written communication, upon a corner of which, cut out from the "Herald," was pasted my printed letter. It ran as follows:

"*Dear Sir*

"Your letter is an exact showing up of the rich American idea of the great american democracy. You invite the officers into your library but the privates who are presumable workingmen in private life must stay in the hall Why not have them all in the hall or all in the library. Do men of your cloes [*sic*] think that even in Heaven and Hell the officers and privates, the workers and other classes of society will be kept apart by God. These are the things that a foreigner cannot understand about your boasted democracy and free country. You shreik and brag that you are the most democratic country in the world and the freest, and tell me where even in Russians palmy days can you find so much police brutality as your third degree and your clubbing and shooting in Lawrence and other strikes. Your judicial decissions, one man fined for stealing thousands and another gets 10 years for assault or stealing a dollar or two. Mooney in jail and rich scroundles walking walking the streets.

Your Senate fighting and trying to besmirch the name of Mr. Wilson the best President that ever lived. Working men being sent to jail for breaking petty city by laws and rich women suffragettes God bless them and more power to them, who know the law and defie the judge have their casis dismissed, which shows that the judge knows the law is illegal and has only been made to give the crooked pols lawyers and judges a hold over the people.

"Yours very respectfully
"A foreign born worker and Citizen"

It did not discourage me, exactly, but it dimmed the radiance of my patriotism a bit. That he mistook my letter for that of a man is, naturally, highly gratifying, but I do so much regret that I cannot write and ask him to call on me, for there is so much that I should like to talk to him about.

I want dreadfully to explain to him that the size of my library being only some twenty square feet, it was truly less aristocratic snobbishness on my part than lack

of dimension that interfered with my democratic spirit. I have not the slightest doubt but that the officers would cheerfully have changed places with the privates if it would have made them any happier, and also the hall would have been more comfortable because it is so much bigger, and there was more to sit on, barring the floor, than there was upstairs; but after anxious consultation since then with an army officer, I am assured that the military manœuvres necessary to have effected the change in the space at command, would have resulted in a total loss of all troops engaged, so my conscience is clear. As to my friend's genial sociability in desiring that we should all be together, I am still uncertain as to whether his education in army etiquette is incomplete, or whether he is a military twin of our Secretary of the Navy.

The oftener I read his letter, the more I regret his self-forgetfulness in omitting his name and address, because there are so many points that I feel we hold in common

in spite of a few perfectly natural mistakes on his part. My portrait, which he presents to the public as that of a "rich American," is not nearly so exact as I could wish, but the mistake is not so much his fault as it is my misfortune. In no way can one be more tragically misunderstood, by the world in general and one's friends in particular, than by living on Beacon Street. The misfortune of a residence on Commonwealth Avenue does not compare with it — for which, being jealous for the reputation of the older street, I am content to suffer. I have supported this injustice so long that I have almost become inured to the hardship and pay the penalty without a murmur. Had my gentleman friend been of a less retiring disposition, I could have explained all this to him, with apologies. But let this pass. I agree with him entirely that the privates in the army are working-men in private life. They are, but it seems superfluous to make such a point of it; so are the officers, so is my husband, whose hospitality officers and men alike so courteously accepted.

I work myself, so far as that goes, and he hurts my feelings when he makes these invidious distinctions; and the trouble is that he does n't care whether he hurts them or not. I am a lot more anxious to spare his feelings than he is to spare mine, wherein I boldly state that I am the better democrat of the two.

He evidently agrees with me that different classes do exist, because he insists upon putting me off in a corner with other men of "your cloes," and firing theological questions at my head. Here, I deeply regret to say, I cannot help him. I am no theologian, but I have a strong feeling that any attempt to settle the social arrangements in the next world is but a work of supererogation. Personally, my hands are more than full enough in my frantic endeavours to accommodate myself to the existing conditions of the immediate present. I should like to impress my views upon him and beg him not to worry so much over the religio-social outlook for the future in either of the two places he mentions, but

to devote his mental energies to the accomplishment of a little missionary work in Boston, Massachusetts, in the present.

Had he thus occupied himself previously to writing me, he might not have held such unfortunate opinions with regard to the police, in the which he has my deep sympathy, for I have suffered a good deal from that organization myself. I have not yet been subjected to the "third degree," nor did I join any of my erstwhile friends who journeyed joyously to Lawrence in their yearning to benefit mankind, but I will admit that I have experienced a "brutality" of language that has aroused within my breast a spirit of revolt unequalled by the defiance of the maddest Bolshevik. However, I draw a long breath of relief as I remember that these experiences are a matter of the past. My friend wrote before the Coming of the State Guard, whose example has been such that I have not been insulted by a policeman since the new force went on duty. I had long since become inured to the fact that rudeness and

incivility, on the part of Government employees of the United States, was a badge of office and a declaration of perfect equality. I had ceased to feel it a personal insult to be called to the telephone by a department of the Municipality, and greeted with the remark, "Say, you get them ash barrels out earlier or I can't empty 'em"; or to be told by the policeman at a street-crossing that I am old enough to know better than to try to cross in front of an electric car. I am convinced that both the Government and the policeman had my true welfare at heart, only they did not know how to express it, servility and civility being inextricably mixed in their minds. But the recent glorious change in the personnel of the police force gives me reasonable encouragement to hope that the improvement in one body may spread in other directions.

My friend unquestionably was not searching for points of harmony between himself and "men" of my class, and I am afraid it would be a bitter disappointment to him if he could know how wholly I am at one

with him in his criticism that my people "shreik and brag" of being the "most democratic country in the world and the freest." In this matter he shows a perspicuity and clearness of judgement that do him credit. There is only one truly democratic country in this world, and it is not the United States of America, but one would hardly expect a foreigner to have seized the point with such precision, or to have described it so graphically in a few brief words. Here, however, is the really crowning point of my desire to meet him face to face, for I long to comfort him by the assurance that he has the remedy for his dissatisfaction entirely in his own hands, a fact which he has obviously overlooked. Nothing pains me more deeply than any attempt to detain an unwilling guest, and if he is not happy in this bragging and shrieking country, not one clause in the Constitution, nor a single law of the land compels him to stay here. In that one particular, at all events, we bravely live up to our brag of being the freest country in the world, and

he is perfectly at liberty to seek another and more modest home. He would not be called upon even to pay his own travelling expenses, for we are a generous nation, and are willing to be put to some expense in order to be as free as we brag of being.

Yes; I regret deeply that I can never meet my Bolshevist friend. I am sure we would have had something in common and more of mutual understanding had we been able to talk of these things face to face, as Mr. Gompers has assured us is the proper course to pursue. His whole letter was of very real interest to me, and at no point more so than in its ending. Having eased his soul by expression of opinion, my friend forgot himself, and unconsciously reverted to a law of nature that is stronger than any acquired democracy or Bolshevist ambitions; one which in the long run will win out, though neither my friend nor I will live to see it. He signs himself — "Yours very respectfully."

Human nature will out in spite of all exertions to the contrary, and beneath all

its visions of Equality and Democracy, normal, healthy, human nature demands a form of government that is monarchical in its essentials. In this, you see, my friend thinks he differs from me. He is artificially convinced that army officers and privates, he and I, are all of a glorious equality, but when he has got himself and his opinions off his mind, he inadvertently acknowledges that he is bound to hold me in respect; and the crux of the whole socialistic theory lies in the answer to the question as to whether his involuntary respect is elicited because I live on Beacon Street, or because I have tried to share what I have at my command with my fellow-beings. It is bound to be the one or the other, and the conviction makes just all the difference in the world. Unconsciously he admits degrees of "class," and if I could only get at the real, honest, human side of him, I believe that he would admit it consciously.

It has been said that "a genuine aristocracy of brains and breeding are vital to national health," to which I add that of

birth and heart as well, and in defence of which creed I have set up my standard. I foresee a long and temporarily adverse battle, but I go down to my unwept grave with my flags flying.

VI

OLD FRIENDS

VI

OLD FRIENDS

ON leaving the house after lunch the other day, my favourite nephew remarked casually, "Oh, Auntie, will you please find Bernard Shaw's 'Arms and the Man' for me; I want it to read this evening." He is the joy of my life, and the stay and support of my declining years, and all that sort of thing, and of course it is a privilege and a pleasure to do anything for him, but I sat heavily down upon the lowest stair with despair in my heart at the thought of hunting out that small volume from a room full of books. I had every intention of making personal remarks to him upon the desirability of doing for one's self, but he saw them coming and hastily shut the door behind him.

I do not know exactly how many books we have in our library; when I turned-to with the other char-woman this autumn and helped to clean them, I estimated the

number at about seven hundred and fifty thousand, and out of that collection, the "joy of my life" expected me to put my hand upon that very small and unobtrusive volume. Really, I did not know where to begin the search. However, when the "stay and support" expects me to do a thing, I usually find it cheaper in the end to do it. Last year he did not approve of a hat I wore, and told me that he "expected" me to get a new one. The next time I appeared in the old one, he gently but firmly removed it from my head and placed it carefully in the very middle of the brightly glowing fire. This is quite irrelevant, but I mention it in order to show that it was really necessary for me to find that book, and to excuse myself for the following burst of literary appreciation which will probably interest no one but myself.

That search took me the whole of one morning and most of the afternoon, but I must confess that I lingered by the way. As I passed patiently from one shelf to an-

other, so many old friends called to me for recognition that I could not resist stopping for a chat with them, and I enjoyed myself immensely. Their serene indifference to the neglect of modern readers was positively refreshing, and they and I agreed that they need fear no rivals because so few of them exist. Real, true people do not live between the covers of a book any more; for the most part, they are only characters in fiction, and I could no more make a friend of a modern "character" than I could make love to a figure in a movie. I know because I have tried, and with regrettably few exceptions have lamentably failed.

After much deep consideration of the subject, I have come to the conclusion that the cause of my failure is owing to the fact that the progenitors of the many pleasant acquaintances I make in modern fiction will permit me no intimacy in the daily life of their offspring. I am allowed to associate with them only upon sensational occasions or under equivocal circumstances, neither of which are conducive to real friendship.

I cannot possibly make friends with people when I meet them only in a motor smash-up, or indulging in conversation of such breadth and brilliancy that I should never dare converse with them myself. Of course I may be unfortunate in my choice of hosts or guests, but I seldom hear in real life such appallingly clever conversations as those I read in books. I regard this as providential because otherwise I should be obliged to stay at home, but the conversations of my recent fictional acquaintances is of so broad and ambitious a scope that there is little place for individualities to appear.

Those of us who were privileged to make our first voyages across the seas of literature in the stately "three-deckers" of the seventies and eighties, find a good deal of difficulty in accommodating ourselves to the submarine-chasers by which they are replaced. I do not wholly disparage them; they have merits of their own, but I sometimes find them conducive to *mal de mer.* The voyage is accompanied by fewer dis-

comforts, perhaps; we travel more rapidly and are in no danger of getting into "the doldrums" (occasionally we wish that we did), and we certainly get to our destination in half the time — a consummation vehemently demanded by the modern reader, but one misses the old maritime and social amenities. You get aboard your story and are at once introduced to a telling episode in the life of one or more of your fellow passengers, after which you skip breathlessly from one high light to another in their careers till you leave them at the end of the voyage feeling much more as if their author had taken you to a movie than introduced you to any real people. Personally, I am frequently quite satisfied to let my acquaintanceship end right there. They are not the kind of people with whom I crave friendship, but I do regret the old-time story in which we lived the life of the characters, and learned to know and care for them as friends.

Anybody who was fortunate enough to begin his literary excursions under the

kindly auspices of Jacob Abbot, acquired a taste for detail that can never be wholly eradicated. We did not just read about Phonny and Malleville, we played with them; we knew what they had for supper and what time they went to bed. We loved dear, gentle Mary Bell, and I am perfectly convinced that whatever I may possess of moral worth is owing far more to the example of the unparagoned Beechnut than to any parental instruction I ever impatiently received.

With Rollo, I must admit that I was never quite so intimate, but that was because his parents and his Uncle George were always so much in evidence and never let him alone. Of course he crossed the Atlantic alone with that indeterminate little sister Jenny, but they made so many instructive friends aboard that they might just as well have been confided to their care in the beginning, and they never had a real adventure all the way over. I always distrusted Uncle George after his carelessness in missing that boat, and I am perfectly

sure that he took the money which he told Rollo he had "credited to his account" and had a good time with it himself in Paris. Malleville rather liked Rollo, I think, because he wore such beautiful clothes, but Phonny and I could not bear him because he never got into scrapes and we always did. Besides, Jonas did not like Beechnut. Rollo thought everything that Jonas did was perfect, while Phonny and I knew quite well that he was not "half as smart" as Beechnut, so, naturally, the relations between Rollo and us were strained. Did you ever know that Beechnut was just thirteen years of age? Until I grew up and asked him, I never doubted but that he was forty. He really was an extraordinarily clever youth. How desperately I envied that rocking-horse he made for Phonny, and I have not yet recovered from my awe at his erudition in naming it "Polypod." It bumped you a good deal when you rode on it, but I have always attributed the excellent condition of my liver in later life to the exercise afforded by Polypod's gait.

I think Aunt Henry must have believed much more in the freedom of the individual than did Mrs. Holiday, for she gave Phonny and Malleville a good deal of liberty, and she never fussed, even over Malleville, but she was really very much worried upon that occasion when her husband insisted upon taking her away with him, and she was obliged to leave the children in the care of the domestics, "particularly Hepzibah." You see, Malleville was a very feeble child with respect to health, and subject to serious fits of illness, and I am sure that Aunt Henry would never have consented to go had she not been sure that Beechnut would oversee affairs in her absence. When I contrast Uncle George's carelessness about that boat with the intelligence with which Beechnut met his responsibilities, I feel that she was entirely justified in her confidence. Neither Uncle George nor Jonas would have known half as well as Beechnut what to do the night Malleville had croup; in fact I could not have handled the situation better myself. It was so sensible of

him to send directly for Mary Bell instead of calling upon Hepzibah, who was not only very busy, but frankly admitted that she knew nothing about illness, while Mary Bell (aged twelve) was an expert in nursing. She immediately soaked Malleville's feet in hot mustard and water which was exactly the right thing to do. Dear Mary Bell, I named an old sheep after her once, and no name could have been more appropriate. I loved Phonny and Malleville dearly, and I wonder if Phonny still throws back his head and "laughs long and merrily."

Of course I did not meet Phonny and Malleville on this occasion in the library. They live in the nursery where they properly belong, and the first person who greeted me as I began my search was that incomparable writer Charlotte M. Yonge and her prolific literary families. She made her reputation, I believe, on "The Heir of Redclyffe." It was the most voluptuously sad book I ever read; one fairly wallowed in pathos from beginning to end, but how we did enjoy it. I always loved Jo of "Little

Women," but never so dearly as when I found her up in the garret one day, eating apples and crying over the sorrows of Guy and Amy. Philip was the most hateful prig that ever lived between the pages of a book. He was always putting Guy in the wrong and taking advantage of it, while Guy suffered all sorts of unjust afflictions with a truly edifying resignation. Then Philip fell ill of a contagious fever through which Guy altruistically insisted upon nursing him and, of course, Guy died and Philip got well, only, to my vindictive satisfaction, to be dogged through life by a gnawing remorse. He deserved it. We may laugh at it all now, but after all, I reflect thoughtfully, it was acknowledged to be a very true picture of that period and I recall no similar mental portrait of to-day. By the time I had reached this particular shelf, I had a suspicion that I was wasting time, but at that moment I incautiously opened "The Clever Woman of the Family" at the scene where Rachel expresses her views to Ermine on the subject of "cura-

tolatry," and I deliberately sat down cross-legged on the floor till I had read it through. Rachel may have been only a character in a story book written sixty years ago, but I defy any one to deny that they number her among their family or friends to-day. "The Dove in the Eagle's Nest" and "The Chaplet of Pearls" are charming stories that retain their power to please even many modern readers, but our really intimate and never-dying friendships were with the families of May and Underwood. There was never anybody to compare with them — in quality or quantity. The May family consisted of a father and mother and eleven children, and the Reverend Mr. and Mrs. Underwood were blessed with six daughters and seven sons. Every single one of those twenty-eight people was so clearly drawn and definite, so wholly alive and real, that throughout the course of their lives, which, in the various books, covered a period of at least fifty years, they were absolutely distinct in character and development. We lived the daily life

of those friends of ours; we breakfasted, lunched, dined, and had ten o'clock P.M. tea with them. We rejoiced in their joys and sorrowed in their griefs, and if I could ever find a physician of Dr. May's charms and qualifications, I should welcome any illness that brought me under his care; but they don't grow any more. Nowadays I seem to stand midway between the two epochs; on the one hand regarding the licence of the offspring of my generation with hair-raising horror, yet acknowledging that it really was a little hard on Margaret May that maidenliness forbade her to go to walk with a young man, even though escorted by an elderly governess and a large assortment of small brothers and sisters. Her modesty was entirely unavailing, too, for she later became engaged to him and they both died — of course.

The Underwoods had a much harder life than the Mays, for they were left orphaned and poverty-stricken when the oldest of them was only sixteen, but surely there never was so capable and methodical a

person as Wilmet. She brought up that family of brothers and sisters with a capability and success that to this day fills me with awe and envious admiration. I know the bears will come out and eat me up as they did Elisha's other disrespectful young friends, but I cannot help a certain mild feeling of vindictive satisfaction in the knowledge that Wilmet's own two boys turned out rather badly. They were once found to be slightly under the influence of liquor, and it upset the entire family connexion for a fortnight. It is the fashion to laugh at Miss Yonge, but let the admirers of modern fiction say what they will, her character-drawing has never been surpassed. She began with her characters when they were born, and those who did not die by the way, she carried on long past middle life, each one developing unmistakably along his or her own lines. Even in their children, one found the characteristics of their parents. Such clearness as this shows talent of no mean order, and she is an author much neglected even by those

who are old enough to take pleasure in something better than murders and immoralities.

Reluctantly I bade Charlotte Mary good-bye and prepared conscientiously to continue my search for Bernard Shaw, but just then a person quite different from them both obtruded himself upon my notice; Geoffrey Hamlyn came breezily across the downs to greet me, and my good intentions went to join my large collections of them in the place where good intentions belong.

Henry Kingsley is an author who has suffered much from the (in my opinion) far less deserved literary fame of his brother Charles, who (again in my opinion) was a prig. From the very scant amount of material that exists, I gather that Henry may not have conformed with entire particularity to the somewhat severe and narrow standards of his family, and shortly after leaving Oxford, minus a degree, he either betook himself, or, as I shrewdly suspect, was incontinently shipped off to Australia. Here he found material for "one of the

finest pieces of fiction ever composed." Yet in the biography of his brother Charles, a ponderous tome of a thousand or more pages, "containing abundant letters and no indiscretions," neither Henry's name nor his books are once mentioned. (In the rough copy of this chapter I had here devoted a long paragraph to the expression of my opinion of Mr. Charles Kingsley's attitude toward his brother Henry, but when I sat down to typewrite the manuscript I reflected thoughtfully upon the feelings of my publishers. They frequently show a highly commendable sensitiveness regarding the feelings of other people, even when they are dead, and so I decided to "blue-pencil" the paragraph myself, before they ordered me to do so. However, I feel much better since I wrote it all out, and I can still read it in private to my friends.) Many people tell me how they loved "Amyas Leigh," but would they sit down to read about him now? Would anybody wade through "Alton Locke" unless in search of a defunct socialism? Go to!

Sam Buckley and Charles Ravenshoe will be true and living friends long after Charles Kingsley's books are out of print and forgotten.

Never was there so gallant a gentleman as Sam Buckley. I would have married him myself in a minute had he only given me the chance, but he fell a victim to the superior charms of Alice Brentwood, whose acquaintance he made under such enchanting circumstances that it was impossible to resist the temptation of re-living that wonderful half-hour with him.

"Sam went to the club with his immortal namesake, bullied Bennett Langdon, argued with Beauclerk, put down Goldsmith, and extinguished Boswell. But it was too hot to read; so he let the book fall on his lap and lay a-dreaming.

"What a delicious verandah this is to dream in! Through the tangled passion flowers, jessamines, and magnolias what a soft gleam of bright, hazy distance, over the plains and far away! The deep river glen cleaves the tableland, which, here and

there, swells into breezy downs. Beyond, miles away to the north, is a great forest barrier, above which there is a blaze of late snow, sending strange light aloft into the burning haze. All this is seen through an arch in the dark mass of verdure which clothes the trellis-work, only broken through in this one place, as though to make a frame for the picture. He leans back and gives himself up to watching trifles.

"See here. A magpie comes furtively out of the house with a key in his mouth, and seeing Sam, stops to consider if he is likely to betray him. On the whole he thinks not; so he hides the key in a crevice and whistles a tune.

"Now enters a cockatoo, waddling along comfortably and talking to himself. He tries to enter into conversation with the magpie, who, however, cuts him dead, and walks off to look at the prospect.

"Flop! Flop! A great foolish-looking kangaroo comes through the house and peers round him. The cockatoo addresses

a few remarks to him, which he takes no notice of, but goes blundering out into the garden, right over the contemplative magpie, who gives him two or three indignant pecks on his clumsy feet, and sends him flying down the gravel walk.

"Two bright-eyed little kangaroo-rats come out of their box peering and blinking. The cockatoo finds an audience in them, for they sit listening to him, now and then catching a flea, or rubbing the backs of their heads with their fore-paws. But a buck 'possum, who stealthily descends by a pillar from unknown realms of mischief on the top of the house, evidently discredits cockey's stories, and departs down the garden to see if he can find something to eat.

"An old cat comes up the garden walk, accompanied by a wicked kitten, who ambushes round the corner of the flower-bed, and pounces out on her mother, knocking her down and severely maltreating her. But the old lady picks herself up without a murmur, and comes into the verandah

followed by her unnatural offspring, ready for any mischief. The kangaroo-rats retire into their box, and the cockatoo, rather nervous, lays himself out to be agreeable.

"But the puppy, born under an unlucky star, who has been watching all these things from behind his mother, thinks at last, 'Here is some one to play with,' so he comes staggering forth and challenges the kitten to a lark.

"She receives him with every symptom of disgust and abhorrence, but he, regardless of all spitting and tail-swelling, rolls her over, spurring and swearing, and makes believe he will worry her to death. Her scratching and biting tell but little on his woolly hide, and he seems to have the best of it out and out, till a new ally appears unexpectedly, and quite turns the tables. The magpie hops up, ranges alongside the combatants, and catches the puppy such a dig over the tail as sends him howling to his mother with a flea in his ear.

"Sam lay sleepily amused by this little drama; then he looked at the bright green

arch which separated the dark verandah from the bright hot garden. The arch was darkened, and looking he saw something which made his heart move strangely, something he has not forgotten yet, and never will.

"Under the arch between the sunlight and the shade, bareheaded, dressed in white, stood a girl, so amazingly beautiful, that Sam wondered for a few moments whether he was asleep or awake. . . . A girl so beautiful that I in all my life never saw her superior. They showed me the other day, in a carriage in the park, one they said was the most beautiful girl in England, a descendant of I know not how many noblemen. But looking back to the times I am speaking of now, I said at once and decidedly, 'Alice Brentwood twenty years ago was more beautiful than she.'"

Under such circumstances he could hardly help falling in love with anybody. I very nearly spent the rest of the day with Sam, and Major Buckley, and Jim Brentwood, and Dr. Mulhaus, who was n't Dr.

Mulhaus at all, but a most distinguished German baron, and almost more fascinating than Sam himself. Dear Dr. Mulhaus. I am glad he could not possibly have lived till 1914, for his great heart had already been nearly broken by his country's baseness, and he could not have borne her disgrace. I had to tear myself away from him to greet Charles Ravenshoe, happy and contented after the tragedies of his life, and welcoming me with a smile.

Really, the people in my library are most heterogeneously placed. Who in the world should I find living next door to Charles Ravenshoe but dear Miss Matty Jenkyns! Did she and Charles ever meet, I wonder? He would have been so graciously courteous to the little lady; but I fear not; they moved in quite different circles, and Charles never went to Cranford. Besides, Miss Deborah would have disapproved of him so utterly that she would never have permitted Miss Matty to associate with him. Of course, I paid my respects to Miss Deborah then and there, but I was careful

to confine myself strictly to the "rules and regulations for visiting," and only overstepped the limit of time when Miss Matty and I stood on the doorstep to watch Miss Betsy Barker's cow "going to her pasture clad in dark grey flannel." I have recently met a real first cousin four times removed from Miss Betsy, and she is almost charming enough to be first cousin to the cow herself, though there is nothing whatever Cranfordian in her character or disposition; still, it is a link. Dear little Miss Matty. I was always so glad that Peter returned to his faithful little sister and Cranford with his sense of humour unimpaired, but I have frequently felt a bit uncertain as to whether Miss Matty's sense of humour might not have failed to appreciate Peter's wit, and fear she may have been inclined to agree with Mrs. Jamieson that the shooting of cherubim was a bit sacrilegious.

With a sigh I left these very dear people, and then I laughed, for I found I had dropped plump into the lap of the Auton

family in "Auton House." I watched the recently arrived C. Auton becoming "sufficiently cohesive to bear pinning"; I sat sympathetically on the stairs with T. Auton as he curled his cold toes in chilly anxiety while his little sister went at his bidding to ask his mother if she was quite sure that he would "live till morning"; I noted their economy of time in saying their prayers in the afternoon "in order to save time when they went to bed"; and I laughed till I cried over the little mother who "chewed out her dolly's wash because she had been forbidden to play with water." These are not characters in a book; they are just you and I, and it is an exact account of what we ourselves did at one time or another in our childhood.

The Auton family had established themselves with striking incongruity next door to Bishop and Mrs. Proudie, and in close propinquity to "the Duke's Children." Not that they were in the least desirous of moving in high society, but because literary architecture does not permit one to ar-

range books by subjects or authors unless one has far more room at one's disposal than we have. I did not even let Mrs. Proudie know that I was in her vicinity, because I knew that she would not hesitate to reprove me for wasting my time, so I surreptitiously sneaked by the Palace, and was greatly pleased to be warmly greeted by some new acquaintances who are almost worthy to take rank among my very real friends.

Mr. Archibald Marshall has the gift, rare in these days, of admitting his readers into the real intimacy of family life, and it is many long years since I have felt so much at home with new people as I have with the Clinton family. The Squire is one of the most pig-headed and delightful, most unreasonable and lovable of people, and so unmitigatedly masculine that even in his most illogical and inconsistent moods, he needs only a little tactful handling to reduce him to the amenability of a lamb. When his eldest son married an American, his wrath knew no bounds, but her national

ability for handling men, and her understanding of the male animal soon converted him from an irate father-in-law to an adoring parent, and since then he has regarded Americans leniently, though a bit nervously. I think he was pleased, though, when I told him that I thought his speech to Mr. Armitage Brown, who objected to letting his only son go to the War, should have been printed in pamphlet form and distributed throughout the allied countries.

Owing to the aforesaid lack of architectural conformity, I stepped directly from my contemporaries back to my very old friend "Malcolm," "The Marquis of Lossie." A remote connexion of mine has just become engaged to marry the grandson of his progenitor, so of course I had to pause on my journey and tell him the news. I do not say very much about him, because I fear he has very few friends left who care to hear about him. Besides, time was passing, and the "stay and support" would shortly be coming home, so I passed hastily on, only stopping for a moment to reprove

"Mopsa the Fairy" for being out of her place and to send her back to the nursery where she belonged, not far from Phonny and Malleville. She bore me no grudge for my reproof, but pointed out to me the volume of Bernard Shaw on the shelf below. I wasted no time over that gentleman; he's no friend of mine. I placed him in a conspicuous position, where even the "joy of my life" could not fail to see him, and awaited his return with the pure conscience of one who has accomplished another duty in life.

VII

NEW ACQUAINTANCES

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NEW ACQUAINTANCES

"BUT," said the editorial We when the foregoing chapter had been submitted to It, "you have passed by a number of old friends with hardly a word; Trollope, for instance."

"I would n't presume," I replied modestly; "nobody felt the deaths of Lady Glencora and Mrs. Proudie more than I did, but their praises have been sung by worthier pens than mine."

"Well, how about modern authors?" we urged. "You must have made a few new friends."

Have I? I wonder. Perhaps; but acquaintances and real intimacies are two very different matters, whether in fact or fiction, and one likes to differentiate. Besides, intimacy is a word of wide and uncertain scope, and I hesitate to undertake ambiguous responsibilities. I used to think that intimacy necessitated a certain constant

familiarity with another's life and habits, but my convictions, in this as in many other matters, have been shaken of late years. Ever since a charming young relative urged me to invite her "very dearest friend Bobby" to meet her at dinner, and was unable to provide me with his surname because she had met him only the previous day, I have suspected the existence of certain intimacies that are unfounded by either length of time or exhaustive intercourse. Any lingering doubts I may have had were dispelled by a friend who dropped in to tea the other day. He alluded to a lady, calling her by her Christian name, which surprised me into saying, "Why, I did not know you knew So-and-So."

"Know her!" he replied; "I have known her all our lives; she is one of my most intimate friends."

"Her death must have been a great sorrow to you," I remarked sympathetically.

"Her what?" he exclaimed.

"Why, yes; she died three years ago," I informed him; "had n't you heard of it?"

He had n't; but he still maintains that she was one of his most intimate friends.

Now, of course, I do not wish to be unreasonable, and I would not demand of fiction more than is required in fact, but personally I find it difficult to feel really intimate with a person in fact when I do not know whether he is dead or alive, and I cannot make real friends in fiction when their authors will permit me to associate with their offspring only in the telling or public incidents of their careers. Acquaintances in plenty are to be had for the asking; many of them pleasant, most of them insignificant, and a regrettable few whom one gently cremates upon the glowing coals of the nearest open fire. These people may be quite charming and attractive, but they come and go like guests at the afternoon tea which I ought to be attending at this moment, and, like them, they make a few vaguely pleasant remarks and vanish out of my life. I have met their like at dinners and balls, on trans-Atlantic steamers, and in motor accidents; I see them in exciting

experiences, and frequently under such blandly equivocal circumstances that I should certainly decline a further acquaintance with them even had I the opportunity to pursue it, but I am rarely given the time. Some of these people might conceivably become friends if I were only allowed to know them well enough or long enough to permit the ripening of acquaintance into friendship; but one cannot become really intimate before one has swallowed one's soup at a dinner-party, or swear eternal friendship when disentangling an apparent corpse from amid the wreckage of an aeroplane, and such are the only opportunities given us by most of the modern novelists.

Hope occasionally arises within me, as it did not long ago when I met that delightful gentleman, Mr. John Baltazar. He really took me into his confidence by telling me in detail the story of his life, and though he had been a good deal of an ass, he admitted it so frankly and jovially that I could not but be drawn to him, and then, no sooner had I begun to feel that I knew him really

well, than he was haled away to China and I shall never see him again. His virile breeziness makes him irresistible as a friend, but I am wondering just a little what that slightly colourless Marcelle will make of him as a husband. I do not know what her life with him will be, but I am sure that it will not be dull, for she will never know what he is going to do next. How delightful it would have been if he could only have visited Major Meredyth ("with a *y*") at the time when Mr. Quang Ho was still his body servant; it would have been interesting to know what Sergeant Marigold would have made of that celestial servitor. I am inclined to think that their conversations would have been truly interesting, and I am not sure which of them would have been the more edified. I long for Sergeant Marigold as a personal friend, but he will not permit me to overstep the line that marks our social separation. I regret this for he and John Baltazar are the only two unmitigated men among their author's always charming family. Marcus Ordeyne is

an amusing gentleman, but no real man could safely have defied conventionality as he did; the Fortunate Youth is an enchanting boy, fortunate to a degree most unusual in this cold, hard world, but he is the Prince in a fairy tale rather than a real work-a-day man; Simon is truly something more than a Jester, and one could not but have respect for anybody who could find humour in Murglebed-on-Sea; but one is not altogether manly with one foot in the grave, and by the time he got well he was so very much married that I felt it only decent to efface myself; but Sergeant Marigold is not only every whit a man, but he is as stern an aristocrat as is his next-door neighbour (in my library) the Emperor Francis Joseph, with whose character he has much in common. Not having aspired to association with Royalty in fact, I feel free to adopt such as please me to friendship within the pages of a book, and I am a staunch admirer of that monarch who was himself a greater tragedy than any he caused. I do like men who stick to their convictions

through thick or thin, right or wrong, and the Emperor is no more immovable in his principles than is his humble neighbour. The Sergeant seldom voices his opinions, but I always see a gleam of sympathetic approval in his eye when, after I have been associating with people at Mr. Galsworthy's "Country House," or been forcibly introduced to any of Mr. Oppenheim's tribe, he hears me request an audience with the Emperor by way of restoring my self-respect. I esteem and admire the Emperor immensely, but I fear he is quite incapable of appreciating the real worth and charm of his other neighbour, the dear Cardinal of Snuff-Box fame. I always wish that the Cardinal could have been appointed the Emperor's confessor, because I believe that, even in so modest a position, his gentle sense of humour and his human outlook upon life would have mitigated the austerity of that aloof monarch, and yet not have detracted from the most majestic figure in history.

I pass by Mr. DeMorgan and Mr. Hew-

lett with a cold bow; one of them bores me and the other has been the cause of bitter family strife, so neither is popular with me. There is no doubt that Mr. DeMorgan gives one ample time and opportunity to become intimate with his characters, but I cannot feel any very overwhelming interest in immoral plumbers or inebrious caretakers, and though Mr. Hewlett moves in quite different circles, his morals are too sentimentally questionable for me to feel at home with him. I like my good people good, and my bad people bad, and never feeling quite sure which of the two kinds I am meeting in my rare encounters with Mr. Hewlett, I skip cautiously by him to greet two dear friends about whom I have no horrid doubts.

I am really devoted to Captain (V.C.) and Mrs. Desmond, the more so that I did not meet them under wildly exciting circumstances, nor were they forcibly torn from my companionship at the end of six months or an unfinished year. I associated with them in their daily lives and through

unhurried though not trivial incident, and the more our intimacy grew, the more I found in them to admire. I cherish high standards and ideals myself, and always try to follow the example of those who hold them, whether in fact or fiction, but my favourite niece says that Honor is altogether too good to live with, and that she much prefers to live with me. This is, of course, flattering, but seems to point to a lack of success in my endeavours. The Desmonds have a delightful habit of appearing among their author's other families, and always to the pleasure and advantage of those about them. They brought those two hot-tempered Lenoxes together after they had wasted five or six perfectly good years over a misunderstanding; they lent a hand in helping the unfortunate Lyndsay Videlle to face a life, happily not too long, with her half-breed husband, and after meeting and hearing of them among various of their Anglo-Indian friends, we find, as we would expect to find, their daughter doing fine work in the War. They are dear

people, and I wish there were more like them.

Honor Desmond is a true friend, and I often wonder what effect she would have upon Mr. Pryce's people if she ever met them. She would be extremely sorry for them, I am sure, for she would see at once that most of them would be perfectly respectable, self-respecting individuals if only their author did not insist upon forcibly dragging them from the paths of virtue. Ann Forrester was as little inclined to misbehave herself as was the Statue that lived in her Wood, and there is not the slightest reason to suppose that Jezebel's mother would have gone to the lengths she did if Mr. Pryce had not deliberately placed her there. This is not fair play on his part, and I like him the less for it, even though Ann is not a very convincing person at best; she is not as real as her friend, Claudia, and infinitely less so than either Jezebel or her father, who were extremely human. She is much more like the characters drawn by Mr. Leonard Merrick, who are not real peo-

ple at all, but exceedingly clever portraits to be hung on the walls of one's imaginary house of fiction.

Why we have not become more intimate with the Gay-Dombeys I do not know, unless it is that their discursive author keeps them so busy associating with a host of half-real, half-fictional people, that they have no time to make friends with their readers. The only person who has intimated that she would like me for a friend is that superlatively charming woman, Lady Feenix; but then, she is not really Lady Feenix at all, but my favourite aunt masquerading under that name. She possesses the secret of universal popularity which lies in making each person she meets believe that he is the one person in the world for whom she cares and whom she wants to see, and though one knows quite well that the next comer will fall under the same spell, and purr with the same sense of gratification, one is quite content to know that her invariable charm will never fail one's self.

My friends are by no means confined to

fashionable London society, and I travel down to Devon to greet with warm pleasure the "Man from America," a delightful person in himself, but for whose captivating father-in-law I have the tenderest affection. Of all the comparatively new friends I have made, not one is more to my mind than the Vicomte de Nauroy, whose family name was Patrick O'Reilly. Nothing short of a blend of the two nationalities indicated could have produced the polished courtliness and the childlike simplicity of this most charming of men; no one else under the acquisition of unexpected wealth could have continued unsuspected to live in the modest country cottage, and no one but the Vicomte could so gracefully and unobtrusively have fallen asleep in one of London's slightly questionable music-halls. His two adored granddaughters married and left "Bon Papa" alone with his roses and old Pélagie (it is a way granddaughters have), but the old Vicomte was undaunted to the last. He "filled himself a bumper of the *Madère sec*, and drank it, standing alone

at the table. '*A la mémoire de ma jeunesse!*' said old Patrick — and he reversed the glass."

It is natural to turn from the Vicomte to that peppery but grand old nobleman, the Prince Saracinesca. He is, perhaps, too old a friend to include among these of so much more recent a date, but both he and Sant' Ilario are so very dear to me that I cannot pass them by. I am glad, indeed, that the old Prince could not have lived to see the evil days that have fallen upon the world, but I rejoice in the pride that would have been his had he known of the achievements of his country's soldiers in the Alps. With such as he and the Vicomte, the Clintons and the Desmonds, I can form real intimacies; various others I accept as pleasant acquaintances; but for the most part I am not loath to withdraw into an exclusive retirement where the modern fashionable worldlings do not care to follow me — nor I to have them.

VIII

HOUSE AND HOME

VIII

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I APPRECIATE immensely the various and varied efforts that are being made by my Government to ameliorate the conditions of life in this country, and in none of the many problems connected with this desirable end do I feel a greater interest than in that of housing. I doubt very much if even the Government itself is half as much impressed as I am with the importance of this problem, or that they would go so far as to share my conviction that in the proper housing of the population lies one of the fundamental principles in the production of a worthy citizen. My views on the subject are strictly feminine, but, therefore, I venture to suggest, not wholly unworthy, for to be worth the building of it, a house should imply a Home, and "What is home without a Mother?" I am afraid that if it were left to the tender mercies of the gubernatorial mind it would be nothing but an incubator.

When I am President of the United States, I propose to enact an amendment to the Constitution which will render obligatory a working knowledge of their duties on the part of heads of departments and chairmen of commissions. The present arrangement seems to be an admirable illustration of the modern theory of equality, and of the conviction on the part of the general public that one man is just as good as another. The theory is grand, but, to my reactionary mind, it does not seem invariably to meet with truly practical success. Specializing can, of course, be overdone, but it has occurred to me several times that if I wanted the best of advice on wine, for instance, I should not apply to a cotton-broker, nor if I broke my leg should I telephone hastily to the greengrocer to come and set it for me. This may sound flippant, but indeed one sees actual instances that are not a whit the less absurd. I know of one municipal commission on building, composed of three members, who have charge of one of the most important classes

of building in their city. The decision as to architecture, style, planning, and cost rests entirely in their hands, and they have millions of dollars at their disposal. The several vocations of these gentlemen in private life are respectively politician, wine-merchant, and stock-broker, and, naturally, the politician is the chairman. One has nothing whatever against these gentlemen or their professions in life, but somehow or other it does not seem to me the most intelligent choice possible for the position they are required to fill on that particular commission, or that their callings would have tended to fit them for it. To a simple-minded person like myself it would seem imperative that one, at least, of that commission should have been an architect by profession, because my common sense tells me that only a mind trained in that calling could successfully cope with such a problem; but if I expressed that opinion publicly, my democratic convictions would be questioned and I should be accused of not believing in the Equality of Man. I don't. But that need

not prevent the exercise of common sense. I believe that one may be a perfectly good democrat without falling a victim to that delusion, dear to democracies, that any citizen is equally fitted for any task, from plumbing and architecture to the Presidency. It is really rather a discouraging view for a nation to assume. A man spends years and brains and energy and money in perfecting his knowledge of a certain profession or calling, and then the working of it is put by imperturbable authorities into the hands of somebody who knows about it just nothing at all. The intentions of these commissions are doubtless super-excellent, but one has heard where many good intentions lead, and can only benevolently trust that they do not carry their perpetrators with them; but it would relieve one of a good deal of anxiety for their future welfare if both the intentions and their perpetrators could be educated and trained in a more practical path.

An illustration of this came to my notice not long ago in the proposal to enact a law

which would make it obligatory that all bedrooms should be not less than a given size, in order that a certain number of cubic feet of air should be ensured to those sleeping in them. Now the intention of that law is splendid. I am a great believer in fresh air and consider it one of the great factors of good health, but this endeavour to secure it seems to be open to criticism. In the first place, I am wondering just how they propose to enforce it. It would be the easiest matter in the world to make illegal the building of a room containing less than a given number of square feet; they might, conceivably, also legislate upon the number of people who were to sleep in it; but when one comes right down to practicalities, just how do they propose to ascertain that the law is not evaded? I may dutifully build my bedroom of the prescribed size, but how is my Government to discover how many of my family I may hospitably invite to share it with me? Is the police force to be augmented, and every policeman furnished with a latch-key to every house?

Are they to make stealthy and unexpected midnight visitations, and, entering each bedroom with flashlight in hand, count the occupants of every bed? How unattractive a thought! And if an overplus is found, will the unfortunate delinquents be then and there dragged from their beds and haled in shivering shimmies before the court? It might not be within the power of a man of very moderate means and large family to hire the number of cubic feet of air required by the law for each person, and in such case what is to be done about it? My imagination is unequal to a reply. I can only suggest that fresh air is not produced by square feet, and meekly enquire, What's the matter with the window?

This legislating for the provision of fresh air by a method that by no means necessarily produces it, seems to my unintelligence much on a par with the precautions taken against fire. Here again there appears to the puzzled lay mind a lack of consistency between the law and its observance, as well as something of inequality in its enforce-

ment. There is an admirable law to the effect that no wooden houses or buildings may be erected within certain city limits, and this ruling is so particularized that a man may not build so much as a wooden hencoop in his own back yard. It does not seem likely, especially in a crowded tenement district, that he would find hens either a safe or a profitable investment, but at all events the Government decides that it is a case of fowls *versus* fire, and, very properly, rules in favour of safety first. When it comes to religious privileges, however, the case is different. Many of these tenements are in over-populated Jewish districts, and there are certain Jewish feasts which require that the worshippers shall sleep on the housetops. I do not know the season, but I trust that it occurs in the summer. The houses in this country, not being built on the plans provided at the time this ceremony was instituted, the Jews are obliged to get permits for the temporary erection of wooden shacks, which are built on the roofs of houses of varying heights, where they

may carry out their religious ceremonies. They are thus put to some trouble and expense, and I have a sneaking sympathy with the loss of memory which causes them to forget to pull these structures down until the time of the yearly feast recurs, when they receive (and doubtless pay for) a fresh permit. Meantime throughout the year, these wooden shacks, far greater in size and danger than any number of hencoops, remain in place; most admirable fuel for fires of portentous dimensions. Yet when a private school in the same city was built of fireproof construction a few years ago, which had an open play-garden on the roof, permission to build a wooden railing around it, in order to safeguard the children from falling off, was refused because of the fire hazard. Far be it from me to cavil at any precautions taken against fire, but there seems to me in the above rulings an inconsistency as glorious as that usually attributed to the female sex.

My Government loves dearly to legislate. I suppose I should like to do it myself

if I had the chance, but their paternal attitude frequently reminds me of that of certain young parents, who lay down strict laws of discipline for their offspring, and then scatter them — the laws, and frequently the offspring — to the four winds of heaven when they interfere with their own personal predilections. The Government is most properly desirous that the people should be safely and comfortably housed, but when it comes to providing the houses, their attitude is distinctly suggestive of "After you, my dear Alphonse," and provocative bows and smirks are directed toward the private individual. Now this is truly unmoral. An individual seldom can, and a corporation never would, tackle any large housing proposition as other than a strictly business undertaking. It could hardly be expected of the one, and it would not be justice on the part of the other toward its shareholders. Besides, that paternal Government of ours permits a jolly little game to be played by landowners and real-estate dealers which would make

such an attempt practically impossible. If a man buys a piece of land and builds a nice little house on it, the owner of the adjoining property immediately feels that it is a privilege for anybody to look at so charming and attractive a residence, and promptly raises the price of his land; if he has a house on it, he raises the rent on account of the improvement in the view. He may even put up a new house for which he can charge a higher rent, and with two beautiful new houses to look at, of course the price of a third lot goes up higher, and a fourth higher still, so that by the time one has a pleasant little group of a dozen or so houses, the working-man might just about as well contemplate renting a palace on Fifth Avenue as being able to afford to hire a simple home in a suburb. Really this is a bit discouraging. The little game cannot be played on the Government because the Government can take the land, if necessary by right of eminent domain, and hold it at its own price, so that the working-man would be able to secure a decent and proper

home at a decent and proper price. This game has been solemnly termed "The Unearned Increment." It is but just to give it an imposing title because, of a truth, it is a most illustrious evil, and one which, I regret to say, is not confined to the United States alone. I was motoring abroad a few summers ago, and fate and a thunderstorm compelled us to spend the night in the one hotel of a small but busy little town. I never met with a more forlorn apology for an inn. The doors would not shut; the locks refused to lock; the papers had peeled from the walls in festoons, and one was obliged to walk with circumspection lest the rotten floors should give way beneath one's feet. The landlord was a friendly soul, even if depressed, and after the very worst breakfast that I ever ate, we fell into conversation. He told me that he could not make a living out of his hotel, and that he would be obliged to give it up. I asked if the little town were dead and "nothing doing" to bring him business, and he replied that, on the contrary, it was quite a centre for

"commercial gents," and that if he could only give them decent accommodation his house would pay well. Being unlearned in increments at that time, I enquired why he did not borrow the money and make repairs. He smiled a sickly smile and explained. Every freshly papered wall, every mended floor and lock, and, it seemed to me, every new pin in a fresh pincushion promptly produced an added tax for betterments, and if he improved his grounds it would jump his neighbour's taxes as well. He simply could not consider the possibility of repairs enough to make his livelihood. It is a grand game, that, and only a public authority pricked and goaded by public opinion is ever in this wicked world going to put a stop to it.

It is characteristic of us as a people that when an emergency comes we usually rise to it and do the decent thing, and this was illustrated by the housing responsibilities assumed by the Government in various parts of the country in war time and for war-work, but I sadly fear that we are not

very far-sighted as a nation. Directly the armistice was signed the Government incontinently dropped its responsibilities and cancelled most of its contracts for such work, even in some cases where the buildings were well under way. This is not, exactly, an argument to use in urging that the Government should assume this responsibility, but if that body once undertook the obligation, one might feel encouraged to hope that it would give its mind to the business. In all probability it might at least not be guilty of a favourite enterprise of some individuals, which is to buy land in the suburbs, and then proceed to erect thereon cheap and showy tenement houses known as "three-deckers," built of wood and containing one family on each floor. The owner builds them, according to law, at precisely the right distance apart to create a superb draught, so that any one of them catching on fire they all burn like tinder — in which case their owner collects a most remunerative insurance. It is only fair to note that in many places this form

of construction is forbidden, but in many others the practice flourishes merrily, notably in one large Eastern city, where age and intellectuality would lead one to look for better things. I once thought that the French law of fining a person who allowed himself to be run over by a passing vehicle was most unjust, but a more thoughtful consideration shows it to be an admirable example of the superiority of positive over prohibitive legislation. If the fire regulations ruled that in event of such tenements burning down, not only could the landlord collect no insurance, but, on the contrary, would be heavily fined, those tenements would be of such superlatively fireproof construction that you could n't so much as start a fire in the kitchen stove.

The housing of workers for the great manufacturing plants is a problem beset with difficulties the solution of which is not yet found. I am not qualified to go exhaustively into the pros and cons of the many methods of studying it, with which any one at all interested in the subject is far more

familiar than I, but there is one attempt at solution on the part of the Government which I am sure is mistaken, and that is where they insist that shacks or temporary buildings are fitting and proper for the housing of labourers. (I believe I have remarked before that the gubernatorial mind finds it difficult to soar above incubators.) A married man never in this world is going to be happy for any length of time in a temporary makeshift, and I have never noticed an indifference to creature comforts even in bachelors. How can any man be expected to settle down and stick to his work when the whole atmosphere about him is redolent of transientness? Even from the purely practical standpoint of efficient work, the scheme is poor policy, and it ignores wholly and outright that fundamental element, necessary to the production of a good workman, or a good citizen, or a good anything else — a home. It may be that a home is poor, indifferent, or even bad; all the same it is a home; and as the good ladies of the Victorian era were wont

to declare that it was better to be married, even though unhappily, than to be old maids, so I stoutly maintain that it counts for good in a man's life to have, or to have had, a home even though not an ideal one. In passing through one of the tenement districts not long ago I met a woman rather the worse for drink, who had with her a small boy of five or six years old. She was shaking and slapping and very distinctly ill-using him, and the child was howling lustily as the tears ran down his grimy little cheeks; yet with both his dirty little hands he clung desperately to the perpetrator of his woes, oblivious of the whacks in the far deeper instinct that she was also his only source of refuge and help. The blows and the shakings and the slaps were an incident, and would pass, and his instinct drove him below the incidentals of life to that reality which he recognized as fundamental. I may be a bit paradoxical; it is one of a woman's prerogatives (and charms), but as I pondered over the trivial incident, it seemed to point out the undeniable strength of a man's

instinct for possession and being possessed; an instinct so strong that a child was oblivious of a lower evil in his appeal to that which was the higher good.

In reading the biography of a certain gentleman of note I was impressed by his attitude of mind toward a life from which, though unusually full of opportunity, he yet felt himself unable to gain that experience which would solve for him its mysteries and problems. He was so busy trying to fit life into a system of self-education, that he missed life itself, and it remained for him an eternal scaffolding which in no way helped him toward the erection of the finished building. I wondered as I read if this might not be part of the trouble with our Government; it is so busy running up elaborate scaffoldings of laws and regulations, prohibitions and embargoes, that the real and solid foundations cannot be found for the intricacy of the laws. I am dreadfully tired, anyway, of this prohibitive form of government; it is so hopelessly Mosaic in its methods. For thousands of years we

have been laying down laws to the effect that you shall not do this evil, or one must not commit that crime, but it does not seem to me that the results have been highly satisfactory. If legislation is necessary (which I suppose it is), and were it my business to legislate (which I know it is n't), I should be greatly tempted to enact a new code by which personal uprightness should be required, and in which every law should begin "Thou shalt" instead of "Thou shalt not." I should have a special set framed for women to the effect that "Thou shalt" teach thy son to be true; "Thou shalt" keep thy daughter pure; "Thou shalt" see to it that thy husband is honest: I "allow as how" we should be kept pretty busy, but we might get somewhere in the end. It would simplify life a lot if, instead of a multiplicity of building laws forbidding this and that and the other thing, there should be one direct command, "Thou shalt provide the working-man with a home and thou shalt see to it that it does not burn down." How simple.

And what burden of petty responsibilities would be lifted from the none-too-broad shoulders of the Government.

We incline as a people to a somewhat homœopathic treatment of life, I fear, and are apt to deal with symptoms rather than to search for the real cause of a difficulty. To provide a house for a working-man is meritorious as far as it goes, but it does not go deep enough. It leaves out of account altogether that inherent demand of mankind, unconscious for the most part but none the less insistent, for something better and beyond bricks and bread. This is the underlying cause of much of the socialism and anarchism of to-day, only they don't know it. They shriek for money and riches because money and riches are the only good things that they know anything about, and when they have obtained them, they continue to shriek, speechlessly and without purpose, because they do not know what it is that they are shrieking for.

We Americans are tremendously proud of our scientific advancement. We have the

very latest thing in theories and accomplishments, and we cackle like a whole barnyardful of hens over the perfection of our ordinances and institutions, but there are moments when I have a horrid suspicion that in some things we are scandalously behind the times. We persist in sticking assiduously to the obsolete theory that man is a simple animal, composed solely of flesh and blood, and think we have solved every problem connected with existence if we provide for that portion of him; whereas, in reality, he is made up of some ten million ingredients, including spirit, which is every bit as insistent and demanding as body, only we are too stupid to see and provide for it.

An excellent illustration of this is to be found in a comparison between the big hospitals of America and England. Our great American hospitals are the very acme of plu-perfection; there is no doubt about that. They are hygienically and painfully clean; there is n't a fly or a flaw (or a flower) to be found within

their perfect portals; and they are just about as human as a talking-machine. The very latest discoveries of science and skill are given to their occupants, who are well fed and well cared for, and there is n't a man, woman, or child among them who would not have preferred incarceration in the penitentiary or county gaol, to their apparently fortunate position. The patients growl and grumble; there is frequently heard abuse of the food and treatment; they are often suspicious, unhappy, and discontented, and, above all, they are invariably and desperately homesick. Now just make a mental note of that last truthful statement, please. Discard if you wish all the other allegations, and take that one alone. Picture the homes from which most of them come — you need no description of them — and contrast their present surroundings. For a brief period they have everything in this world that flesh and blood can need, and for which, when in health and strength, they shriek and clamour, and yet, they are confessedly and un-

mistakably homesick. In Heaven's name, what are they homesick for?

I have visited several of the big English hospitals, chiefly in London, where hygienic cleanliness is a physical impossibility — unless possibly, by superhuman efforts, in the operating-room. There are a few flies, literal as well as metaphorical; there are some flaws (and heaps of flowers) in most; and about every single one of them is an atmosphere of human-ness and home-li-ness, to find which you might scratch in vain every hospital in the United States with a fine-tooth comb. I doubt if the patients are as well fed as ours; I know they are not so luxuriously cared for; the treatment given is much more conservative and less theoretically scientific; yet — and mind you, this statement is not made upon my own authority, but upon that of a person whose business it is to know such things — the results turned out from the English hospitals are, taken by and large, rather more successful and satisfactory than are ours. How do you

account for it? I should like to see the face of any American physician or surgeon who may read the above; it would be a study of incredulous contempt, and his opinion of my intellect would be unprintable. I know, for I have heard it frankly expressed by fraternal doctor friends; nevertheless I am perfectly willing to abide by my statement. I crossed the ocean once with a leading American surgeon who had visited some of these London hospitals, including one for treatment in his own special line of work. It was, perhaps, even a bit more grimy than some others, but, by actual comparison, its results were slightly in advance of those of his own pet and very perfect hospital at home; but this conveyed nothing to him. His contempt for English hospitals, including this particular one, remained unmitigated, and when one murmured to him of puddings and proofs, he could think no differently. In spite of undeniable proof to the contrary, beneath his American nose, he would admit nothing, but continued unmoved in his patriotic conviction that

English hospitals were hopelessly behind the times. After an absence from home of six months I seemed to feel a familiar atmosphere steal about me as he talked. I wonder why.

It is perfectly well known that in caring for the wounded during the War, the element of homesickness was so inimical to recovery that special arrangements were made by English hospitals, even so far away as France, to bring some member of a man's family to be near and visit him, and the importance of the experiment was proved beyond question by its success. Account for this if you can by any theory other than that there is a need in man for something beside a roof over his head and a "genteel sufficiency" in his stomach. A few students of life are beginning to realize this, but the material weighs heavily in the balance against the immaterial, and it is truly difficult to deal with the immaterial. We are scandalously rich in this country and, fortunately or unfortunately, our use of riches is not a matter that can be legis-

lated upon with any great success. We can be, and Heaven knows we are, taxed till (in my own personal case, anyway) the tax is bigger than the income, but that does not show us how to spend our money in a way that is of benefit to others, or to get the best fun out of it for ourselves. Yes, I know; we are tremendously generous and we do heaps of good with our gains, be they well or ill gotten, and this applies to the Government as well as to the private individual. The expenditure of the individual is none of my business, but the handling of money by the Government is, because some of it is mine, and I strenuously object to many of the ways in which it is spent by that body. I do not care one bit, for instance, to help pay for a $70,000 post-office to serve a town of five thousand inhabitants; but could I be assured that my money would be used intelligently for the proper housing of the people, the action of the Government would meet with my unqualified approval. After all, the question of money boils itself down to the well-worn

maxim of its use as a means to an end, and there could not be found a more solid or fundamental "end" than the provision of proper living conditions, which means the school, the playground and its sports, and, above all, the Home.

England has been studying this subject for the past twenty years or more, and has been awake to this side of the problem for a very long time. It is natural that she should be the first to recognize it for, proverbially, the Englishman's house has always been his castle, and he has taken deeper root and been more attached to his home, be it cottage or palace, than we of a more transient-loving race. In several cases their efforts have achieved fairly satisfactory solutions, and their attitude toward partial success is as characteristic of that nation and of France, as is that of our own. In spite of occasional success England and France still feel that the problem is further from its final solution than was ever Leicester Square from Tipperary, and though cheered by a modicum of advance, they do

not complacently sit down and purr, but promptly proceed to send commissions to other countries that they may learn and profit by the experience of others. I feel a certain delicacy about mentioning it, as I may be uninformed, but I have not heard of any similar voyages of discovery having been set on foot by Americans. This seems rather a pity because, even though we may be convinced that other nations have nothing to teach us, we might at least learn from them what we wish to avoid. Incidentally, we might also find out what we really want, for at present there seems to be a diversity of opinion about the matter, and right there is where we slip up, for it is only a strong-minded, robust Public Opinion that will make Public Authority sit up and take notice.

It is pretty generally admitted that houses cannot be built without proper foundations, and I have a deeply rooted conviction that the only safe foundation for a democracy lies in the provision of Homes. If Public Opinion could be edu-

cated to know what laws were wise and necessary, and to demand intelligent understanding and consistent administration of them on the part of legislators, perhaps the children on a school-house roof might be safeguarded from falling off, and the houses in a Jewish district be designed to meet the needs of the race without arbitrary ruling on the one hand and criminal fire hazard on the other. Laws are regrettably necessary in an imperfect world and dwellings a desideratum, but how pleasant it would be if, instead of prohibitive rulings about houses, we might have intelligent inspection of Homes. I would draw attention, however, to the qualifying adjective.

IX

QUALITY VERSUS EQUALITY

IX

QUALITY VERSUS EQUALITY

IT will not have escaped the notice of the keen and observant mind that the last year or two has been marked by what might be called an epidemic of processions and parades. They have been of all sorts and descriptions. Processions of business men in uninteresting tail coats or the greenish-yellow suit so beloved of down-town men; thousands of petticoats flapping to a stride that would be martial did not the high heel cause it to resemble the action of a hen out on business; floats of artistic ambitions and a little shaky as to historical accuracy; and, best of all, many real processions of real soldiers bent on real business in a real cause. It is an excellent method of arousing the enthusiasm of the people. The sight of the flag invariably meets with applause, and the many bands are inspiring even when the onward feet of the Christian soldiers become entangled with the girls

they left behind them, and Dixie and John Brown get inextricably mixed. A procession never fails to draw almost as vast a crowd as a baseball game, and the mere sight alone of such numbers is thrilling.

I live on a perfectly good, level street with many convenient cross-streets dividing it, an ideal place for the formation and route of a procession and, once upon a time, one could take it comfortably for granted that every big procession would sooner or later pass my house. This was extremely pleasant. My house was filled from attic to cellar with friends and relatives, young and old, including babies of all ages from the cradle upwards, who were being taught patriotism from their extreme youth while that of the old folks was renewed. The street is broad, and therefore capable of holding without undue crowding a vast concourse of people; the steps to the surrounding houses are all that could be desired for the accommodation of tired mothers, babies and children, and are never grudged for that purpose, and it is in

all ways the street *par excellence* through which a procession should pass; but for some years now it has languished untouched by the feet of multitudes and unaroused by martial strains. Why? I am told that all parades and processions must now pass through the business part of the city, through the slums, and past the homes of the foreign population in order that any joy or benefit that may be derived from them may accrue to the "People." Admirable and excellent sentiment! I agree with every word of it. But why are not my friends and I also the "People"? Why do not I need the beneficial effects of the good things that — not the gods — but the country provides? Why should not my feelings be considered equally with the people who are in the shops or live in the slums? For many years I have felt that in this, as in many other ways, my rights as an American citizen are being trampled upon, and I propose to protest.

As I reflect upon the pains taken to smooth the path and make plain the way

for what is erroneously termed the "working" class over what with equal fallacy is branded the "leisure" class, I am filled with a sense of injustice, and I boldly state that in my opinion my country is going back on some of its principles. My ancestors came to this country because George Washington promised that they should be free, equal, and unoppressed, and I claim that my country has made it impossible for me to be in any one of those three desirable positions. To begin with, no country in the world declares so loudly as does ours that there is no such distinction as that of class. It is a lie, of course. There has been class distinction ever since Eve spanked Cain for unbrotherly action toward Abel, and there always will be until the millennium — and then there will probably be degrees of righteousness; and to the practical mind it would seem but common sense to admit it and to regulate life accordingly. There will always be those who lead and those who are led, but they should be labelled in less misleading terms.

The "working" class. I challenge the monopoly of the adjective. There may be in this country a certain number of people who live a leisure or idle life, but if this be true the number is so small as to be negligible, and the term "leisure" or "upper" class is, therefore, I suppose, applied to those who earn their living by their brains rather than by their hands. It is really a perfectly good way of earning a living, although many people deny it. If payment in money is the standard of compensation, then brain-work must take rank far below that of manual labour, for not only is it literally as well as comparatively less highly paid, but the wage of the class who monopolize the title "working" is set and safeguarded by an arbitrary authority which dictates not only what the wage shall be, but the hours during which work may be done. The brain-worker has no such security.

On the Friday afternoon about half-past three of a very cold day last winter, I was careless enough to break a large pane of

glass in my bedroom window. Realizing that it was growing late in the day, I lost no time in telephoning the glazier to request that he would come up at once and replace it. He apologized profusely, regretting in tearful accents that every one of his own men was out, and that he had no one to send. I resigned myself uncomplainingly to the prospect of undressing and going to bed in a temperature where the water in a vase of flowers was already skimming over with a coating of ice, and remarked with truly Christian acceptance of the inevitable, "But you will be sure to send some one the very first thing in the morning, won't you?" The reply came in tones of conscious superiority — "We don't work on Saturdays." And they did n't. Friday afternoon, all Saturday and Sunday, that yawning hole remained in my window, and, every other room in the house being occupied, for three shivering nights and mornings I dressed and undressed in that icy blast with the cold of which no open fire nor furnace could compete.

The hours of labour legalized by the Government are from 8 to 12 A.M. and 1 to 5 P.M., and the strict observance of this law on the part of our fellow citizens is edifying to behold. I had a plumber at work in my bathroom not long ago, and I watched with fascinated eyes as he played little games of magic with his glowing poker and molten lead. True to the romance of fairy tales, as the clock struck the witching hour of twelve, he dropped that red-hot poker with such prompt obedience to its call that it burned a large and very evil-smelling hole in my much-prized new linoleum, to accomplish the purchase of which I had scraped together the pennies by the wearing of my old hat for the third winter and abstention from many thrilling movies. The plumber did not pay for the damage, of course, and I know my place quite too well to have suggested it, but I suspected later from the size of the bill that he had charged me the amount that I might have asked him for damages.

If one is very rich, salvation from abso-

lute cataclysm may occasionally be obtained by payment for over-time, and this is a point upon which the Government legislates very strictly. The men who have selected trade as their calling in life may, under certain circumstances and if they so wish, work over-time, but for this the Government is very particular to insist that they shall be paid extra, frequently dictating what the amount shall be. This is fair and as it should be, and perhaps it may be excusable at this point to make a little excursion into apparent irrelevancy upon the subject of "tips," a custom which I stoutly defend. If I go to visit friends, their servants are obliged to do work for me which is outside their regular routine as arranged for when they were engaged and their wages settled, and it is often work that is more purely personal than that involved in the making of my bed or the dusting of my room. In the days when females were buttoned up behind it was very distinctly more; either a long row of ladies stood each fastening the dress of the

one in front of her, or else for half an hour before dinner, the maid fled in frenzied haste from one room to another in response to the plaintive requests issuing from half-opened doors that she would "please come and do me up." This and similar services may very properly be regarded as over-time work, and I do not want to accept such service without showing, by a more convincing evidence than word of mouth, that I appreciate it. The legitimate quarrel with tipping is in the exorbitance shown by those to whom money is no object and by whose prodigality of acknowledgement all economic balance is upset and scattered to the four winds of heaven. This is not fair, either as regards economic balance nor toward those who are unable to give so largely; nor do I believe that it meets with the unqualified approval of those who receive it. I lunched at a restaurant not long ago at a table next that occupied by a man who was entertaining two women. He had a most elaborate luncheon, including champagne, of

which only one glass apiece was drunk out of each bottle, a fresh supply being requisitioned after each drink, and he tipped the waiter with a twenty dollar bill. The waiter did not happen to be a friend of mine and I had no conversation with him, but it was entirely unnecessary; the expression of his face spoke more clearly than a whole dictionaryful of words. If I could command such an expression of wordless contempt, I should treasure it as an invaluable asset. Reasonable tipping is first cousin to payment for over-time work, and as such should be acknowledged, but why draw the line as to what class of work should be paid over-time and what should not? Why should the Government protect the over-time pay of one class and not of another?

The clearest illustration, perhaps, of this unjust legislation is shown in the line drawn between the profession of architecture, which is labour with the brain, and the manual labour of trades necessary for building, both of which are interde-

pendent and the one as indispensable as the other. The profession of architecture does not, as so vast a majority of people believe, consist solely in drawing pretty pictures and making straight lines to go in different directions on paper. In addition to this ability, the true architect must have a working knowledge of pretty much every trade under heaven. It is imperative that he should know good carpentry, brick-laying, and plumbing; of soils and gardening; about plastering, painting, and electricity; in short, the architect does not, as is generally supposed, build a house by the simple expedient of drawing a few plans, and sitting down, like a hatching hen, to watch somebody else do the work. The acquisition of the knowledge necessary to this end means years of work, study, and experience, and the production of the working drawings alone, "precept upon precept, line upon line," accounting for every square inch of every different material used in the construction of a building, is a labour but vaguely understanded

of the multitude. Very frequently, and especially upon Government work and in war-times, over-time work is required, and for this the Government legislates very strictly indeed. The department which demands for over-time work the payment of time and a half to all mechanics and labourers, demands with equal explicitness that, to professional employees, NO additional payment shall be made. Why this class distinction? Far be it from me to put my fingers into public pies — I have quite enough private ones in the baking; but I see no reason why a share in this pie does not rightfully belong to me. It is not fair that in the fixing of payment for labour, either brain or manual, the one who pays that price should have no voice in the setting of it. For many years we have been fighting corporations as an evil that a democracy will not endure, yet the labour unions (excellent institutions when properly handled) have been so upheld by the Government that they have become the closest kind of corporation, dictating with

an arrogance, strongly suggestive of the late ruler of Germany, just what price millions of people outside that corporation shall pay for work done for them, and without the provision of which work the working-man could not live.

Moreover, I am not free to employ, if I prefer, a workman outside that organization; if I do so, the workman and I both suffer. Also, I am obliged to pay the same price for bad work as for good. Not only must I pay for a piece of work which is so poor that it must be done over again, and I therefore pay twice, but a skilled workman must stand by and see a boy, who has not yet learned the rudiments of his trade, paid the same wage as he, himself, deserves. He may want to work well and to work when he wishes, but that close corporation steps in and says, "You shall work only when and how we choose." Yet we cackle and crow that we are a "free" nation. If this is democracy, I feel that I might be able to appreciate the advantages of a monarchy.

The evils of such legislation are patent —

or should be — to the least observant. For one thing by this limiting of the character and quality of labour, it sorely discourages all good, efficient work and sublimely encourages the idle and incompetent, and it is in just this latter class where the evil is most clearly shown to lie. The skilled workman has a certain pride in his work and in his attitude toward it, but the common labourer works for his pay only. The worse he does it, and the less energy he puts into it, the greater his gain, and the fact that by this attitude he is responsible for long delay and additional expense to others, including the Government which protects and encourages him in it, is a matter of perfect indifference to him and, apparently, to the Government as well.

Already I must wait, at whatever cost, from Friday till Monday to have certain kinds of work done, and few men would work after five o'clock without over-time pay if it were to save a life; now I am told that this "labouring" class is to have a six-hour day with eight-hour payment.

Where do I come in on that arrangement? With all my heart and soul I believe that the man who labours should be paid and well paid, but with equal conviction I believe (1) that payment should be just, and (2) that it should not be confined arbitrarily to one class of labour. I do not doubt that there was a time when the man who worked with his hands was underpaid (of the extent of his "oppression" I am for several reasons a bit sceptical), but no sane man can pretend that the situation is not changed, and it is now a useless waste of time and energy to kick so unequivocally a "dead horse" as that of the "oppressed" working-man. That the skilled and unskilled workman, for instance, should be paid the same wage is unjust in the extreme, and that the skilled workman does not kick so alive and thoroughly vicious a "horse" only shows that while he once laboured under the possibly just conviction that he was oppressed by certain people whom he considered to be in a different class from himself, he is now, apparently,

quite unconscious that he is being insulted and cheated by those of his very own crowd.

I do not quarrel with the Government nor with any other body of people who legislate to protect the interests of any class whatever, but I do think it unfair that one class of worker should be defended at the expense of another. The wages of the manual labourer have not only never been so high, but are rising from week to week — a matter for rejoicing; but the wage of the professional man is not one penny the more. Is it not a natural question on my part to ask why my Government, who promises me freedom and equality, should permit this? Why must everything be made easy for one class to the exclusion of another? Why must all those processions pass through the streets inhabited by another class of labour, and not through those lived in by mine? I revert to that procession because it seems to me symbolic of the fact that a whole lot of perfectly good sympathy is being wasted upon entirely the wrong

lot of people. The burden of underpayment and oppression is now being laid upon that class of people whose brains provide labour for those who work with their hands, and if, under this oppression, brains "go on strike," it will be a case of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Comfortable as it may have been for the rich in the days when manual labour was underpaid, no decent man or woman has any desire to return to that time. I am not a socialist, and there is nothing in this world in which I have so profound a disbelief as in the doctrine of equality in any and every sense in which it can be used; for one reason, because I have never yet found any human being who desired it. The Socialists shriek for equality, but what they strive for is ascendancy. If, however, with the cry for Equality there should be coupled the demand for Quality, the principle might possibly be one to offer as a working basis upon which to found a better understanding between the people of different qualifications; but quality of

work, manners, morals, or character meets with but scanty attention in these days when the world is obsessed with the one standard of gain for money and of money. I have never yet heard of a body of men who went on strike because the quality of their work was not appreciated, but I offer the suggestion to the "walking delegate" as a new idea, certainly more novel and one better worth the suffering and inconvenience entailed than their objects heretofore. I should also take pleasure in making a few observations to the effect that Equality plus Quality would impart to democracy a stability in which, under present conditions, one feels it to be a bit lacking.

With all that is to be regretted in the standards of to-day, the world is unquestionably striving for a better and higher standard to which it will eventually attain. When Quality of service shall be in Equality with the rise of compensation; when the Quality of man's honour and honesty are on an Equality of mutual magnanim-

ity; when we have learned that if we take care of the Quality the Equality will take care of itself, we shall have realized a democracy that is as yet but a loyal dream.

X

DIFFERENCES AND DISTINCTIONS

X

DIFFERENCES AND DISTINCTIONS

I LIKE dinner-parties because I almost always find somebody who does not agree with me about something, and the ensuing conversation is apt to be lively enough to send me home feeling mentally quite frisky. I attended one not long ago, however, where the difference in opinion was indubitable enough, but from which I returned much depressed.

I was escorted into the dining-room by an agreeable, though slightly aggressive, gentleman, who cheerily began the conversation by the remark, "Say" (I regret to state that he is a Bostonian) "Say, I don't think much of these Britishers of yours."

I did not quite understand why Great Britain and all her Colonies should be planted upon the shoulders of me, a perfectly innocent American, but I accepted the charge unmurmuringly, and enquired

why his opinion of them was so modest. His reply was of a length that enabled me to get halfway through my soup, but the gist of it seemed to be that they gave themselves "such everlasting airs." I replied that that was a perfectly horrid trait (and I did not pronounce it "tray," either), and that to a modest and self-effacing nation like our own, it was particularly exasperating.

"I'm dead tired," he continued, "of having them come over here all dolled up in their Sam Browne belts, and telling us what they did in France, and how they fought in Flanders, and how much their fleet had accomplished; one would think they had won the War entirely by themselves." "That is queer," I replied, "because every single Englishman I have seen since the War began, has told me himself that he had done nothing."

I dislike telling long stories to men because they so much prefer telling them to me, so I refrained from recounting to my companion the opinions expressed by the

Captain of the ——— when he dined with me. It had just been broken to him that he would have to make a speech in Symphony Hall the next night, and his remarks were not printable in their entirety. His temper was irretrievably mislaid, and he growled like the proverbial (English) bear. He "did n't like makin' speeches one little bit"; he "would have to tell about" what he had done in the War — "rotten idea"; he "had n't done anything but the day's work, anyway." This last statement could not be regarded as strictly truthful. I happened to know, as a matter of fact, that he had done so preposterously more than his "day's work" that, had he belonged to a labour union, he would have been disciplined to a certainty. I did not say all this, but I thought it, and before I had time to invent some harmless reply the comfortably portly person on my other side put his oar into the troubled waters of the conversation.

"Did n't I hear," he said, "that much of the friction between the American and

English privates was because the Tommies speak the better English, and that our men considered them to be 'putting on side?'"

"I don't care a —— about their grammar," answered the originator of this harmonious conversation, "but their accent is enough to drive anybody to drink — if there was any drink left to be driven to," he added vindictively.

I opened my mouth to reply, but shut it up again quickly, mindful of a recent remark made by my favourite nephew.

He had sat, quite polite and well-behaved, throughout the call of an English friend, and had appeared much interested in the conversation. When the family were collected at the dinner-table, he remarked elegantly, "Gosh, but you ought to have been here this afternoon when Mr. Blank was calling. Auntie got her best English accent out of the moth-balls where she packs it away, and it was so thick you could cut it with a knife."

This slight pause for self-restraint had given me time to suspect that the con-

versational atmosphere was in danger of becoming overheated, so I thought it wise to change the subject to national rather than international affairs. Later I came home feeling distinctly low in my mind because of the too evident anti-British feelings of my dinner-party neighbours. I undressed and crawled dismally into bed, where I curled myself around a hot-water bottle and gave way to unbridled gloom.

It is regrettable that so few people appreciate the soothing qualities of that humble utensil. I am quite sure that Mr. Lloyd George would be more amenable and Mr. Wilson less pernicketty if they would both adopt its use. After a short half-hour of worry, its gentle warmth permeated even to my brain, and I began to meditate upon the discord between the two countries with less troubled mind. Even enfolded within its genial glow, I could not deny that the two nationalities are tremendously different, but it began to dawn upon me that the reason for the difference is because they are so exactly alike.

We Americans love our own country so dearly that we are always going away from it, in order to enjoy the sensation of getting back and feeling how much superior we are to any other nation. Being an adaptable people, we are quick to appreciate the beauty of foreign countries, the novelty of their dissimilar scenery and architecture, and the fascination of an unfamiliar tongue.

We go to France and express our affection for her; we go to Italy and are conscious of our love for her; we go to Egypt and stand in wonder before her past; we used to go to Germany to admire her efficiency and wrestle with her language, but we don't any more. At the end of our trip we make a bee-line for England to get aboard ship for the States, and find ourselves — at home! The same scenery, similar architecture, familiar habits and customs, and, above all, an identical language. Of course it seems queer that they should differ from us in so many ways — which they don't, really, except in trivialities.

Everybody knows that trivialities exasperate people, especially men; my husband and my favourite nephew, for instance. One would think they were double-distilled femininity by the way they quarrel over their clothes. The F.N. loathes English clothes, and wears only the American variety, fitted in at the waist, and economical as to material at the top of the trousers. My husband tells him that any man who is obliged to button the lowest button of his waistcoat in order to conceal his shirt is a man improperly dressed. On the other hand, my husband resolutely refuses to wear any clothes at all unless they are made in London, and the F.N. retorts that he'd rather show a bit of nice white shirt than have to button his back collar button to the top of his pants. Both of them are supposed to have intelligent views and opinions upon international affairs, but as a real matter of fact, they do not become half so infuriated over the doings of the respective National Governments as they do over the "set" of their respective per-

sonal pants. They appear to me to be much like all other men.

The use of terms as applied to wearing apparel is also graphically illustrative of distinction minus difference in the two countries. Individually, I prefer trousers to pants (I prefer them to petticoats, for that matter), but as between two democratic countries, surely one may be permitted one's little personal predilections.

I spent one summer in a small English town where the natives laughed consumedly when I remarked innocently that I had been "to the dry-goods store to buy a spool of thread," because, they assured me carefully, what it should be called was "a reel of cotton." Similarly, when I called on a friend, and found tied to the doorbell a neat little card bearing the information that the parlour-maid was slightly deaf, and that if the doorbell was not answered promptly, would the caller please step inside and ring the dinner-bell, I sat down on that doorstep and laughed till I cried.

It is more or less the same with our slang,

and whether the English or American variety is the more choice and elegant is a matter of taste. I only know that neither of us can use the other's with that nicety of correctness expressive of its true perfection.

One year I was visiting some English people in a cathedral town, where I had made many pleasant friends. Passing down the street one day, I fell joyfully into the arms of three Boston friends, who were there for only the proverbial American day and night. One has friends and friends; some of them are of a variety that one is particularly proud to show off to the English, and these were of this species. I promptly sent a message to the Bishop's Palace to ask if I might bring them in to afternoon tea, and we were cordially welcomed. One of the three was a brother of the other two, and was possessed of charming manners and engaging ways. As I introduced him to our hostess, my American heart swelled with pride, and I felt that she would at last know what Boston could produce when it really tried. He returned his empty cup to

the tea-table, and was hospitably pressed by his hostess to have another.

"Thank you," said my Boston friend, with his most engaging smile and a beautiful bow, "I think I will stand on one cup."

Our hostess looked helplessly back and forth between my friend and the tea-cup, and I retired hastily, leaving my Boston friend to get himself out of the difficulty in his own charming way.

One may trust most American men to extricate themselves adroitly from any similar difficulties in private conversation, especially with a woman, but when it comes to public speaking, I listen with about the same degree of nervous apprehension to the speakers of one nation as of the other. We are a nation of born speakers, and we not only appreciate ourselves in that line, but we also appreciate it in others. I frequently feel, however, that neither English nor American speakers are invariably happy in expressing themselves.

One English speaker was here not long ago, the most earnest purpose of his soul

being to unite, by bonds of perfect understanding, the feelings of the two countries. His chief argument was that England could not possibly be inimical to the States because she knew so little about them. He alluded particularly to our "Boston Tea-Party," and assured us that few, if anybody, in England had ever heard of it. I am not a Bostonian, but I am very proud of that episode, and my little feelings were quite hurt.

That attitude of knowing nothing and caring less about what happens in the world outside their own, particular bailiwick is one of England's most valuable assets; one that all my life I have endeavoured assiduously but unsuccessfully to acquire. A mind so impervious to other people's business is one source of England's placid strength, and it ought to make them especially popular with us, for I defy anybody who has followed the vicissitudes of the Treaty and the League of Nations, to deny that "None of our business" is the watchword of our nation. But never mind;

we will "grow up" some day to know better; and meantime it is not only the Englishman who says things that he might wish he had expressed differently.

A well-known British officer spoke in Boston one night, and was introduced to a very large audience by a pure American — that is, as pure as we make them. The introduction was not of that brevity which is quoted as perfection, and I began to be nervous before he had reached the end of his first ten minutes. Later, when he announced with emphasis that "WE" could not have won the War if it had not been for France; "WE" could not have won the War if it had not been for the Belgians, and (with that British officer at his elbow) "WE" could not have won the War without England, my nervous system suffered a collapse from which it has not yet recovered. As a matter of fact, he did not in the least mean what he implied, as was evident by the context. What he wished to express was that the War could not have been won by the Allies had not each country rendered

its special service in its special place. One must admit, however, that there was not much to choose between the Englishman and the American so far as tactfulness is concerned. I think the palm for that particular gift must be given to one especial man.

An Englishman is never more soul-satisfying than when he is a Scotchman, and the peculiarly judicious admixture to whom I allude has done more to translate to one another the two countries than anything outside a petticoat that I am acquainted with. The hereditary right to an abbreviated excuse for that article of clothing may account for his tact and discretion. In speaking here on one occasion, he admitted modestly that the American boys in England may have learned some things to their advantage, and he stated unequivocally that the English boys had learned a great deal from ours; one of them being that "an American loves and is proud of his country, and is not ashamed to say so." Nobody wholly divorced from a petticoat could possibly have said that so prettily.

To return to the dinner-bell and the spool of thread, from which, hen-like, I have strayed, I do not feel in the least apologetic for my own use of the vernacular, nor am I making fun of a perfectly straightforward way of simplifying a domestic situation; they are both perfectly good methods of expression. They do, however, serve admirably to illustrate some of the differences of ways, manners, and customs which between the two countries are a great deal harder to understand, and, sometimes, more difficult to excuse, than the fundamental matters in which, thank God, they do not so often clash. Diplomacy, commerce, international law are, of course, of some slight importance, but even the aforesaid hot-water bottle did not furnish me with sufficient brains to argue about them, even with myself — the only opponent I have ever been able to convince. Privately, I do not think they amount to much, anyway. I frankly doubt if I am alone in a happy ignorance of international affairs that prevents me from

lying awake o' nights worrying over them, but I know I have plenty of good company in caring a lot if my people mistake British shyness and *gaucherie* for "everlasting airs," or the British, not knowing us very well, imagine that I and my people eat with our knives or are unenlightened as to the advantages of the daily bath. I am inclined to think that it is pretty fairly important for us English-speaking nations to stand very closely together for the next century or two, and if we are to be perpetually spatting because, metaphorically, they call a reel of cotton what we call a spool of thread, it would be singularly unintelligent on the part of both of us. They think we are queer, and we know they are; it would seem common sense to let it go at that.

One of the matters in which the English are apt to be mistaken with regard to the United States is our geography. Personally, I am not able to resent it because I am not very strong on that science myself, and also because I think we must allow that we do cover a rather large portion of the map

to commit to memory. A very dear old English friend was immensely interested when we first met, to learn that we came from America; when he heard that we lived in Boston (which he had ascertained was not in South America) he became actually excited. He wanted to know if we had ever met his brother who lived in Keokuk. The only defence I can make of such ignorance is that a short time ago I went upstairs and asked of my deputy-grandson (aged two weeks), his special attendant, his mother, and two other perfectly good people, the following questions: "In what country is Biarritz? In what county is situated the cathedral town of Canterbury? and, What State proudly boasts the possession of Oil City?" Not one of them could answer a single one of the questions; not even the "Deputy," who is the wisest of us all. After the above exhibition of ignorance on the part of my personal friends and fellow citizens, it is only decent on my part to state that I, myself, last week addressed a letter to "Detroit, Mississippi."

The few people who, twenty years ago, served afternoon tea here, were regarded as "putting on side," but we have become so far infected by this effeminacy that, now a days, it is the general custom. I have heard a great many Americans jeer because the English officers in the trenches demanded their afternoon tea just as much as if they were at home. I do not wish to be considered too excessively pro-British, but really, it would seem to me reasonable to let a man have pretty much anything he wanted under those circumstances. I cannot feel that there is a distinguishable difference between tea in the trenches, which was their day's work, and tea in the offices of two or three business firms, where I know, from personal experience, it is served for the office force every day. (I know also of one man who provides an opera ticket for his office force, to be used in turn once a week throughout the season. I consider this the apotheosis of Boston.) Both seem to me entirely appropriate places in which to serve that comforting beverage, for both

forces are doing a work which needs nourishment, and there is n't a man alive with whom an empty stomach is not accompanied by a "cameelious hump."

Then, too, our customs differ. The English engaged girl marks her possessions with the name or initials which she is to bear in the future. Our girls, in contemplating what an emigrant once called "committing a matrimony," mark all their silver and linen with the initials of their maiden name; the name of a person who, in a short time, will no longer exist. It is charmingly sentimental to know that we are following an old Dutch custom; we have so few traditions that one longs to cling to them furiously, but we must in honesty admit that it does not seem very practical as a means of identification in the wash or elsewhere. In fact, when my best friend went off on her wedding trip, with her beautiful new portmanteau marked loudly with her maiden initials, travelling sociably with that of her husband bearing a quite different letter, it savoured slightly of impro-

priety. It had also its practical drawbacks, for one letter being B, and the other W, they were obliged to chase themselves from one end of every custom-house to the other in order to effect a union between the two. They were rather unmitigated Americans, these friends of mine, and did not have a high opinion of English and foreign modes of travel, which they liked to compare with our own. Personally, I have small opinion of either method. To travel in a little nasty, draughty compartment, with (usually) one's back to the engine, or in a bigger compartment, where the air is vile, and the seats of those vicious plush chairs drag one's skirts hind-side-to, or one's trousers into spirals up the backbone, seems to me much of a muchness. If anybody is anti-British on account of the comparison in travel, I shall feel more respect for him if he does not mention it. I call it a drawn game.

The subject of titles is a never-ending topic of joyous dissension the world over. We do not grow them here, unless one may

count as such the attainment of Judge, Colonel, or similar brevet rank. I should like, however, to draw attention to the frequency with which I see gentlemen alluded to in our newspapers as "Barber" Smith, or "Professor" Getemwell, or even "Slayer" Jones, which proves our fundamental craving for the article. I really do not know which nation is most provocative of mirth on this subject. I have heard just exactly as many English as Americans express their contempt for "such rubbish," and declare with immense solemnity that they would not accept a title if it was offered to them.

It is usually a pretty safe statement to make, especially in the case of the American; and though I have known only one person (an Englishman, by the way) who actually refused the offer when it did come, the effect of the remark is truly impressive. I do not believe it, of course. I am much more inclined to think that in their deepest and darkest hearts the individuals of both nations adore them, only they are not

honest enough to admit it. This is a mistake. To be gratified by so simple a pleasure is a perfectly incorrupt and inoffensive taste and shows an artless mind. I refrain from banal remarks upon the "*noblesse oblige*" responsibilities of the article in question.

As to the respective merits of baseball and cricket, I refuse to judge. When the millennium arrives and our political differences are dead and buried; when our manners, morals, and minds are identical; when the Lion and the Eagle have curled up together in urbane amity; even then, the sight of a cricket bat and a baseball bat, singly or together, will dissolve the amalgamated nations once more into their component parts.

Never in all this world did I expect to live to see a King of England "throw off" for a baseball game; but the thought of an American undertaking to witness a game of cricket, from its leisurely beginning to its long-drawn-out end, is truly humorous. Nothing could be better illustrative of the

superficial differences in the characteristics of the two nations than in their adoption of these two sports. The English like their excitements spread neatly and evenly over a generous amount of time; we prefer ours crowded into one or two hours of delirious joy. They ride, drive, or motor to the cricket field in so tranquil and temperate a manner as to make one suspect that they are out for pleasure, while we arrive at the baseball field only at the expense of a free fight — which is quite considered part of the fun.

There may be other ways in which the English misjudge the Americans, but in none so unjustly as in their desire for enjoyment. He believes the American man to be immersed in business to the exclusion of every other thought; nothing could be more unjust; in the baseball season, anyway. A "fan" would cheerfully give up his business, his wife, his dinner, and his mother-in-law before he would allow anything to interfere with his attendance at one of the "big" games of the season. I do

not know what becomes of the business. It is probably left in the sorrowing charge of an envious office boy, who cannot have much to do, as there is nobody left to do it. The excitement of the game drowns, for the moment, every other emotion of which the human heart is capable. I know, for I have attended one. On that occasion a woman behind me fainted away, and a man in front of me fell in an epileptic fit, so I decided not to go to any more. Could anything be more antipodean to cricket?

Yet right there the difference ends. They are both games; they are alike even to the extent of being played with bats, balls, and runs; but above all they are alike in that the rules of both demand justice, fair play, and honour, and in that the judgement of the people is against those who do not comply with them. These are the points that really matter, and they are also the points upon which the English-speaking nations are wholly and utterly at one.

I have been told many times the number of foreign countries whose emigrants have

become naturalized Americans; I am sorry that my brain is too small to retain the information, because it is distinctly impressive; yet with all that influx of alien races, the United States has never adopted other than Saxon language, or standards of life and morals; not because of leagues or votes, or even of choice, but instinctively and as a matter of course.

The lives and customs of the two nations are not identical; the Governments differ slightly in name and form (they have a king as their titular head, we have a college professor or a retired tradesman, as the case may be); but when it comes right down to fundamental principles, we are scandalously alike.

It is not through international laws or diplomacy or design that England and the United States shall stand together in the years to come, but simply and solely because neither of them can help it, whether they want to or not. A like standard of Honour and Honesty, and an identical goal of Freedom and Democracy, constitute too

solid a foundation for the building-up of a reformed world to be easily undermined.

If the Lion and the Eagle can rest together in peace, it is not for their disrespectful offspring to disturb them.

THE END

EPILOGUE

BY THE FAVOURITE NEPHEW

SO the book is done; the last, or perhaps only the latest, prejudice has been published far and wide, and the dragon sleeps.

What a dragon it is! Nothing escapes her roaming eye, be it never so innocent or small. If the baby cries, the fact is pounced upon and the newest chapter of the book is headed, "The Cruelty of Modern Parents"; if one is late for a meal, one finds scattered about the dragon's den neatly typewritten references to the thoughtlessness of the young. She dips her claws into the blood of friends and enemies alike, and, when brought to bay, disappears into her den and becomes — an Early Victorian lady of gentle humility.

Yet for us who live just outside the cave, the dragon has her very human side. I remember once coming home late one afternoon, and as I climbed the stairs I was surprised to hear above me voices raised in altercation. The leading voice I easily rec-

ognized as that of a maid who had offended and was being, quite properly, scolded. But somehow the maid was not quite as subdued by the little dragon's rebuke as the readers of this book might be led to expect. Protest waxed into indignation on the part of the domestic, indignation into invective, and invective into vituperation. Fearing the next change might be to personal violence, I sprang up the stairs. As I reached the last flight, at the top of which the battle raged, I heard the quick patter of the little dragon's feet, and, with a reiterated "That will do, Margaret, that will do," she retired hurriedly into her favourite niece's room, slamming the door on the echoes of her opponent's rage which still quivered in the blue air. Never shall I forget either the dignity of her voice or her hurried bolt into sanctuary.

You see the dragon is human, after all. We all know and appreciate it, and though we squirm when prodded with her pen, we are proud of the little dragon and love her even though she kills us — with laughing.

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