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THE BLACK STAIN.

By GEO. R. SIMS.

(Reprinted from the London "Tribune.")

A. FOREWORD.

In that which I am about to write my great desire is to be definite.

I want, in the plainest possible language, to put before the public a statement of facts which prove beyond the possibility of dispute that there is a condition of things existing in Christian England which is a black stain upon England's Christianity.

It was my privilege early in the present year to lay before the readers of "The Tribune" the result of a series of personal investigations in connection with the pressing problem of our appalling infantile mortality. In "The Cry of the Children" I dealt with the—from every point of view—undesirable presence from morn till midnight of babies or young children in the crowded drinking bars of the gin palace and the beerhouse.

It was necessary in order to concentrate public attention on a definite scheme of reform that I should in those articles restrict myself mainly to facts and figures illustrative of this particular form of peril to infant life.

But in the course of those investigations I covered a far wider area of child life than that to which I then confined myself in print.

The facts which came under my notice when I was endeavouring to ascertain what the home life of the children who were nightly nursed in the Babies' Inferno was like revealed a condition of things so terrible that I was inclined to believe that I had accidentally come into contact with the worst phase of an evil which I had always believed to be greatly exaggerated by soft-hearted humanitarians.

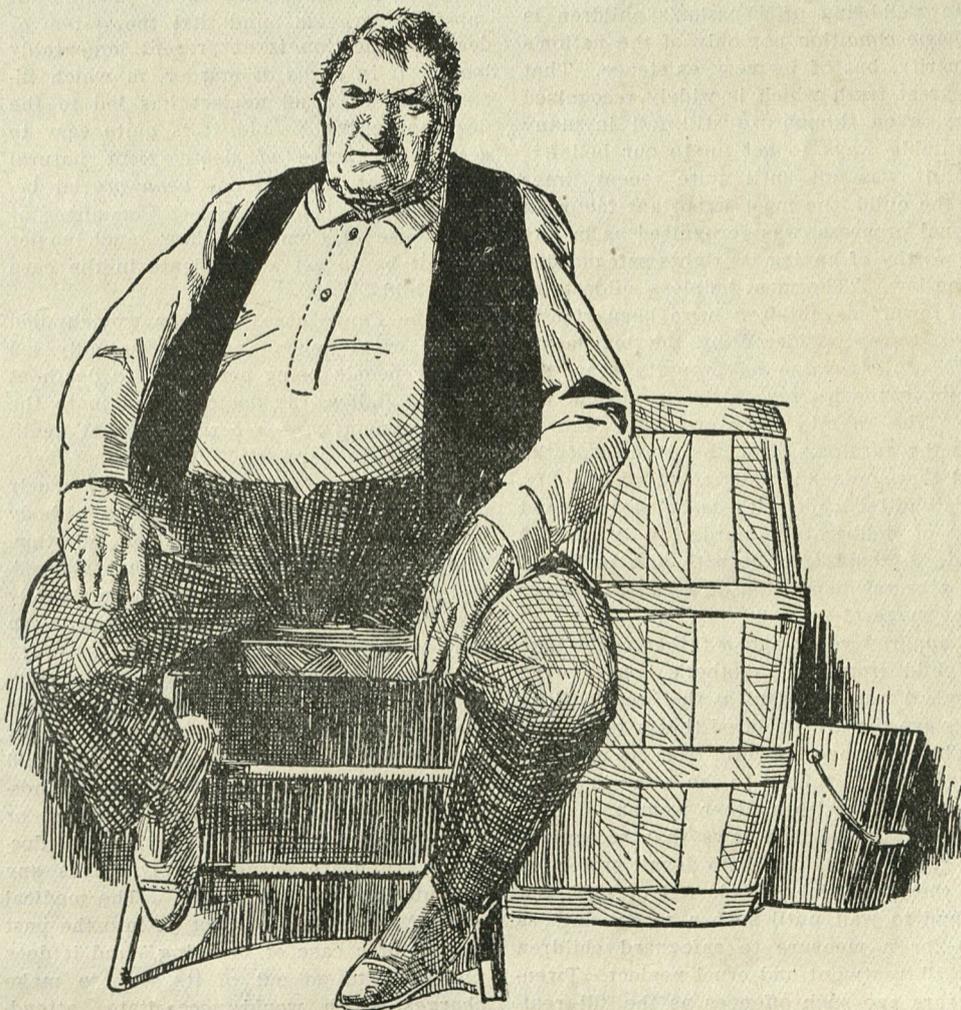
I determined at the first opportunity to extend the scope of the inquiry, and to ascertain as far as possible from personal observation the extent to which the evil prevailed.

With this object in view I have travelled the Capital north and south, and east and

west, and I have visited some of the larger provincial towns.

In my journeyings I have been brought face to face with horrors which might be

easily believed in connection with the Congo and the tortured black, but which will seem almost incredible when related of little children martyred in English homes.



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It is
THE STORY OF MY PILGRIMAGE OF
PAIN

that I propose to tell.

The proprietors of "The Tribune" have given me permission to tell it frankly and fully. I will choose phrases that have the least offence to modest ears, but I shall not ask the reader to gaze through a gauze at scenes of shame and suffering that can only be made impossible in our midst when the men and women of England realise them in all their agonizing actuality.

I have said that the pilgrimage has been one of pain. That pain I cannot spare the reader who elects to accompany me over the ground I shall re-travel. But though the blackness of night may be sometimes around us, we shall see ere we come to the journey's end the breaking of the dawn. Sorrow may be in our eyes, but never need despair be in our hearts. For of the knowledge gained by those who have gone before us noble effort has been born and many a signal victory won.

But the war has to be waged with ceaseless vigilance, and the forces of the enemy can only be driven from the field when the nation's heart is with those who are doing the nation's work.

There is an old saying of the people: "What the eye does not see the heart does not grieve over." It is because so few eyes have read in the book of our daily life the pages on which the black stain lies that the great heart of the nation has not yet been touched to the grief that goes beyond the heaving of an occasional sigh.

The well-being of a nation's children is the basic condition not only of the nation's prosperity, but of its very existence. That is a great truth which is widely recognised to-day, even though we still fail in many lamentable ways to act up to our belief.

But it was not until quite recent times that the child, the most important factor in national progress, was recognised as in any way worthy of having its rights safeguarded by the law. "The most helpless subjects of the Crown," as children have been rightly called, were considered by the legislature to be of less value as property than the rabbits in the warren or the turnips in the field. The rabbits were protected, and so were the turnips. For the wrongs of the child there was no remedy. It was the father's chattel to do with as he pleased, and short of deliberately murdering it in cold blood, he could treat it with any barbarity that a brutal disposition or a violent temper might suggest.

A hundred years ago a father could take his child from the mother's care even though it was an infant at the breast. Fifty years ago the law declared that a father had a right to remove his child from its mother's custody and to take it to the home in which he was living with another woman.

One of the earliest laws that recognised the right of the child to legal protection was the Industrial Schools Act of 1866. But we had to wait until such a recent date as 1889 for a measure to safeguard children from ill-treatment and cruel neglect. Twenty years ago such offences as the "ill-treatment" or "neglect" of children were not known to the English law.

At the present moment the work of look-

ing after "the most helpless subjects of the Crown," so far as safeguarding them against deliberate ill-treatment and cruel neglect is concerned, is carried on by a society entirely supported by voluntary contributions. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has rendered, and is rendering, magnificent service to humanity, but, being a voluntary society, it has to work according to its means, and is dependent for its means upon the subscriptions of those who, sympathising with its objects, are prepared to give to that sympathy a practical form of expression.

With the splendid work that the society is accomplishing I shall deal in due course. For the present it is sufficient for my purpose to point out that

during the period between April 1st, 1906, and March 31st, 1907, it had to inquire into 40,443 cases of alleged cruelty to children, and of these cases the accusations were found to be justified in 39,006 instances. The number of children concerned in these cases of ill-treatment or "cruel neglect" was 115,002. These are figures to stir the conscience of Christian people, but they by no means represent the extent of the abomination.

In considering the figures I have quoted, appalling as they are, it must be remembered that they represent only the returns of the chief society. There are other societies in various parts of the United Kingdom which deal with cases of cruelty in their own areas, and there are large portions of the kingdom which are still uncovered ground.

Again, in considering these figures it must be borne in mind that the system of death-certification is at present lamentably loose. If in cases of murder, in which ill-treatment or cruel neglect has led to the death of grown people, it is quite easy to get a certificate of death from natural causes—that it is so has been proved beyond dispute before a Select Committee of the House of Commons—how much easier must it be to get a certificate in the case of a child.

In the Penge case, where a woman died of the cruel neglect which eventually led to four people being sentenced to death at the Old Bailey, the doctor called in to the dying woman gave a certificate that death was "due to paralysis." Had it not been that the mother of the victim had previously communicated with the police, the body would have been buried without question. The starved-to-death child of that starved-to-death woman had already been safely disposed of by taking it to the hospital in time to get a death certificate.

I quote this case because it is still a common practice in cases of child neglect where there has been no official interference for the mother when she thinks that the child is going to die to hurry off with it to a hospital, where it is treated for wasting or some kindred "disease." The hospital doctor, when death ensues, rarely makes any difficulty about a certificate. The medical staff of a hospital does not go into the past history of a case of "wasting," and it does not want to go out of its way to make charges which would necessitate attendance at an inquest, and probably at a police court, with the Old Bailey to follow.

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multitude of sins against helpless childhood.

I am compelled to dwell upon these points, and also to urge the fact that thousands of cases of "cruel neglect" and unnecessary suffering inflicted on innocent and helpless children never come to the notice of the protecting societies at all, because otherwise I might be held as I proceed to be exaggerating the evil and overstating its extent.

The N.S.P.C.C., whose figures I quote, is not a prosecuting society. The law is resorted to only in cases where such a course is absolutely necessary. It is a society whose main object is to help the children and to advise the parents, or persons standing in the position of parents, who are through carelessness or ignorance or from other causes inflicting upon children unnecessary suffering. It warns, instructs, and assists, and it keeps the ill-treated or neglected children under the supervision of visiting officers until there is a visible improvement in the victims and in their home conditions. But if the society finds all its efforts in vain, it brings the matter into a public court, and the rest is for the law.

The foul and widespread neglect of helpless babes and innocent children which is a black stain upon a Christian land does not lie upon one class alone. The worst barbarities of child torture have diminished year by year since the institution of the society, but where they are still found there is often a condition of well-being in the home which intensifies one's astonishment

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that there are Christian parents who can be less human to their young than the heathen savage.

Habitual drunkenness of the mother or the father, sometimes of both, is responsible for a terrible amount of child misery. The drinking mother is chiefly responsible for the foul home conditions which in themselves alone inflict ceaseless suffering upon her children.

Baby-farming of the cruellest kind, in spite of recent legislation and a system of inspection of all homes in which more than one nurse child is taken, still exists to a degree entirely unsuspected by the public, and the law is constantly evaded. In many parts of the country this traffic in child-murder, for it is nothing else, is still going on. And the sufferings of the unhappy children whose lives are spared would make death to many of them a merciful release.

We shall visit some of these baby farms and see for ourselves what abominable cruelty can be practised in duly-inspected "homes" for nurse children and in the "one-child" home, which is as yet exempt from inspection, although during the last four and a half years over 2000 cases of cruel neglect have been dealt with in connection with the single nurse child, and during the past eighteen months three women engaged in the "one-child" business have been hanged.

On the question of the gambling in the lives of children there is a vast difference of opinion. With that subject I shall deal in its place. There are grave dangers connected with it which ought to be more generally recognised. It is contended by many who speak with authority that children are not murdered for insurance money. It is urged that the contention that there are fathers and mothers who wilfully let their ailing children die for lack of proper help because they are insured is not justified by obtainable evidence. But in the printed statistics of the last annual report of the N.S.P.C.C. I find that of the 115,002 children who have come under the society's observation in cases of cruel neglect 31,518 were insured for £164,887. There are facts in connection with child insurance which in the interests of infant life ought not to be ignored, and with these facts I hope later on to deal.

They are matters which must be discussed in connection with the measures passed from time to time to extend the recognition by the State of the rights of "the most helpless subjects of the Crown."

So much it was incumbent upon me to say by way of preface before starting on our journey through the Valley of the Shadow in which tens of thousands of innocent, helpless English children are living in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seven.

The suffering of the nation's children is not merely a question for the humanitarian to consider. It is a question for the citizen, the patriot, and the statesman to consider. Thousands of the tortured children who suffer and survive will only do so with stunted bodies and enfeebled minds, to become the physical, moral, and mental wreckage which burdens the State and fills the lunatic asylums, the workhouses, and the gaols.

Against the guilt of race suicide our men of science are everywhere preaching their sermons to-day. It is against the guilt of race murder that the cry of the children should ring through the land.

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THE STORY OF ONE MOTHER'S WORK.

"May I have Harry Gould for a partner, mother? I like him and he is interested in things I am. I just feel sorry for him—he don't have any chance at all!"

"A partner—did you say? A partner in what, Ralph?" the mother asked, smiling across the table.

"Why, a partner in my work, in my experiments—in my learning about things and how to do things," the boy answered with the fire of earnestness and enthusiasm flashing up in his eyes.

"What! Am I to be dropped?" asked his mother, still smiling over her teacup.

"Oh, of course not, mother! You're the head of the business—always was and always shall be! But I just thought maybe you could help two boys as well as one. Harry and I would be doing the same things, you see."

"But what is the matter with Harry?" the mother asked, not in the least objecting to Ralph's plan, but, like a wise diplomat, wishing to fully understand the case in hand. "Why, doesn't Harry have all he needs? You say he has no chance."

"Well, mother, it's just like this: There isn't a place in their big house on Nob Hill for a boy's room and workshop. You know I went home with Harry last night. They have parlours and a library, and a music-room, and a smoking den, and all that sort of thing. Harry's room is nice, too. But, honest, mother, it's so awful nice that he can't have any good times in it. He took me upstairs to see a hang-bird's nest and some curious rocks he found in the country. When we got up there they were gone. He went to his mother about it, and, if you'll believe it, she just laughed and said, 'We can't have such rubbish in your pretty room!' And she or the maid had burned up his bird's nest and thrown away the curious stones. My! but he looked glum, but he didn't say half I wanted to. I'm downright sorry for him. They might just as well throw him into the street along with the stones."

During Ralph's long speech a shadow swept over his mother's face, and Ralph read her sympathy before her answer came.

"Certainly, I shall be glad to have you take Harry Gould for a partner, if this is what you mean. But do you think his father and mother will be quite willing that he should spend his spare time here?" said his mother.

"They won't either of them care, I'm sure. I don't 'spose they know where he is anyhow. He told me his father went to business before he and his mother were up in the morning, and came home so late that he sometimes didn't see them for a week. His mother goes off to parties and clubs, and Harry says he gets awful lonesome, and so he goes most anywhere evenings."

"Bring him here, Ralph; I want him as much as you do," said Ralph's mother.

All through the day thoughts of Harry Gould brought a shadow to the face of Mrs. King, Ralph's mother, and her heart warmed toward the boy who "didn't have any chance." She knew his father to be a prominent business man in the city, and his mother's name often appeared in the society club columns of the "Daily Leader." In her thoughts of Harry there came thoughts of other boys of well-to-do families, as unhelped as was Harry. "Oh," she said to herself; "the rich need helping as much as the people of the slums."

Business had kept Ralph's father out of

the city for weeks at a time for much of Ralph's life, and to the mother had fallen most of the care and training of the "Little Prince," as the more immediate friends of Mr. and Mrs. King had dubbed the boy since he first came to be one of the King's household. So "Little Prince" he still was, and he had learned, as well as any son of a royal house, that he was being trained to a kingdom—a kingdom of usefulness, where truth and faithfulness are armour and crown.

When the boy first lay upon his mother's breast, she felt her insufficiency, as every mother must, but she felt the greatness of this gift divinely committed to her care. Prayer led her to the Wise for wisdom, and, as the boy grew, he did not grow away from his mother. Ralph was now fourteen, and with his mother he had learned the beauty of the world, and the days were all too short to hunt out its treasures and to study its wonders.

Museums and parks and menageries and libraries were visited; excursions into the country came into Ralph's training and education; access was arranged to machine shops and printing houses and factories—and all these visits were supplemented by home study, experiments and attempts to make or put into practice something he had learned.

In all his investigations and work, Ralph's mother was, as he had said, "at the head of the company."

"How do you ever get time for it all?" an intimate friend had asked when she found Ralph and his mother one day arranging a battery and running telegraph wires from room to room. "You must have to study day and night."

"Study!" laughed Mrs. King. "I never studied harder in school, nor was it ever so delightful. I never began to study so in my Browning club, nor in my Sorosis. But," she added, with a voice sweet and very earnest, "My Browning club and Sorosis were interesting and helpful, yet not to be compared with this. This work is preparing the 'Prince' for his kingdom, you know."

That night Harry Gould came to the study room and the workshop. To him it was

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the beginning of a new life—the opening of doors into a world of which he had all along had dreams, and for which he had been hungry all his life.

There the boys worked out experiments, turned inventors, and learned to use their brains and their hands. There they telegraphed—startling messages the world was yet to hear. There they built boats staunch enough to carry cargoes that were to help in life's long voyage. And there it was that Harry's father found his boy, weeks later, when he "came to himself." And this is the way it happened.

Mr. Gould left the counting-room earlier than usual one evening. A spirit of unrest seemed to have settled on him. His usually accurate brain refused to do its duty, and, closing books and desk, he went home.

"A beautiful home," he said in his heart, as he lingered a moment in the bright light that streamed from its windows, and the thought of Harry gave a warm thrill to his heart. As a little later he entered the parlours and saw a group of friends he remembered that his wife had told him that the card club were to meet there that evening. None were playing, however, and a heavy gloom shadowed the place. "Not playing?" he said, "How's this?"

"O George, you haven't heard!" exclaimed his wife. "Such a dreadful thing has happened! You know Rose Dale belongs to our club; she was to have been here tonight. Mr. Bruce called for her, and it is he who has brought us the word. They have just learned that her brother, David, has shot himself. He had become a gambler, and had lost his own and his employer's money. He could not bear it. Poor, poor boy! Poor Rose! You know what a brilliant young man he was—a young man of such promise—and, don't you remember he came with Rose and learned to play—here—at our club. I recall his wonderful skill; he seemed a born player. How we cheered him on! And it has come to this!" Mrs. Gould could say no more for weeping.

A pallor came into the man's face as he listened, and the shock to him, as to them all, was terrible. But somehow his own boy's face seemed ever to rise before him, until at length he asked:

"Where is our Harry, Grace?"

"Why, really, George, I don't know," his wife answered. "He has been out evenings a great deal lately, with Ralph King, on Granger-street, I think."

With a half groan the man went out. Somehow the tragedy whose shock was upon him compelled thoughts of Harry, and he realised how little was being done to save his own boy. A grip like a hand of steel seemed to be upon his heart as he rang the bell at the little house on Granger-street. "Can you tell me where Harry Gould is?" he asked, as his ring was answered. The door of a large room just across the hall stood open. This was the boys' room. Harry, surprised, heard his father's voice, and called in answer, "Oh, papa, come in here and see what we are doing." An angel's song could not have been sweeter at that moment to the father's ear. Mrs. King led the way, and for a moment the man stood in the door. He saw half-finished boats, miniature engines, cases of tools, and the meaning of the room flashed upon him.

"See, papa, we are printing our own newspaper," said Harry proudly, pointing to a hand press which the young printers were manipulating. "Isn't this a nice room?" he went on, "and it's all Ralph's, and I'm his partner, and we're learning so much! Ralph's mother helps us. It's the best place I ever went to. I just wish all boys had such a chance!"

"I wish so too," said Mr. Gould, with a mist shining in his eyes.

After that night things were changed at the Goulds' home. There was no more danger of a hang-bird's nest ever going into the fire again, or of specimens being thrown away, and when Mr. Gould took both boys to Yellowstone Park that summer, they went as three good comrades.

Overheard in the Hospital, Aldershot, when the sick were being examined:

"Military doctor (to Private Jonas, of the Bluffs): "Well, my man, what's the matter with you?"

Private Jonas: "Pains in the back, sir."

Doctor (handing him a few pills): "Take one of these a quarter of an hour before you feel the pain coming on."

A DOUBTFUL LAST RESORT.

Little Betty had been playing quietly on the porch one afternoon, unnoticed by her father and a friend, who were discussing the recent financial panic in America. When the guest had gone and bedtime had come, Betty was unusually silent and thoughtful. And when she knelt to say her prayers, a pause followed the usual petitions in behalf of "papa an' mamma an' Aunt Mary an' Uncle Tom an' Rover an' Bridget." Finally with great earnestness, she resumed:

"An' now, God, please take great care of Yourself, 'cause if anything should happen to You we'd only have Mr. Roosevelt—an' he hasn't come up to papa's expectations."

A DILEMMA.

The three men in the back room of an American saloon had made a night of it. Their heads were heavy and their nerves were on edge. The half-emptied glasses on the table had lost their charm.

Suddenly a rat darted across the floor, seized a bit of cheese that had fallen from the table, and scurried back to the hole whence it had come. Each of the men started violently and glanced suspiciously at his companions. It was Hennessy who first mustered courage to speak.

"What are ye lookin' at" he demanded with a sneer. "I know what ye're thinkin'. Ye think I thought I saw a rat. But I don't!"

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Talk about People

Albert Bruntnell.

For some years Mr. Bruntnell has been the lecturer for the N.S.W. Alliance; in his extensive trips throughout the State he has made innumerable friends and many converts to No-License. Gifted with ready speech and quaint humour, and a warm-hearted, genial manner, he has succeeded where most men would have failed. We think the Alliance has erred in letting him go for twelve months, since there is no one else who could put its finances straight and lay the foundation for the next campaign which will be so much greater in every way than the last. The farewell-dinner was somewhat marred by the casualness so characteristic of temperance folk. Only 60 intimated their intention of being present, and some 200 turned up; however, in spite of the inconvenience resulting from the lack of courtesy on the part of the 140, the dinner was a success. The speeches were good and worthy of a much larger report than the daily papers gave. The Rev. W. W. Rutledge, referring to Mr. Bruntnell's exclusion from Parliament, said that undoubtedly it would only be temporary, but he went on to say: "It was, however, a question whether Mr. Bruntnell's services might not be very much more valuable to the temperance party if he remained outside of the walls of Parliament." (Hear, hear). Mr. Bruntnell, in reply, drew attention to the advantages, and also the limitations of our legislation, and very rightly emphasised the need of moral and educational work to enable us to take advantage of the benefits of our laws. Mr. Bruntnell left for Melbourne on the 24th inst., and will hold some meetings there before he joins the ship. We heartily wish him "Bon voyage."

Mark Twain Applauded.

Mark Twain was once a guest at a London banquet where eight hundred or nine hundred people were present. Some official read out the list of chief guests before they began to eat. When a prominent name was called the other guests would applaud. "I didn't pay much attention," said Mark, in relating the incident, "for I found the man next me rather a good talker. Just as we got to an interesting subject there was a tremendous clapping of hands. I had hardly ever heard such applause before. I straightened up, and set to clapping with the rest, and I noticed a good many people round about me fixing their attention on me, and some of them laughing in a friendly and encouraging way. I moved about in my chair and clapped louder than ever.

"Who is it?" I asked the man on my right. "Samuel Clemens, better known in England as Mark Twain," he replied.

"I stopped clapping. The life seemed to go out of me. I never was in such a fix."

Celebrities' Sizes in Hats.

According to the figures given by a famous West-end firm of hatters, the standard sizes in hats worn by leading men of to-day are 6½, 7, and 7¼. The King wears the latter size, as does also Lord Wolseley, Lord Brassey, Mr. Birrell, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Loreburn, and Sir Thomas Lipton. In art, music, and the drama, size 7 is more in demand, Mr. Beerbohm Tree, Sir W. S. Gilbert, Herr Kubelik, Sir Charles Santley, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Sir E. Poynter requiring this size. The Duke of Connaught and the King of Norway take the small size of 6½, while 7¼ is taken by such men as Mr. Pierpont

Morgan, Professor Ray Lankester, and the Duke of Argyll.

The Kaiser's Talisman.

During the Kaiser's recent visit to England he wore the famous Hohenzollern talisman, which for centuries has been credited with a supernatural power to protect its wearer from harm of any kind. This imperial talisman, a massive gold ring with a square, dark-coloured stone, which the Emperor is said to wear on the middle finger of his left hand, has a highly romantic history, dating from the far-off days when his ancestors, the Margraves of Nuremberg, followed their leaders to the capture of the Holy Sepulchre from the Moslems. The ring, which was captured in a hard-fought battle under the walls of Jerusalem, came into the possession of Margraf Ulrich, from whom it has descended to his successors, generation after generation, as a highly-prized heirloom. The sentence from the Koran which adorned the ring when worn by Saladin and his successors has been removed and a Latin cross engraved in its place.

Violinist to the Queen.

It may be news to many people that Lady Halle, so well known by music-lovers in Australia, and who has expressed her intention of settling permanently in London, after years of residence abroad, possesses the unique title of "Violinist to the Queen." As a matter of fact, Queen Alexandra numbers Lady Halle amongst her personal friends, and quite recently Her Majesty sent a letter to the famous violinist, saying how welcome she would be in London. Lady Halle, who made her professional debut in England when she was ten years old, as Wilhelmine Neruda, is one of the family of Nerudas who for a century and a half have been famous in Moravia as violinists. Her father was an organist, and presided over the organ at the cathedral at Brunn. As a child she was permitted to have a seat, hidden from sight, in the organ-loft. Long before her first marriage, at twenty-four, to Ludwig Norman, the Swedish musician, Lady Halle's fame had penetrated to every music-loving centre in Europe. She married the late Sir Charles Halle nineteen years ago, and has been a widow for the last twelve years.

Lord Charles Beresford.

It is through no feeling of disrespect that the men of the lower deck refer to Lord Charles Beresford as "Charlie" when speaking of him amongst themselves (says a London paper). It is simply because they feel that "he is one of us," and certainly no naval commander has the interests and welfare of the men under him more at heart than the breezy Lord Charles. As a middy he was a "broth of a boy." His pranks and practical jokes were without number. Then with increased years came the famous "Condor" episode. That was pure and unadulterated daring. No other man would have even thought of taking an unarmoured gunboat right under the nose of a fort. The same tale of delightful escapade runs all through his life—naval, political, domestic. Even in the House of Commons he would have his little joke. He is said to have even gone so far as to force a member to go into the division lobby minus his boots! A solemn M.P. was in the habit of taking off his boots during a debate, for greater ease. Lord Charles noted this, and waited until he was dozing, when he secreted the boots, causing the

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M.P. to walk through the division lobby in his stockings! There was a hole in his stockings, too!

Remarkably enough, Lord Charles himself, on one occasion, figured in a signalling incident which caused a good deal of talk. On the day of Queen Victoria's naval review in 1887, Lord Charles was in the position of Sir Percy Scott, and as flag officer had to signal the fleet. The manoeuvres had been prolonged, and late in the afternoon all eyes were turned on Sir Charles' ship as a signal went up. It was nothing more momentous than a message to his wife, Lady Beresford, to the effect that as he should be late for dinner she was not to wait. Beyond the hilarity evoked by the signalling of such a domestic detail, nothing more would have been heard of the matter had not the special correspondent of the "Times" heard of the incident. The next morning that newspaper contained a full and humorous report of the incident. Then there was trouble.

A MILLIONAIRE MELTED.

President Manuel Amador, of Panama, tells this little tale of a certain Cuban millionaire:

"An unfortunate man once obtained access to this millionaire, and started to lay before him his woes. He depicted his wretched poverty in most vivid colours. Indeed, so graphic was the man's sad story that the millionaire felt himself affected as he had never been before. With tears in his eyes he summoned his servant and in a quavering voice said:

"John, put this poor fellow out. He is breaking my heart."

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GRIT.

A PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE.

"Grit, clear Grit."—A pure Americanism, standing for Luck, or Energy, or Industry, or all three. Reference is probably had to the sandstones used for grindstones—the more grit they contain the better they wear.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1908.

ANOTHER CREED EVAPORATED.

After forty years of existence the "Light of Truth," which has been the chief exponent of Spiritism as a creed, has suspended publication. In the last issue a long editorial appears, from which we copy the following:—"In this way I write myself out of a movement that has absorbed my interest and attention for the past 37 years. Never during my career have I been so impressed with the futility and uncertainty of mediumship when employed in the development of personal interests, having their rise in business and commercial affairs, as I have been during the past five or six years, and the conclusions I have arrived at, I hope, will be of service to those who pin their faith on the integrity of Spiritualism to the shilly-shally maunderings and mutterings of finite spirits. Of this I am assured, Spiritualism cannot thrive and ought not to thrive on the topics that interest the average spiritualist and the methods of propaganda instituted to represent and carry it on. As for myself, I am clearly and for ever done with it as a sect and propaganda thus instituted and sought to be maintained at the expense of a debauched and prostituted mediumship."

There is no statement that the phenomena of Spiritism is not real, but rather that it is devilish. The man who for 37 years has been connected with Spiritism has at last awakened to the use of his common sense, and has judged his creed by its fruit, and with unusual courage has turned his back for ever on its errors and its evils. It took him a long time to find it out, some will say, and yet not so long as it takes some people to find out that the licensed liquor trade by its fruit stands condemned and awaits its sentence at the hands of the people. With an increase of common sense and courage must come the banishment of alcohol.

ORGANIZATION.

In the twentieth century the race is not to the rich or the clever, but to the organised. This may be illustrated by the success of the Labour movement which started out with little more than a genius for organising. The No-License party are beginning to realise this and while we congratulate the union of the four electorates of St. Leonards, Middle Harbour, Gordon, and Lane Cove in their early start to organise in the interest of No-License, we also commend their example to others. It will not be by meetings alone, however good the speaking, but rather by a thorough, persistent and earnest effort to organise that No-License is to be carried. Only about 100 out of every 1000 go to meetings, or read both sides of a question, so there must be an effort to go to those who do not hear or read, and personally persuade them. Thousands who could never stand on a platform or give largely, could do most successful work as canvassers. Electorates must be mapped out and work apportioned, so that no one with sympathy for No-License is unused and no one in the electorate unreached. The idea of all organising is to employ as many as possible and to imbue them with the thought "to do the thing they can, and not presume to fret because it's little." No-License people cannot begin too soon to get together a fighting fund; a penny a month from each person who voted No-License would give over £700 per month. Begin to organise, get it in, and you will reap the fruit of your effort in the banishment of the licensed liquor trade and win the gratitude of thousands.

NUTS TO CRACK.

In every 100 dollars worth of boots and shoes you buy is 20.71 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of furniture you buy is 23.77 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of hardware you buy is 24.17 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of clothing you buy is 17.42 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of cotton goods you buy, is 16.91 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of men's furnishing goods you buy is 18.34 dollars of labour; in every 100 dollars worth of worsted goods you buy is 13.55 dollars of labour;

in every 100 dollars worth of woollen goods you buy is 12.86 dollars of labour; in each 800 dollars worth of the above goods, 100 dollars worth of each kind in 800 dollars lot, is 147.75 dollars of human labour employed; in every 800 dollars worth of liquors you buy is 9.84 dollars of human labour. This calculation is American. Anyone who is interested can work it out in Australian money. The result would be the same. Think it over!

"BE AN OPTIMIST AND SMILE."

The world owes a good deal to American enterprise and energy, not alone in the commercial, but in the moral and religious sense. The latest innovation across the Pacific suggests a chance for everybody. It is the inauguration of a new club, styled the Optimist Club, which, though of American origin, is capable of universal imitation and adoption, for it is in reality, as has been said, a club which everyone may and should join, in spirit if not in person, without either having to pay any entrance fee, or an annual subscription. This club had its beginning in Salt Lake City, the home of Mormonism; though there is nothing surprising in that fact. Brigham Young or any of his descendants or converts who have favoured matrimony on wholesale lines, must at least have been optimists in the beginning. It is gratifying to find that matrimonial experience on the larger scale has not turned optimists to pessimists. The Optimists' Club, however, aims at something better than Mormonism or polygamy. Its controlling spirit is optimism, and it has for its motto: "God reigns; the Union still lives and the sun still shines, even though at times the clouds obscure it. Be an optimist and smile." Some of the good tenets of this club, which is reported to have accredited branches in all the large cities, are worth remembering by everybody: "There are more people dying from the lack of a kind word than from disease." "Nobody can really harm you but yourself." "A smile is God's own medicine." "Before money was invented, some people were happy." "In the realm of the birds the lark is the optimist. The crow is the pessimist; don't be a crow." There is room for such a club even in "Sunny New South Wales."

REMINDED HIM.

A negro pastor was warming up to the climax of his sermon, and his auditors were waxing more and more excited.

"I wahns yer, O my congregashun," exclaimed the exhorter—"I wahns yer against de sin uv fightin'; I wahns yer against de sin of whisky-drinkin'; an' de sin uv chicken-robbin'; and I wahns yer, my breddern, against de sin uv melon-stealin'."

A devout worshipper in the rear of the church jumped to his feet and snapped his fingers excitedly.

"Whuffo does yer, my brudder, r'ar up an' snap yo' fingers when I speaks uv melon-stealin'?" asked the preacher.

"Kase yo' jes' minds me whar I lef' mah overcoat," replied the devout worshipper, as he hurried off.

HYPNOTISM

There is considerable difference of opinion concerning the definition of the term "cure" when applied to alcoholism. Some go so far as to say that there is no such thing as a cure, that is, that the alcoholic never returns to a normal condition where he is able to partake of a glass of alcoholic liquor without the danger of the recurrence of the impulse to excessive use. This is undoubtedly so, but he is as much cured as the man is cured of a broken leg, notwithstanding the fact that if he jumps off the roof of a house he will break his leg again, which fact does not reflect on the genuineness of the cure. The alcoholic may be cured and stay cured, but it will be by his gladly accepting total abstinence and being content to live as an abstainer. Can anything make him both glad and contented in doing this?

It will not be by drugs and medicines, and this was forcibly brought out at a recent meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine. The gathering consisted of a number of specialists and doctors of repute from many countries, who had had considerable experience with alcoholism, and among the suggested cures not a drug or medicine was mentioned. There were only two cures spoken of, both of these of a psychological rather than a physiological nature. They were hypnotism and religious conversion.

SUBSTITUTES NOT REMEDIES.

Apart from the suggestive influence which they may have, the numerous specifics advertised for the cure of alcoholism are largely valueless. Besides some tonic, most of them contain a drug which produces the same stimulating feeling as that of alcohol, and may be even more harmful. As long as this is taken alcohol is not needed, but as soon as this is discontinued the patient again resorts to his former indulgence. As in some cases of morphinism, the remedy is simply opium in another form, and thus does away with the customary portion of the morphine. These so-called cures have a real effect, but it is not lasting, nor is it curative.

SOME AUTHORITIES.

Owing to the ravages of alcohol, and the difficulty in remedying them, it is not to be wondered that the medical faculty has turned its attention to hypnotism since thousands both privately and in hospitals have experienced the treatment. You have only to ask your medical man if he knows such men as Voisin, Tuckey, Ladame, Forel, Eeden, Neilson, Von Reuterghem, Widmer, Corval, Wetterstrand, Shenck-Notzing, and Bernheim, to be assured that they are medical authorities to be trusted. All these quoted, and many others, report cures of all kinds of alcoholics. The subjects treated have been invariably those who have tried other methods without avail. They wished to be treated by hypnotism, not because they had much faith in the remedial value of this method, but because it was the last resort. In spite of the fact that their cases might be classed as hopeless, they report as high as 80 per cent. of cures. In nearly every case an immediate and distinct benefit, and in a large number a remarkable cure was effected.

NOT A GRAND PANACEA.

It will not cure regardless of circumstances—it is not a supermundane prohibitive. Even intelligent people have most curious and mistaken ideas of hypnotism. Some wish their friend treated without his

knowledge, and some wish to be compelled to stop drinking. They think it is to be a battle-royal between their appetite on the one side, and the operator's "power" on the other, and they are to be only spectators of the fray. They hope the power will win, providing it does not cause them any inconvenience. It must be understood hypnotism is only a help, and the patient must wish to be cured to get the best and most frequently any result. Nothing that the patient or friends can do to help should be despised, for all means possible should be used. Hypnotism permits of physical means being used at the same time, and a tonic or anything like a change of environment may be of great value.

A GREAT DRAWBACK.

What seems the greatest drawback to the cure of alcoholism by hypnotism, and all other cures except that by religious conversion, is the fact that the patient is surrounded by the same environment after he has been treated. Even the strongest form of suggestion of a hypnotic nature, when given for a few minutes daily or weekly, can hardly hope to compete with the legion of suggestions which the environment invariably gives. Here is one way in which religious conversions excel hypnotism as a method of treatment; it gives a new environment, different companions, a place to spend a portion at least of the spare time, and a new train of thoughts. Notwithstanding the great disadvantage under which hypnotism works, the number and character of the cures by this method are really marvellous.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS.

First a willing subject, and, second, a susceptible subject. By the first condition is not meant a passively willing, but an actively willing subject, one who desires to be cured, and do all he can to further the cure. It is useless to attempt to hypnotise while the patient is under the influence of alcohol; but when he is recovering, when disgusted with himself, and anxious to do better, he expresses willingness to try the treatment, then you may hope for good results. About 90 per cent. are hypnotisable, irrespective of their sex or age. It is, however, necessary to experiment before it can be said how far any one is susceptible, even those who on the first few attempts do not seem to have been hypnotised may become good patients, and those who seem only to have been slightly affected may yet prove very responsive. Many people confuse hypnotism with mesmerism, and also seem to think only weak-willed people can be thus influenced. We can only say in both cases they are entirely wrong. Strong-willed people invariably make good subjects, and idiots and hysteria cases are practically impossible to hypnotise. It seems beyond question that the patient can always resist suggestions made during the hypnotic condition, and that it does not place them under the control of the operator's will as many seem to think.

IN DOUBT AS USUAL.

The husband had had an unusual amount of work to do, and it was after midnight when he started upstairs to bed. He tiptoed softly, but in spite of his cautiousness his wife rolled over and half awakened.

"Is that you, John?" she asked.

"Yes, dear."

"Are you sure?" she demanded, from force of habit,

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AFTER THE BOYS.

The saloon men are not modest nor retiring. They want many things, and they are not scrupulous in their methods of obtaining them. No class of men are more adroit and persistent in advertising their wares and making them attractive.

And yet among all the attractions and disguises and conveniences with which the business is surrounded, there is one thing and only one thing that the saloon must have. This one thing is not a name. Buffet and other titles long ago crowded out saloon as a name, but as a thing the saloon survived.

It is not a place. You may crowd them out of the rural districts, the residence streets, the vicinity of churches and schools, and out of college towns, but the saloon will survive each blow.

It is not a time. You can close it on Sundays, election days, holidays, and each night at midnight, but the saloon does not die.

It is not the attraction of bright lights, the glitter of polished glass, the charm of music, the lure of dancing. It is not expensive fixtures nor elaborate advertising, nor a warm welcome. These all tempt, but they are not the essential thing.

It is not in this drink or that. Wine and whisky and even beer could be done away with, and the drinker's palate would accustom itself to the change. Other drugs could be substituted for alcohol itself to yield an equal attraction, and, perhaps, a greater destruction.

The one thing is the supply of boys. Older drinkers will die away, those who drink most frequently have the least to spend. Any saloon-keeper would trade his old customers for an equal number of new and young ones. Their leaders brazenly counsel them to tempt the boys.

Now, as it happens, a supply of boys is also an absolute essential of the national life. And so there are an increasing number of men who have the courage to say, "The saloon must not and shall not have the boys."

A GREAT FAMILY EVENT.

To castor-oil a child from two to seven years of age requires three or four strong women, a spoon, a magnum of the fluid, a lump of sugar, a towel, a jumping-jack, and a seraphic temper. The first notion is to ring in the medicine on the unsuspecting babe thinly disguised in milk. The manoeuvre failing, you parley with the enemy, and attempt to corrupt its infantile integrity with bribes of pa's watch, imperial revenues of small change, and a number of oranges.

After having tempted it, put the spoon to its lips; it refuses point-blank to touch the nasty thing. Thereupon your surcharged indignation finds relief in corporal chastisement of the rebellious infant. Peace being restored, you bring up rein-

forcements, and, strategy and diplomacy having failed, determine to accept nothing but unconditional surrender, and prepare to march at once on the enemy's works.

A grand combined attack is made. The left wing firmly holds the child's hands; the right wing pinches its nose, so as to compel it to open its mouth, in which the centre pours a deadly fire from the spoon. Meanwhile, the reserves hold up a lump of sugar commiseratively exclaiming:—

"Poor little tootsy-pootsy, was it nasty stuff, then?" and keeps the towel ready.

The baby rolls and chokes. The young mother, afraid of killing it, lets go its nose; the infant, catching breath, discharges the whole dose upon her dress, and follows up this advantage with so heart-broken a yell that the attacking party surrenders at discretion, and calls it:

"Poor injured mammie's own tootsy, and it sha'n't take any more nasty castor-oil if it don't want to."

A treaty of peace is then ratified, whereby the infant wins the day, together with a bountiful supply of sweets.

THE STUFF MEN ARE MADE OF.

Boys are simply material of unlimited possibilities, and many a fond parent has sadly to recognise that a great man was lost in their failure to make the most of the boy material. Parents so frequently make the unpardonable mistake of training a boy to know things and inciting him to possess things, whereas the first thing is not what he knows or has, but what he is. A boy having no education and no money, if he has character, will yet be a man who will be known and felt; there are innumerable instances of this. We welcome as a contribution towards character-building a book under the title of "A Call to Seamen," by the Rev. F. S. Horan. Mr. Horan was one of the party that toured the States with the Rev. G. C. Grubb some years ago. On his return to England he went to Cambridge, and won the three-mile inter-university race in record time. For some time he has been chaplain at the Royal Naval College, Osborn, England, and has become an immense favourite with the naval cadets. The book is unfortunately named, as it would lead one to think it was exclusively for seamen, whereas it is a fine collection of manly and inspirational talks to young fellows. It would make a useful gift to boys, or would be of untold value to those parents who want a book from which to read to the family on Sunday evenings. Our copy is from Messrs. Geo. Robertson's.

SECRET DRUGS AND CURES.

In answer to several inquiries, we have to say that no certain information could be obtained about the Royal Commissioner's report until this week. The book will cost one shilling and sixpence, and as it is foolscap size and contains over 400 pages, will

DIET and HEALTH.

Our bodies are built up from the food we eat. There is a constant breaking down of the tissues of the body, every movement of every organ involves waste, and this waste is repaired from our food. Each organ of the body requires its share of nutrition. The brain must be supplied with its portion; the bones, muscles and nerves demand theirs.

IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN HEALTH, A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF GOOD NOURISHING FOOD IS NEEDED.

It is a wonderful process that transforms the food into blood, and uses this blood to build up the various parts of the body; but this process is going on continually, supplying with life and strength each nerve, muscle, and tissue. Where wrong habits of diet have been indulged, there should be no delay in reform. When dyspepsia has resulted from abuse of the stomach, efforts should be carefully made to preserve the remaining strength of the vital forces, by removing every overtaxing burden. The stomach may never entirely recover health after long abuse; but a proper course of diet will save further debility, and many will recover more or less fully.

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ASK FOR
Pearson's
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AND TAKE NO OTHER.

WHAT SOCIETY WEDDINGS COST.**£3000 TO £4000 OFTEN SPENT IN THE WEST-END OF LONDON.**

It has been announced, upon very good authority, that the wedding of Princess Louise of France and Prince Charles of Bourbon at Wood Norton, near Evesham, cost from start to finish no less a sum than £50,000. There have been many marriages of late years in the United States and this country that have cost £10,000 and more, while probably the most costly wedding of recent years was that of the King of Spain and Princess Ena of Battenberg last year.

In the case of this semi-Royal wedding at Evesham, however, there were very heavy expenses that would not be incurred in the ordinary way. For instance, a special chapel was erected for the ceremony, together with a temporary pavilion and other apartments. There were also invited three reigning Sovereigns, the Kings of England, Spain, and Norway, and four Queens, together with many other Royalties, whom it cost an enormous sum fittingly to entertain. The cost of catering for the guests and providing for their accommodation was estimated at several thousand pounds, and there were several "extras" in the way of special trains to convey the Royal and other guests, carriages and motor-cars, waiters, stewards and attendants, while only the choicest wines and rarest foods were served at the reception.

Most of the foregoing expenses would not be necessary in the case of the wedding of private individuals, or, at any rate, in a much smaller degree, but there is the authority of a leading West-end clergyman—one who is being constantly invited to officiate at fashionable weddings during the London season—for stating that these ceremonies may cost anything up to £3000 or £4000 without being looked upon as at all out of the way.

It has become the fashion within recent years to employ eminent vocalists to sing at these weddings, in addition to the usual choir, and when it is remembered that such artists as Melba, Caruso, and Plancon, all of whom have sung at London weddings within the past few years, receive a fee well into four figures for their services, it is easy to see how much money may be spent in this direction alone. Flowers are another very costly item, and at a wedding solemnized in a fashionable West-end church very recently, the florist's bill for decorating the church, the rooms where the reception was afterwards held, and providing bouquets for the bridal party came to close upon £400, a sum that has been exceeded upon several occasions.

In some circles it is the custom of late years for guests invited to a wedding to use their own carriages, but even under these circumstances it devolves upon the parents of the bride to provide sufficient vehicles for the whole of their guests who might be unprovided for in this direction, and as many as a hundred of these carriages are often employed, the usual cost being one guinea for a pair of greys and coachman and footman. At the wedding of the Duke of Westminster a few years ago, it was stated that upwards of 300 carriages were required to convey the guests to and from the church.

The old-fashioned wedding-breakfast is now completely a thing of the past, and in its place a stately reception is held that extends for the greater part of the afternoon. As comparatively few London houses provide sufficient accommodation for the small army of guests, it is considered neces-

sary to invite, a suite of rooms is usually engaged at a leading West-end hotel. Though the cost of these rooms may be comparatively moderate, the necessary refreshments run into a very considerable sum. For quite an ordinary "dejeuner," 10s 6d for each guest present is the usual charge, and if special wines or rare fruits are required the amount that may be spent in this direction is practically unlimited.

Fees and tips are two more items that run away with a considerable sum, since everyone who performs the least service looks for his or her reward. Though the fees of the clergy are regulated by Act of Parliament, there are many other expenses in this direction that have to be faced. It is usual, if a minister travels any distance to assist at the ceremony, to pay his expenses both ways, while it is now becoming the custom for the bridegroom to contribute handsomely to such charity as the officiating clergyman may suggest, as a recognition of his services. The choir, too, has to be suitably remunerated, as well as the organist, the vergers, pew-openers, and the rest of the assistants.

When the bridegroom is in the Army it is the custom for a detachment of the men of his regiment to line the aisle of the church, and under these circumstances it behoves him to provide food and drink for the men both before and after the service, though the travelling expenses of the detachment are, as a rule, defrayed out of the funds of the regiment as a compliment to him. As often as not, too, the band of the regiment plays at the subsequent reception, and though their services are usually given free in such a case, refreshments for them will cost the best part of £20.

There are many little odds and ends, too, that crop up before and after the ceremony which, added together, make a goodly sum, but which are considered to be quite indispensable. Thus it will be seen that money has to be literally poured forth in connection with a society wedding. If Royalty condescends to be present the cost of the affair will probably be well-nigh doubled, since special and costly arrangements must be made. Among these may be mentioned the employment of special police to keep the crowds back, etc.

It may be said, in brief, that there is no limit to the amount of money that may be spent upon a wedding of this description without the charge of vulgar ostentation being incurred, while some of the "freak" weddings that have taken place in New York and other American cities of recent years have cost enormous sums.

HIGHEST REFERENCES.

Billy, aged twelve, took part the other day in a debate on imperialism. His opponent, in rebuttal, made a point by quoting the definition of empire from the Century Dictionary. Billy, nothing daunted, with all the air of Patrick Henry himself, rose up and said:

"It's all right for my opponent to quote from the dictionary; but as for me, I rely on the facts!"

LIKELY SOIL.

His clothes were spotted with dirt and grease, but a bright bunch of flowers adorned the lapel of his coat.

"What do you think of this?" he asked, proudly tapping his bouquet. "Where do you think I got it?"

"Don't know," admitted his friend, "unless— Why, maybe it grew there."

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ALREADY NECESSARY TO ENLARGE

THE PREMISES AGAIN

THE WATERS OF LETHE.

The boy possessed one rare and enviable gift, a voice of celestial quality, an inheritance from his mother. In the heyday of her youth and fortune she had been the star of a fashionable and popular church. Devout audiences, doting on the operative pitch in religion, listened entranced to her solos, feeling that just so the angels who kept abreast of the times must sing in glory. And the concert hall, with as deep and a yet more ebullient rapture, repeated and ratified the judgment. It chanced that Merrishaw saw, heard, and, like the rest, was enchanted.

"If I were a rich man she should go to Italy," he declared ecstatically. "By Heaven, she shall go!"

He meant it. For a whole evening the generous impulse glowed in his breast. Next day, fixity of purpose being no attribute of genius, it had passed. Yet his magnanimity was not wholly void. He wrote up his prima donna with a boundless enthusiasm and all the resources of a popular journalist. Then, finding himself distractedly in love with his divinity, he had no option but to marry her.

The Society reporter, letting herself go with a fine "abandon" in the manner which delights Mayfair, described the wedding as "one of the prettiest and most interesting of the season in view of the multitude of friends and the celebrity of the contracting parties." A crowd of notabilities attended the ceremony, presents were numerous and of a quite satisfactory monetary value, and both bride and bridegroom looked radiantly happy. Thus the Society reporter. No one, of course, thought of the grim Fates in the darkness behind or suspected what stuff they were even then laying on their black looms. Merrishaw belonged to the order that craves a new interest with each rising of the sun. The honeymoon was scarcely over when he began to yawn. Marriage, it seemed, was not a perpetual diversion nor a wife an antidote to "ennui." Temperament called, like a tormenting demon, for variety, variety, and ever more pungent variety. "I shall die of tedium," it said, like a flighty, empty-headed girl seeking the spice of life in endless flirtation. "What has become of your jocund hours? Where is your vaunted conviviality? Think of all the wise men of old who plucked the sunshine which empurples the vine-clad hills, stored it in casks, and in due season made themselves merry therewith."

So he taught his wife what was necessary of the Dionysian mysteries as brought up to date by the skill of brewers and distillers. She proved an apt learner, after the manner of her sex. Indeed, the pupil soon outdid the master in zeal and devotion. For it is at once the signal merit and the perilous defect of woman that she does nothing by halves. It may have been mere coincidence, it may have been something deeper, subtle effect following subtle cause, but as time passed the singer sang with diminished "eclat," even as the jester jested with less point and mirth.

When Albert Charles came upon the stage the sullen murmur of Avernus was already audible below. There were frantic spasmodic efforts to turn back, to regain the comparative safety of the top; but one does not return easily upon a declivity of

polished ice. "Never mind," said Temperament insidiously; "good things were meant to be enjoyed. Better a short life and a merry one than aeons of respectable dullness. Bacchus is a jovial and beneficent god. First he gives his worshippers great draughts of joy, and then a happy oblivion. He is the only god who does this."

But it seemed that this jovial diety was in the end a gross deceiver. "Don't imagine I drink for delight," Merrishaw once told Dalrymple in a moment of confidence. "That stage is long past. It's the waters of Lethe I want. But, sir, the god has fooled me. There is something here," tapping first his breast and then his forehead, "which no opiate can effectually dispose of. Sometimes it is a fire and sometimes a poisoned arrow. When it is a fire I cannot quench it; when it is an arrow I cannot pluck it out."

"Then there is still hope," observed Dalrymple quietly.

The other laughed in scorn. "It is, of course, your business to say so," he returned. "But I know better. The day I came here Hope and I parted company. Hope is a very dainty lady. She dislikes the mire as much as any simpering creature of fashion. The Inferno, as Dante well knew, is not for her. And in truth she could not live here if she tried."

"She could—and does" was the emphatic answer.

"Then perhaps you will have the goodness to give me her address," Merrishaw retorted ironically. "Upon my word, I should like to call and see her for old times' sake."

"I promise you shall see her if you come with me," said Dalrymple earnestly. But Merrishaw laughed more bitterly than before.

"No, no!" he cried; "I am not to be fooled any longer. Once I believed all I was told, like the child of an honest unspoiled Greenlander. I thought the universe swarmed with good genii. I hung up my stocking at Christmas with unquestioning faith in Santa Claus. By and by I found out that Santa Claus was a beneficent imposture. As I grew older I found out other things, till at last all my illusions were gone. Finally I discovered that the thing called happiness is itself an illusion."

"Might it not be that your discovery is the illusion?" Dalrymple asked gently.

"Ah!" cried Merrishaw, "you would draw me into metaphysics. Well, perhaps I could meet you there. But experience puts metaphysics out of court. I am cold, I am hungry, I am thirsty. Metaphysic would prove to me in her airy fashion that I merely imagine I am cold and hungry and thirsty. I answer bluntly that Metaphysic

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is a liar. So go your way, sir, to your own folk. If you have anodyne for their woes, let them have it. As for me, I desire only to be let alone."

That was ever his way—the disdainful retort, the cold shoulder to the would-be helper.

"So he's at it again," remarked Dalrymple sorrowfully, when the angry Miry returned.

"Yes, sir, for al 'e's worth," said Miry truculently. "Can't we take Albert Charles away from him?"

"You heard what he said about his legal rights," replied Dalrymple. "The law gives him sole charge of his boy."

"Then," responded Miry fiercely, forgetting her manners in her disgust, "all I've got to say is this, the law's a bloomin' moke. If them as makes laws would come 'ere to see 'ow the thing works sometimes, they'd learn wot they don't 'pear to know much about. But there," she cried, flushing as in apology. "There's them blessed kids as 'ungry lookin' as stray dogs. Wot yer a-doin' of anyway, Mr. O'Ryan? Ain't 'e got no more for the poor dears to eat?"

"Lashins and lashins," answered O'Ryan blithely, bestirring himself. "Faith, and 'tis the foine healthy appetites they have entoirely. What I'm beginnin' to look for is the flyin' buttons. They're about due, I'm thinkin'."

"As you're the 'andy man ye can sew 'em on again," retorted Miry, bustling with a basket of buns.—From "Quicksands," by John A. Steuart. Copies now on sale at "The Watchman" Book Store, post free, 3/6.

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According to bakers, people eat 20 per cent. more bread when the weather is cold than when it is mild.

Santa Rose, California, has a church capable of seating 200, all built out of the timber sawn from a single redwood tree.

New York's daily drink bill amounts to a million dollars, which is 365,000,000 dollars a year.

Distillation began in Boston in 1700. Four years later in western Pennsylvania. In less than 100 years there were 40,000 distilleries in the United States.

The Philadelphia Board of Education is making efforts to ascertain how many of the children who come to the public schools come hungry.

One effect of the popularity of the motor-car is said to be that ladies now go out less often of an evening than they formerly did, long motor drives in the open air inducing an inclination to spend the remainder of the day quietly at home.

The professed Christian who says he favours the saloon in preference to local option ought to remember that the saloon man and the gambler think the same thing. He ought to be alarmed at the company he is in.

The challenge cup offered by the Scottish branch of the Society of Stenographers has been won by Mr. A. Taylor, M.A., Lochgelly, with Pitman's system. The competition was open to all systems. Mr. Taylor scored 798 marks out of 800, and in the speed section of the examination attained to 250 words per minute.

A section of the Canadian Northern Railway, running north-west from Sudbury and crossing the Vermillion River is unique in that it is ballasted with gold. Every yard of the gravel used for ballast has been found to contain from 50 cents' worth to a dollar's worth of the precious metal, in the shape of fine dust, and a syndicate is installing machinery for its extraction.

In some parts of West Africa the girls have long engagements. On the day of their birth they are betrothed to a baby boy a trifle older than themselves, and at the age of twenty they are married. The girls know of no other way of getting a husband, and so they are quite happy and satisfied. As wives they are patterns of obedience, and the marriages usually turn out successes.

A unique and interesting vessel is H.M.S. Cyclops—general repair ship to the Fleet. Amongst her machinery she has plant capable of turning out castings weighing two tons, and lathes which will deal with such castings up to a length of 15ft. The "Cyclops" is equipped to repair anything, from a broken bolt to a 60-ton gun, a special feature of her machinery being that it is all electrically driven.

The relation of pauperism to intemperance seems very plain to the people of Japan. In Great Britain there are 1,000,000 paupers, while Japan has only 25,000. When someone expressed surprise and wonder-

ment at the great disparity—that in Japan there is so small an element of pauperism in proportion to population—the reply of a Japanese statesman was: "That is because while the Japanese drink tea the British people drink alcohol."

The United Railways Company of St. Louis employs four thousand motormen and conductors. Recently each of these employees received when he reported for duty, a letter from the company that must have set him thinking. It read: "If employees of this company choose to frequent saloons, either on or off duty, or attend the races or other gambling places, rooms or resorts they are exercising a right which cannot be denied them, but they cannot remain in the employ of the company."

The Berlin branch of the Imperial Insurance Company has set aside the yearly sum of £5000 for the purpose of providing a dental institute in the city for working men holding its policies. The institute will provide artificial teeth for all working men needing them. It has been found by the company that men provided with good dental apparatus make a better risk than others, and the new institute is expected to save much money to the company in the course of a few years.

Alcoholism accounts for the fact that in England more murders are committed on Saturday (pay day) than at any other time. In 487 cases of murder committed by Englishmen in twenty years ending 1905, no fewer than 124 of the victims were women. Only 11.74 per cent. of the murderers condemned to death in this period were women, a fact which has caused Sir John MacDonal to characterise murder as a masculine crime.

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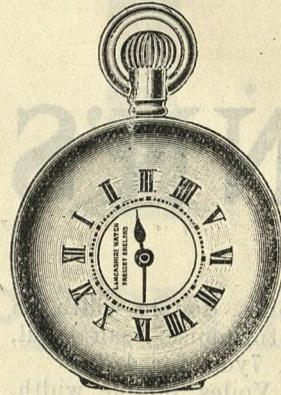
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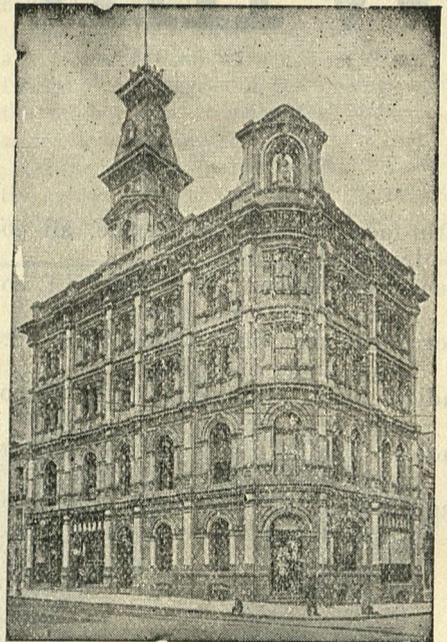
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