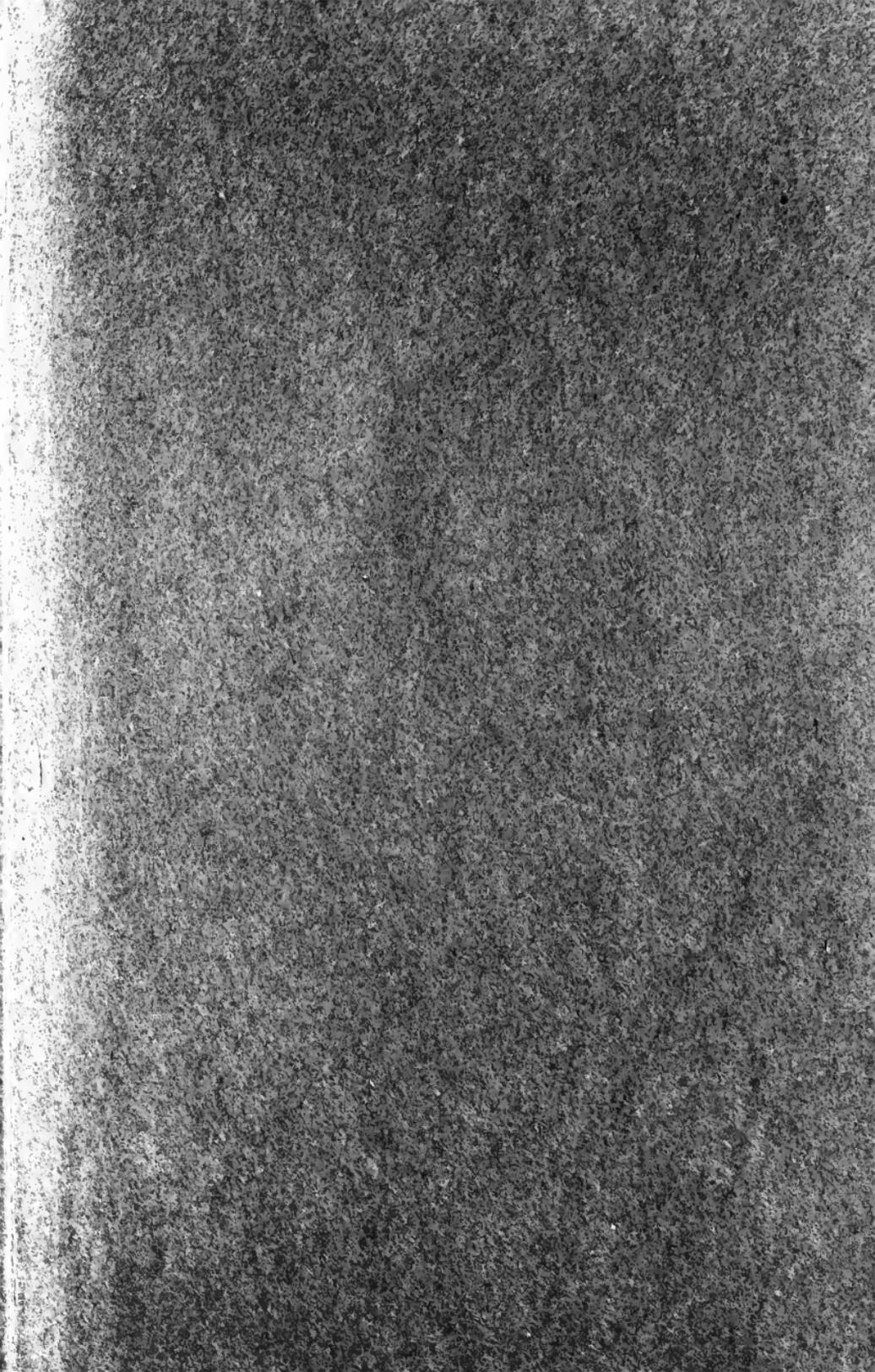


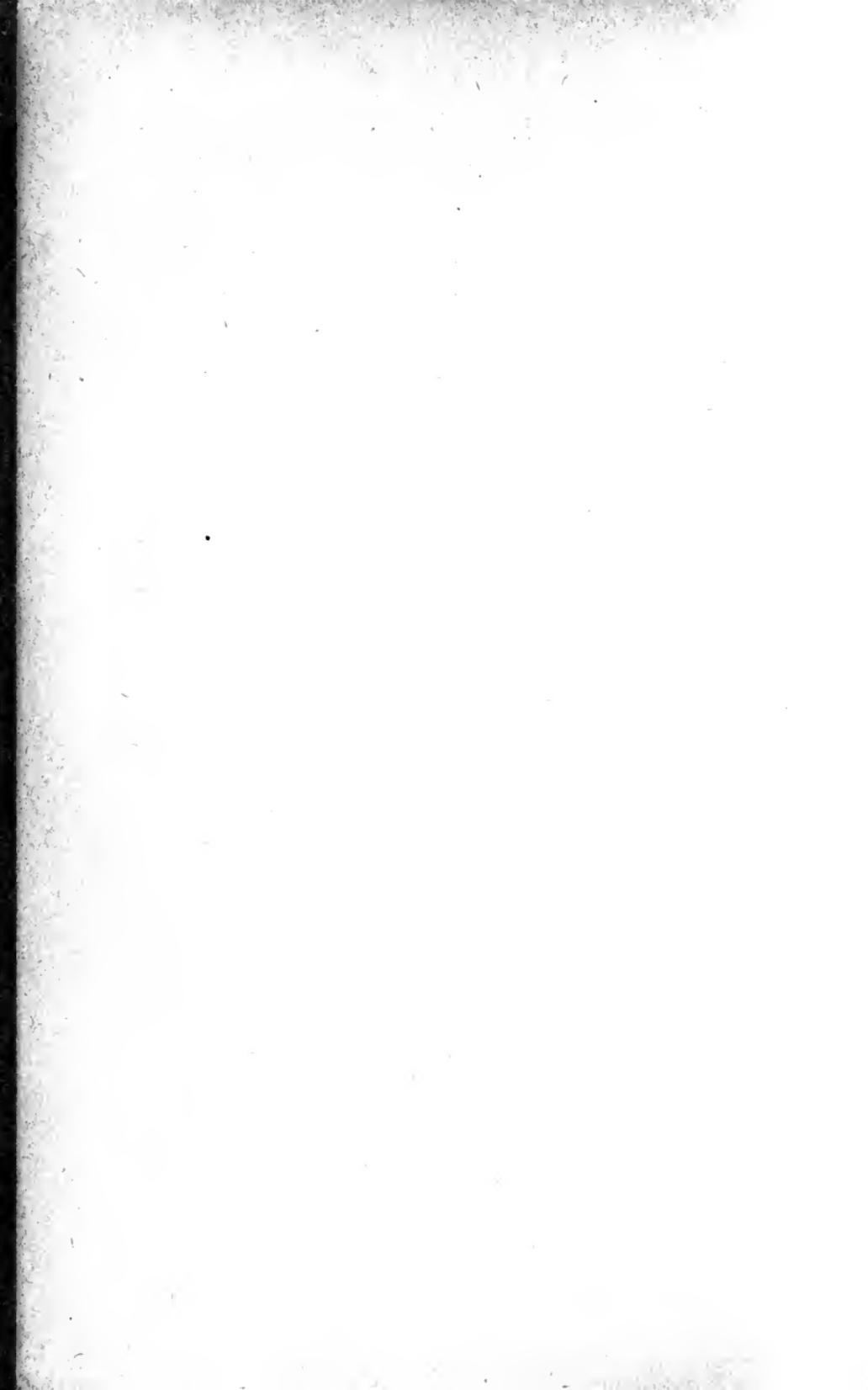


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SHALL I BUY LIL-
CHRISTMAS?

Mr Thrasher
**The People
I've
Smiled With.**

WON'T SHE BE SUR-
PRISED?



... BEING ...

recollections of a Merry
Little Life.

25

BY

MARSHALL P. WILDER.

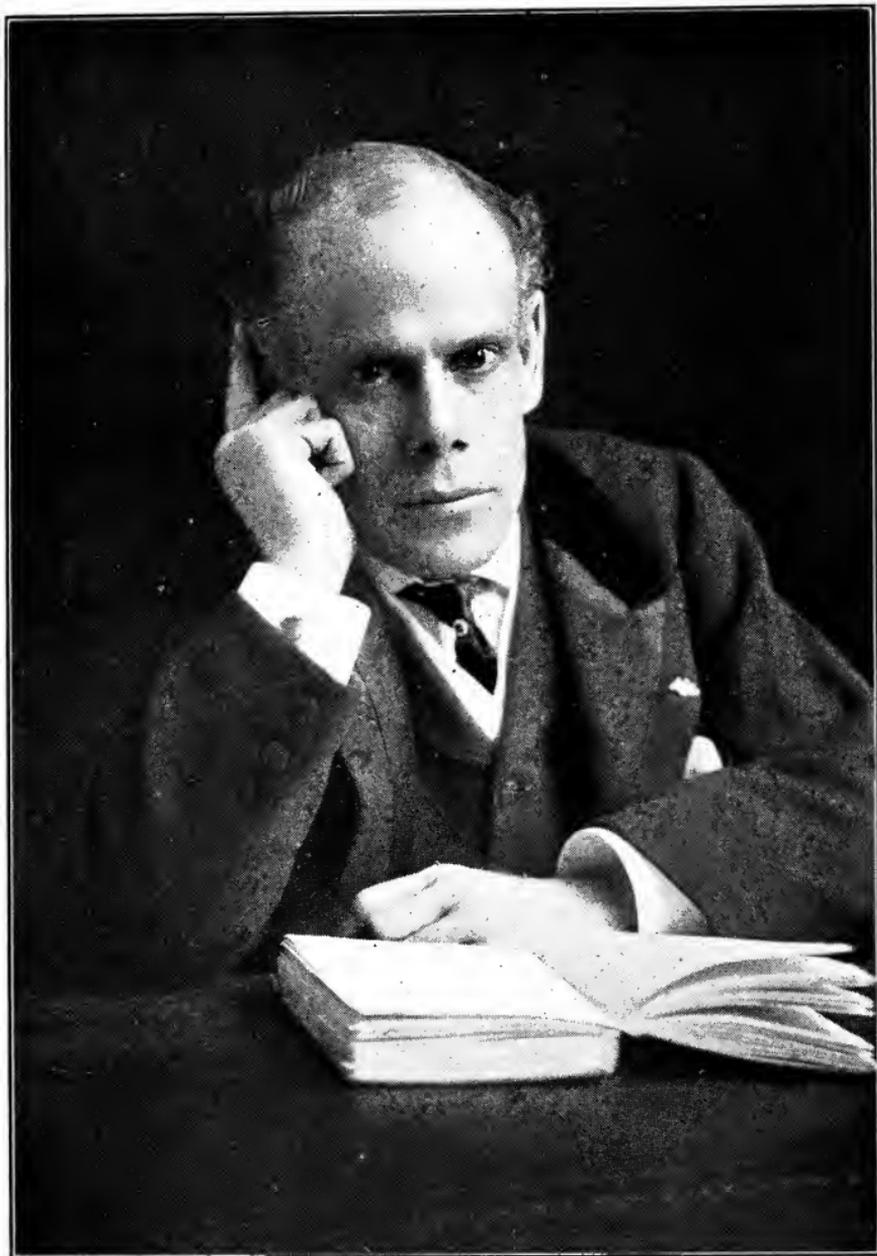
NOW, WHAT SHALL I
BUY MY WIFE?



WAIT UNTIL SHE SEES
THAT WATCH!

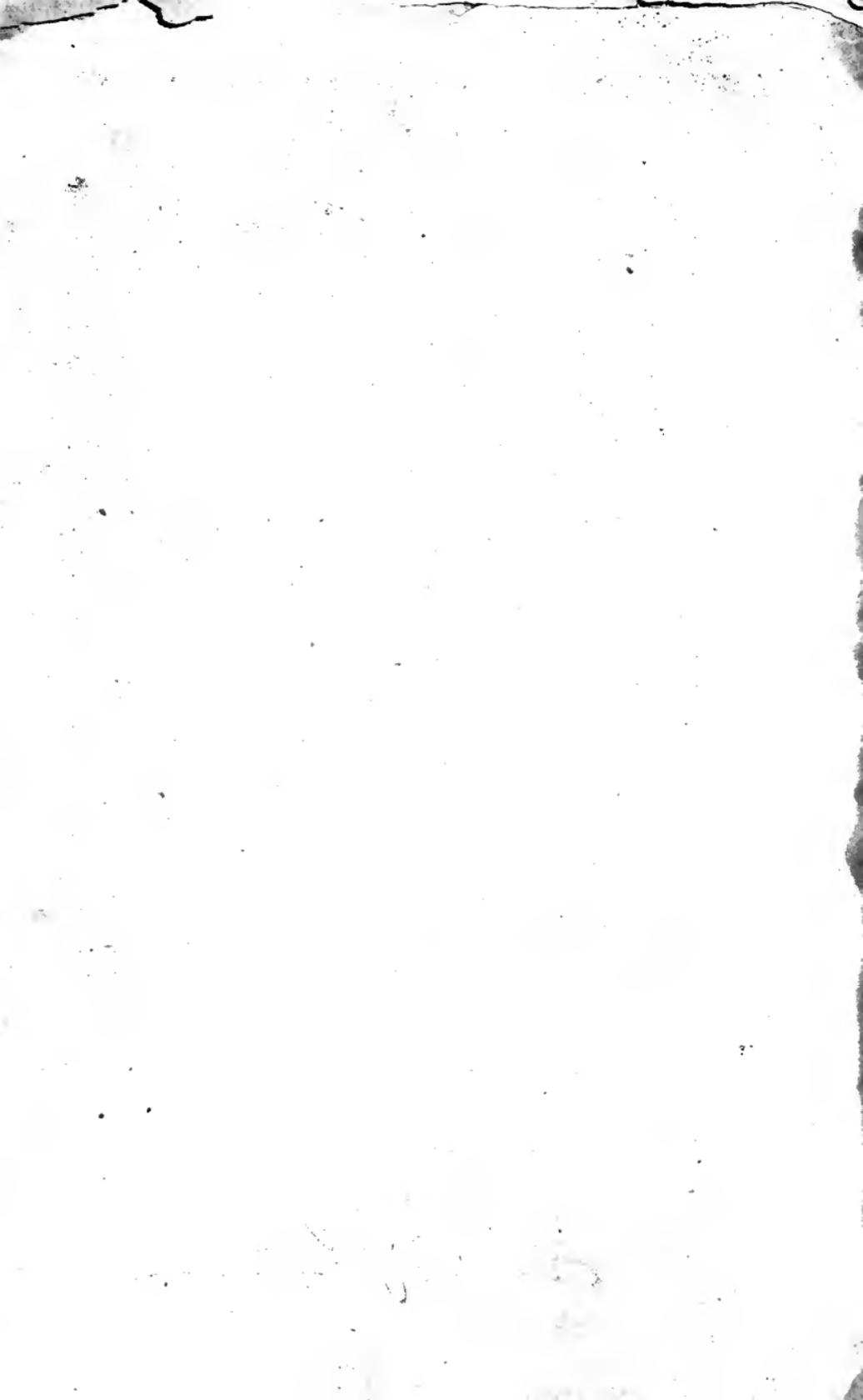






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*Truly yours
Marshall P. Wilder*



THE PEOPLE I'VE
SMILED WITH

RECOLLECTIONS OF
A MERRY LITTLE
LIFE ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡

By MARSHALL P. WILDER

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INTRODUCTORY.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones."—PROV., chap. xvii., verse 22.

IN a world so filled with cankering care, "blessings on him who invented sleep," as simple Sancho Panza says, and blessed be he who with merry quip beguiles tedious hours or causes one flower of merriment to bloom in the desert of selfishness and sorrow.

When first I met Marshall P. Wilder, I was drawn toward him because of his magnetic smile and because of a sympathy for a merry lad who bore his little cross so patiently. I saw in him one who, from the hour that his bright eyes opened on his cradle, might well have railed at Nature; one who, cheated of fair hours and fair gifts, might well have been the prey of misanthropy; who might have taken Thersites for a model rather than Mercurio, and whose heart might well have been

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filled with bitterness rather than the sunshine which makes cheerful the darkest days.

To this brave and philosophical youth has been given the richest of dowers—the power to make others happy :

“ He is so full of pleasing anecdote,
So rich, so poignant in his wit,
Time vanishes before him as he speaks.”

In his soul no envy lurks. His heart is brimful of charity. His name is synonymous with mirth. He is a living illustration of how kindly the harsh world receives those who come to it smiling and bearing in their hands offerings of good-will.

Where he has passed the flowers bloom not less brightly because his feet have touched. Children laugh and run to meet the messenger of Momus; solemn men forget their ills; hearts grow tender under the magic pathos of his voice, and in all homes he is as welcome as the minstrel of old with harp and song and story.

He has written here a little book which is a reflex of his own happy, buoyant nature. It contains recollections of a life which has known no evil, and which, if it has not always been spent in sunshine, has reflected every

DEDICATED

TO MY SECOND MOTHER,

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

pleasant rainbow hue which has fallen upon it. As one who has smiled with him, I ask for this unpretentious book even more than its deserving, for I know that it is the offering of a grateful heart to a public whose kindness has been as cherishing as the dews which kiss the roses where shadows often rest.

JOHN A. COCKERILL.

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THE PEOPLE I'VE SMILED WITH.

CHAPTER I.

"YOURS, MERRILY,"—HOW I CAME TO SMILE.—DAME NATURE OUT OF SORTS, BUT SHE RELENTED.—WHAT THE OLD LADY GAVE ME.—HOW OTHERS CAME TO SMILE WITH ME.—SMILING AS A BUSINESS, AND THE FRIENDS IT BROUGHT ME.

WHY one man should smile more than some others, and how I chanced to be that man, may properly be stated here, by way of explanation of the following pages. Besides, I am the smallest man mentioned in this book, and "the shortest horse is soonest curried."

To begin at the beginning, as the crane said when he swallowed the eel head first, old Dame Nature appeared to be out of sorts when she got hold of me. She put a couple of feet under me, but she left a couple of feet off of my stature. She didn't make me tall enough to look down on anybody, or strong enough to thrash anybody, so I never was allowed the small-boy privilege of "putting on airs."

After a while Dame Nature took another look, and seemed to think she hadn't done the fair thing by me, so she gave me an expansive smile and a big laugh. I liked them both; they amused me a great deal whenever there chanced to be nobody else looking after me. I cultivated that smile and that laugh until the one grew very broad and the other very loud. In fact, both became so prominent as to attract a great deal of attention.

Pretty soon they began to make themselves useful to me at school. All of my readers who have been to school know that boys aren't the gentlest creatures in the world; turn a lion and a lot of schoolboys loose in the same well-fenced lot, and the lion would be roaring for the police in less than five minutes. As for a small boy who isn't strong enough to fight,—why, there will always be a crowd of bigger boys who will see how near they can come to worrying him to death without killing him.

There were some boys of that kind in the school I first attended, and they "went for me." I tried to defend myself with my smile and my laugh; I hadn't anything else to hit them with, and I beat them. They gave up when they found I didn't worry worth a cent. Then they were so surprised that they stood

around and asked what kind of fellow I was any way. In reply, I smiled and laughed some more, and told them a story or two. After that I was the biggest boy in school.

“Orpheus, with his lute, made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing.”

I don't wish to belittle Orpheus's well-earned reputation, but in spite of his great achievements I don't believe he could have drawn a bigger crowd in our old school yard with his music than I always did as soon as I laughed a specimen or two. No sooner would I get to work than the juvenile toughs would stop fighting, and the juvenile saints stop doing nothing, all to gather around me, and hear my jokes or tell me some,—it didn't seem to matter much which,—so they could see me smile and hear me laugh.

When I became old enough to want to select a life occupation, I found myself in a serious quandary. All the callings to which boys at first naturally incline seemed closed against me. I couldn't be clown in a circus or enter for a walking-match, for my legs were too short. I couldn't preach, for my head wouldn't reach the top of the pulpit. There was no chance for me in Congress, for the

Speaker couldn't see me, to recognize me, unless I stood on a chair, which would be contrary to the "Rules of the House;" and I couldn't become John L. Sullivan's rival, for my fighting-weight was too light.

It occurred to me one day that there were a good many solemn people in the world, and none too many men who made a business of provoking their fellow-men to laugh. If I could persuade enough people to listen to me, I might make it my business to smile for revenue. Incidentally I might do some good ; for if I, with the handicapping I was enduring, could smile and be merry, any big healthy fellow ought to go out into his own back yard and kick himself whenever he found himself becoming miserable.

The more I thought over this plan, the better I liked it. I already had some idea of how to do it, for I had "tried it on a dog," as the theatrical people say: that is, I'd told a great many jokes and sung dozens of funny songs to men who couldn't laugh much easier than George Washington could tell a lie. I'd learned how to "size up" a crowded house, for I had given a good many dramatic entertainments in our barn (price of admission, one pin),

and the audience was generally discriminating—and mixed.

So I went into the “humourous entertainment” business. I also succeeded—so other folks say. I did so well that people who heard and saw me always put on their most cheerful faces when afterward we met; as for me, no one ever heard me growl or grumble. I’ve had the pleasure of meeting many of the people of whom the world talks a great deal; they have been kind enough to listen to me, chat with me, smile with me, and otherwise treat me so well that I can’t help talking about them. So here goes.

CHAPTER II.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.—MRS. BEECHER.—A LONG HILL
OFT CLIMBED.—TWO OLD SUNDAY-SCHOOL BOYS IN
COUNCIL.—A FRIEND FOR LIFE.—HE SEEMED TO KNOW
EVERYTHING.—A LOVE SCENE NOT TO BE FOUND IN
NOVELS.

WHEN I started in my professional career as caterer to human risibilities, I worked for nothing and was glad of the chance, for opportunity to appear and become known was what I needed. As soon as I dared, however, I began to charge for my services. My first fee was fifty cents, but it made a great difference in the treatment I received, and, strange though it may appear, the higher my fee, the greater is the courtesy and attention I receive. Why, when I used to volunteer to recite at a church entertainment, I would be the last person reached by the strawberries and cream; but now, when I am paid almost all the money received at the door, I am likely to be the first person served. People care most for what costs them most; I know how it is myself.

After getting a good deal of practice in

reciting at social affairs, and having acquired a large and carefully assorted lot of humorous and pathetic songs and stories, I determined to look for larger and more profitable audiences. To get them, it seemed to me I needed the indorsement of some prominent people, so I started in search of it. Any man of the world, or of ordinary business sense, would have nosed around among his acquaintances until he found some one who knew somebody else who knew somebody in particular, and then have got letters from one to another,—just as half a million able-bodied American citizens who want office have been approaching President Harrison during the past few months. But I was as “green” as I was short; I knew no way but the straightest; and I can’t say now, after looking back, that I’m a bit sorry for it.

The first indorsement I went for—and also the first I got—was that of Henry Ward Beecher. He was prominent; his opinion of anyone was always quoted; and I knew from his sermons that he had the sort of heart that would sympathise with a little bit of a fellow trying to handle a great big contract. So over to Brooklyn I went, and climbed Columbia Heights. Oh, that climb! It’s a beautiful

hill when you've reached the top of it, but it isn't the sort of hill that I should design with special reference to the legs of fellows only three or four feet high. I consider myself an authority on Columbia Heights, for I had to climb it more than half a dozen times before I got a glance at Mr. Beecher, and another half a dozen before I came to know him as I wanted to. Bless the great-hearted old man! To once more see his face break into a smile, and the kindly twinkle come into his eyes, I'd go up that steep slope a dozen times again, and do it on my knees every time.

Well, Mr. Beecher's door was slammed in my face half a dozen different times. The servants couldn't have taken me for a burglar or sneak-thief, I was too neatly dressed for a beggar, so I had to conclude that they took me for a book-agent. That wasn't encouraging, though some book-agents are good fellows. I couldn't understand it; the only thing I fully comprehended was that the doorstep wasn't specially designed for a tired little fellow to rest on.

The seventh time I called, Mrs. Beecher chanced to open the door. When she had looked down long enough to find who it was that had rung the bell, she smiled a little

and asked me what I wanted. "I want to see Mr. Beecher," said I; then, paraphrasing General Grant's historic dispatch, I continued, "and I'm going to keep on coming until I find him." That remark, I afterward learned, went right to the heart of Mrs. Beecher's own persevering Yankee nature, and the good woman told me to come again, when I should see her husband if he were at home. I went; Mrs. Beecher received me, and called back to her husband, "Papa, here's that little man who wants to see you."

Mr. Beecher came forward; his parlour floor was a long suite of rooms with his study in the rear. He looked as solemn and sharp-eyed as a country deacon to whom a stranger is trying to sell a horse. I like to be looked at that way, though; it means that a man is "sizing me up;" I can stand it as long as he can.

"Mr. Beecher," said I, "I'm trying to make a living by making people laugh."

"Well," said he, "if you can make people merry, you deserve all you can make out of it."

"I can do it," said I. "I'll make *you* laugh if you're not careful." I guess he wasn't careful, for his face suddenly broke up like a cloud with the sun jumping through it. I went on: "I want a better chance than I've had, and I'd

like to let myself loose before your Sunday-school. I've been a Sunday-school boy, and I know what that sort of fellow likes."

"I've been one myself," said the old man. He looked dreamy a moment; then he began to chuckle and shake over some mischievous boyish memory,—I don't know what it was; but I smiled in sympathy with him, and just then his eye met mine. That settled it; I'd got him. That isn't all either; *he'd* got *me*, not only for the remainder of his life, but for all that might be left of mine.

"Well, little chap," said he, "I'm not manager of the Sunday-school; you go and talk to the superintendent. I guess you're able to hoe your own row."

I went, and the following Christmas morning I was called by telegraph to appear before the Sunday-school. Mr. Beecher was there, and made a hit, as usual; but boys and girls can swallow fun as fast as if it were ice-cream, so I made a hit too. After that Mr. Beecher gave me a letter; there weren't many words in it, but every one of them was worth a heap of money to me. I printed the letter in my circular, and I soon found myself a good deal of a fellow in the estimation of the public. Engagements began to crowd upon me, and

when I tried to lessen the number, for time's sake, by raising my prices, I found that money was no object to the people who wanted to see me and smile with me.

But that wasn't all the dear old man did for me. Always after that, when we happened to be in the same place, he looked me out and took pains to say something cheery to me. I've got head and heart for a good deal outside of my business, and when I think of that great man, courted and flattered by thousands, hated and envied by a few, carrying in his great warm heart the cares and sorrows of hundreds and thousands of souls, giving strength to the weak and hope to the wicked, and all the time having a great battle of his own to fight,—when I think of all this and remember that he yet found heart and time to offer cheery companionship to a little fellow like me, I have a very clear idea about the salt of the earth.

I afterward saw a great deal of Mr. Beecher when he was in England. I travelled there with him at times, and found him a wonderful combination of greatness and goodness. There seemed nothing of interest to humanity or in the world about which he hadn't thought clearly, and with a conscience in first-class

working order. To me—and everybody else who met him, I believe—he was books, newspapers, and a whole university course beside.

Several years ago I thought I would like to see President Cleveland, but I didn't want to straggle along in a line and look at him only about a second; it takes a little fellow like me a long time to get a good square look at a President of the United States. I said as much to Mr. Beecher one day, and he replied :

“I guess that can be managed, young fellow.” Then he sat down and wrote a letter, of which more anon.

One of my pleasantest recollections of Mr. Beecher has its scene in the home of Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker, of London, whose guest Mr. Beecher was for a time. At a pleasant little reception given by Dr. Parker the rooms were so crowded that Mr. Beecher, having given his seat to a lady, stood beside the chair in which his wife sat. Mrs. T. P. O'Connor, wife of a prominent member of the Home Rule party in Parliament, and herself a most brilliant and charming woman,—an American besides,—recited a pathetic Southern story. Tears began to gather in Mr. Beecher's eyes: he did not want to make a spectacle of himself, so he

softly stooped until he sat upon the floor. The recitation continued ; so did the flow of tears ; at last the old man hid his face in his wife's lap ; the old lady bent over him and stroked his forehead ; and for once I thanked God that I was very short, for otherwise I might not have been the only witness of this true love-passage between husband and wife. After that, any one who told me that love was only an accident of youth was wasting his breath. I wouldn't have missed that sight for all the Romeos and Juliets in the world. I've often swapped jokes with Henry Ward Beecher ; we've pressed each other hard in laughing-matches ; he has been a great help to me in business and many other ways ; but dearer than all my other memories of him is that which taught me that true love is eternal, that gray hairs cannot chill it, but, on the contrary, that—

“ Where the snow lies thickest there's nothing can freeze.”

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL GRANT.—ONE OF HIS PREDICTIONS WHICH HASN'T BEEN FULFILLED.—WE DROVE TOGETHER THROUGH CENTRAL PARK.—I SURRENDERED UNCONDITIONALLY.—THE TRULY GREAT ARE TRULY GOOD.—HE COULD NOT EXULT OVER A FALLEN FOE.—HE TEACHES A MARE TO TROT.—BETTER THAN FUNNY.

THE human face is a good indication of character, but I've often found that while it is very good for this purpose, it amounts only to what the miners call "surface indications." It tells of much that you will be sure to find if you search farther, but it doesn't inform you of a great many things which you are sure to stumble over sooner or later.

The foregoing isn't part of one of my recitations; it is merely a reflection or two that come to my mind as I think of General Grant. I had heard and thought a great deal about him while he was General and President, and, like more than half the youngsters in the United States, I thought him as serious, solemn, and preoccupied as the Sphinx itself. I hoped that some day I might see him,—

"A cat may look at a king,"—and I also hoped that when that day should come he might look at me, if only for an instant; though I expected that the glance would be from a pair of cold, steel-blue-gray eyes, with a firm-set mouth a little way beneath them.

Well, one day I went with my father to a camp-meeting at Martha's Vineyard, where General Grant chanced to be staying. My father, as he and I were strolling along together, stopped suddenly and began chatting with a rather short, stout, modest-looking gentleman. A moment or two later my father said:

"General Grant, allow me to present my son."

Gracious! you could have knocked me down with a feather. Really, General Grant? And I only little Marshall Wilder? I felt as if I were shrinking down into my boots; but I guess I wasn't; for the General managed to reach my head without stooping; he patted me kindly, and said,

"You'll be a little General some day, my boy."

I'm not anxious to have his prophecy fulfilled, for I've too much respect for our present major-generals, brigadiers, and a lot of other

splendid West Pointers I know. Besides, I'm otherwise engaged ; I'd rather half kill a man with a joke than with a bullet ; nevertheless the military dreams I indulged in that night would have knocked Napoleon silly,—that's about the size of it,—and they'd paralyze Moltke, Sir Garnet Wolseley, and General Schofield if I could repeat them to-day.

I didn't expect ever to meet General Grant again, or to presume upon a casual introduction, such as men as prominent as Grant have to endure fifty or a hundred times a day. I could not imagine that he would remember me if ever we chanced to meet again. But one day, while I was standing at the corner of Seventh Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street, who should chance to step from a Belt Line horse-car but General Grant. Again I felt smaller than my very small self, but I remembered that I was an American citizen, so I braced up and said :

“ Good-morning, General.”

“ Why, good-morning, my little man,” said he. “ How are you feeling this morning ? ”

“ Tip-top,” I replied, “ I was just going to take a run in the Park.”

He threw a pleasant wink down to me and said :

“ How would it do to have a horse do the

running, and you sit behind him?" Then he turned to one of the Park cabmen and said: "I want you to take my friend and me around the Park."

Away we went. Good air and distinguished company made me feel merrier than usual, and I let off a joke or two; the General "saw" me and went me one or two better. We kept up a good-natured fight of that kind all the way through the Park and back again; I worked my biggest guns and used up all my ammunition, but in the end I found myself on the list with General Pemberton, General Lee, and a lot of other good fellows,—I'd had to surrender unconditionally. Nobody need talk to me about Grant being "the silent man." And what a big, honest smile he had! I've one myself, I think, but I wish he could have left me his in his will. The idea of a man who had handled a dozen armies, carried a nation on his shoulders through four years of fighting in the field and eight years more in Washington, giving an hour or more of his time and attention to a little chap whom he chanced to meet on a street corner, while a score of millionnaires would almost have given their heads to be in my place beside him! As we rode along, hundreds of people recognized him and

raised their hats to him, but he returned their salutes as modestly as if he was nobody in particular.

But he was that sort of man. He never seemed to exult in conquering men, though that had been his most successful work in life. General Horace Porter told me that, after the surrender of Lee, Grant said: "I must get off for Washington to-morrow." "Why," said Porter, "you haven't yet looked at the troops you have conquered." "No," replied Grant, "and I won't; they feel bad enough already." General Porter said also that the reason Grant allowed the officers of the Army of Northern Virginia to retain their side-arms after the surrender was that he saw Lee carried a magnificent diamond-studded sword given him by the State of Virginia, and he hadn't the heart to deprive him of it.

When it came to horses, however, Grant not only liked to conquer them, but to exult about it afterward. My friend Ned Stokes, proprietor of the Hoffman House, with whom I have often smiled (though not at his gorgeous bar), told me that one day when Grant was his guest Robert Bonner said to him, at the Hoffman, "Stokes, bring Grant over to my place to-morrow, and I'll have Budd Doble drive Dexter

a specimen mile for him." So over they went, and Dexter did a mile beautifully. Then a handsome gray mare named Peerless was brought out and sent around the track in handsome style. She seemed to go like a streak of lightning with a pack of fire-crackers at its tail, but Grant remarked :

"I believe I could make the mare beat that time, if Mr. Bonner would let me."

"Certainly," said Mr. Bonner pleasantly, but with a "Young-man-you-don't-know-as-much-as-you-think-you-do" look. Grant took the ribbons and asked Stokes to take the time. "Go!" shouted Bonner. Whiz! went the mare, Grant "lifting" her a little.

"Well?" said the General, after completing the mile.

"There is the watch," replied Stokes, and the party saw that, with Grant to manage her, Peerless had beaten her previous time by one second. Stokes was amazed; Bonner was more so; but Grant—why, he crowed all day long over that exploit, and told of it to every acquaintance he met!

As I said before, there's more to a man—who *is* a man—than shows in his face; no face is big enough to hold it all. I've seen all the portraits and busts of Grant; I look at them

reverently and loyally, in memory of the man's great achievements; but, after all, human nature is human nature, and my mind always goes back to the day when he put off whatever he was about to do, and took little me for an hour's drive in the Park. The busts and pictures are all serious and grand, as they ought to be, but for the life of me I can't help seeing a broad, honest smile come over each of them when I've looked at it a minute.

Just one more story about him. During our ride I said to him that it must seem funny, after so active a life, for him to be living so quietly. He replied:

"It's a thousand times better than funny, my boy: it's *rest*."

And from the expression of his face I knew he meant more than words could say.

CHAPTER IV.

EX-PRESIDENT CLEVELAND.—I VISIT THE WHITE HOUSE.—
THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST.—THE MAGIC OF A LETTER.—
A WONDERFUL MAN AT DISPATCHING BUSINESS.—MRS.
CLEVELAND.

ABOUT three years ago I went to Washington for the first time. It may have been rough on Washington society that I had not been there before, but 'twas rough on me, too,—so condolences are mutual. I went there to give some drawing-room entertainments, but as it was my first visit to the Capital, I determined to see something and somebody out of the way of business.

The first call I made was at the White House. A man at the door stopped me—for I was walking boldly in, as if I belonged there.

“What do you want?” he asked.

“I'd like to see President Cleveland,” I replied.

“Then go right up-stairs and turn to the right,” said he.

This sounded businesslike and encouraging,

but when I reached the head of the stair I was stopped by another Cerberus who asked :

“What do you want?”

“President Cleveland,” I gasped; flights of stairs never have any pity on my short legs.

“Step right into that room,” said he, pointing to a doorway. I entered, getting my best Sunday smile ready for the President, but instead of Mr. Cleveland I found twenty or thirty other American citizens who were on the same errand as I. They didn't seem pleased, either, to see an addition, small though he was, to the crowd. Some senators were there; also some representatives, and a lot of possible future Presidents, yet it was only the beginning of the day. It didn't take me long to make up my mind that I never would allow either party to run me for the Presidency, if business had to begin so early in the morning, and in such earnest. I also made up my mind that I was in for a long wait, and I couldn't see anything lying about for a man to amuse himself with.

It occurred to me that if I were to send in my letter from Mr. Beecher it might prepare the way for me, so I said to one of the coloured attendants :

“Take this in, will you? I’ll await my turn.”

The letter read as follows:

DECEMBER 24, 1886.

PRESIDENT GROVER CLEVELAND:

DEAR SIR: Marshall P. Wilder desires an introduction to you, and since in his English career he has been received by the Prince of Wales, and is a favourite with nobles and commoners of high degree, he will feel honoured if you will receive him kindly. He asks nothing but the privilege of conferring pleasure. His entertainments are highly laughter-provoking and of an original character. He deserves great credit for making a brave struggle against difficulties that would have appalled others. He is a most worthy and respectable person, and his efforts in my church on sundry occasions have given very great amusement both to the children and to the grown folks.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

In a very few minutes an attendant came out and said: “Will Mr. Wilder please step forward?” I stepped. I forgive the other fellows for the scowls they gave me, for it must have been provoking to see the last go first—and such a little one. I could see some

of them asking one another with their eyes, "Who is he?" and some of them looked as if they were thinking, "Well, it's not always size that makes the man."

Mr. Cleveland met me very kindly, and asked:

"What can I do for you, Mr. Wilder?"

Poor man! I suppose he was so used to men who called only to ask favours that he took it as a matter of course that somewhere about my clothes I had an axe to grind. So I made haste to reply:

"Nothing at all, Mr. President, except the pleasure of shaking hands with you. I didn't vote for you, but that doesn't seem to have made any difference."

Two gentlemen who were present, I afterward learned, were Cabinet officers, so there must have been business on hand; nevertheless the President kindly said:

"Sit down. Tell me something about yourself. What are you doing down here?"

I dropped into a chair, and Mr. Cleveland chatted pleasantly with me for a while; then he looked at Mr. Beecher's note and said:

"Mr. Wilder, this is a very valuable letter. Hadn't you better keep it?"

Bless the man! I wonder how many others

in his position would have been so thoughtful. I quickly thanked him, and told him nothing he ever had said would be more heartily appreciated, for, while the letter would have been of no use to him, it was extremely valuable to me. But that wasn't all he did; he was kind enough to invite me to call on him and his wife the next day. I don't suppose I can add anything to the praises which cleverer pens than mine have written of Mrs. Cleveland; she has been glorified by men of all classes, and of styles differing—well, from General Sherman's to Tim Campbell's. I simply wish to indorse everything good that every one has said of her, and wish also that I could re-arrange an unabridged dictionary so that all the words would speak her praise.

Mr. Cleveland's faculty for seeing people in rapid succession, yet getting rid of them without offending any one, amazed me. I know some business men who are noted throughout the United States for being "rustlers" in managing human nature; I've stood in their offices and admired their tact, but I never saw any of them dispatch business so rapidly as Mr. Cleveland. I was in the crowd one day, and purposely kept among the latest comers, just to see how he would dispatch people—no other

word expresses the operation, yet none seemed to go away feeling hurt. I finally dropped into a brown study over it, wondering how it was done, when suddenly I heard, "How are you to-day, Mr. Wilder?" and looking up, I saw the President's face beaming on me as pleasantly as if all his work had been mere fun, and as if he had nothing else to do for the day.

I afterward went to a "swell" reception at the White House, in company with my friends Moses P. Handy, of the Philadelphia Clover Club, and the late W. F. O'Brien. There were any number of gorgeous diplomats present, with epauletted and gold-laced officers of our own, ladies in wonderful costumes, and all pushing their way to the famous "Blue Room," where beside his handsome wife stood the President, looking as dignified and distinguished as any good citizen could ask; but I like best to remember him in every-day dress, receiving every one who came and trying to do the fair thing by every one. I was so impressed that I wanted to do something real nice for him—something that no one else had done, so I left Washington without giving him a bit of advice about how to run the Government. I hope he was duly grateful.

CHAPTER V.

MR. BLAINE.—A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW.—NO AIRS ABOUT HIM.—A CAPITAL STORY-TELLER.—QUITE AS SENSITIVE AS OTHER MEN.—A SYMPATHETIC LISTENER.—MRS. BLAINE.—A PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES.—IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A HONEYMOON TRIP.

WHILE I was at Washington I was "taken around," by some dear old friends who wanted me to be acquainted with some of the "big" men, and also wanted them to be acquainted with a little man. Nowhere else in the world have I been more kindly treated; nowhere have I found it harder to get out of a house where I had just dropped in. How other callers managed to stay so short a time as some did was a mystery to me. Perhaps short calls are as easy as running the government or making a fortune—when one is used to it, but it did seem very odd to me, to see a well-dressed, intelligent couple, whom I knew at sight would be charming company, call on a lady equally intelligent and charming, and then hear a conversation something like this:

"Good-morning."

"Oh, how do you do; I'm *so* glad to see you."

"Thank you. Isn't it lovely weather?"

"Indeed, yes. How well you are looking!"

"So kind of you to say so. (*Rising.*) Do come and see me."

"Oh, you're not going? I've enjoyed your call so much. Good-morning."

"*Good-morning.*"

They have to do it in this way a great deal of the time, during the season. There are so many people in town whom one wants to see, and must see, that there's no way of doing all except by making five-minute calls, and dashing madly in a carriage from place to place. I've heard some society fellows in New York boast of the number of calls they'd made on a single New Year's day, but a day or two in Washington society would take the conceit out of them. And Washington people—those who belong there—do it so easily, too; they enter a drawing-room in as leisurely a way as if they'd come to spend the day in old-style back-country fashion, and go to prayer-meeting with the family afterward. They depart in the same deliberate, well-bred manner; you'd suppose, to look at them, that they were wondering how and where to kill a couple of hours of

time, instead of squeezing twenty or thirty calls into it.

One of the most interesting men in Washington is Mr. Blaine. I've seen a great deal of him, and the more I meet him, the oftener I want to meet him again. He has a way of making a fellow feel entirely at ease with him which is wonderfully pleasant—if you chance yourself to be the fellow. He takes your hand—if he likes you—in a way that makes you feel that you're his long-lost friend, and he chats with you as freely and merrily as if he hadn't a thing to do or think of but make himself agreeable.

And how he can tell stories! Lots of other men do it, but after a while you begin to think they've been out nutting, and found all the chestnuts. Not that I object to chestnuts; I've gathered some myself in my time, and found that people enjoyed them, when properly served. Mr. Blaine enjoys them himself, apparently, for I've seen him listen to the same story four or five times in as many days, and laugh heartily each time. And how he can laugh! Should *he* ever go into the entertainment business he'd knock out all the rest of us.

I first met Mr. Blaine on shipboard. One

day when the sea was running high, and the wind on deck went through a man like a piece of bad news, the captain invited several of us into his cabin; beside your humble servant there were Mr. Scott Cassatt, Mr. T. C. Crawford the well-known journalist, the Earl of Donoughmore, and Mr. Blaine. Chat soon became general, and everything reminded Mr. Blaine of a story. The Earl had been travelling on state business, and having dispatches chase him from place to place without finding him, which reminded Mr. Blaine of an army officer who graduated at West Point before the days of the Pacific Mail Steamship line. Immediately after graduating he was assigned to the Fourth Infantry, stationed at San Francisco, and set out for his post via Cape Horn. It took exactly nine months to make the journey. He was a very bad sailor, and was very sick all the way around. When he reached San Francisco he found there was a mistake in his order, and he should have been assigned to the Fifth Regiment, stationed at Fort Mackinaw, Michigan. This information was brought by the pony express, then just established, so he had to come back again and undergo another nine months' stretch of horrible seasickness. He finally reached Fort Mackinaw, but after a

week's stay the Fifth Regiment was ordered to change places with the Fourth, and he had to go back to San Francisco. As he was starting on his third voyage he said to a friend: "My father gave me a choice between the army and the navy, and I foolishly selected the army. If I had selected the navy I am sure I would have had a much better chance of remaining on land."

Some one told of a friend of his who travelled a great deal, but hadn't the faculty of seeing things; indeed, he seemed to prefer not to see them.

"A good deal like an English lord I've heard of," said Mr. Blaine. "On reaching a certain town in Germany he asked his courier what there was to see. 'Nothing whatever, my lord; absolutely nothing.' 'Then,' said his lordship, looking quite happy, 'we'll stay here a month.'"

Some of us were talking of men who never did anything for their fellow-men, and Mr. Blaine asked if we weren't a little too hard on them. "If a fellow will be true to himself," said he, "he may do a great deal of good unawares, and nobody will ever know of it. Why, there's a friend of mine in Maine, a veteran of the Mexican war, who once went up to old Colonel

— and said to him, 'Colonel, I owe you more than I ever can repay. In the Mexican war you saved my life three different times.' The Colonel was somewhat astonished, for he couldn't recall a single incident of the kind, so he asked the fellow to explain. 'Why,' was the reply, 'I always kept my eye on you during an engagement; whenever you started to run, I ran too, and three times your example saved my precious life.' "

During conversation about the Irish race, the religious Irishman's persistent thought about the great hereafter was alluded to. "Yes," said Mr. Blaine, "and there's good reason for it. The Irish people have such infernal torments at home that they can't be blamed for wanting to avoid any in the next world. If they could believe there was no hell they'd rather die than live. Once at Dublin, toward the end of the opera, Satan was conducting Faust through the trap-door which represented the gates of Hades. His majesty got through all right—he was used to going below, but Faust, who was quite stout, got only about half-way in, and no squeezing would get him any farther. Suddenly an Irishman in the gallery exclaimed devoutly, 'Thank God, hell is full!' "

Because he has been a public man and politician a great many years, Mr. Blaine is supposed by some people to be very thick-skinned, but it is impossible to be with him a little while without seeing that he is nothing of the sort. He is quite as sensitive as any other gentleman, and any rude remark grates unpleasantly upon him, even if it has no personal application. The only time I ever heard him speak of himself was one day when he brought me a caricature of myself which some one aboard ship had drawn. "There, Marshall," said he, "how do you like that?" "Great Scott!" I exclaimed, making a face at the picture, "does that look like me?" "Well," said he, "that's exactly the question I ask myself when the illustrated papers caricature me."

I've heard people call Mrs. Blaine "cold," but I saw for myself that the only reason for it was that she was so devoted to her husband that she had no time for more than ordinary civility to any one else. She hovered about Mr. Blaine as tenderly as if she were his mother and he was her pet child. She seemed to anticipate his every want, and in this respect her daughters were just like her.

It was great fun to me to see Mr. Blaine among the passengers, telling good stories, lis-

tening genially to everybody, and laughing more heartily than any one else. I think I smiled just as long, however, and with a very warm heart, more than one night, when, creeping on the lonely deck for a "nightcap" in the shape of a mouthful of fresh air, I saw Mr. and Mrs. Blaine side by side, with one shawl around both of them, softly chatting and dozing, like a newly married couple on a wedding trip. A great man's private life is his own, no matter how much he belongs to the public; no one has any right to peep behind the curtain; but an accidental view, such as I've just mentioned, certainly does the beholder a great deal of good, if only by reminding him that public men have hearts quite as big as their fellows—often bigger.

CHAPTER VI.

GOING ABROAD.—A FORLORN HOPE.—MY OWN PRIVATE STORY.—THE PRINCE OF WALES.—EVERY INCH A PRINCE, AND THE PRINCE OF GOOD FELLOWS BESIDE.—HIS COURTESY, THOUGHTFULNESS, TACT, AND KINDNESS.—WHY THE ENGLISH LIKE HIM.—ENGLISH MANNERS IN THE PRINCE'S PRESENCE.—ONE YANKEE WHO SWEARS BY HIM.

AFTER I had been in the entertainment business a few years, it occurred to me that I might give my friends a rest and get a change for myself by going abroad. I might make some money beside. English people like extremes as well as others. A number of our greatest men had been well received over there ; so might not there be a chance for one of our smallest ?

So I went. I landed there an entire stranger and without much money. I expected up-hill work, but I've a tremendous faith in a man "getting there" if he'll do his level best ; he's sure to have something unexpected turn up to his advantage. A "forlorn hope" almost always achieves a brilliant success, partly through itself, and partly through something it didn't

expect. I always, when I have to "nerve up," repeat to myself the following story:

Old Jim Peters was a famous bear-hunter in the Adirondacks. Both his ears and his nose were clawed off in bear-fights. When he drank too much he wanted to fight, and if there were no bears in sight he would fight with the first man he met. Jim had a pretty daughter. A young shingle-cutter used to come to see her. The old man met him one night and was going to whip him, but the youngster was so small that it seemed mean to strike him, so instead of beating him the old man said, "Don't you ever come fooling around my daughter again till you bring me a bear, and a live one at that." The young man was rather appalled at the outlook, but he made up his mind that he must have the girl. The ground was covered with deep snow, on which the rain had fallen and frozen till it was very slippery. The hunter's cabin was right at the bottom of a steep hill. As the shingle-cutter reached the top of the ridge, a bear jumped from a rock and grabbed him in his embrace. In the struggle the bear lost his footing and fell, with the youngster on top. Out they shot on the ice and slipped down the hill, going like a double-ripper on a toboggan slide. The young shingle-cutter put his foot

out behind and made a splendid steer for the cabin. The couple struck the logs in the side of the cabin like a freight train on a down grade, stunning the bear. The door flew open, and out flew old Jimmie to see what was the matter. "There," said the shingle-cutter, "there's the bear—and a live one too." He got the girl.

Well, I was in London some time without getting an engagement. One day I met my good friend Perugini, the popular tenor—in spite of his Italian name he is a big-hearted American, and I told him how my luck was succeeding in dodging me. "Why don't you go to the Lyric Club," said he, "and speak a little piece? Then people will know something about you. I'll send you a card of invitation." He kept his word; I went to the Lyric Club—of which more hereafter—spoke a piece, and was asked for several more. They took so well that through the Club my name was put on the list of speakers at an entertainment given for the Gordon Home for Boys. It was to be given at the Grosvenor Hall, and the Prince of Wales and the Princess, with their sons and daughters, were to be present, together with the most brilliant assemblage in London. The Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lord

Randolph Churchill, and everybody was to be there, simply because the entertainment was for a charitable purpose.

My invitation was as follows :

*To meet his Royal Highness the
Prince of Wales*

Sir Coutts Lindsay

requests the honor of the company of

Mr. M. Wilder,

*at the Grosvenor Gallery on Sunday
evening, June 27th, at 10.30.*

Supper at 11 o'clock.

An early answer is requested.

I knew this was the most important point of my English career, because if I succeeded in pleasing the Prince of Wales my fortune would be made, but if I failed there would be no use

in my remaining abroad. One doesn't want to be long in England to find out that the opinion of the Prince about any one or any thing has almost the force of law.

I sat down and thought it all over. I hoped his Royal Highness would be feeling well, because I knew that if he was out of sorts in any way it would be a very hard task to entertain him; royalty is also humanity in this respect. If you have ever had a Turkish bath I think you will know how I felt for about a week before the entertainment. The Prince had heard of me, and my name was presented to his highness by the committee from the Lyric Club, so that by his command I was allowed to appear. This is the way things are always done over there. Lists are submitted to him, and he uses his preference.

That night, after I reached the hall and was waiting for my turn to "go on," I peeped through the curtains at the Prince. I saw a pleasant-faced gentleman with a kind light in his eyes. I noticed that while many of the courtiers about him were full of the English coldness that you may have heard of, the Prince himself was unaffected and cordial in manner, and when I saw how kind the Princess appeared, and how appreciative of the people who

appeared before my "number" came, I felt encouraged, and, Republican-born though I was, I understood why people heartily admire the Prince of Wales.

As I walked down the stage the Prince looked at me in a way that seemed to say: "Now, my boy, you are three thousand miles away from home; you want to make a success. Go in and do your best. If you have any ability, I will help you all I can." He seemed surprised at my small stature, so I got on a box to give him a better view. The first thing I did was an imitation, entirely by the face; it was of a man who received a letter from his wife; he expected, of course, that she wanted more money; opened the letter and discovered that she didn't, but that her mother, his dear mother-in-law, was ill, and a postscript told she was dead. The whole story is told by the face. Of course the man is very cross at first, but blissful at last when he finds his mother-in-law is dead. This caught the Prince's fancy, and he burst into a laugh which from any one less distinguished would have been called a roar. He was even so kind as to "call me out," and, of course, the audience assisted him. It was worth to me nearly \$1000 in a very short time, for next morning I had fifteen

engagements. That started my career in London.

The first time I met the Prince to have any conversation with him was at the house of a prominent society lady who gave an entertainment. Mr. Eugene Oudin, the well-known American baritone, and I were invited there to entertain the Prince. When the Prince came in I noticed his entire lack of formality, and yet his gentlemanly, courteous bearing and dignified manner made one feel that his Royal Highness was an awfully nice fellow, but caused one to refrain from being familiar with him. It was strange to see how assuming all the rest of the men about him were ; how full of stiffness and formality they were. The Prince alone was perfectly easy in his manner. The man whom you would naturally think would be formal was just the reverse. After the entertainment we went down to dine. As I passed on the right of the Prince, there was a vacant seat beside him, and he kindly said, "Mr. Wilder, be seated." So I sat down beside him. For once in my life I felt very tall ; I know everybody will forgive me. I never shall forget how kind he was, and what nice things he said about America. He asked me a great many questions about the Americans, and

seemed to be wonderfully well posted on everything happening here.

During the evening I wanted a glass of water—being a temperance man. I called to a waiter to hand me the caraffe. It was right in front of the Prince, who himself passed it to me, remarking as he did so: “Mr. Wilder, that is water.”

“Yes, your Highness, but that is all I take.”

He could have turned around and said to me, “See here; you don't often get a chance to drink with a Prince,” but he was so gentlemanly in his way that he did not at all embarrass me. I wish some Americans could learn manners from him.

Of course I closely observed, on every opportunity, the manner of the prospective King of England. When he appears at a reception, every one arises; the Prince bows, and greets the host and hostess, sometimes shaking hands with them. He is very particular about dress. On all occasions a military man, when he comes into the presence of the Prince, must wear the proper uniform. If he has any medals—the man who wins a medal in England has a small miniature model made of it and placed on a ribbon instead of wearing the large medal—these the Prince insists upon his wearing. As

soon as the Prince seats himself everybody else sits down. No one leaves until the Prince does. It is wonderful how he observes everything and knows exactly how long to stay, and when to get up and lead the way to the dining-room. As he walks past the company every one bows. As he goes down to the dining-room the other guests follow him. He stands until everybody is in the room; then he sits down, and the others follow his example. When he commences eating, they commence eating. He is very thoughtful as well as clever. For instance, no one stops eating until he stops, so he will keep on eating till he sees that everybody has got pretty nearly enough. His exceeding tact and courtesy astonished me so that once I made bold to ask him how he could remember the various people he met. He said he always associated certain ideas with them.

His kindness to me at all times I cannot forget; he really seemed to "have me on his mind," and to remember that I was a stranger there and whatever kindness he could show me would do me good. He was right, bless him!

One night I went to Mr. Irving's theatre, and the Prince was in one of the boxes. Those acquainted with Mr. Irving's theatre know that there is a room off one of the boxes where the

Prince generally goes to take refreshments. As I passed by the Prince happened to see me and called out :

“ Aha, little chap, back again ? ”

“ Yes, your Highness,” said I. As I walked up the stair he noticed I was lame, so he leaned down and helped me up two steps. Then he shook my hands and turned to Mr. Ashton, of Mitchell's, and said, “ You must always be kind to this little chap.” It's no wonder the English people are very fond of him, but I'll double discount any of them at that business; I've good reason, too.

CHAPTER VII.

LONDON SOCIETY.—AMERICANS HAVE A MISTAKEN IDEA ABOUT IT.—GOOD TASTE AND UNAFFECTED MANNERS.—DUKE OF TECK.—EARL DUDLEY.—BRITISH LOYALTY.—VISITORS ARE MADE TO FEEL AT HOME.—THE EGYPTIAN PRINCES.—VICTORIA, D. G., ETC.—“GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.”

BEFORE I went to England I heard a great deal about society, and people, and society ways over there. I was loaded to my full capacity with information and advice, all given with the best intentions in the world, but as soon as I became acquainted I had to unload and throw it all away. I've no doubt there are cads, dudes, fools, and rogues in some English circles, but I am happy to say I haven't met any of them, although I've been over several times, and “run around” a great deal.

I suppose some of our readers will think me assuming when I express opinions on this subject. Well, I'm quite willing to admit that I'm not a “swell;” I know perfectly well that in society I'm merely the salt that goes with the soup, nevertheless I insist that “the

soup " above alluded to is good to be "in." I've been invited out a great deal in London, generally in my professional capacity; I've kept my eyes and ears open, seen and heard everything, good and bad, that any one could see, and I must say that more intelligent, better-hearted, better-mannered people than the upper classes in England cannot be found anywhere—not even in our own happy land, where I know any number of good fellows and charming women.

One reason of this isn't hard to find. The English have learned how to enjoy life, and how not to be in a hurry to get away from what they are doing and go do something else. Clerks in government offices and business houses, private secretaries, and the managers of great estates, are trained to do work which here the millionaire must do for himself. English household service is perfect, as near as humanity can make it; you simply can't imagine a lot of English ladies sitting down and exchanging dismal remarks about cooks and chambermaids, such as one can't help hearing whenever a few women get together in a drawing-room in New York. I'm not blaming our American women; if I were in their place, I'd talk servants too, and I'm sure my language

would be unfit for publication. But facts are good, solid, can't-get-away-from-me sort of things, and I'm talking about some of them that do make a distinct difference between society in Europe and here.

In one particular, however, the better classes in both countries are exactly alike; the greater the individual really is, the more modest and natural is his manner with every one.

For instance, one night at a reception at Mrs. Ronalds's, while I was perched upon a sofa watching the brilliant assemblage, I fell into conversation with a pleasant gentleman seated beside me, who was very curious about America and American life. I told him a great deal about America, and said that Americans in England would not at once know how to address people properly. "As for me," I said, "I am as green as a gooseberry on this subject; even if I supposed you were one of the nobility I should not know how to address you." A few moments afterward Mrs. Ronalds said to me, "Mr. Wilder, that's a good thing you've been saying to the Duke of Teck; you've made an impression upon His Highness." I replied: "Why, I haven't met the Duke of Teck; the only gentleman I've been talking to is standing over there." "Well,"

says Mrs. Ronalds, "that is the Duke of Teck." Gracious! I am a little enough fellow by nature, but just then you might have put me in a pint cup.

Last summer young Earl Dudley invited me down to his place—Witley Court, Worcestershire. The Earl wanted me to entertain some of the yeomanry—corresponding with our militia. When I arrived he was out playing polo; soon afterward he hurt his ankle and had to be helped upstairs by his valet and one of his friends. When he came into the room where I was awaiting him, he was suffering great pain, but he spoke as kindly to me as if I were an old friend. Afterward he invited me to join a number of officers at a hotel, and a very pleasant evening I had. All were cultivated gentlemen; they had read a great deal about America, and listened with great interest to the stories I told them of this country. They were particularly interested in the stories of the Fire Department; Englishmen always are interested particularly in whatever calls for manly strength and courage.

When English people of "quality" invite you, their cards are very simple. They are not printed as we get them up here,—elaborate copperplate engravings, like government

bonds or railroad stocks, but are simply written, in a cordial off-hand manner, by the hostess herself, as a rule, and in very simple language. For instance, "Lady Burton invites Mr. Wilder to tea Friday afternoon at four." In one corner of the card will be "Music by the Hungarian band;" in the other corner will be "R. S. V. P." That is always there. When you arrive you are ushered into Lady Burton's beautiful apartments in Mayfair. A flunky meets you at the door and takes your hat and coat. A little further on another flunky takes your card, and passes to the room above where the reception is held. My lady will be standing at the door with her husband, and the flunky calls out your name; then you receive a cordial hand-shake, and pass right in. There are no formal introductions, as a rule. When a guest you have the right to speak to everybody—and you do. If you happen to make a mistake and address a person wrongly, allowances are kindly made for you—if they know you are an American. One nobleman came to me in London one day—he is a man of high title—and showed to me a letter addressed to him as "Mr." and "Esq.," and he laughed at it as heartily as if I had been called Lord Marshall P. Wilder; he seemed to think it a capital joke instead of being

offended by it. Who wouldn't like such a fellow?

It is not an uncommon thing in London society to see negro banjo-players contributing to the entertainment of the guests. There are a couple of men over there—the Bohee Brothers—who are making a great deal of money. They went over with Haverly's minstrels some time ago. The English people must be entertained; they have the leisure, the money, and the taste for it, and draw the line only against what is not good of its kind, and what is not respectable. They will not, however, tolerate buffoonery, or anything that approaches it.

I've been asked whether the higher classes in England really respect royalty, and I always answer "Yes," with all the lungs I have. Any one who bets his pile on England becoming a republic will wish afterward that he'd put his money into Keely Motor stock, for he'd get at least the price of waste paper out of it. How can the English help it? With a Queen who is a model of domestic virtue and royal dignity, the Prince of Wales, who is unceasing in courtesy, cordiality, and thoughtfulness, his charming wife the Princess, whom everybody adores, and a royal family beside which numbers many estimable members, the English have plenty of

reason to be loyal and satisfied. I'm a rabid American myself—I crow whenever our eagle screams, and I can't ever look at the Stars and Stripes without a sudden enlargement of the heart and a tendency to wipe my eyes—but whenever English hats go off as “God save the Queen” is played, I know just how the men under those hats feel, and I honour them for it.

Among other royal personages whom I met unexpectedly in England were the Egyptian Princes. Through the kind suggestion of the Prince of Wales I one day received the following invitation :

“MR. WILDER: Their Highnesses the Princess Abbas and Mehemet Ali request the pleasure of your company to dinner to-morrow evening at six o'clock.”

Following this came the same invitation in Egyptian characters, on parchment. The princes are sons of the Khedive of Egypt; when I met them their ages were about thirteen and fourteen years, but their manners were those of well-bred adults. They showed training in pomp and ceremony, yet they were courteous and cordial. They had been out to visit Queen Victoria and had just returned, but they were not above being affable to a tiny American sovereign. They had been educated

in Switzerland, and spoke English well. They were much pleased with my entertainment, and understood me thoroughly. The elder seemed in manner very like the Prince of Wales: he was naturally the leader, being heir to the throne. They talked a great deal about my entertainment; afterward they went in to dinner with great ceremony. The elder went in first, his brother followed, and they went through about the same ceremony that I have described with regard to the Prince of Wales: all about them stood up until the Princes were seated; the dishes were first presented to Prince Abbas and then passed around. I noticed how clever he was not to finish before any one else. Finally, when he rose all followed. When he got back to Egypt he sent me a present of a cane as a souvenir of the occasion, and also an invitation to visit them in Egypt. He told me that when he arrived home outside the gates of the palace they would kill a lamb or a cow, and then the carriage of the prince would have to drive through the blood. The ceremony may seem barbarous, but time-honoured precedents must be respected, as the Yankee deacon said when he refused to give the parson more than a dollar for marrying him to his sixth wife.

Every American who has been to England is expected to tell, when he comes home, what he thinks of the Queen. I saw Her Majesty on "Jubilee Day"; she didn't stop her carriage to speak to me, but I forgive her; 'twas her jubilee—not mine; when I've governed a great country respectably for fifty years I won't stop my carriage in the procession for anybody; if any one wants to speak to me that particular day, let them come up to the house when the show is over. As I said, I saw Her Majesty, and I was so much impressed that I raised my hat as high as my arm would let me. Just think of it a moment, fellow-citizens who have seen Presidents rise and fall once in four years; here was a woman who for half a century had been head of the most populous civilized nation in the world, yet except for an air of modest dignity—"the divinity that doth hedge a king"—looked as honest, unassuming, kindly, womanly, and good as any decent fellow's darling mother.

"God save the Queen."

"Them's my sentiments," as the man said as he hung up a printed prayer on the wall one cold winter evening, and pointed at it before he jumped into bed.

CHAPTER VIII.

ENTERTAINING IN LONDON. — ENGLISH “SWELLS” DRESS PLAINLY AT PARTIES.—NO DISPLAY OF JEWELRY.—BARON ROTHSCHILD.—BRAINS RULE IN GOOD SOCIETY.—MRS. RONALDS.—MRS. MACKAY.—LADY ARTHUR PAGET.—NO CROWD OR NOISE IN THE BEST HOUSES.—NO DISPLAY.

WHILE I am scribbling about the ways of a number of “nice people” who have smiled with me in London, it may not be inappropriate to astonish some of my readers and enrage their jewellers, by remarking that people at “the best houses” wear very few diamonds or other gems. They own them; there are occasions when they wear them, but informal receptions and entertainments are not among them.

Baron Rothschild is the richest banker in England; Mrs. Mackay is wife of a “Bonanza King,” but, except on extraordinary occasions, there is less display of jewelry in the well-filled drawing-rooms of these prominent members of society than you may see at an ordinary reception in New York. English

people of the better class own a great many jewels, and they know how to admire and display them, but they have a very clear idea that "there is a time for everything," and the time to show off rare necklaces, bracelets, and other begemmed ornaments is not during an evening devoted to amusement. Even the diamond ring, without which no American lady's toilet is complete—nor any shop-girl's either—has to be looked for a long time in a parlor full of high-born English ladies. As for a competitive show of diamond rings—"a full hand,"—such as one frequently sees spoiling pretty fingers in America, you can't see it in any class of English society—not even among the vulgar people made newly rich.

There is a notion in America that all "swell" society in England consists of the nobility. There never was a greater mistake. Noble-men, like ministers, are sometimes off-color; a few of them, of retiring and studious manner, wouldn't be in society if they could; a far greater number couldn't if they would. In London you are quite as likely to meet the Prince of Wales or some other member of the royal family at a little evening entertainment given by a commoner or an American, as among the nobility. Character, manners, and culture are

as highly esteemed in England as here, although some of our own good people seem to think they've a monopoly of that sort of thing.

Some of the pleasantest home entertainments in London are given by Americans. For instance, there is Mrs. Ronalds; I believe an Englishman who has the *entrée* of her delightful house would give up grumbling about the national debt rather than miss one of her "Sunday afternoons." I have heard them spoken of as "rather Bohemian," but if that is true, all society can afford to make haste to be Bohemian. The only difference between these affairs and some other drawing-room entertainments is that they are a bit less formal, Mrs. Ronalds's friends "dropping in," instead of being specially invited. The hostess is always near the door, receives each guest, and has an inexplicable, wonderful way of at once making every one feel at ease. As a rule in London, everybody in good society knows everybody else, and no introductions are necessary, but many prominent Americans and people from the Continent are acquainted with Mrs. Ronalds; she must see that these do not feel lonesome or ill at ease, and she does it instantly, or her charming daughter, Mrs. Ritchie, does it for her.

All the prominent lyric artists in London like to sing at Mrs. Ronalds's receptions, partly because most of her friends really love good music, but another reason is that no one dares to talk or whisper while music is going on. There are places in London that remind one of Punch's joke about the lady who was so glad the distinguished pianist she had invited was about to play, for then the people would stop being stupid and begin to talk: if, however, any one attempts to talk during song or piano playing, Mrs. Ronalds gives them a look; a pleasant smile goes with it, but the talker promptly retires within himself for a while. Probably more literary and artistic people go to Mrs. Ronalds's Sunday afternoons than to any other house in London, and other noted people go there to meet them. In a single afternoon I have seen there the Prince of Wales, Lord Burton, Mrs. Mackay, Lady Paget, George Augustus Sala, Lady Randolph Churchill, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Wilson Barrett, and many others equally prominent in their respective sets and professions. Minnie Hauk and Madame Nevada sang, Sir Arthur Sullivan played, W. S. Gilbert said witty things, everybody chatted with everybody, and not one person did I see sitting alone or looking bored. The

hostess seemed to be seeing, hearing, and enjoying everything, yet finding time beside to speak to all her guests. I never can forget her many kindnesses to one small American whose name begins with W.

Mrs. Mackay's entertainments are also delightful. Although as rich as the richest, and the owner of a beautiful house to which the best people in London like to come, she never forgets her nationality to the extent of forgetting Americans—of the right kind—in London. Many of our people get letters of introduction to Mrs. Mackay when going abroad, and it is amusing to note the astonishment of some of them when they meet the lady. Because she is wife of a "Bonanza King," they seem to expect her home to look like Aladdin's cave, and to see her arrayed like an Oriental princess. Well, it would be impossible to find anywhere a house where there is less attempt at display; everything is there which taste and comfort suggest, but nothing designed only for show. As for the warm-hearted hostess, I never saw a more unassuming lady, nor did I ever see her wearing jewelry of any kind. She never says or does anything to remind a person that she is richer than any but two or three of Britain's six hundred peers,

and that she knows every one in England worth knowing. Beside being a society queen she is very enterprising and nobly charitable; where some one else, hearing of a case of suffering, will sigh "Poor thing!" and think her duty done, Mrs. Mackay will have the case looked into, and substantial relief provided at once if really needed. Some Americans seem to think she has become entirely Anglicized and has "cut" her native country; but one day I asked her when she would return, and she quickly replied: "I want to go home as soon as my sons complete their education."

Another American lady—Lady Arthur Paget, *née* Minnie Stevens—gives entertainments so delightful that people will break almost any other engagement rather than miss them. At her house I have met the Prince and Princess of Wales, their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Duke of Teck and his handsome wife the Princess Mary, and many other distinguished persons.

Entertainments at such houses are specially delightful, aside from other reasons, because there is no noise nor any crowd. Only enough invitations are sent out to comfortably fill the house. When a song or recitation is to be

given, the master of ceremonies claps his hands, the buzz of conversation ceases, and every one listens as respectfully as if the hostess herself was speaking. When your humble servant was to "do something," he was generally, in compliment to his size, placed on a cushion on the piano, so he could be seen as well as heard.

It would do a Yankee's soul good to hear the talk of the better class of English people about American girls. All English people admire our young women immensely—how can they help it?—but some misunderstand them. Not so the well-bred English, whom our girls most naturally meet. It is all in the bringing up, as the artillery captain said when he saved the day by bringing his battery into an action over a road which no other fellow understood. English girls are as natural, sweet, and good as any in the world, but they are not brought up like ours. They are kept like children or babies—I don't know how else to express it. The English young lady spends a great deal of time with governess and nurse; in many families she does not take her meals with her parents until she is almost a woman. The American girl, sitting at table with her elders from the time she is able to sit on a

High chair, and playing about sitting-room, parlour, or wherever else her mother may chance to be, unconsciously gets a great deal of that high education that comes of contact with superior minds. She is just as modest and innocent as any other girl in the world, but she is a great deal besides: she has a degree of intelligence, composure, and self-command that makes her a woman among women quite as early as her brother becomes a man. This is not merely my opinion—I've heard it, bit by bit, from many observing English men and women.

How the Englishmen do cluster about one of our pretty girls in a drawing-room! No one makes rude speeches, unless in a lower class of people than I have seen. Old men and young; husbands and bachelors, veteran soldiers and statesmen, callow youths and top-heavy university students, will stand in a circle for an hour and be happy to get a word from one of our girls. Not a disrespectful or impudent look does any one give; each looks as if he wanted to say: "You angel, when did you drop out of heaven? Stay here a long time, won't you?—it can't do you any harm, and it does the rest of us an awful lot of good."

There are a lot of people on our side of the

water who seem to think that the American girl goes abroad with the sole idea of marrying a title. Nonsense! any of our girls could get a distinguished foreigner for a husband if she liked. If she doesn't, it isn't for lack of offers. Many American girls who spend as much time abroad as here, and are quite at home in England, have married titles, but the great majority come back to marry here because they prefer to live here, and sensible Englishmen respect them for it, for nobody knows better that "There's no place like home."

CHAPTER IX.

"THE SEASON."—SUMMER, BUT NOT HOT WEATHER.—A CHANCE FOR AMERICANS.—ENTERTAINMENTS WITH A RUSH.—RAIN ALSO.—WILLIAM BEATTY KINGSTON.—GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.—LABOUCHERE.—SIR MORELL MACKENZIE :—NEWMAN HALL.—JOSEPH PARKER.—LADY WILDE.—OSCAR WILDE.—WILLIE WILDE.

THERE is only one trouble about the so-called fashionable season in London—it doesn't last long enough. Occasionally I've seen fashionable Britons who looked and acted as if they wished the season shorter; nevertheless I adhere to my original statement, for I'm talking from the standpoint of the observer and the professional. I never got tired of looking on, or of putting one engagement more on my little list.

Still, while the season does last it is most lively. The American who imagines the English a slow people will have the nonsense taken out of him very speedily if he gets in "the swim" of English society for the season. For a time it was a mystery to me that people got about at all to the unceasing round of parties,

receptions, and balls. I used to pity the most stalwart six-footers—of whom there are more in England than in New York—as they hurried about to “take it all in”; but when I began to be in demand I pitied myself more, and wished my short legs were as numerous as those of a centipede. It’s easy enough, though, when you know the ropes, as the old sailor said when he hanged himself.

The season begins at the first of June and ends at the last of July. This may seem hot weather, to the American mind, but the English haven’t any such summer heat as we; they can wear their winter clothes all the year round. Should an American ever want to establish a reputation in England as a colossal liar, all he need do is to tell a few positive truths about the heat of New York in summer. It wouldn’t do, though, for a Philadelphian or Poughkeepsie man to go and do likewise; there *is* an extreme of lying which the English regard as detestable imbecility.

Sometimes there is good weather during the fashionable season—but only sometimes. Once when I was over there was rain on each of ninety successive days. Strange though it may seem to Americans, the English seldom grumble about bad weather; there are some

things that long civilization teaches a nation, and one of them is that the weather is managed by a power that can't be influenced by any amount of grumbling. When the sun does come out, however, and the ground dries decently, the English take advantage of it in a hurry. There are very few "hot-house plants" among English women; they never lose a good opportunity to be out and about, on horseback, in carriage, or on foot, and English girls will take long walks with their fathers or brothers in weather that would keep an American girl indoors for fear the dampness would take the crimp out of her hair.

It mystifies an American to see how much time a busy Englishman finds to devote to entertaining and being entertained. There is William Beatty Kingston, for instance, of the London *Daily Telegraph*. Everybody knows him for a busy journalist, yet everybody knows also that he gives in rapid succession some of the most enjoyable entertainments in London. He has a lovely home at Finchley, New Road. I was invited there to meet Patti, who is one of Mr. Kingston's dearest friends; Henry Irving, Hans Richter, the famous musician, and some Continental royalties were of the party. The Kingstons' Sunday afternoons are noted

as among the most enjoyable in London. In the house are several fine pianos, one of which has not been opened in a long time, because the last person who played upon it was the incomparable Liszt : a silver plate on the lid is inscribed with this statement.

George Augustus Sala is another very busy knight of the pen, but he finds time to give a great many dinner-parties, which no one of the invited would miss any more than he'd miss his own wedding-day.

Then there is Labouchere ; what that man doesn't interest himself in, know about, talk about, and write about, hasn't yet been discovered by the most inquisitive eye. There isn't a man in England, except, perhaps, Gladstone, whose opinions are oftener quoted,—yet Labouchere is continually entertaining. He has a glorious place for the purpose, too ; it is Pope's historic villa at Twickenham, on the Thames, only a little way from the heart of London. Beside entertaining his friends and acquaintances, he allows the general public the liberty of his beautiful grounds a great deal of the time. He has an odd way of intimating when he wants the general crowd to depart, but it never fails to work ; on top of his house is a clock, visible from all parts of the grounds,

and when the proprietor wishes to give "notice to quit" he simply sets the hands forward an hour or two.

I shall never forget the first time that I met Mr. Labouchere. I wrote him that I had a letter of introduction to him, and he responded with an invitation to his villa. When I sent up my card I was ushered into the presence of two men, one of whom was short, with whiskers about his face, his clothes rather unkempt, and his shoes down at the heel—a man who was very quiet in his manner. The other man was a very large fellow, who had a great deal to say, and moved around and talked in so authoritative a manner that I immediately assumed he was Labouchere. After some conversation I discovered my mistake, and felt like pinching myself. Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Blaine resemble each other greatly in one respect: each can talk with you an hour and make you tell him everything you know, while he gives you little or nothing. They give you the impression right away that they listen to everything you say, which is highly flattering, yet often, after you leave them, you want to pinch yourself for saying so much and hearing so little.

Labouchere has tried his hand at almost

everything, and generally succeeded. He told me that he managed the Queen's Theater over twenty years ago, and in his company were Charles Wyndham, Henry Irving, the late John Clayton, J. L. Toole, Ellen Terry, Lionel Brough, and others now famous. At that time Toole was his most popular man, and received the highest salary. He said that once he announced, at his theatre, Miss Terry and Mr. Irving in, I think, "The Taming of the Shrew," but "the public entirely declined to come." Think of it!

While telling me that a manager needs to know human nature as well as dramatic art, and must humour the public while having his own way, he said, by way of explanation: "Once I advertised to give a Shakespearean entertainment, the names of the plays desired by the people to be put into a ballot-box, and the most successful one was to be produced. Every one visiting my theater was to have a chance to cast a ballot for some Shakespearean play. In the mean time I had myself prepared the play—Cymbeline—which I really intended to produce. I let everybody vote, and gave the impression that the vote would decide what would be brought out, but in the mean time Cymbeline was to be put on, whatever

they said. There were a great many ballots cast, but not more than two or three for Cymbeline. There were fifty votes for Hamlet, forty-five for Macbeth, and forty for The Merchant of Venice, but the play I brought out was Cymbeline; I believed it would be popular, and I had a large audience."

Mrs. Labouchere is quite as fond of the stage as her husband, and knows it as thoroughly; it was at the Labouchere villa that I had the pleasure of witnessing the famous performance of "As You Like It," with a number of prominent dramatic artists in the cast.

Dr. Morell Mackenzie, of whom the world has recently heard a great deal, lives in a pleasant home on Harley Street, West, and his wife gives capital entertainments Thursday afternoons, at which one is sure to meet a great many prominent Englishmen. I had but a very short talk with Dr. Mackenzie, as his time when I was there was very busily taken up writing his trials and experiences at the German Court on the occasion of the late Emperor's sickness. I found his wife to be a very charming lady. They have two sons, one, a young man, who is very much "taken" with the stage, and who looks a great deal like his father.

One Londoner whom I remember most pleasantly is Rev. Newman Hall, well known to thousands in America. I first met him at the house of Dr. Strong, of Saratoga, when he was over here preaching. One night we all got together in a parlour, and Dr. Hall told a story after listening to one of mine. One led to another. We commenced about ten o'clock and ended about twelve, he alternating with me, and always telling stories a great deal better than I could. (You may be sure I wouldn't admit this if I could help it.) About twelve o'clock the audience, who had been laughing all the evening, shook hands with the doctor, and went home. I think at that hour he must have about reached the end of his stories—no man can hold more than so many. When I went to London he gave me a charming little lunch at the Toy House, Hempstead Heath, and I enjoyed a pleasant time there with himself, a lot of his friends, and his charming wife.

Speaking of one preacher reminds me of another—one who wasn't fully appreciated in this country. I mean the Rev. Joseph Parker, about whom there was some talk in connection with Plymouth pulpit, when the grand and good Beecher died. Dr. Parker is a splendid fellow to joke with; he laughs all over

when you tell him a good thing, and he's too "square" to let you get away before he can give you another equally good. But there's an immense deal to him besides humour.

I went once to Dr. Parker's noonday meeting at the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, and was greatly impressed by the spectacle of poor men bringing in their dinner-pails and eating their midday meal while Dr. Parker talked to them. If any one doubts his goodness and greatness of heart, let him go there and see how much beloved he is by his immense congregation. His platform, or rather his pulpit, is moved out almost to the centre of the church, as near as can be, in order to properly adjust the acoustics. There he stands and talks; he doesn't preach, but just talks to his congregation. People drop in and stay for five or ten minutes, and then go out, if they like. His charming wife is always near him. In fact I noticed that both Dr. Parker and Dr. Hall were so very fond of their wives, that they never seemed to care to start their sermons unless these ladies were in the congregation. I remember Dr. Parker at church once arising, and, not seeing his wife in her customary seat, he sat down again and waited. She had been detained by some friends; when she finally ar-

rived and took her seat, he commenced his sermon. I asked him about it afterward, and he said he got much of his inspiration by looking into her face.

A woman can make or break a man—every time.

Lady Wilde has every Saturday afternoon a little *conversazione*. She is the mother of Oscar. There are very pleasant gatherings at her house throughout the society season. There you meet all the literary people. Oscar Wilde and his wife, and his brother Willie, generally attend, and also a great many people noted in music and art. The room is lit by candles, with rose shades, which cast a very soft light. Lady Wilde is a very charming lady, and she has the true English style of making one feel perfectly at home; she is constantly receiving friends from America, and is very fond of Americans. I met Oscar Wilde a great deal in society. He is one of the brightest conversationalists I ever had the pleasure of talking with. He is not at all the man most Americans imagine him. His brother Willie Wilde I found to be more of a social man. He has a humourous way of telling a good story, and enjoying it too. He told me one of a young prima

donna on the stage who was singing in Dublin. At one part of the song she takes a long breath and has to sustain a note. She held it for a long while, and two or three Irishmen in the gallery looked at each other, and one said, "Say, Mike, listen to that"; another said, "Oh, that's nothing at all,—that's not the woman, it's the gas." He told me another story of a disturbance in the pit of a theater in Ireland. One Irishman called out, "Put him out"; another fellow said, "Jump on him"; another man said, "Say, Pat, don't waste him; kill a fiddler with him!"

CHAPTER X.

LONDON CLUBS.—SEMI-HOMES, SEMI-OFFICES.—GREAT BLESSINGS TO WIVES.—THE SAVAGE.—A SATURDAY NIGHT.—HOSPITABLE TO AMERICANS.—I “TAKE OFF” BIGGAR.—THE LYRIC CLUB.—THE NEW CLUB.—THE ODD VOLUMES.—THE GALLERY.—TITLE AND RANK.

AMONG the first surprises of an American in London is the great number of clubs; the next surprise is the number of ways in which a man will make his club useful to him. To most New Yorkers the club is a good place to go when they have nothing else to do, but the Englishman's club seems a sort of second home,—a half-way place between residence and business office. An acquaintance writes you a note, not from his place of business or residence, but from his club: he invites you to call on him at his club, not his house. If American wives could know what a blessing this custom is—how it keeps all of a husband's stupid semi-business acquaintances from being imposed upon the family, and saves women from being driven out of their most comfortable room when some fellow wants to “buzz” the head

of the house for an hour or two about politics or a yacht race or a shooting match, why, the dear creatures would have a club house at every other street corner, even if they had to pay all the expenses themselves, out of their own pin-money.

The club is a blessing to the business man, too; in London there is very little of the running into a man's counting-room on private or social business, which is so common here. The Englishman in his counting-room, office, or studio, can depend upon having the use of all his time while there; at his house, the only calls are of a social nature. If in London you want to see a gentleman on any affair of your own, you go to his club: if he is not there you do not go to his office, disturb the course of his business, and make him wish you where thermometers would have to be a mile high to take the temperature. You do not go to his house and disturb his romp with the children, or a rubber of whist with some friends. You merely leave your card at the club, asking when you can see him, and he replies, asking you to call at the club at a specified time.

Beside the many clubs which are really semi-business offices for their members, there are many which are devoted almost entirely to en-

tainment—to “having a good time.” There is no more eating and drinking at these than at any reputable club in New York, but there is a great deal more fun.

For instance, there is the Savage Club, containing quite as many men of brains as any of the learned societies. It resembles the Lotos Club of New York in the great number of dramatic and musical artists among its members, but I think it contains a larger proportion of literary men. The Prince of Wales is a member, with a great many other prominent men. Americans who amount to anything are always taken to the Savage, and always enjoy themselves so much that they wish they could carry the whole club, members and all, back to America with them.

Saturday night at the Savage is a gala day. Maybe a night may not seem a day, but it lasts nearly as long—at the Savage. It begins with a dinner at five o'clock; after an hour or two of eating and drinking the tables are cleared, the incense of burning tobacco begins to perfume the air, and the chairman, who was appointed by his predecessor, for one week only, calls on some member to do something. The member must respond; apologies are never accepted. A man may sing a song, tell a story,

“speak a piece,” or make faces. As the professional members do not have to be on the stage until an hour or two after the dinner is over, they can always be depended upon to open the Club’s evening brilliantly. Afterward the other members do their best, most of which is very good ; sometimes a sober speech is sandwiched between bits of fun, but nobody is sorry, for a fellow isn’t going to get on his feet before a lot of brainy men like the Savage Club members unless he has something to say. Henry M. Stanley, the famous African traveller, has made some capital short speeches at the Savage. Before any one realizes how the clock has been behaving, the theatres are over the actors come back, bringing some of their audiences with them, and the new blood continues to “whoop ’er up.” So pleasant is the “feast of reason and flow of soul” at the Savage that the Club has never felt the need even of a billiard-room. There is no more formality there than at a Methodist camp-meeting, nor any attempt at style in furnishing the rooms, but the members don’t miss it ; I really believe a Savage man would rather sit on a stump, if he could find one, than in an easy-chair.

The fellows at the Savage are particularly attentive and cordial to Americans ; they have

done countless favors to me, faster than I could thank them for, and when the Fourth of July comes around they very often put an American in the chair. The Savage is an ideal "Cave of Harmony," and I imagine it's one of the first places a member longs for when he is tired.

I had a specially amusing experience at the Savage one evening. I had been in the House of Commons that day to hear a debate on the Irish question, and noticed that one of the smart Irish members, Mr. Biggar, had a peculiar delivery. The annual dinner of the Savage occurred that evening, and as my name was on the list as "Wilder, M. P.," I took advantage of the double meaning of the initial letters to say I would imitate one of my fellow-members. Then I "took off" Mr. Biggar; from the amount of applause that followed I imagined I had made a hit; a moment later I was sure of it, for Biggar himself, who was present, exclaimed, loud enough for every one to hear:

"Begorra, I didn't know there were two of me."

Another club that "goes in" for enjoyment, and gets it every time, is the Lyric, which is what a New York boy would call "awful

tonev." The Earl of Londesborough is chairman, and on the managing committee are Sir Julius Goldsmidt, Lord Charles Beresford the famous sea-fighter, Henry Irving, Lord De Lisle, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Dr. Morell Mackenzie, Lord Dudley, and Mr. Bancroft, while the membership is of very high order. The Lyric has both summer and winter quarters; their town house is on Piccadilly and their summer place at St. Ann's, where they have a water front of a thousand feet, a beautiful lawn and garden, cricket ground, tennis court, etc. They give open-air concerts and recitations in warm weather; in winter they give parties, balls, and theatricals, having a handsome little theatre in their town house. Applause is not always as loud at the Lyric as at the Savage; many of the members take their fun gently, but they take it all the same, and can stand a great deal of it. They've smiled with me frequently and in large numbers, and always treated me as kindly as if I were one of themselves, instead of a little chap from the other side of the Atlantic.

Another amusement-loving institution, noted as being the favorite of the Prince of Wales, is the New Club. A peculiarity of it is that the entertainments generally are given at

midnight; this seems to have come about because the artists upon whom the club depends are disengaged at that hour. The New Club is so exclusive that if a fellow is invited there he is pretty sure to let his friends know it.

There is a peculiar club in London called the Odd Volumes. The object is conviviality and mutual admiration—so the form of invitation informs the visitor. It meets once a month and has a dinner; each member connected with it publishes a book, and a limited number of copies is given to each. One or two are saved for the club, and then the manuscript and the type and everything else pertaining to the book is destroyed. In course of time these volumes become very valuable.

One of the most enjoyable clubs is called The Gallery; Sir Coutts Lindsay is its leading spirit. It was there that I first had the pleasure of smiling with our brilliant fellow-countryman, Bret Harte, who is a London favorite. Whistler, the artist, I saw there also; it was the night of a reception given the Prince of Wales, but "Jimmy," as Whistler is always called by his acquaintances, strolled in unconcernedly in white duck trousers, a little white straw hat with a big blue band, a single

eye-glass, a merry laugh and a "chipper" manner, just as if he and the Prince had swapped jack-knives and been fishing together ever since Adam was a boy. Everybody can tell you funny stories about Whistler, but everybody likes him, so of course he's a first-rate fellow.

An American visiting English clubs is sure to be surprised at the number of titles he hears. Besides the nobility, nearly every one seems to have a special handle to his name. Colonels are not quite as numerous as in Kentucky or Georgia, but for Captains and Majors, why, we can't hold a candle to them. It was reserved for me, an American, to "knock them out" on rank in a most unexpected manner. An old waiter—an ex-soldier—at the Savage called me Marshall several times one evening, and was reprimanded by one of the members for addressing a guest by his first name. "His name!" exclaimed the old fellow, looking astonished—and then turning said, "Why, your honor, I thought Marshal his rank!" General Grant prophesied that I should be a general, but the old waiter went him one better, and the title stuck to me for a while, too.

Ah, those London club men know how to enjoy life and make it enjoyable for other

people! Many an American I've met and chatted with about one club or other, where both of us had spent whole hours and evenings smiling at the good things heard and seen. To talk about them, though, when three thousand miles away, takes the smile off of a fellow's face for at least a moment or two.

CHAPTER XI.

HENRY IRVING.—A MOST REMARKABLE MAN.—DISCUSSED AS AN ACTOR—AGREED UPON AS A MAN.—HE WAS MY FRIEND.—ALWAYS SAYS AND DOES THE RIGHT THING.—MY IMPUDENCE AND HIS GOOD NATURE.—ALWAYS AT HIS BEST.—NEVER TALKS OF HIMSELF.—WHEN DOES HE SLEEP?—A TALKING FACE.—HIS DELICATE WAY OF DOING THINGS.—KIND TO AMERICANS.—HIS LITTLE JOKE ON ME.—HENRY IRVING, JUNIOR.

TO most Americans the biggest man in all London is Henry Irving, and I don't wonder at it. Even before he came over here and gave his matchless representations with the best-trained company that ever has played in New York, Americans who were abroad knew a great deal about him. It is the proper thing in London to go to the Lyceum Theatre. Some nights the house is crowded and some nights there seems to be a very thin audience, but there is never any "paper" used to fill the seats, and there is always some one there whom you would not miss seeing for a great deal.

A few years ago one of the London weekly

papers, I think it was Edmund Yates's *World*, published a cartoon of a "first night" at the Lyceum, and all the faces of the people in the stalls and boxes were those of men well known in Europe and America. There was little or no exaggeration in it. A man in London will give up almost anything except his own wedding or the burial of his wife in order to "take in" a first night at the Lyceum. People discuss Irving over there just as we do here. Some are tremendously critical, others laudatory and won't stand a word of depreciation, but both sides meet on common ground when they come to talk about Irving's personality.

I had a great deal to do with Mr. Irving when I was in London. It was not my fault, for he made a great deal of me. I never had a chance to impose myself upon him, for so sure as anything turned up in which it seemed to me that he might be useful to me, he thought of it before I had a chance to do so, and presented himself either personally or by letter in exactly the right way. He is such a thorough gentleman that he cannot imagine any one else being otherwise, and that sort of thing is inexpressibly delightful, even to an American from the backwoods like Yours Truly.

Irving is one of the busiest men in London.

No theatre manager on the face of the earth gives closer attention to all the details of his business, but Irving has such a solid and well-arranged brain that he can attend to all his private business and yet find time to go everywhere he wishes to see anything, or go where other people wish to see him; and between these two demands upon his time he is compelled to be almost omnipresent.

I asked some one how it was that Irving seemed to know exactly how always to do the right thing at the right time. The answer was, "It is because of his theatrical training." I doubt it, but if that is true I wish all my acquaintances could serve an apprenticeship upon some dramatic stage, Mr. Irving's preferably.

One time when I was in London, and knew Irving was coming to America, I thought it would be a good thing for me to give him a letter of introduction. That's exactly the sort of fool I was. I did not stop for a moment to think that he was known here a hundred times as well as I; but, honestly, it occurred to me that he was an Englishman and I was an American, and consequently I could do him some good. So I went around to the theatre and I said to him: "Mr. Irving, I would like to see you a

minute. I have some friends in America—" Ah, yes," said he, " my dear boy, how many seats do they want? They shall have them." I think about that time I was as red as the best boiled lobster that any one ever saw at Fulton Market, but I succeeded in stammering out: " They don't want any seats at all; that is not what I came for. I simply wanted to tell you that these friends of mine in America would do anything in the world for me, and I'd like to give you a letter of introduction to them." There was nothing left for me but to sit down and write him some letters, and he took them all very kindly. But I think if about the time I took pen in hand he had got up and kicked me out of the theatre, I should have felt a great deal more comfortable, and certainly had less reason to despise myself.

Irving is an absolute wonder to me. I have had to make it a business to study prominent men here and abroad, and of course I made a study of him, but the more I observed him and listened to him, the more astonished I was at the greatness of his knowledge and the breadth of that head of his. People tell me sometimes, " You ought to see so-and-so at such a place if you want to see him at his best." Well, I have seen Irving everywhere,—at receptions,

theatres, clubs, and in the streets. I have seen him riding, have seen him eating, and I never yet saw him when he was not at his best.

One delightful thing about him is, that you never hear him speak of himself; and another, which is like unto it, is this: you never hear him say an unkind word of anybody else. I have no doubt that he is quite as good a judge of human nature as I, but that is nonsense, for of course he is a great deal better one. Nevertheless, no matter whom he meets he has the most courteous method of looking at them, that one can imagine. He will listen to the longest and most ponderous speech in the world by way of introduction, and not appear the least bit bored; and then, the moment he speaks, you, or whoever he is speaking to, will feel entirely at ease. I confess that after I had seen him a few times I was completely awed when in his presence. If he does not know everything about everybody that stands before him for an instant, then I am no judge of human nature. He will look at you as courteously as if you were the Prince of Wales or President of the United States, but all the while, if you have any eyes in your head, you are obliged to see that he is looking you

through and through and taking your measure entirely.

I expected to see him off his dignity, perhaps occasionally out of temper, at his theater. If a manager cannot get out of temper in his own theatre, where on earth can he? But no; in spite of the little quarrels and troubles and tiffs that go on in every dramatic company on the face of the earth, and probably every other company besides, Mr. Irving is imperturbable, cool, and smiling, brushing away all other people's difficulties in the gentlest manner in the world, and never intimating by look, word, or deed that he has any whatever of his own. No matter how small the difference that may occur between two of his people, he never says an unkind word to either, but devotes himself to adjusting the difficulty and leaving both of them better pleased with each other than they ever were before, and with a new and grateful appreciation of the tact of the manager.

One of his young men, Weedon Grossmith, told me of his own first appearance at the Lyceum, and how uncomfortable he was. He felt that he was on the boards of the first theatre in England, with the leading actor of the English-speaking race, and before one of the most critical audiences of London. Well,

when he came out to speak his lines, he felt as if the roof of his mouth and the tip of his tongue were glued together, and his knees shook beneath him every time that Irving came in sight. But Irving would go up to him, pat him on the shoulder, and say: "Don't be foolish, my dear boy; cheer up. I am with you; you are doing first rate. If you please me, what on earth have you to worry about regarding other people?"

Irving so "laid himself out" on me, as the saying is over here, that he was of immense assistance to me in every direction. The first time he heard one of my alleged performances was at a reception given by Sir Coutts Lindsay. Well, Irving was there and heard me. He turned to Bret Harte and said, "Who is this little chap?" Bret Harte told him, and that evening Irving took pains to meet me in the coat-room and, said, "See here, little fellow; I want you to go in the cab with me." I did so. He went down to my hotel, and we sat there talking for a couple of hours in the cool morning air. He asked a great deal about America and the people over here, and sat there smoking and listening to me, putting in a word himself once in a while, but evidently more anxious to listen than to talk. He spoke of the many kind

friends he had over here and I told him of others whom he would find, but all the while I was fearing that his courtesy to me was depriving him of needed rest. I learned better afterward; he is what we call a regular night-owl. I suppose he must sleep sometimes—humanity cannot get along without it, but I don't know of any one who ever saw him on his way home to go to bed. I remember one night very late—long after the theatre had closed, he went with me to call on Charles Wyndham. We sat there chatting for a couple of hours, and suddenly he said, "I guess I'll run over and see Labouchere for an hour." It was then two o'clock in the morning. He called a cab, went over to see Labouchere, and came back at about four o'clock just as Wyndham and I and the other fellows were adjourning. It seems as if he never slept. They say a weasel sleeps with one eye open; I guess Irving must sleep with both eyes open.

Irving has the most expressive face that any one can imagine. When you see him on the stage with his "make-up" on, it is expressive enough for any purpose, but sitting face to face with him, or sitting in a chair *en tête-à-tête* you get an idea of his features that no stage representation, behind glaring lights, can pos-

sibly convey. A friend of his told me a story which I know Mr. Irving nowadays can afford to have repeated. It was about a law-suit in which he was brought up during the early days of his dramatic experience, when he had a great deal more brains than money. At that time he was playing in Manchester, and was said to be dreamy, and allowing his mind to run off his business all the while—very much as is the case with great men everywhere, when they are brooding over something new to precipitate upon the public. He had run up a great many bills which he was unable to pay, and the judge said to him in court: “So here you are! Too young a man to have been spending money so fast. You have been living too fast, and here you are.” Irving did not speak a single word, but his face very distinctly said: “Well, sir, there were two or three chances in a hundred that I would fail. I have had to be among some people in high life. I have had to live above my means for the sake of the means I expected to make afterward. I have had to be around among these people, and take my share of the expense, so as to make a point. I have lost it this time, but I am willing to take the consequences, and I know sooner or later I will succeed.” “He said all this by his expression,”

said this friend ; " it was impossible to read it in any other way."

Like all other great men Mr. Irving is quite sensitive in spite of his admirable self-command; all artists are. Why, there's Patti, who has been on the stage as long as she can remember, yet once in a while she is so nervous that she can scarcely control herself. She is also very sympathetic, which is a kindred quality to nervousness, of course. One night I saw her at the Lyceum Theatre in a box with her husband Nicolini, Mr. William Beattie Kingston of the London *Telegraph*, and Henry Ward Beecher. Irving and Terry were on the stage playing "Faust," and Patti cried like a baby all through the performance. After the performance was over, Irving went into the box with a beautiful fan in his hand. He walked up to Patti and said, "Ah, it's rather warm here, isn't it; fan yourself." She took the fan, opened it, and commenced fanning herself; pretty soon she chanced to see engraved on the side of one of the ribs of the fan, "Presented to Madame Patti by Henry Irving." That was Mr. Irving's way of making a presentation speech.

Irving is specially kind to Americans. He was so before he ever came over here, and I

believe before he ever thought of coming here. American actors of all degrees can testify to his courtesy and kindness, not only to the extent of seats in the theatre but in many more substantial ways. Some of our best actors have played in his theatre, and their heartiest encouragement has come from Mr. Irving himself. Like all other great men he has no fear of rivalry. No one enjoys better acting by some one else better than he.

Beside being extremely courteous, Irving can be very funny; no one can tell a joke better than he. Seated close beside you, where he does not have to think of what tone of voice to take, is different from hearing him in a theatre where he has probably to take an unnatural tone in order to carry his words to the gallery and the extreme wall of a theatre. His voice has charming play and intonation, and when he tells a story, not a particle of the point can be lost.

Here is a letter which Mr. Irving sent me in acknowledgment of a lot of my photographs sent him :

“ Lyceum Theatre, 27th July, 1886.

“ DEAR MR. WILDER :—

“ I ought before this to have acknowledged your photographs which you so kindly sent me.

They pleasantly remind me of some of the genial and skilful characterizations that I have seen. With all good wishes, sincerely your friend,

“HENRY IRVING.”

Mr. Irving knows how to play a practical joke once in a while without being at all ugly, and yet getting enough out of it to make a very amusing story afterward. I remember his once asking me whether I would like to go down and entertain a party of Greeks. I promptly sent my mind backward to my school days and recalled what I had read in Greek history about the peculiarities of the people, and I made up my mind that they would be very easy to entertain because the Greek character was so intellectual. When I arrived at the place designated, I was very glad I had come, and I mentally patted myself on the head for my characterization of the people, for I found a party of the loveliest ladies imaginable, magnificently dressed, and a lot of gentlemen of fine face and figure and with most intellectual countenances. I thought I had the easiest task in the world to entertain them, and I went at it as a labour of love,—no, not a labour, but a pleasure. But alas! they had no appreciation of American humour. It was an

utterly terrible ordeal. Jokes that the most intelligent people over here would simply double up at, they passed by as merely so much wind. Finally I completely exhausted myself and lost heart. I had talked for half an hour with no visible result, and then to add to my misery the hostess came to me and said, "Now, Mr. Wilder, can't you say something funny." Imagine my feelings! I said, "Madam, I assure you I have done the best I could." Then I called my cab, and it was not until some time afterward that I learned, through some of the people to whom Mr. Irving had told this story in his inimitable manner, that not a single one of the party understood a word of English. Whenever afterward I had occasion to pass the door of the house where I met these Greeks, or even to go into that portion of London, a cold shiver has got into me that lasted for several minutes. I forgave Irving for it, though. It was worth doing for the sake of giving him such a capital story to tell on me.

I was rather startled one evening at a reception given by Charles Wyndham, of the Criterion Theatre,—an actor to whom thousands of Americans are immensely indebted for the fun he gave them when he was over here—at hearing the servant announce "Henry Irving,

Jr." Turning around, I discovered a young man, slender, long-legged, with very dark hair and heavy eyebrows. He had exactly his father's profile, and wore eyeglasses. He is a charming fellow to talk to, and very proud indeed of his name and parentage. His manner is as gentlemanly as his father's—it would be impossible to praise it higher—and he has that pleasant, humourous smile which his father always wears. He told me an amusing story of an incident at an East End theatre where, just as the heroine had dropped on her knees and got off the speech, "Abandoned! Lost! Oh, heavens! what is there left for me?" and the curtain was coming down, a vendor in the pit shouted out, "Apples! Oranges! Pies and Cakes!"

England contains a great many famous men, great men of every description, men whom Americans may do well to study and imitate; but after several seasons in London, and after having had all notables pointed out to me by kind friends, after having chatted pleasantly with most of them and been kindly treated by all, I must still say that the most interesting man in all England for an American to study is Henry Irving.

CHAPTER XII.

AMERICANS IN ENGLAND.—NO END TO THEM.—THEY ARE WELL TREATED.—NOT FAIR TO OUR MINISTER.—MR. PHELPS.—FOURTH OF JULY AT THE LEGATION.—AN AMERICAN MONTE CRISTO.—THE SCHOOL TREAT.—ENGLISH SHOPS AND AMERICAN CUSTOMERS.—HOWARD PAUL.—UNFORTUNATE YANKEES.

IF I wanted to meet a great many Americans and could not look into heaven, I think the next place I should prefer to go would be London. I always meet so many Americans over there that I am almost tempted to wonder whether something has not occurred in my own country to clean out two or three large cities, and send abroad everybody who has money enough to take care of themselves away from home, as well as quite a number who do not seem to be in that enviable condition. I don't at all wonder that Mr. James Gordon Bennett has begun to publish a daily edition of the *New York Herald* in that city. I only wonder that he didn't do it before, for while the English are courteous and attentive to Americans in almost every other way, they

give them very little home news in the daily papers. If you look carefully through any of the leading London dailies you may be rewarded by finding a New York date, but under it all the information you will get will be that coffee has advanced nine points, or that there was a little flurry in some railroad shares on the Stock Exchange the day before. News such as all Americans long for when they are away from home—some of them to the extent of cabling over specially for facts about matters that would not be worth thinking about at home—cannot be had in England for love or money. I predict an immense success for Mr. Bennett's London edition of the *Herald*.

I can't blame Americans for flocking to London, and, indeed, to England in general, for all who deserve it are quite as well treated there as at home; better, in fact, for, as already intimated several times in this book, English people have a quantity and quality of leisure that is entirely unknown over here. For an American who has been to England to come back and say the English people are boors, or stiff, or suspicious, or unobliging, is to say that he is not a representative American himself. Some of our people have come to grief by not knowing exactly how to act in certain circum-

stances. For instance, if I were to stop a man in the street in London and ask him a question about something near by, he would stare at me an instant and then pass on in silence; but if I were to say, "I beg your pardon, but I am an American, and I should be very glad to know about so and so," he would be quite as courteous and obliging as a Philadelphian, and everybody knows that a Philadelphian will go without his dinner for the sake of answering any question from a person who is a stranger in that city.

A great deal of the kindly feeling for Americans in England, especially in London, is due to the courtesy of our ministers at the Court of St. James. Mr. Motley, Mr. Lowell, Mr. Phelps, and others have been unwearied in their endeavours to make the time of our travelling public pass pleasantly. I doubt whether any one who has not been in the diplomatic service can realize the amount of effort which these gentlemen have put forth in making Americans feel at home in the mother country. I have occasionally heard some ill-natured Americans say that our minister in London (if he didn't happen to belong to the speaker's own political party) didn't seem to do anything except look after Americans so-

cially, but for my part I cannot see how he has time to do anything else. Most Americans seem to think this is all the minister was put there for, and that at the shortest possible notice our minister can present them at Court. Some of them act as if her Majesty, the Queen, was in some way subject to the orders of the American minister, and that all that functionary has to do, when one of his countrymen calls upon him, is to ring for a messenger boy, send him to the Queen's residence, and ask her Majesty to get into her robes of state and her best crown, and be prepared to receive an immediate call.

My own experience at the American Legation in London was principally during the term of Minister Phelps, who with his wife has kept open house in delightful style ever since he went over. Every Friday afternoon Mr. Phelps would give a reception, at which any American who was of any account at home was welcome, and there would meet many of his fellow-countrymen and have a most enjoyable time. A great day for Americans in London is the Fourth of July, and then admission to the Legation is necessarily by invitation, for it could not possibly hold one-tenth of all who wish to go. On the last Fourth of July when

I was there, in 1887, were present Mr. Blaine, James Russell Lowell, Mrs. James Brown Potter, Mrs. John Bigelow of New York, Mrs. John Sherwood, Emma Nevada, and a number of other representative Americans, from all respectable classes and professions. Of course, nearly every one who did not receive invitations felt hurt, and some of them wrote ugly letters to the American newspapers; but I speak from personal knowledge when I say if they knew the circumstances they would have been glad at being left out, for the place was so crowded that it was almost impossible to move about. Yet Mr. Phelps and his wife seemed omnipresent, looking after their guests and seeing that by no chance should any American fail to have a pleasant time.

There is one very famous man in London who deserves more than passing mention. He is Colonel J. T. North. I am sorry that he does not hail from the United States; but he is an American, nevertheless—a South American Monte Cristo. Although he is an Englishman by birth, nobody ever alludes to him except as an American. Thirty years ago he was a workman at Leeds, earning thirty shillings a week, and thinking himself remarkably well off at that; he was shrewd, intelligent, and clever,

and in time became foreman of the agricultural implement factory of the famous firm of Messrs. Fowler. His employers sent him to South America to put up some machinery, and while there he saw an opportunity to put up a fortune for himself. He became interested in railroads, saw the fertilizing advantages of nitre, obtained control of vast nitre-beds by government concessions, amassed millions, became the "nitre king," returned to England, and bought a beautiful country place in Kent. His wealth and ability soon made him a leader both in business and society. He has established new enterprises in England, and fortunes have accumulated rapidly in his hands. He became popularly known as "North the Money-maker." He was offered the colonelcy of a volunteer regiment, and made Master of the Mid-Kent Hounds, a title which I suspect pleased him a great deal the more. Now the whole world and his wife bows to him. They not only bow to him, but they run after him and cling to the skirts of his coat.

In spite of all his business responsibilities, Colonel North is a jolly, good-natured fellow, generous to his friends, kind to everybody, and so obliging that everybody who wishes to make money tries to be a friend of his. Whenever

a scheme is up for making money, the projectors go first to Colonel North, and if they secure him the fortune of that enterprise is made. Wherever the Colonel goes in business, there goes the world that has money to invest. His name seems synonymous with immediate and large profit. His expenditures are liberal almost beyond belief. If he takes a fancy to a thing he buys it, whether it be a horse, a warehouse, a tavern, or a historical loom. Everybody who knows the city knows the old Woolpack Tavern. Well, the Colonel has bought that. He bought Kirkstall Abbey, and presented it to his native town of Leeds. He bought Mr. Frith's latest Academy success, "The Road to Ruin," paying 6000 guineas for it, and waiving the copyright for engraving. I was told that a short time ago the Colonel started to float a South American bank subscription. The books were no sooner opened than the price of shares shot up to a high premium.

The first time I met the Colonel I was introduced to him by an American friend, Mr. Horton, who lives with his charming family at the Victoria Hotel in London all the year round, and to whom I am indebted for many kind and thoughtful acts. I went out to Colonel

North's one day when he was giving what is called a school-treat. He had purchased a large tent for \$5000; I asked him, "Isn't that a good deal of money for a tent for an occasion of this kind?" "Well," said he, "I do this thing once or twice a year, and every time I've hired a tent I've paid almost as much as it was worth, so now I have bought it."

He entertained over one thousand children that afternoon, and had a number of famous artists to amuse them. The school-treat, as it is called in that country, is something not known here. They take all the scholars of some London public school by railroad, in the morning, to the house of some well-known man to enjoy themselves on his ground, and the owner does all he can to make them remember the occasion happily. Besides some recitations and music of a high order, Colonel North had a Punch and Judy show, and a neighbouring minstrel show with what the English call "the correct imitation of an American darkey." A bountiful lunch was provided, and Mrs. North herself, with a bevy of wonderfully pretty young ladies in big white housekeeping aprons, were busy in making sandwiches and cutting up other wholesome food. The affair lasted from ten in the morning till five in the after-

noon, and at the end of it balloons were sent up and every child was given a toy of some kind. In the afternoon the children were all grouped together and photographed; then they marched off for tea in the big tent. When the curate said grace, how the good things did disappear! It was equal to the newsboys' picnic on one of Starin's barges. I am sure that sort of thing would go well in the United States in the vicinity of New York, only I don't know exactly where the boys would look for a Colonel North to give it.

Many of the London shops make great efforts to obtain American patronage, for there is so much of it. Besides travelling Americans seem to care so little for the value of money. They will buy anything they fancy, regardless of the price. In many of these shops, the American flag is displayed to catch the passing Yankee. There is only one brand of American whom the English don't like; it is the shopping fiend—the person who goes into a place, looks at everything, asks a great many questions, prices almost everything, and then goes out without buying anything. It is the English custom to purchase something, no matter how little, to compensate the establishment for whatever trouble you may have made.

One American who has been on the other side so long that the present generation would probably regard him as an Englishman born and bred is Howard Paul, whom old-timers at the theatres here will remember as the giver of some very clever entertainments of the impersonation line. Paul has made London his home for almost fifty years, I believe; nevertheless, he is still a true American,—nervous, excitable, generous, sociable, humourous, and, I am happy to say, very prosperous.

There are some Americans in London to whom I would rather not allude, but whom I ought to mention by way of warning. They are those who have gone over there with the desire to improve their financial condition, and with a vague notion, Micawber-like, that something will turn up to their advantage. If any of my readers happen to belong to that class—which I admit contains a great many good fellows—I beg to inform them London is the wrong place for them. The American who thinks that the Englishman is a stupid fellow, whom anybody can get around with any sort of scheme, is bound to woeful disappointment. He is doomed to come back home in the steerage, and even then he is likely to get his ticket as a matter of charity from the American Lega-

tion or from some good-natured brother countryman. I found a great many Americans stranded there and anxious to get away. A number of them had gone over there with the same purpose which carried me—that is to say, to give entertainments, but they did not seem to have learned the business properly before they left home. Entertaining—that is, reading and reciting, singing, playing, etc.—has become a high art on the other side of the water, and to succeed a man must do one of two things: he must either be better than anybody else in his line, or he must strike an entirely new and original vein.

A lot of these good fellows and women seem to think that they would do first-rate if they could only get the indorsement of the Prince of Wales, and it is a very unpleasant task to try to make them understand that one thing is absolutely pre-requisite to such an indorsement; and that is ability to entertain the Prince of Wales. Some people have it, some haven't; that's all there is about it. All that I have been able to tell them on the subject I have very cheerfully done and I propose to say something about it later on, hoping that it will make the way easy for some, and keep a number of others from going away from home.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUFFALO BILL.—HE MET OLD FRIENDS.—A LION IN SOCIETY.—NATE SAULSBURY.—JACK BURKE.—INDIANS IN DRAWING-ROOMS.—I ENTERTAINED THEM.—A PATRIOTIC EXPLANATION.—THE BOYS TOLD STORIES.—ONE ABOUT NED BUNTLINE.—BUCK TAYLOR'S PIE.

AMERICA has sent a great many famous beings to England, and the English have always taken them at their full value. We sent them Henry Ward Beecher, the horse Iroquois, and the yacht America. We sent them John Lothrop Motley and George Francis Train, and Lawrence Barrett and McKee Rankin, and Minister Phelps. All these dissimilar beings were immensely successful through their respective merits. But the greatest, most unapproachable, thoroughly howling success that America ever sent to London was Buffalo Bill.

Some people have talked of Bill's success in London as being strange. It was not strange at all. The great mass of the English people think of America as a place principally infested by Indians, bears, and hunters, and they took

Bill and his show as a sample of that sort of thing. There are any number of the common people who, if they were to land at Castle Garden, would like to have a rifle in their hands so as to pick off a buffalo or knock a grizzly out of a high tree, and I have no doubt many of them landing in that way keep their hands closely pressed to the top of their heads, for fear that a savage will suddenly start out of the Field Building or the Produce Exchange and attempt to take their scalps. I do not exactly know how they think business is done in New York, but probably they imagine that there is a guard of soldiers around each of the banks and also around the Stock Exchange, to keep the Indians from rushing in and cleaning out the crowd and making off with all the plunder.

But these were not the only people who crowded to the Wild West Show. A great many English noblemen and other gentlemen have been coming over here for years to hunt big game ; society and the newspapers haven't got hold of them, for they didn't come for that sort of thing. It is generally the bogus noblemen and gentlemen that New York society takes up strongly and then drops in a hurry. Well, these people always went West, of course, in

search of their game, and consulted our army officers, who are the most hospitable and attentive hosts in the world, and the officers selected guides for them. A few years ago Bill was the favorite guide for any army officer who wanted to go out to look for game, consequently Bill was guide for hundreds of these gentlemen, and they discovered what a splendid good fellow he was. First they learned to like him, and then they heartily respected him, and he never did anything to make them change their opinion of him—he could not, for in spite of the prairie style which was his at that time, he was born well and well-bred, and had always kept his heart and his manners in good working order; so when he started for London all these people remembered him and talked about him. They talked about him a long time beforehand; each one of them was unconsciously an advance agent, one of the very best that possibly could be provided.

In fact, as one nobleman, whose name I won't give, said to me once, confidentially, "It was a great relief to me to have Buffalo Bill come over here. I have done a great deal of shooting in the West, and though I say it myself, as you Americans put it, I did it pretty well. But I brought home so many antlers,

and skins, and furs, that it seemed to some of my acquaintances I must have got some of them with a golden bullet or at least with a handful of silver shot. Bill had always been my guide, so he no sooner landed and became acquainted than people began to ask him about some of my exploits. They repeated to him the stories I had told them, and Bill, being a veracious man, had to admit I had told only the truth. In fact, he sometimes added a point or two which I had omitted, not so much out of modesty as for fear that if I told the whole truth nothing that I said would be believed. That set me up at once among my acquaintances, and as soon as some other sportsmen heard of it they also hurried to Bill for certificates of character and sportsmanship."

But this was not all of it. Bill always seemed to know exactly what to do and say. I have heard many Englishmen, and many English ladies, talk about him, and all were as delighted with his manners and personality as with his show. I must express my pride and delight, as an American, at the figure Bill cut in society. He fills a full-dress suit as gracefully as he does the hunter's buckskins, carries himself as elegantly as any English gentleman

of leisure, uses good grammar, speaks with a drawing-room tone of voice, and moves as leisurely as if he had nothing to do all his life but exist beautifully. He tells a good joke, but knows when not to carry the fun too far. Every friend he has made over there I am sure he has kept. I ought to know, for most of them have told me so themselves.

Bill would have made a tremendous success, all alone by himself, but it would be unfair not to admit that a great deal of the popularity and business success of the Wild West Show was due to the admirable business management of William's partner, "Nate" Saulsbury. Nate is, as a good many Americans know, quite as much of a character in his way as Buffalo Bill himself. He is one of the funniest comedians who ever walked the American boards, and can play high tragedy besides, but to see him at his best one wants to see him among a few familiars and hear him tell a story. He tells as much with his face as he does with his tongue, and that is saying a great deal, for though I have heard a number of his stories, "first off," as the saying is, there was never a word too much or a word too little. The point came in exactly right, and was as sharp as that of a nettle, though it never stung anybody. Nate was

quite as gentlemanly as Bill, and if he did not make as much of a name over there, it was only because he was so attentive to business all the while that he had not much time to go about. Every one, however, who ever met him wanted to see him again, and knowing his sympathetic and obliging nature, I have no doubt that his principal sorrow in England was that he could not respond to all the invitations which were showered upon him.

Another American who contributed largely to the success of the Wild West Show was Jack Burke, or Major John Burke as he is frequently known in America, though all his old acquaintances persist in calling him Jack. Jack is about as handsome and distinguished-looking a fellow as Buffalo Bill himself—tall, straight, deep-chested, with a fine head set magnificently on his shoulders, a very intelligent face brimming over with good-nature, and an eye that begins to laugh as soon as the point of anybody's joke is reached. Jack is one of the heartiest fellows the Lord ever made. How he managed to get through all his business and yet have time to talk to everybody and cap every man's joke with a better one, is one of the things that I can't find out. If I could, I would be a millionaire in my business inside of

five years. Jack was one of the fellows whom I was continually meeting wherever I went, and, knowing him very well, I used to make my way to his side as soon as possible. The number of times I have heard the two of us alluded to as "the long and the short of it"—reference of course being to our comparative sizes—can hardly be stated by all the figures in a first-class arithmetic.

The Wild West Show was almost always crowded, but on one particular occasion I saw an audience there that would have delighted the soul of a dynamiter if he could have got in, fully prepared for practical operations. It was a private exhibition and no one was allowed to be present except the invited guests. There was more royalty there than had been seen together outside of a royal residence for a long while. There were the Prince and Princess of Wales, the King of Saxony, the King of Denmark, the King of Greece, the Crown Prince of Sweden and Norway, Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, the hereditary Prince and Princess of Saxe-Meiningen, Princess Victoria of Prussia, Prince George of Greece, the Duke of Sparta, Prince Albert Victor of Wales, Prince George of Wales, the Princesses Victoria and Maud of Wales, Prince Louis of Baden,

and a great number of notable ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting. But the dynamiter wasn't there.

Buffalo Bill was entertained almost everywhere while he was in London; so were a number of his Indians. People never seemed able to see enough of these redskins. They didn't stare at them as mere curiosities, as some Americans would, but they would first go to Major Burke, the manager, and say: "Mr. Burke, we'd like to have some of those Indians drop out to our place—Red Shirt and others, and we'd like to entertain them so that they would have a good time as well as we." Well, Jack Burke, being a friend of mine, would frequently say, "I guess you had better go and get Marshall Wilder, the American humorist; he is just the man to have on hand for an affair of that kind." So they would finally send for me. I would go there with the rest of the guests and attempt to entertain the Indians. I got up a programme especially for them and had it first carefully explained to the whole gang; then, whenever I was called to any place where they were, I gave the same old entertainment. Of course, being Indians, they could not sing out "Chestnut," and they learned to know just when the point would come in so

they would laugh about the right time—laugh in their Indianic way, which is a sort of grunt. It made me feel rather sheepish afterward, though, when the hostess would come to me and say, “Mr. Wilder, how is it that the Indians, who don’t speak English, always seem to understand you?” “Oh,” I would have to say, after swallowing part of my conscience, “it isn’t at all difficult; art is everything in our country.”

It was very funny to see those Indians in an English parlor; they would sit, with their red paint on, as dignified as if they were royal personages—and about half of them really did imagine themselves to be such, in their own country. If they were called upon to do anything they would always cheerfully respond, generally singing a love-song. An Indian love-song is one of the most original things in the world; you would never imagine what it was unless you were told, and then you would scarcely believe your own ears. When a little present was given them, as frequently occurred, if it were a trinket or anything shining, their faces would brighten up in spite of all the paint that was on them. Even regarding these Indians, the delicacy of British hospitality showed out very plainly. I knew several la-

dies who sent cooks away out to the Wild West camp where the Indians belonged, just to find out how they cooked their meals, so that everything that was set before them should please them. That is the way the English have of treating everybody, from the highest to the lowest, when they attempt to entertain them.

Of course Bill and Nate Saulsbury and Jack Burke were continually importuned for stories, and there aren't three better story-tellers on the face of the earth. So if the reader will remember that all they told were entirely new, and about a country and a state of society—to wit, that of our Western border—which was entirely new, strange, and unimaginable to most of the English people, it is easy to understand that their stories were immensely popular. I don't propose to repeat any of them, because I am afraid the effect would be about the same as that of looking at an object through a diminishing glass. Besides, if they want their stories printed, they are quite competent to do it themselves, and I have no doubt they could do it a great deal better than I.

When it came to some of the cowboys, however, who also were steadily importuned for stories, there was a little drawing of the long-

bow, the bow itself being longer than any English archer ever carried. I cannot blame the boys for it; some of the Englishmen swallowed everything that was told them so unquestioningly that it was hard not to enlarge a little upon the facts, to put it mildly. I remember one of them telling about bucking horses, of which the company carried over a few carefully selected samples. An English man asked, "Why, do these horses really buck when they are in America?" The cowboy replied "Yes," and the Englishman said he had an impression it was one of the tricks of the business, and that the horses were taught to buck. "Oh, no," said the cowboy; "they are born that way, as you will find out if you ever buy an Indian pony without first having him examined by an expert. A most extraordinary thing happened to me once. I bought a pony in a hurry and jumped on his back, and he turned out to be a bucker. He kept on bucking for three whole days and nights." "Why," asked the Englishman, "how did you get your meals?" "Oh," said the cowboy, "that was all right; the boys kept shying biscuits at me, and I caught them on the fly." "Well, but how did you get anything to drink?" "Well," said the cowboy, "we were near a

little brook, and every time the horse bucked I scooped up a little water in my hand and drank it that way." I don't suppose it has yet occurred to that Englishman that the brook could not be over the fellow's head, and that if it was not he could not very well scoop water.

One of Buffalo Bill's stories I will venture to tell, because he gave it as an illustration of how bad some plays could be; the listeners were all dramatic artists themselves. It was concerning the time when he was an actor with Texas Jack in a play by Ned Buntline,—a play which a great many Americans have seen and laughed over. Buntline was very proud of this play, but one night when he chanced to be "off" the stage Bill arranged with the manager to reverse the order of proceedings, and begin with the fourth act, then play the third, and then the second, finishing up with the first act. Buntline, who was to come on in the last act, was at the front of the house keeping an eye on the doorkeeper, apparently, and he did not come in until near the end of the act, and was horrified to find that they were playing the fourth act first. He ran to the back of the stage and was utterly dazed for a minute or two; then he began to get off some vocal fire-

works. He knew that he was sober, and after a little examination satisfied himself he was sane, so he demanded an explanation. "Well," said Bill, "we have shifted the acts; it got monotonous playing in the regular way all the time." "But," exclaimed Buntline, "confound you, you will ruin everything!" "Oh, nonsense!" said Bill, "the audience will never know the difference." And I don't believe they ever did.

Buck Taylor, one of Bill's Wild West Company, was immensely popular over in England, and Bill told a story about him apropos of the American fondness for pie. Buck is very fond of pie. Bill took Buck to breakfast with him one morning in Chicago. They were at one of the best hotels in the city, and Buck, after eating his breakfast, said to the waiter, "Now, bring me some pie." The waiter was a girl, and she almost shook the beautiful crimps off her forehead as she tossed her head and replied contemptuously, "We don't have pie for breakfast." "Oh, is that so?" said Buck; "Well, when do you have it?" "At dinner, sir." "Well, when is dinner?" "Twelve o'clock, sir." "All right," said he, "I guess I'll stay here and wait for it." And there at that table sat Buck Taylor, solitary and alone, from the time that

the breakfast dishes were cleared away until dinner was served. After Bill told this story Buck Taylor never again lacked pie for breakfast, luncheon, dinner, and afternoon lunch, supper or midnight meal, so long as he was in England.

CHAPTER XIV.

MY SUCCESS ABROAD.—NO SECRET ABOUT IT.—NEVER MADE FUN OF THE ENGLISH.—NOR FORCED MYSELF UPON THEM.—INTERESTED MYSELF IN MY FRIENDS.—NO “EFFETE” NONSENSE.—DID NOT “TOADY.”—NO FAVOURS DEMANDED.—DRANK NOTHING STRONGER THAN WATER.—WHEN I ADMIRERD ANYTHING I SAID SO.—PUT ON NO “AIRS.”

EVER since the first time I came back from London and began to talk about people I had met and good times I had had—I don't suppose any fellow can help talking that way,—people have asked me how on earth it all happened, and they have looked at me curiously as if they were trying to discover the secret of it.

There is no secret at all about it in any way, shape, or manner, unless it is I went there determined to be jolly under all circumstances and I lived up to my resolution. I discovered that any one that will do the same will have a good time wherever he goes. Everybody likes to see a man smile, take things pleasantly, make the best of things, and I have been in

training for that sort of life for a great many years, as I have already intimated in my opening chapter.

Perhaps one reason that I got along very well was that I never made fun of English peculiarities, and I took great pains not always to be telling how much better we did things in America than they do over there. English people are sensitive about that sort of thing, and I can't see how in that respect they differ much from Americans. All my readers know what they think of Englishmen or Germans or Frenchmen who come over here and spend all their time in explaining how their country is a great deal better than ours. I never got down to any of that sort of nonsense. When once in a while—sometimes oftener—I noticed some things that were done better here than there, I kept it to myself, gave a little hurrah for the American eagle and the Stars and Stripes—also to myself—but I never said anything about it to my kind entertainers. Whatever they learned from me about America they drew out of me by persistent questioning. I never was backward about talking of my own beloved country when any one seemed interested in it, but I never “ran” the subject on folks. Very early in life I heard the good

old maxim that though you may lead a horse to water you can't make him drink, so I never was fool enough to try to make English people believe that our country was a great deal better than theirs. If I believe it, that's enough for me. If I want them to believe it, I wait until I get them over here, let them use their own eyes and ears and form their own conclusions, for I know perfectly well they won't take any of mine instead. When I met a pleasant man or woman in England, I did exactly what I or any other sensible American would do here in similar circumstances: I made myself as agreeable as I could in a gentlemanly way, so as to try to make them friendly to me, and to make myself friendly to them, and it very seldom failed to work.

When I chanced to meet any of the disagreeable people who persisted in abusing America, I simply changed the subject, recalling an old story of a fellow who was going along one winter on the frozen lumps on the side of the road, and grumbling awfully about the unevenness of the turf. A friend who heard him growling and swearing said to him: "You confounded fool, if you don't like the ground that's under your feet why don't you get out in the smooth road?" Well, that's what I tried

to do in England. I always tried to get into a smooth road when people tried to make things rocky for me. Of course I always endeavored to behave like a gentleman, in all circumstances. Some Americans have an idiotic idea that in going abroad they must act in a manner different from other people, or they won't be recognized for Americans. This sort of fool has done our country a great deal more harm than he ever can atone for. I tried not to be this sort of fool. When you are in Rome do as the Romans do. When you are in Turkey do as the turkeys do. That was my motto over in England. I didn't find it hard to live up to it. I didn't find any trouble in acting like gentlemen bred and born there, and consequently nobody could find any fault with me for being "one of those rowdyish Americans"—an expression which I have heard regarding some fellows who knew a great deal better than to act that way.

I always tried to interest myself in whatever was interesting my entertainers, and to give all the sympathy I could in whatever matter was being talked about. I never for an instant imagined myself on exhibition, unless I was exhibiting professionally. If men were talking politics or horse-racing, or if women

were talking about dresses or babies, I listened respectfully, joined in the conversation to the best of my ability, and assured them at least that they had a good listener. I don't know of anything in the world that is more appreciated by intelligent people than a steady, thoroughly interested, can't-wear-him-out sort of a listener. English people don't differ a bit from Americans in this respect. There are a great many of them, very likely, who talk for the sake of freeing their own minds—just as I do sometimes, and you too, dear reader, I suppose.

I didn't go over with any fool notion that England and the other nations of Europe, were "effete." I had read something to that effect in some of our American newspapers, but fortunately I had also read a great deal of geography and history, and I knew that the countries of Europe were quite as wide-awake as we, and although perhaps they hadn't as many opportunities, nor such a glorious climate, nor such beautiful women, nor a great many other things which make this the most glorious land in the world—for us—they nevertheless have enough to keep their hands and heads and hearts very busy. Instead of making up my mind, when I got there, that

they were a great way behind us in every respect, I saw and heard a great deal which taught me that we could learn a great deal from them—just as we, in fact, are learning, as any of our artists, authors, inventors, and journalists will tell you on the quiet, if you get them alone where no other American is within hearing.

Another thing: I never posed for a curiosity, as some well-built Americans do; I never sat around looking and acting as if I expected to be questioned about myself, or about my country. There is too much of this sort of thing about some otherwise intelligent Americans who go abroad. They seem to think that they come from a *terra incognita*, and that in some way or other they are made different from other people, and that everybody is going to recognize the difference, look at them, and talk to them about it.

When people tried to make a great deal of me, as many were kind enough to do, I did my best to return the compliment. English people are not different from any others in very soon getting tired of a person who is willing to be the recipient of all the attention that is going around in a drawing-room or at a party. As soon as any one seemed to devote himself or

herself especially to me I tried to respond at once. If I got a compliment—as occasionally I did—I tried very quickly to match it and “go one better” if possible. English people like that sort of thing. If they didn't they couldn't possibly have been the ancestors of Americans. When I was a boy, I often saw a young rooster, just because he was permitted to go into somebody else's yard, immediately begin to act as if he were cock of the walk. I am not that sort of rooster. I have seen too many of that kind chased out and made to feel so bad that they weren't fit to go into any other place for weeks afterward.

Although I never was forward in volunteering remarks about my own country, I took care to avoid the opposite extreme. I never toadied. That sort of thing doesn't please the English any better than it does us. Really, what would any American suppose if an Englishman were to come over here and go into raptures about everything that he saw, and try to unmake himself and act as if he weren't an Englishman at all, or, if he were, he was very much ashamed of it, and would be an American just as soon as he possibly could? There is no place on the face of the earth where an American dude and toady is so heartily de-

spised as he is in the country whose gentlemen he imitates.

By the way, it isn't the English gentleman that the American dude imitates; as Bronson Howard makes one of his characters in his comical play, "The Henrietta," very truthfully say: "It isn't the Englishman after all that we've been imitating; it's his valet, don't you know?" Much as I went about in England, I never saw an English gentleman—no, not one, whose manner was at all like that of the young American swells who ape the English, or who are said to do so, and who certainly can't have got their peculiar style by imitating anybody else, for they stick to the English language in spite of all their monkeying.

When I got acquainted with people I didn't immediately freeze to them as if they were long-lost brothers of mine, and act—well, about as some people in the United States do after they have known a man ten minutes. I never introduced a new acquaintance as "my old and particular friend," as is the custom in some parts of the United States. I have no objections to forming a strong friendship quickly for a man who is worth it. In some parts of the world it is absolutely necessary, but over in England it isn't the custom. They have

ample leisure there; they can take time to get acquainted, and the consequence is they are not as badly "let in" by new acquaintances as Americans frequently are. It is pretty hard for an adventurer to go into English society and succeed as well as he frequently does here. The very speed with which he works will make him an object of suspicion.

Another thing which I carefully avoided was the asking of favours. I had to accept a great many, and I did it gratefully, but I never made the awful blunder which many people make—strangers in a strange land—to imagine that their position justifies them in inflicting their necessities and personal troubles upon other people. It is true that I had no occasion, financial or otherwise, to impose myself upon the good-hearted natives of the British Isle; but, suppose I had, I should have been far more careful about doing it than I would in any place at home in the United States. A good many Americans fail to observe this rule. They lay all their troubles and mistakes and worries to the country, and they seem to want to take it out of the natives—even out of those who have been most kind to them and are most thoughtful of their comforts. The class of travellers known as "globe-trotters" have

done the reputation of our people a great deal of harm in England, and I determined to do something, if only a very little, on the other side to take the bad taste out of the mouths of some of them.

When I saw something being done either in society or at a club, or in Parliament, or at a dinner, that was quite different from the way that we do the same sort of thing in America, I didn't put on a silly smile and remark, "How funny!" as a great many other Americans have been known to do in England. If an Englishman says that sort of thing here, it makes the natives feel very hot under the collar, and I never forgot that Englishmen and Americans are made of very much the same blood and muscle and have about the same sort of tempers.

Another thing I may say by way of both warning and encouragement to Americans; and that is, that all the while I was in England I drank nothing stronger than water. It saved me a great deal of trouble. Much liquor is drunk in England; the natives can stand it; the air isn't exactly like ours; it isn't as exhilarating, and people can stand more stimulants without feeling uncomfortable: but you have to get thoroughly acclimated there before you

can do it. I don't know what is the period of acclimatization, but from the condition of some Americans I have seen over there I should say it wasn't safe to drink a drop in less than forty years after arrival. Even then it isn't quite as safe as letting it alone. Some Americans drink freely because they think the natives would be offended if they didn't, but there isn't any such backwoods idea of manners among the English people. No fellow draws a pistol on you if you refuse to take a brandy-and-soda with him. Nobody feels you are not a gentleman if you decline the wine when it's passed to you at dinner. The American who wants to keep his eyes and ears open, and have a real good time in England, had better sign the pledge before he starts. If he must be a drinking man most of the time at home, he will have the consolation that his abstinence for two or three months will insure him a good drunken time when he comes back; he wouldn't take a hundred dollars for his thirsty, as the soldier said on coming in from a long trip on the plains where he hadn't even water to drink.

One rule I made I strictly adhered to all the time I was in England, and that was, when I saw anything pleasant, or anything that interested me very much, or anything which I

greatly admired, to talk about it. The English like that sort of thing, and if any one knows an American who doesn't, I should like him to introduce me to the fellow and let me study him as a curiosity. It is a supposition that only people of new countries are sensitive about their own land and their own customs, but it is a great mistake. The English are just as sensitive as we, just as proud of their own institutions, just as anxious that other people should like them, and while they may not force them upon you they are immensely delighted if you begin the subject and show that you have seen and appreciate them. It isn't at all a hard thing to do, for between art and science and politics and the ordinary business and social life of the people, there is an immense deal to be seen and admired by any American who has a clear head and an unprejudiced heart. I wouldn't trade America for England if all the other foreign countries were thrown in to boot, including the diamond fields of South Africa for my own special benefit; but I shall never forget what I saw there that was worthy of admiration, and I shall never cease talking to English people about it. It amuses them, and it does me a great deal of good to get off my opinions on the subject. It is

very pleasant to be able to talk anything to people whom you know are going to agree thoroughly with just what you say, and you may count upon the Englishman doing that, when you talk about his country, just as thoroughly as if he were a Yankee talking about Yankee-land.

All that I have said above may seem very little by way of explanation of the very kind reception I met everywhere in England, and of the manner in which I succeeded in enjoying myself. Nevertheless, it will seem explanation enough to any other American who has been well received in England and would like to go back there again, and it may serve as warning and information to some Americans who still intend to go over, and have an erroneous idea of the English people and their nature and an undue sense of their own importance.

I know it is very hard for an American not to feel that he is the finest fellow in the world. We have done so much in this country, made so many successes with greater rapidity than any other people on the earth, that a lot of our folks, otherwise very good fellows, seem of the impression that they are superior beings, and that they must act accordingly, and expect every one else to acknowledge it. All I have to

say to such fellows is, Don't go abroad until you get that nonsense out of your head. You won't make any friends, and you will lay up a new stock of enemies. Not only that, you will prejudice a lot of good people on the other side against a lot of good people on this side, who yet may be waiting to go over. Don't try to be bigger than yourself. When you want to crow, do it from your own perch; if you can't hold your tongue when you are on other fellows', don't go there.

CHAPTER XV.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—MY RECITATIONS ABROAD.
—THE RENOVATION AND ORNAMENTATION OF THE CHEST-
NUT.—MARK TWAIN ON CHESTNUTS.—HOW I HANDLED
THEM.—*Punch* EXPLAINS FOR^{ME}.—DEVISE SOMETHING
NEW.—THE ENGLISH LIKE PUNS.—AN HISTORIC SPECI-
MEN.—RESPECT OTHER ARTISTS.—THE LANDLORD AND
THE DOG.—AN IRISH TOAST.—TAKING BITS OF AMERICAN
HUMOUR.—TOO MUCH ADVICE.

A NUMBER of good fellows who want to go abroad, to fill their own pockets while filling the English countenance with smiles, have asked me personally or by letter to tell them what I did over there, and how I did it.

I've responded to the best of my ability; there's no hog about me, as the Hebrew said when he threw away a ham because he thought the thunder-storm was heaven's protest against his owning forbidden property. To spare my feeble pen, however, and lessen the duties of postal clerks and letter-carriers, I'm going to jot down right here as much about my working method abroad as I can conveniently recall.

As I never in my life took a lesson in elocu-

tion, I sat down hard on my personal tastes and didn't spout a single line of Shakespeare. I talk Shakespeare to myself sometimes ;— of all the men who are on the other side of the river, William of Avon is one of my best friends, but I don't run him on other people. Neither did I recite Poe's "Raven" abroad ;— I'd too often been made ravin' mad about it here.

If I had to define my work abroad in the fewest possible words—say for the purpose of sending it to some one by cable, at my own expense, with no opposition wire to keep down rates, and I had to borrow the money to pay the tolls—I should say that it consisted entirely of the renovation and ornamentation of the chestnut. In the lexicon of art there's no such word as chestnut. I once insisted to Mark Twain that, properly speaking, no good stories were chestnuts, and Mark drawled out, "I agree with you, my boy ; if you're not right about it, why do people go to minstrel shows ? They do go, you know ; nothing can keep them away ; I go myself, and roar hardest at the jokes I was brought up on when I was a boy."

I've intimated that I put my selected chestnuts through a course of renovation and orna-

ment. How did I do it? Well, I can hardly explain; but I gave them the benefit of every gesture, facial change, and tone of voice within my command. *Punch* explained my method, perhaps, in a few lines, which followed pictures they printed of me, from a lot of faces which I made at the camera of Van der Weyde, the famous London photographer :

WILDER-GRAPHS.

“Here, smiling, frowning, doubting, laughing,
Lamenting, thinking, bowing, chaffing,
All sorts of moods; the stronger, milder,
By clever little Marshall Wilder,
As reproduced in studies made
By skilful graver Van der Weyde.”

(I can't let pass the opportunity of expressing my admiration for the endurance of Mr. Van der Weyde's camera and the artist also. I made some awful faces at both, yet the camera didn't explode and the genial artist did not go to the lunatic asylum.)

I had no method or programme ready when I reached London. I left that to be determined after I should have seen and heard what the English already were getting. I didn't propose to carry coals to Newcastle. If an aspirant for histrionic honors chooses to

make his *début* in Hamlet, which is every great tragedian's masterpiece, let him do it, if he has money enough to keep him out of the poorhouse and to bury him decently when he dies of disappointment. I wasn't in that financial condition when I went to England.

One of the first "entertainers" I saw was Mr. Corney Grain, who has been immensely popular for years, both in the famous "German-Reed" entertainments, and in drawing-rooms. Mr. Grain will sit down at a piano and with his very good voice parody a famous song in perfect taste but with killing effect; his "Lost Gown," adapted from Sullivan's "Lost Chord," is worth crossing the ocean to hear. I wasn't fool enough to try to be a second Corney Grain.

George Grossmith is another wonderfully clever entertainer; nobody admires him more than I, so I didn't venture into his preserves. Eric Lewis is another; he is unapproachable in his line, so I didn't approach him—or try to.

They have minstrels there, too—Moore and Burgess have been running for a third of a century. I think I know—and sometimes "do"—all the minstrel songs and jokes devised since Ham gave family entertainments in the Ark, but when I saw how well Moore and Bur-

guess suited the London people I dropped that method from my mind like an intent to kill.

It didn't take me long to discover that the English people enjoyed a pun, especially if it was properly dressed. A pun is always in order over there ; I never saw one in a state document, but I suppose the only reason was that the secretaries of state forgot to offer me the freedom of their pigeon-holes. The *Court Journal* is one of the most proper and sedate journals in England, but here is what it ventured to "come" on your humble servant :

"Wild Indians from the United States are being imported very fast. They will be one of the curiosities of the season. A 'Wild-er' white man has also arrived."

The Hon. Edward Everett went many years ago to the only land where Bostonians aren't superior to everybody else. Yet again and again I've heard Englishmen tell of the time when, at a dinner in London, the artist Story offered the toast, "Here's to learning; when *Ever-it* rises it grows," and Everett rose to his feet and exclaimed: "I beg to amend; 'Here's to learning; when ever it rises it grows, but never above one *Story*.'"

I "took my cue" and never forgot it; what-

ever else I did,—sing, gesticulate, orate, or make faces, I didn't fail to handle some puns for all they were worth. Here are the skeletons of two or three that "took" well:

Two Englishmen go out to see a game of base-ball. One knows all about it, and tried to explain to the other who knows nothing of the game: "You see that little spot there? We call it the home-plate. Those three bags are the first and second and third bases. The white lines that go down toward the first and third bases we call the foul lines; anything that goes inside those lines is fair, but if the ball is struck out of those lines it is foul."

Just at that moment the man at the bat hits a "liner" and hits the poor man in the back of the head. He falls over senseless, and a crowd collects and the doctor is sent for, and his temples are bathed, and finally he opens his eyes very slowly and calls his friend, and says, "What was it?" His friend says it was a "foul." "Gracious! I thought it was a mule."

Another base-ball story is told of an old lady who went out to see a game of ball. The catcher was up close behind the bat, and the striker happened to hit him in the eye and knocked him senseless. The umpire says, "Foul—not out." The old lady said, "What a

horrible thing that he was hit in the eye, but I am glad it is not out."

Two Irishmen meeting in the street were discussing as to who was the first gladiator; one said it was Samson, the other said it was a man by the name of John L. Sullivan. Another man said it was a fellow by the name of McGinty, and he proved it thus: McGinty and his wife went to Ireland, and when they were half-way over the water his wife was walking on the deck and happened to fall over the side; a whale that chanced to come along swallowed her up. McGinty looked over and saw the whale eat his wife, and says he, "Well, I'm *glad he ate her*," which shows he was the first gladiator. These may not read like much, but—I didn't read them—don't you see?

When my name appeared on the programme with other artists, I took care to consult their tastes and preferences. The tenor or soprano who is to sing a serious solo does not like to appear immediately after the audience has laughed at something humorous; I can understand the feeling, and I always yielded to it. I would change places with any one and trust myself to "catch on," no matter when I might appear. I never had any of the feeling of performers who thought only about who or what

was to precede and follow them; they remind me of Governor Bunn's story of the small boy who, when his mother divided an orange between him and his brother, ate his brother's half first, then his own, and afterward cried because there wasn't a third half lying around somewhere.

In making my own selections I took pains to exclude anything which might offend. There are people and things which may be abused from stage or platform in England. I always kept in mind the story of the three travellers and the dog who arrived at a hotel at about the same time. The landlord didn't like dogs, but he exclaimed: "Good-morning, gentlemen, I'm very glad to see you. What a fine dog! Yours, sir?" (this to one of the party.) "No, —not mine," was the reply. "H'm!" mused the proprietor, turning to another man; "yours, I suppose?" "No," answered the man, between the whisks of the office-boy's brush. "Indeed? I should greatly like to own such a dog. Of course (this to third traveller) he is your property, sir?" "Oh, no; I never saw him before." "Well," said the landlord, taking a commanding position in rear of the animal, and raising his heavily shod foot to the position of "aim," "as I was saying, I should

like to own such a dog,—for the pleasure (kick) of getting rid of him. Get out (kick), you worthless cur ! ”

Many as are the quarrels between England and Ireland, it isn't safe to abuse the Irish on English soil. I never tried it, having had no inclinations that way,—too many of my good friends are Irishmen,—but I know of other men being called to account for it. There are many fine Irishmen in London, as the natives are free to admit. Sometimes the two races have their eyes on each other, but it is a case of “nip and tuck,” as American boys say. Farjeon, the novelist, expressed the situation neatly in his story, at the Greenroom Club dinner, of an Irishman's toast to an Englishman: “Here's to you, as good as you are, and here's to me, as bad as I am; but as good as you are and as bad as I am, I'm as good as you are, bad as I am.”

The American habit of jumping to unexpected conclusions pleases the English mightily when properly illustrated by a story,—for instance, like Lou Megargee's story of the Louisville dude who went in the St. James's Hotel, New York, and said to the type-writing damsel there, “I would like to have you write a letter for me, and say that I have gone to Narra-

gansett Pier." She said, "How do you spell Narragansett?" He replied, "Can't you spell it?" "No," she said. "Why," he exclaimed, "everybody in New York ought to be able to spell Narragansett." "Well," said the girl, "if you want me to write it you must spell it for me." He said, thoughtfully, "Must I spell it?" "Yes." "Well," he said, "then I will go to Newport."

American stories bounding suddenly from the sentimental to the practical delight English people of the better class,—for instance, the following, told by Harold Fredericks at the Savage Club dinner in London: A darkey who was fishing had a little boy about two years old at his side, and as he threw the line into the water the little chap fell in also. The old darkey plunged in and brought out the youngster, squeezed him out, and stood him up to dry. A clergyman who came along happened to see him, and said, "My man, you have done nobly—you are a hero. You saved that boy's life." "Well," said the darkey, "I didn't do dat to sabe his life; he had de bait in his pocket."

It has been said humourists must not enjoy their own humour, and if they enjoy it they must never show it. Artemus Ward never showed his appreciation of his own wit, and

therein lay his charm. Speaking from experience, I think that a man must always enjoy his own joke, if he wishes to make it succeed with others. I know that I laugh at the stories I tell, not because they are mine, but because they are clever sayings of other people, I merely dressing them up in funny style to please my audience and prolong their lives. If I feel that a story has pathos or fun I am always sure the audience will think so too.

I am afraid, though, that I am offering too much advice—that isn't an uncommon fault of men to whom others go for information. I am warned by a story which Lionel Brough told at the dinner of the Greenroom Club. A man was advised by his doctor to take better care of himself. The doctor said: "You must go to bed early, eat more roast beef, drink beef tea, go out for a month's rest in some summer watering-place, and smoke just one cigar a day, or you won't live." The fellow met the doctor about a month afterward, and the doctor said, "You're looking better." "Well," he replied, "Doctor, I am feeling better. I went to bed early, ate more roast beef, spent a month in the country, and took great care of myself, but that one cigar a day nearly killed me, for I never smoked before."

CHAPTER XVI.

ENGLISH RESPECT FOR THE DRAMATIC PROFESSION.—THE LORD MAYOR'S DRAMATIC RECEPTION.—WILSON BARRETT.—TOOLE.—ONE OF HIS STORIES.—"GUS" HARRIS.—W. S. GILBERT.—SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN.—CHARLES WYNDHAM.—MADAME PATTI.—ENGLISH THEATRES DON'T EQUAL OURS.

IN London they make a great deal more of the dramatic profession than we do in this country, more's the pity for us. Over there an artist is an artist, no matter what his particular line of "business" may be, and the people are so appreciative that a good actor is sure sooner or later to make a great number of important, pleasing and valuable acquaintances. Mr. Irving's success has been of great service to his profession in general by nerving up a number of theatrical people to doing their very best, so as to earn recognition from the people who make and unmake celebrities.

I believe no English actor has yet been knighted, but the honor of knighthood has been conferred upon some musical composers, and men who are supposed to speak with authority

are prophesying that at least one distinguished actor will shortly have a distinguished handle applied to his name.

I have said a great deal already about Mr. Irving—said so much that I fear hasty mention of other distinguished actors and actresses may all the more lay me open to a charge of invidious distinction; but really, I don't mean it; I have done only what other people do when they begin to talk about Irving. I have run right along without knowing when and how to stop. I don't believe there is a Londoner of any consequence who would not do exactly the same thing, and I am glad to say that prominent actors in other theatres besides the Lyceum are quite as fond of Mr. Irving and as enthusiastic about him as I.

When one begins to count up the distinguished actors and actresses of the London theatres on his fingers, he finds himself in need of two or three extra pairs of hands. Not long ago the Lord Mayor of London, the Right Hon. Sir Reginald Hanson, Bart., gave a dramatic lunch at the Mansion House, and was kind enough to invite me to meet the representative members of the profession. His invitation read as follows:

“The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress re-

quest the honor of the company of Mr. Marshall P. Wilder to luncheon, on Wednesday, June 15th, at 2 o'clock. Mansion House, London. An early reply is desired."

Of course, I went and enjoyed myself very much. Music was supplied by the Coldstream Band, and the assemblage was brilliant. Among those present were Mr. Henry Irving, Marie Roze, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, Charles Wyndham, Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Mrs. Charles Matthews, Mrs. Beerbohm-Tree, Mrs. John Wood, Mrs. F. Harrison, J. L. Toole, Ellen Terry, Fred Leslie, Lionel Brough, Miss Nellie Farren, Herman Vezin, and that dear old lady, Mrs. Keeley, who is greatly beloved by all the theatrical people of London: and at least two hundred other dramatic artists, among whom were all the soubrettes of the London stage—how quickly Americans present found them!—Mr. Edmund Yates, editor of the *London World*, Alderman Sir Robert Carden, Bart., Colonel Mapleson, whom every American knows, Mr. Pinero, the dramatic author, and a number of others, including many Americans.

Of course there was a formal address. Of course, also, Mr. Irving delivered it, and it was a masterpiece, as all his addresses are. There was also a funny speech which had to be made

by Mr. Toole—not that Toole insists upon doing such things, for he is a very modest man, but all the other comedians admire him so much that no one will say anything for fear that Toole will find an excuse for being quiet on such occasions.

After Henry Irving I suppose Wilson Barrett is the London actor of whom Americans would most like to hear. I don't blame them for it, for, besides being a very good actor, he is a splendid fellow in every respect. He is a pronounced Englishman in cast of countenance and muscular development, and, as many of my American readers will know, he has a very expressive eye and a fine, strong face. Although he is a kind-hearted fellow and never climbs over any one else in his anxiety to get to the top, he got there all the same, through his own persistent endeavor. Before he appeared on the stage himself he was a manager for a star, the star being his own wife, who was a Miss Heath, and had been reader to the Queen. Miss Heath was a very beautiful woman, and in marrying her Mr. Barrett simply gave a new illustration of the excellence of his judgment of human nature. As a manager he was quite successful, and finally started out, probably by advice of his wife, as an actor, and played suc-

cessfully in "The Silver King," "Hoodman Blind," and other strong but refined melodramatic parts. He is known to thousands in America, and so are his charming daughters, and I know all my readers will be glad to learn that he expects to return here before long.

The first public appearance, properly speaking, that I made in London was at the benefit given to Mr. Wilson Barrett. I was very nervous about it, too. I had appeared in drawing-rooms and done very well—so the people seemed to think—but that simply made me ambitious to score a success in public also. When my time came to "go on," I felt more uncomfortable than ever, for the gentleman who had preceded me in the entertainment was a great success in London, and had become a popular favourite. As I went upon the stage there was a dead silence, and I felt as if I were shrinking at the rate of a foot a minute; that experience could not have lasted five minutes without there being considerably less than nothing on the stage. Finally one of the crowd cried out: "I see him!" Another fellow shouted, "Where?" "Why, he's on there!" some one said. "Sure enough, there he is!" said another fellow, and then still another cried out: "Stand on a chair, sonny!"

All these remarks failed to help me in the slightest degree, but they put the audience in good humour, and that means a good deal to a man who is expected to do anything. Finally one man in the audience cried out: "Say, there, don't step on him!" That struck my funny-spot, so I began laughing with the audience, and, as I have generally discovered elsewhere, when I begin to laugh the other people do it too. I leave them to explain why. The laughter lasted for about a minute, and as soon as silence was restored I stepped forward and said: "I have done what I came for, I have made you laugh," and off I went. They called me back at once; they did it four or five times more, and enabled me to achieve a grand success. That was my first public appearance in London, and, although I enjoyed it in the end, I don't care about ever going through the beginning of it again.

A London actor, whom the Americans ought to know better, is the famous comedian J. L. Toole. I cannot understand those of my countrymen who go to see Toole, and then come away and say that he isn't much of an actor. To my mind he is simply inimitable in his line, but he is so much of an artist that it takes a little while to comprehend the extent

and finish of his style. He is a wonderfully keen-featured fellow, quite stout, just a trifle lame, wears the conventional eye-glass, and cannot talk to you without telling stories. If I could remember all the stories that Toole told me, I would not have to use a chestnut for a year. One in particular I recall about a man who was addicted to drink and used to see all sorts of things double, sometimes having them doubled about a dozen times. Finally he stopped drinking, and about three years afterward he called on a friend who had two boys—twins. The resemblance between them was remarkable, and as they were dressed alike it was impossible for any one but the parents to distinguish one from the other. The proud father brought the boys down into the parlour, and turning to Mr. Toole's friend, said: "Charlie, what do you think of this?" Charlie looked at the pair a moment, pinched himself, moved about, rubbed his eyes, seemed to remember something, and finally succeeded in saying, "I think *it* is a very fine boy." He would not own that he thought he saw double.

Mr. Augustus Harris of the Drury Lane Theatre, who is called "Gus" by all his friends, is an enterprising fellow who has been quite successful and deserves everything that he has

obtained. He is celebrated for producing pantomimes, which are a specialty of some of the theatres of London, especially about Christmas time, the first performance being always given on "boxing night." This night is not, as an American may suppose, devoted to entertainments of the John L. Sullivan order, but is simply the night of "Boxing Day," the day after Christmas Day, on which every one who has done anything for you, or says he has, expects a Christmas "box" or gift. Mr. Harris holds the lead in this sort of performance and entertainment, and he can tell funny stories about boxing-night experiences at the rate of about one for each person who bought a ticket of admission. Where he hears all his stories, and how he succeeds in remembering them in addition to all the business which he attends to very closely in all its details, I do not know, but there are a great many things that no fellow can find out.

The first time I ever saw W. S. Gilbert in London was at the house of Lady East, in Twickenham. I went there to entertain a party of ladies and gentlemen, and saw an English home so lovely that I could hardly keep my mind on the business in hand. The professional assistance I had in entertaining the party was from a pianist, but the company

was so select that their own faces and manners were inspiration enough for any one. I don't know how long I talked and smiled and made faces, but I could have kept it up all day in such society. While I was talking, I saw a face in the audience which I thought I recognized, but was not able to place it. Finally it occurred to me that it looked greatly like the pictures of W. S. Gilbert, and as I saw that he seemed particularly appreciative and very much amused, I thought I must be mistaken, for I had heard that Gilbert was very sarcastic and fastidious and a hard man to please.

After I got through he came forward and I was presented to him, and found that I was right—he really was Gilbert. I made haste to say to him: "You acted as if you were amused, but I didn't imagine that you could appreciate my work." "Oh," said he, "but I did, very much." "Well," I made bold to say, "then you are a very different man from what I had imagined. I understood that you were a fellow with the dyspepsia, and consequently never could see anything pleasant, and were always gruff." "Oh, well," said he, "I *am* gruff—to some people," and then he spoke very nicely about my work and passed on. I remarked to myself, "Score one for Wilder."

Sir Arthur Sullivan I met several times in London, and each time liked him better than before, although he impressed me from the first as a most cheerful, courteous, sympathetic gentleman. I first met him at the house of Mrs. Ronalds, of whom I have already spoken, and soon afterward he invited me to his home, which I found to be one of the pleasantest bachelor apartments imaginable. He has what in New York we would call a "flat," and it contains every comfort that a bachelor could ask. He is as ingenious in mechanics as he is in music; he even has his own private machinery for generating electricity to provide light for his apartments. Although he is a bachelor, it must not be supposed that he has only himself to spend money upon. He has a large circle of relatives, and I am told that he takes care of them all in as good style as if he were a father and they were members of his own family.

I don't know whether Madame Patti should be called a Londoner, but she seems so entirely at home there, and is so well known and so frequently mentioned, that it is impossible to write of members of the dramatic profession there without recalling her. I have heard some unkind things about Madame Patti from

people who don't know her, but never a word of the kind from any of her acquaintances. I have heard that she was a little "close," and given to be unkind to others, but I am sure this is not so. The peasants who live about her castle in Wales all worship her, and any one who has seen even a little of the English peasantry will agree with me that they could not feel that way toward Patti unless she were very liberal at heart and pocket. I have heard of numerous instances of her kindnesses. I have never seen her in New York without clever little Miss Foster near her—a little lady who must be rolled about in a chair on account of physical infirmities, but Patti cares for her as tenderly as if she were her mother, and wants her always with her at her hotel, in her dressing-room, or behind the scenes.

Charles Wyndham is an actor and manager whom no American in London cares to miss. His style and that of his company is pretty well known in New York on account of the rattling comedies which they gave here several years ago, and which still are talked about. Americans who then saw Wyndham never failed to urge him to come back again soon, but I suspect that he is so busy at home that he daren't think much about going abroad.

He is quite as amusing in private life and among his acquaintances as he is on the stage, and I don't know what more could be said of any one, for I never was able to keep a smile off my face when Wyndham came upon the stage. 'Tisn't necessary that he should speak any lines. The twinkle of his eye and the poses that he can take, changing rapidly from one to another, are so effective that were he to advertise to appear in pantomime, instead of spoken comedy, I should go as quickly to hear him, and expect to be pleased fully as much.

In one respect New York is far ahead of London, and that is as to theatres. Mr. Irving's Lyceum is a handsome and finely appointed building, and so is Charles Wyndham's Criterion Theatre, but the other houses are not equal to ours either in the appearance of the auditorium or the setting of the stage; nor do they pay as close and careful attention to dress on the stage as we. A great deal of their scenery would be pronounced too shabby for anything if displayed in any of our first-class houses. There is nothing like getting used to a thing, though, as the old woman said when she kissed her cow, and an American soon ceases to make comparison when an English company gets on the stage and fairly at work.

The oddest thing to anybody from this side of the water is to pay a large price—almost twice the American rate—for a seat in the stalls, as they are called, and find one's self separated by only a thin railing from the pit, where the seats cost only about twenty-five cents. The pit of the English theatre is what the top gallery is here; the gods sit there, and a most amusing lot they are as regards attire and manners.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEAUTIFUL PARIS.—FRENCH AS I ACT IT.—IN SEARCH OF NAPOLEON'S TOMB.—ORDERING A BATH.—RESTAURANT FRENCH.—LEGAL, BUT FRENCHY.—THE CHAMPS ELYSÉES. FRENCH GIRLS NOT AS PRETTY AS OURS.—CLEAN STREETS.—A WAR STORY TO THE POINT.—SOME OF THE SIGHTS.—A VANDERBILT INCIDENT.

WHEN an American who speaks no language but his own goes to Paris for the first time, and tries to make his way around alone, he is the most pitiable object on the face of the earth, not excepting an office-seeker at Washington. When I landed there I could not speak a word of French. I knew that before I went. My entire knowledge of French had been obtained from the bill of fare at Delmonico's, to which the English side of the same bill served the purpose of an interlinear translation, yet I was confident that I could make my way about by the use of my mimetic powers. Note what happened.

The first place I wanted to see was the tomb of Napoleon. I had never been a soldier; but he had been a very small man, so I had some

sympathy with him. I went to the American Exchange, hoping to be started right, and told a man there what I wanted. He said: "All right; just take that 'bus out there." So I jumped upon the bus, not waiting for it to stop, and the driver shouted at me: "*Complet! Complet!*" I rolled the word over in my head several times and then tried to swallow it, but in no way could I possibly assimilate it with anything I had ever heard before. After mature deliberation I made up my mind that he meant that I could either go on top or stay inside. How two words exactly alike could mean so much I didn't know, but I was willing to admit anything for a language which I had been told was unusually comprehensive. I supposed he saw I was lame, and didn't care to push me off the step, so I remained there, although it was against the law, as I discovered afterward, the stage being full—which was what he meant by saying "*Complet!*" Then I looked up cheerfully and confidentially to the conductor and said: "I want to go to the tomb of Napoleon." He shook his head mournfully, but I was not going to be fooled in that way, so I said: "*Hôtel des Invalides.*" He didn't seem to understand that, either, so I threw my head on one side and placed my hand under it,

trying to imitate a person who was very ill. But that did not suggest "invalids" to him at all. Then I said again, "I want to see the tomb of Napoleon," and I tried different gestures by taking my cane and commencing to dig an imaginary grave in the middle of the 'bus floor. I kept at it until I buried Napoleon, as it were, and threw back all the dirt upon him, to the great amazement of the other passengers. Finally one man, who had been very red in the face and had stuffed his handkerchief in his mouth until he was in danger of choking to death, coughed and exclaimed: "I'll tell him what you want, if you like." "Great Scott!" said I, "you don't mean to tell me that you speak English, and have heard me struggling with this conductor so long without helping me?" But the fellow shamelessly said that when such fun as that was going on he was going to enjoy it for all it was worth, no matter if it killed the other fellow. Finally, however, he told the driver in French what I wanted, and I succeeded in reaching the tomb of Napoleon. I wish the great lamented could have noted my efforts to get there—he would know how much I thought of him.

My experience reminded me of a story

which I afterward heard Chauncey Depew tell regarding a man who went to Paris and wanted a bath. He only knew one word of French and that was "*garçon*"; but he began bravely "*Garçon, bring up*"—and then he described, as well as he could with his hands and arms, a bath-tub, and ejaculated "Sh—sh—sh," imitating to the best of his ability the hissing noise of water passing from the faucet into the tub. The waiter smiled, shook his head intelligently, went downstairs, and brought up—what do you suppose? Why, a bottle of brandy and soda. "Well," said the man who wanted a bath, "I guess you know better what I want than I do myself."

He was not as badly off, though, as that other American who went over there, and, although his wife advised him not to go on the street without an interpreter, he made up his mind one day when he was hungry and saw an attractive looking restaurant that he could succeed in getting a good meal without speaking any French. He was a methodical fellow, so he picked up the bill of fare in a business-like way, glanced at it carelessly, and pointed at the very first item. The waiter disappeared and quickly came back with some excellent soup. "I'll tell my wife about this when I reach the

hotel," said the fellow, smiling to himself as he emptied the plate. Then he pointed to the second item. Quickly the waiter filled the order; it was another plate of soup, of a different kind, but the man was pretty hungry; soup went to the spot that day with him, so he didn't object to two plates. Then he skipped one item and pointed to the fourth on the list. Again the waiter comprehended and brought him—another plate of soup. By this time people at the surrounding tables were looking at him in a manner so inquisitive, in spite of traditional French politeness, that the fellow became confused, and to avoid eating any more soup he got as far away from the head of the list as he possibly could, and pointed at the very last item. The waiter swallowed a grin, stepped to a neighboring table, and reappeared instantly with a glass of toothpicks. Then all the surrounding diners laughed, the American grew very red in the face, and started away with such rapidity that he almost forgot to pay his bill.

By the way, I didn't learn until after I had stood on the step of that 'bus for a long while during my search for the tomb of Napoleon of the double risk which I was running. If I had fallen off I might have been run over, and, ac-

ording to peculiarities of the French mind and the French law, when you are run over by a vehicle in Paris you and not the driver of the crushing wheel are the one to be arrested. In this country the legal presumption is that a man is innocent until he is proved guilty. In France the reverse is the case. This sort of thing may be all right over there, but if it were tried in New York we would have to extend the Tombs so as to make them reach all the way to Broadway on one side and the East River on the other.

In Paris one of the first things an American asks to see is the Champs Elysées. It is on fête days and on Sundays that this famous resort is to be seen at its best. I don't wonder that Americans like to go there. A man with leisure can spend it more pleasantly there with less financial outlay than anywhere else I know of.

On either side of the avenue there are a number of *cafés chantants*. You can go in for a very small sum, have a seat allotted to you according to the price you pay, and listen to the entertainment which is going on. You may hear a song, or a piano recital, or a comic recitation. You never know what is coming next, and that is quite an exhilarat-

ing sensation, as the fellow said about the bill of fare at the cheap boarding house where he lived. Very often when the songs in the cafés are popular the audience will join in the chorus. This sort of thing makes a fellow feel at home. There is also a circus at one end of the Champs Elysées, at which several performances are given every day, and the whole thing is very gay and lively.

The French are a very tidy people and always dress neatly and nicely; the women have a great deal of *chic*, no matter how poor they may be. But they are not as good looking as the women of our own country.

You can stand on any New York street between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, when the masses are going to work, and see more pretty girls in an hour than you can see in Paris in a month. Nevertheless Americans are such appreciative fellows, and so anxious to enjoy everything that is going on in the world, that a number of them rave over the beauty of French women.

Perhaps I am no judge, but the first time I meet a Frenchman who seems fond of the fair sex I'll take all the national conceit out of him if I can only manage to catch him alone in

New York for a couple of hours just after breakfast or just before supper.

In one respect Paris leaves New York entirely out of sight. The streets are well paved and very clean. They are as far ahead of the streets of New York as a macadamized road is ahead of a Western wagon-path—as much better as a Delmonico luncheon is than a piece of dusty slab-pie purchased at a corner stand on South Street. The work of cleaning and watering a street is allotted, in very small sections, to individuals. Each man has a block or two to care for, and he will do his work entirely regardless of the weather or what may be going on around him.

Mr. John Russell Young, late United States Minister to China, and now of the staff of Mr. Bennett's London edition of the *New York Herald*, tells a good story of a street cleaner during the troublous times in Paris at the period of the Franco-Prussian war. Among their other playful ebullitions of Gallic temper, the populace pulled down the Column Vendome. It was a big contract, but they were quite equal to it. The unencumbered area around it was very great, and they had rigged numerous ropes, each of which was manned by hundreds of men. Those who could not haul

at the ropes were assisting to the best of their ability by howling—and when a French mob does howl it leaves the cries of the associated newsboys entirely in the shade. There were probably fifty thousand people within view of the fated column, and Mr. Young stood with our minister, Mr. Washburne, and two or three other Americans, looking on and studying French nature, when suddenly they were approached by an old man with a sprinkler and a broom, who said to them, "*Circulez, circulez, Messieurs, s'il vous plait ; circulez.*" Within two or three moments the column came down, making an amount of dirt and débris that could not have been cleared away by the New York Street Cleaning Department in five thousand years; the old fellow saw in advance what was about to happen, but he had been paid to sprinkle and sweep that street; that was about his hour to operate just about the place where those gentlemen were standing, and he did his work faithfully, regardless of what was to come after.

The omnibus service of Paris is something like that of London, each 'bus having a driver in front and a conductor behind. If the Paris people were obliged to pay their own fares, as a hundred thousand or more New Yorkers do

every day on the bob-tail cars, there would be an insurrection compared with which any of the historical French revolutions would be mere trifles. The omnibuses never run over anybody, as some of our street-cars do. Under the driver's foot is a rubber ball containing a little whistle, and by pressing this with his foot he can warn any one in front. Although each 'bus has three horses, no conductor is allowed to admit more persons than can be comfortably seated on top and inside. As soon as the vehicle is full to its legal limit the word "*Complet*"—oh, that word! is displayed in large letters on the side. This excludes any more people. I am bound to say I should like to see the same rule in force on the surface and elevated railroads in New York City, but if the happy time ever comes I shall prefer not to be the holder of railway stock.

It used to be the fashion when distinguished visitors came to New York to take them first to see the small-pox hospital. The Parisians have advanced a step on this; they take you to look at their sewers, which are very large and well lighted. It is reported that their size is due to the idea of some king of France who thought it would be a capital thing to have the sewers so large that soldiers could move underground from one part of the city to

another without attracting the attention of the populace. Passes can be obtained at the American Legation to go through these sewers and inspect them in company with a guide. The idea may not be pleasant at first thought, but after some experience in them I am obliged to admit that they don't smell any worse than some of the gutters above ground in the city of New York.

One of the things that don't make you feel as much at home in Paris as you might is the information that as soon as you arrive the police take pains to obtain a full description of you. I notice they took mine, and I was afterward curious to see how it would look in French, but I was not very inquisitive about it at the Bureau, for fear that I might be detained. Every hotel proprietor is obliged to notify the police of the arrival of new guests and give a full description of them. I'd give a good deal to see such a list filled out in New York by some of our enterprising hotel clerks, but I am afraid it would result in considerable changing of hotels by a certain portion of the travelling populace.

Another of the popular sights of Paris is the Morgue; you shouldn't go there just after eating your dinner, and I wouldn't advise a

fellow to take a peep before breakfast either. You are taken down a side street, and you look through six glass windows to the marble slabs where the bodies of the unfortunates are laid. I have no doubt the spectacle might be enjoyable to students from a medical college, but I am not that sort of student, so I went there only once. There have been some touching and dramatic stories written with the Morgue as ostensible inspiration, but I have a strong suspicion that imagination had more to do with them. I cannot understand the fellow who could look through those windows more than a moment or two without going away and being willing to give up almost anything to forget forever what he had been seeing.

There are a great many soldiers in Paris; likewise a great many priests. The soldiers are the more admired of the two, but the priests are the more respected. Every one takes off his hat to a priest whether he knows him or not; the foreigners quickly learn to follow the native example. You know the clergy by sight in Paris at once, which is more than you can say about them in New York. You can suspect almost any man of being a minister here, if his dress corresponds at all with your idea of clerical garb. I heard once

of old Commodore Vanderbilt riding up town in a horse-car in which were two men discussing religion. Both were about half drunk—a condition in which a certain class of men always are possessed to talk about religion or something equally beyond their comprehension. They disputed furiously for a while, and finally one of them, noticing the Commodore's clear-cut features, clerical side-whiskers, closely buttoned coat, and white tie, said, "I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll leave the question to the minister over there in the corner." "Agreed," said his friend, and walked over and asked the Commodore whether he supposed that a man who didn't believe in infant baptism could be saved. The old man, seeing the condition in which both men were, looked up pleasantly and mildly remarked, "I hope so," upon which the champion of damnation looked very crestfallen, and muttered to his friend, "I'll bet the old cock is a Universalist."

I could say a great many pleasant things about Paris, but I propose to be modest enough to remember that a number of my readers know the city far better than I; so I will close by saying the very best thing I can about it, which is that it resembles New York more than any other city I ever visited. If that doesn't please Paris, Paris is hard to please.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AMERICANS AHEAD OF THE WORLD.—SOME NEW YORKERS.
—CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.—HE SENT ME AROUND.—SO
DID PETER COOPER.—A THOMPSON STREET AFFAIR.—
CHAUNCEY DEPEW.—THAT WAY OF HIS.—BOB INGER-
SOLL.—HIS PERFECT HOME.—RELIGION AND PHILOS-
OPHY.—TOM OCHILTREE.—HE IMITATED WASHINGTON.

IT begins to occur to me that I have devoted a great deal of my space to people and incidents abroad, but I insist that it isn't my fault. When my friends in New York and elsewhere in this country meet me they don't ask me much about what is going on at the metropolis, but at once say, "Well, Marsh, when were you on the other side last? Whom did you see? Where did you go? How is so-and-so?" etc.; so a great deal of the foregoing is the result of the questioning that I am oftenest subjected to.

I wish to remark, however, in general terms, that there is no place like home, and by way of specification I wish to say that there are no better fellows anywhere on the face of the earth than in the city of New York. I have

written a great deal about distinguished persons abroad and their many admirable qualities, but there are just as many at home, and my only regret in saying anything about them is that I cannot say all I like.

There are some men, however, regarding whom I must say a little if only from a sense of duty. Among those in New York who are noted for their wealth, business enterprise, and general prominence are many who are quite as enterprising and thoughtful regarding the comfort and prosperity of persons who have no legal claim upon their attention or pockets. One of these is Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, who has paid me a great deal of money to give entertainments for charitable purposes, or more properly speaking to give entertainments to persons who were unable otherwise to obtain them. He has sent me to hospitals, insane asylums, prisons, newsboys' lodging-houses, and other places to cheer up the unfortunate and poor and ailing to the best of my ability. Whenever Mr. Vanderbilt sent me anywhere it was with the understanding that I should say nothing about it, and particularly that I should not mention it to any newspaper men, as he didn't care to have his benevolences made public. I trust he will forgive me for

this one first and only mention. It is due to him that the public, which knows so much of him as a millionaire and a business man, should understand also that he has a great warm heart which he knows how to use for the benefit of others.

Another rich man of the same quality of goodness was Mr. Peter Cooper, who during the later years of his life sent me about a great deal to amuse some classes of people of whose existence, even, most other people seemed ignorant. Mr. Cooper appeared to think that amusement was one of the prime necessities of life. Sensible man! He wanted it to be entirely proper and innocent, but the more amusing the better. He sent me to some very odd places. One was a house in Thompson Street where a lot of poor colored people used to gather, I think for the purpose of receiving charities doled out under Mr. Cooper's direction. I do not believe I ever found a more appreciative audience anywhere than at that place in Thompson Street. When I told these people a laughing story they would laugh to such an extent that when they all got started together it was almost impossible to stop them so that I could go on with the show. I really became anxious, for fear I would not be al-

lowed to earn the money which Mr. Cooper was going to pay me. On one occasion down there I mimicked a young man who is supposed to have an india rubber face and dance a jig with his mouth. I had a pianist who understood this performance and played a lively air for me while I kept time with my lips and face as nearly as I could.

Well, as often happens in performances of that kind, a number of the audience began unconsciously to imitate me with their faces. One of them, who had a very large mouth, succeeded to such an extent that he drew his jaw so far behind his ear that I didn't know but what the ends were going to meet behind his neck and make a permanent collar for him, and he did it so fast that he made me laugh until I had to stop my performance. That started the whole crowd, and finally I was obliged to go off of the platform and down stairs to explain to Mr. Cooper how it happened. He laughed, too, and forgave me and invited the entire audience down to refreshments, which consisted of as nice a luncheon, including ice cream, coffee, etc., as a person could find anywhere. I waited until the rooms were clear and then went to the refreshment room myself, but no sooner did I enter than a

very black man shouted in an excitable way, "Take dat man 'way—take him 'way, or we can't eat nothin' at all," and they all commenced to laugh again, so that I was compelled to leave the room. They didn't seem even to be able to look at me without laughing.

Chauncey Depew is another man who is always looking out for other people. This ought to be admitted by about half a million Americans to whom he gave free passes before the Inter-State Railroad Commission put an end to that sort of thing. As every one ought to know, Mr. Depew is a very busy man. A man cannot be president of a great railroad company, look after his own private interests, be a bank director, receive hundreds of visitors daily, make a speech or two every night at dinners or great public occasions, and have much time to spare, yet Mr. Depew never seems ruffled or put out when some new person appears to demand his attention. I have been told by more than one railroad man around the Grand Central Railroad Depot that he looks out for the employés quite as well as for some of his more distinguished acquaintances. Some men attempt to do all this and partially succeed, but they do it at the expense of dear ones at home. There is none of that sort of non-

sense about Depew. If you walk along the street with him after his business day at his office has closed, he is very likely to stop in front of a candy store and say, "Just come in here a moment." Then he loads his pockets with bonbons or something of the kind to take home. If you ask him what he is going to do with all these, he will say, "Oh, these are for my boy."

I have called on Mr. Depew a great many times, and though he may have wanted to kick me out at one time or other he never showed any such sentiment in his face. He would always greet me with a pleasant "How are you, Marshall?" and whatever I asked of him he was sure to attend to. I suspect the good-hearted man has often wondered after I went out when I would come to years of discretion and stop bothering him about matters which I ought to be able to attend to myself, but if he has he has never given me a hint of it. I have seen him treat a number of other people in the same way, but he is quite as competent at getting rid of bores as he is at looking after his friends. I remember one morning calling there when he was very busy; so I sat down and amused myself with a newspaper, awaiting his convenience. His genial secretary, Mr.

Duval, stood at the door trying to guard his superior officer from being bothered, but somehow one fellow slipped in, and Mr. Depew immediately greeted him pleasantly, with "Ah, good-morning, sit down." The man immediately began to tell the railroad president that on his farm was the one particular thing that Mr. Depew needed in the shape of stone to ballast his railroad. Now, Mr. Depew could have told that man that he already had the quality of stone he needed, which was the truth, but that would have brought on an argument; so he said: "Oh, yes; that reminds me of a story." Then he got up to tell the story, and how splendidly he did it! I shall never forget it. The man rose with him, and as the two walked together Mr. Depew edged gently toward the door. By this time the story was nearly finished; both were half way out the door. When the point came the man laughed heartily; Depew shook hands with him, said good-morning, and was back at his desk and hard at work again before the fellow got through laughing, or realized that he wasn't inside the office. Mr. Depew would make a first-class managing editor for a daily newspaper if he were not otherwise engaged, and of course he would do honour to our national presidential chair.

One of the pleasantest fellows to meet in New York is Bob Ingersoll. I know his name is Robert, and he has a middle initial, which is G., but if I called him anything but "Bob," I am afraid people might not understand to whom I was alluding. There is a great deal of religion in Bob, in spite of remarks to the contrary, of which the public have heard a great deal. His father was a minister, and the boy was baptized in a theatre, and he seems to have struck a happy average between the two. Whenever you go to his house, you will find him very entertaining, and anxious that everybody else should be entertained. Whenever I am there, and somebody persuades me to get up and recite or say something, Mr. Ingersoll is so anxious that whatever is done shall be thoroughly enjoyed by as many as possible that he calls up all his servants and lets them stand in the hall to listen. I am not defending his theological theories, or lack of any, for theology isn't in my line, but I remember seeing a great deal in the New Testament about the influence of love on a family and humanity in general, and I want to say that in Ingersoll's house the spirit of love seems to prevail over everything. The host is so good-natured and considerate and willing to make

allowances for others that he won't even lose his temper if the dinner chances to come up wrong in some way. I was there one day when the meat was overdone, or underdone, or something of the kind; and the family, instead of complaining, laughed about it. They asked some questions, for discipline must be preserved in a kitchen as much as in an army, but when they found out that there had been a political parade that day and the cook had gone out to see it, so that she had forgotten the meat for a while, they all laughed and thought it was a good joke.

Here is a bit of Ingersoll's philosophy, illustrated by himself: There were two turkeys in a farmer's yard, one was wise and the other foolish. The wise turkey said, "Ah, Thanksgiving Day is approaching; I shall starve myself and thereby be able to live longer." The foolish turkey said, "No, sir; I am going to eat all I can." "All right," said the wise turkey, "go ahead." So the foolish turkey ate, became fat, and had lots of fun, but the wise turkey starved himself and became thin. When Thanksgiving Day arrived the honest farmer killed both the wise and the foolish turkey, and by putting a stone inside the wise turkey made him weigh more than

the foolish one. Moral: Never give up a good thing.

One day I met Bob in Twenty-third Street, when it was raining great guns, and he had on a new coat and a very shiny hat. A poor man came up to him and asked him for some money. The man's coat was not as good as the Colonel's, but it was plain to see that it was a great deal thinner; so while the poor beggar was making his pitiful speech the Colonel held an umbrella over him all the while, and then gave him a dollar—not with a scowl and I-wonder-if-you-are-a-liar sort of a look, but with pleasant talk and some words of encouragement. People may say all they please about Colonel Ingersoll's infidelity, but I wish a good many people whom I know had some of his religion. Religion works differently in different natures. Perhaps some, like Col. Ingersoll, need very little of it. There are others who don't seem able to get enough to keep them straight, at least not enough to keep them fair to their fellows.

One of the best men in New York to smile with is Senator Evarts. I think I have heard somewhere that he can make a very long speech when he tries, but when he is telling a joke he can get to the point as soon as any one.

I shall not forget the time that he was at the dinner of the "Clover Club" in Philadelphia—an institution which it isn't safe for a man to visit unless he has all his brains in his head and can get them to the tip of his tongue at very short notice. Among the guests on this occasion were President Cleveland, ex-President Hayes, Gov. Foraker of Ohio, Gov. Lee of Virginia, Col. Aleck McClure, Gov. Gordon of Georgia, Senator Hawley, Col. John McCaull, Col. A. Lowden Snowden, and Hon. John F. Wise of Virginia. It is the style at the Clover Club to guy the speaker—everybody understands that. This is done only for fun; nevertheless it doesn't help a man to deliver a well-arranged speech. But Mr. Evarts began promptly to guy the Club. Said he: "I am sure my distinguished friend, Judge Harlan, whom we have just heard, tried to get some idea from President Handy (President of the Clover Club) to help him out with his speech, but that was an awful mistake. I cannot get any ideas out of the two gentlemen who sit near me (Gov. Gordon and ex-President Hayes), because they have none, and, as far as I can judge of the Clover Club and its members, these gentlemen haven't received any new ideas since they came." Here some *one* inter-

rupted with, "I move we elect Evarts on that basis." "Gentlemen," retorted the Senator, with a gesture of his hand, "I have never been seen in this way before. I was going to say a very modest thing—which is not very common with me—but I won't break the record. I was going to say that I have never been here before, and, if I had been, you would never have invited me again. I understand that in your great city you are pre-eminently without conventionality, but I have heard nothing but convention for the last week. (It chanced to be the week of the Convention of Governors.) When I had the honor of delivering the Centennial oration of '76"—here a voice shouted "1776"—"a friend said to me, 'Now, Evarts, when you spoke on the impeachment trial, you spoke four days; at the Beecher trial you spoke eight days; is there to be any limit whatever on this occasion?' 'No,' I replied, 'but there is a sort of implied understanding that I shall get through before the next Centennial.' My failure in speaking is that I lack, according to my friends, what has been the cause of many large railway enterprises failing—I lack terminal facilities." Then he sat down and nobody dared bother him.

Colonel Tom Ochiltree is a good fellow to

meet in New York. Tom has the air of an enterprising business man, but I never saw him in such a hurry that he didn't have time to tell a story, not even if he was going to take a drink. He is proud of being the original of the story of the young man who was taken in partnership with his father, and entrusted with the duty of preparing a signboard for the new firm, and when the father came down town next day and looked over the door he read:

THOMAS P. OCHILTREE & FATHER.

Tom is said to be gifted with a lively imagination, and never to spoil a story for the sake of the truth. He explained confidentially once to a number of his friends how he came by this peculiarity. The occasion was a meeting of the Southern Club of New York, all the members of which were born in Southern States. The club had been called together to take proper action regarding the approaching Washington Centenary, and when Tom rose to respond some one in the audience remarked gravely, "Washington never told a lie." If he supposed that remark was going to bluff Tom Ochiltree he didn't know his man, for the Colonel promptly responded, "That's so, I know that cherry tree story, I heard it when I was

very young. I was so affected by it that I was moved to emulation. My father hadn't any cherry trees, but he had a nice young apple orchard, and I got a little hatchet and went out in the orchard and chopped down the pet tree. As soon as father came home he saw what had happened. He immediately questioned me, and I told him the truth, expecting to be treated as little Georgie Washington was. Well, my father went to that tree, and he cut off a nice long slender section of it, and he used it in such a manner for the next five minutes that I've hated the very mention of the truth ever since."

Tom is a great fellow for illustrating an argument with a story. Abe Lincoln couldn't do it better. Here is one which he offered as an illustration during one of the endless quarrels over Free Trade and Protection during the recent Presidential canvass. A couple of darkies met down South one day. One little fellow said, "Hallo, how do you do?" "Oh, I'se fust rate; what's you doin'?" "Oh, I'se been workin' for my mammy." "Is you workin' for you' mammy; what is you doin' for you' mammy?" "Oh, I'se choppin' wood." "What does you' mammy give you for choppin' wood?" "Oh, she gives me a penny a

day." "And what you gwine to do wid the money?" "Oh, mammy's keepin' it for me." "Well, what she gwine to do wid it?" "Oh, she's gwine to buy me a new handle for dis axe, when I wears out dis one." The reader may apply the theory according to his own predilections in politics.

CHAPTER XIX.

AMERICAN ACTORS.—THEY ARE GREAT STORY-TELLERS.—
AUGUSTIN DALY AND HIS BROTHER.—JAMES LEWIS.—*In*
re COQUELIN.—NAT GOODWIN.—DE WOLF HOPPER.—
BARRETT.—BOOTH.—CHANFRAU'S BEST STORY.—BEN
MAGINLEY.—NO ADMITTANCE BEHIND THE SCENES.—
MARK TWAIN'S EXPERIENCE.—MAURICE BARRYMORE.

WHEN the gift of smiling and making others smile was given out, American actors were not behind the door. Almost any one of them is a compendium of stories, new and old, and when he tells them you enjoy the old about as well as the new, for it either has a new point, or something else entirely unexpected about its anatomy. It is hard to quote distinctive individuals and specimens without leaving out a hundred times as much as any book would hold, but at a venture I herewith offer a few, first making my will, and hoping that none of the dramatic profession whom I chance to neglect is mean enough to hit a man smaller than himself.

Some of the best story-telling ever done by members of the profession was at the dinner

given by Mr. Augustin Daly to Coquelin, the distinguished French comedian. By the way, Mr. Daly tells a first-class story about his brother, the Judge. The two used to indulge in amateur theatricals when they were boys. Their theatre was the family smoke-house, and the performances began when the manager was about eight years old. As they grew up, both dabbled more and more in theatricals, and finally the Judge ventured to play Mark Antony in Julius Cæsar, and afterwards asked his brother for an opinion of his performance. "Well," said Augustin, "I think, Joe, that you had better study law."

One of the liveliest members of Mr. Daly's company is James Lewis, who has made fun for New Yorkers longer than any other man living, and longer than any one upon whom the curtain has been "rung down," unless perhaps old Burton is excepted. Jim, as every one calls him, looks like a boy. A friend of mine once in front of the house asked me how old he was. I said, "Oh, about thirty-five years, I suppose." "Thirty-five!" said he; "why, he has been hanging around Daly's for twenty years." "Well," said Lewis himself, when this story was told him, "I have been hanging around Daly's for sixteen years, and they have been

the happiest and most prosperous years of my life. Mark Twain said to me one night: 'Say, Lewis, how old are you, any way?' I said to him: 'Mark, I am a full deck,' and he understood me."

When Lewis was called upon to speak at the Coquelin dinner, he paid the following tribute to the distinguished guest: "The last time I saw Coquelin," said he, "was in Paris, and on that occasion I was 'made up' for the character of the professor in 'A Night Off.' Coquelin said I looked so much like his old tutor that I made him shudder. A friend of mine who saw me act in Paris said I reminded him of Coquelin—because I was so different. After thinking about it for a long while I made up my mind that was sarcasm. I have never had the pleasure of seeing M. Coquelin on the stage, but I have been warned about him. Perhaps you don't catch the idea. Well, I'll explain. The year I voted for Andrew Jackson I was travelling with a small company acting in rural towns. In one village I asked the landlord of the local hotel where the theatre was. 'Well,' he replied, 'we aint exactly got no theatre, but there's a buildin' up yander where they give performances. It used to be the Temperance Hall, but they call it

'the Grand Opera House now.' I went 'up yander,' and found a marble-yard. A man was chiseling 'In memory of' on a tombstone, and I shuddered. 'Where's the Grand Opera House?' I asked him. 'Right back of the marble-yard,' he replied. 'Where's the stage-door?' 'You'll find it just behind the third tombstone on your left,' said he. Things were beginning to seem solemn, and when I got in there, and on the stage, I didn't feel like playing comedy. The carpenter was up on a ladder fixing a bit of scenery, and I threw a ten-penny nail at him to attract his attention. He looked down at me over his spectacles, and something in my personal appearance seemed to strike him, for he asked me: 'Is your name Lewis?' 'Yes,' I answered. 'Oh, well, I've been warned about you.' 'So?' I asked wonderingly. 'Yes; they told me you was first-rate.' Well, I have been warned about Coquelin. I am sorry I don't know more French—*Vive Coquelin!*"

Nat Goodwin is another splendid story-teller. He is always full of fresh ones. I think he must make them up himself, because I never heard any of them before I got them from him. I owe him a great deal for the new "bracers" he has given me, and I feel still

more indebted to him for his not having killed me on one special occasion. It was this: I reached London about two weeks before he did, dined at the Savage Club, and told one of Nat's stories, because I knew of course it would be fresh. It made an immense hit. About two weeks afterward Nat came over. He was introduced at the Savage Club. At the dinner-table he told what he supposed was his newest story. It fell utterly flat, and Nat was amazed and disgusted. Chauncey Depew had told him that some of the English didn't appreciate humour, and he made up his mind that must be the trouble; but one of the members, knowing his discomfiture, said to him: "The trouble is, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Wilder told us that story a week or two ago." "Oh, did he?" said Nat. "Well, then, I'll get even with him; I'll give you an imitation of Marsh Wilder," and then he told one of my stories and made a tremendous hit.

De Wolf Hopper is another man who can put a select crowd in a roar and keep them at it until each of them needs to go to a throat-doctor. So is Lawrence Barrett. Mr. Booth, solemn as he may appear on the stage in tragedy, has an immense amount of fun in him. There isn't on the variety stage a man who can

better sing a comic song or dance a jig. Chanfrau, who used to be a great character actor, and who I hope is making as much fun in the other world as he did in this, used to tell a story of Booth and Edwin Adams in the days when they were both young, aspiring, and very poor. They had gone to Australia to delight the natives with the legitimate drama, but "something intervened to obviate," and they found themselves hard up. They couldn't walk home on the ties, there not being that kind of a route, and they could not exactly see their way to a walking tour upon the ocean; so they went into seclusion. Chanfrau happened in town, wherever it was, about that time, and, walking about one evening, heard the cheerful sound of a jig proceeding upward from a cellar which seemed also to be a bar-room. He dropped down to see what was going on, and there he found Booth and Adams dancing jigs for drinks. I don't know whether either of them ever denied the story. I heartily hope they didn't, for it was fun to think of it when one chanced to see them afterward on the stage in the height of their prosperity.

Old Ben Maginley, who, by the way, was not old at all when he died, and whose two hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois I trust is now

gracing the edge of a fleecy, sunny cloud somewhere in the celestial ether, was also a great story-teller. Ben would stand at the corner of the Union Square Hotel on a mild summer evening, when one season had concluded and the agony of the next had not yet begun, and tell stories in an innocent, straightforward, country-farmer fashion that convulsed every one about him. None of his hearers went to a bar-room so long as Ben would continue talking.

American actors don't differ much in style and manner from their professional brethren in England, but the ways of American theaters behind the scenes differ decidedly from those on the other side. The green-rooms and "flies" in many London theatres are accessible to a select and specially favoured circle, but it isn't easy for any visitor to get behind the stage of a first-class American theatre. The following explanation by Mark Twain of an attempted visit to Daly's green-room is a fair illustration of what may happen to any one attempting to get into the rear of that house or any other prominent New York theatre. He said, at the 100th-night dinner of "The Taming of the Shrew": "I am glad to be here. This is the hardest theatre in New York to get into, even at the front door. I never got in with-

out hard work. I am glad we have got so far in at last. Two or three years ago I had an appointment to meet Mr. Daly on the stage of this theatre at eight o'clock in the evening. Well, I got on a train at Hartford to come to New York and keep the appointment. All I had to do was to come to the back door of the theatre on Sixth Avenue. I did not believe that; I did not believe it could be on Sixth Avenue, but that is what Daly's note said—Come to that door, walk right in, and keep the appointment. It looked very easy. It looked easy enough, but I had not much confidence in the Sixth Avenue door. Well, I was kind of bored on the train, and I bought some newspapers—New Haven newspapers—and there was not much news in them, so I read the advertisements. There was one advertisement of a bench show. I had heard of bench shows, and I often wondered what there was about them to interest people. I had seen bench shows, lectured to bench shows in fact, but I didn't want to advertise them or to brag about them. Well, I read on a little and learned that a bench show was not a bench show—but dogs, not benches at all—only dogs. I began to be interested, and, as there was nothing else to do, I read every bit of that advertisement, and

learned that the biggest thing in this show was a St. Bernard dog that weighed one hundred and forty-five pounds. Before I got to New York, I was so interested in the bench shows, that I made up my mind to go to one the first chance I got. Down on Sixth Avenue, near where that back door might be, I began to take things leisurely. I did not like to be in too much of a hurry. There was not anything in sight that looked like a back door. The nearest approach to it was a cigar store, so I went in and bought a cigar, not too expensive, but it cost enough to pay for any information I might get, and leave the dealer a fair profit. Well, I did not like to be too abrupt, to make the man think me crazy, by asking him if that was the way to Daly's Theatre, so I started gradually to lead up to the subject, asking him first if that was the way to Castle Garden. When I got to the real question, and he said he would show me the way, I was astonished. He sent me through a long hallway, and I found myself in a back yard. Then I went through a long passage-way and into a little room, and there before my eyes was a big St. Bernard dog lying on a bench. There was another door beyond, and I went there and was met by a big, fierce man with a fur cap on and coat off,

who remarked, "Fhwat do yez want?" I told him I wanted to see Mr. Daly. "Yez can't see Mr. Daly this time of night," he responded. I urged that I had an appointment with Mr. Daly, and gave him my card, which did not seem to impress him much. "Yez can't get in and yez can't smoke here. Throw away that cigar. If yez want to see Mr. Daly, yez'll have to be after going to the front door and buy a ticket, and then if yez have luck and he's around that way yez may see him." I was getting discouraged, but I had one resource left that had been of good service in similar emergencies. Firmly but kindly I told him my name was Mark Twain, and I awaited results. There were none. He was not fazed a bit. "Fhwere's your order to see Mr. Daly?" he asked. I handed him the note, and he examined it intently. "My friend," I remarked, "you can read that better if you hold it the other side up"; but he took no notice of the suggestion, and finally asked, "Where's Mr. Daly's name?" "There it is," I told him, "on the top of the page." "That's all right," he said, "that's where he always puts it, but I don't see the "W" in his name," and he eyed me distrustfully. Finally he asked, "Fhwat do yez want to see Mr. Daly for?" "Business."

"Business?" "Yes." It was my only hope. "Fhwat kind—theatres?" That was too much. "No." "What kind of shows, then?" "Bench shows." It was risky, but I was desperate. "Bench shows, is it—where?" The big man's face changed, and he began to look interested. "New Haven." "New Haven," is it? Ah, that's going to be a fine show. I'm glad to see you. Did you see a big dog in the other room?" "Yes." "How much do you think that dog weighs?" "One hundred and forty-five pounds." "Look at that, now! He's a good judge of dogs, and no mistake. He weighs all of one hundred and thirty-eight. Sit down and shmoke,—go on and shmoke your cigar, I'll tell Mr. Daly you are here." In a few minutes I was on the stage shaking hands with Mr. Daly, and the big man standing around glowing with satisfaction. "Come around in front," said Mr. Daly, "and see the performance. I will put you into my own box," and as I moved away I heard my honest friend mutter, "Well, he desarves it."

Maurice Barrymore is a splendid fellow to smile with; he always seems good-natured. He is of fine birth and education, and would have been a clergyman could his parents have had things their way; he would have made one

of the curates with whom all girls fall in love. He never slumbers or sleeps, unless while his eyes are open and he is busy talking and telling stories. He has no chestnuts, but any story he tells reaches the dignity of a chestnut in a very short time, it is repeated so industriously.

CHAPTER XX.

AFTER-DINNER SPEAKERS.—ENGLISHMEN ADMIRE OURS.—
TOM WALLER.—CHAUNCEY DEPEW.—WAYNE McVEAGH —
MOSES P. HANDY.—THE BALD EAGLE OF WESTCHESTER.—
THE MAN WHO DIDN'T KICK.—COMPETITIVE LYING.—
HORACE PORTER.—BILL NYE.—JAMES WHITCOMB
RILEY.—JUDGE BRADY.—JUDGE DAVIS.—DAVID DUDLEY
FIELD.

THERE are a great many clever men in England,—men who are known to the entire world as orators—but they can't hold a candle to Americans as after-dinner speakers. The English respect us for our cattle-ranches, horse-races, wheat-fields, yacht-building, and many other things, but their highest appreciation of America is on account of our after-dinner speakers. They do not read the American newspapers very much as a rule, for which I extend to them my sentiments of profound commiseration, but whenever anything occurs here which calls for a lot of after-dinner speeches from prominent men it has a way of making itself known and talked about all over England. Englishmen never fail to attend

any social affair in London at which a number of prominent Americans are expected to be present.

Our late Consul-General, Tom Waller of Connecticut, was a great favorite there. So was Wayne McVeagh, who, as a cabinet officer, was as solemn as the back side of a grave-stone. Moses P. Handy is another man very popular over there for his after-dinner orations; and if Jimmy Husted, the "Bald Eagle of Westchester," ever cares to change his occupation, he can make his fortune in a short time by going to England and making speeches. The English are simply amazed at the quickness and readiness of Americans at speech-making and repartee. No Englishman cares to compete with one of them at the dinner-table.

Of course they have all heard of Chauncey Depew, and some of his good stories I heard over there for the first time. One which was repeated to me frequently was as follows: "When I was about fourteen years of age, my father lived on an old farm at Poughkeepsie. One day, after I had worked very hard at a five-acre field of corn, I begged permission and money to go to the circus. While I was there I saw a spotted coach-dog which took my fancy, and, as I had enough money left, I

bought him and took him home. My father, who was an old Puritan, and had read of Jacob's little game with the sheep of Laban, said to me, 'Chauncey, I don't want any spotted dogs on this farm; they'll drive the cattle crazy and spoil the breed!' Next day it chanced to rain, and I took the dog out into the woods to try him on a coon, but to my great astonishment the rain washed all the spots off of him. I took the dog back to the circus man who sold him to me and told him that all the spots had washed off. 'Great Scott!' said the fellow, with an affectation of surprise. 'There was an umbrella went with that dog to keep him dry. Didn't you get it?'"

The English like the optimistic style of our speakers, and were hugely pleased with the retort ascribed to a little fellow who had no feet and, whom a lot of his neighbors set up in business as a newsdealer in Harlem, providing him with a barrel in which to sit and hang his stumps, so that the wind should not strike them. One day, when the blizzard was raging violently, he went on selling newspapers as cheerily as if nothing was occurring. Finally a friend came along and said to him: "Hello, Charley, how is business?" "Well," said the

little fellow, looking down to the place where his feet ought to be, "I aint kickin'."

Bret Harte was long one of the famous after-dinner speakers in London. I have heard that Bret's printed stories are written with great care, leisure, and deliberation, but in London he always succeeded in saying something entirely new and on the spur of the moment. He set a whole table laughing once by telling of an Irishman who lost his way in a large city and was driving up and down in his cart, which was drawn by a small mule. The fellow looked so woe-begone that some one shouted to him from the sidewalk and asked him where he was going. "I don't know," said he, "ask the mule."

Another after-dinner story that people do not tire of over there was about a German revisiting his native country, who was questioned a great deal by one of the native princes. Said the prince: "Hans, have you any circus riders in America?" "Yes," was the reply, "we've got lots of them; who is your greatest rider in Germany?" "Oh, Hans Wagner; he is the greatest rider you ever saw in your life." "Well," said the returned emigrant, "I'll bet he aint much to what we've got in America. Now, there's Jim Robinson, I've seen him run

along and jump off a horse's back and on again four or five times." "Oh, that's nothing," said the prince, "Hans Wagner does that every day for practice." "But I've seen Robinson jump on a horse going at full speed and stand with one foot on his tail." "Yes, but Hans Wagner did that when he was a young man the first time he tried." "Well, but I've seen Jimmy Robinson run into a ring and run twice around with the horse, and then jump and land right on the horse's breath." "Well, Hans Wagner, he—see here, my man, that's a lie; I don't believe that."

Some of Horace Porter's stories are repeated over there with great gusto. One of them was carried over from here, having been given after the dinner on the 100th night of the "Taming of the Shrew," at Mr. Daly's Theatre. It was a story of Sherman's march to the sea. It seems that Sherman used to go out of his way to avoid bridges, and was very fond of fords. One day the army was to ford a river, but for miles before they reached it they waded knee-deep in a swamp, and one soldier finally said to another, "Bill, I guess we've struck this river lengthwise." Porter's story of the man who was always on time also amused the English immensely. It seems this fellow kept a

sort of schedule of his day's proceedings. He would arise in the morning at a certain time, go to bed at a certain time, eat his meals at a certain time, and dress at a certain time, and was so methodical that his watch was in his hand a great deal of the time. One day his wife died. At the funeral, as the remains were lowered into the grave the bereaved husband wiped his weeping eyes, swallowed a sob or two, took out his watch, looked at it, and murmured: "Just a quarter past two; got her in on time."

In England they are very fond of repeating stories told by Mark Twain, Bill Nye, and James Whitcomb Riley, and I don't wonder at it, for there are few men who better understand the art. They don't resemble each other much more than my esteemed friends, T. De Witt Talmage and Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, but each talks for all he is worth and gets there every time. Mark Twain transgresses all precedents by spinning out a story to an immense length, yet every one is sorry when he sits down. Bill Nye gets upon his feet so full of what he is going to say that it oozes all out over his good-natured face and still has considerable overflow for the top of his shining bald head. Riley tells his story in

a most leisurely and quiet manner that suggests a great deal of reserve force, but when he gets to the point he does it so sharply and skilfully that the audience is astounded for an instant, and when they do catch on the applause is terrific. He can mix the humorous and pathetic more skilfully than any man I ever heard. He told me once of a little fellow who had a curvature of the spine. He made the story intensely pathetic until I began to feel for my handkerchief, but when he explained how the little chap was as proud of his deformity as a colored man would be of a new suit of clothes, I nearly exploded. I didn't know whether I was crying or laughing.

Although it isn't to the point of American after-dinner speaking, I want to record just here a story I have heard about Riley out in Union City, Indiana, where he turned up once as a painter. The proprietor of the hotel there called my attention to the sign overhead his door, and said : "Do you see that sign?" "Yes," said I. "Well," said he, "that was painted by James Whitcomb Riley, the poet, who in those days was called the blind painter of Indiana. They called him blind because when he went up on a ladder he traced the outlines of the letter so very slowly, and filled

them in so carefully, that you hardly could see that he was working at all; yet, all of a sudden, the whole sign was done, and it was the best work of the kind in the State of Indiana!" Riley tells stories just exactly as he painted the sign.

If the English want to know how well our people can tell after-dinner stories, however, they ought to come over here and drop into some of the New York clubs, and hear Judge Brady and Judge Noah Davis and David Dudley Field, and some other men who to the general public are as solemn as obituary notices. When these men do find time for recreation and let themselves loose, they do it in magnificent style. Once up at the Lambs' Club Judge Brady, who was then the shepherd of that pastoral institution, took exception to something that was said about the public being unable to understand big words. "Any one can understand a big word," said he. "Why, a little while ago, in front of J. M. Hill's cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg, two Irishmen stopped, and one of them, looking up at the round building, asked the other, 'What is this?' 'This is a cyclorama,' said Pat. 'A what?' asked Mike. 'A cyclorama.' 'Well, and what's a cyclorama?' 'Don't you know

what a cyclorama is?' 'Indade I don't.' 'Well, cyclorama is dude language for gas-house.' "

When, however, you want to hear some of the best American speaking at the shortest notice, you want to get yourself into a crowd of newspaper men. For particulars see next chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

NEWSPAPER MEN ARE RELIABLE SMILERS.—JOHN COCKERILL.—GENERAL SHERMAN EXPLAINS.—SOME OF COCKERILL'S YARNS.—AMOS CUMMINGS.—SOME OF HIS STORIES.—JOE HOWARD BRINGS DOWN THE HOUSE.—WILLIE WINTER.—HENRY GUY CARLETON ON COMMERCIAL TRAVELERS.—BOB MORRIS.—JOE CLARKE.—JOHN REED.—WILL STARKS.—GEORGE WILLIAMS.—THE PRESS CLUB.—THE FELLOWCRAFT.

AMONG the men who can always be depended upon to smile with a man and say the best things at the shortest notice, the journalists of New York City are pre-eminent. It takes a great deal of good stuff to make one journalist, but after the work is done the results are so admirable that the reader would not object to spoiling a hundred or so ordinary beings for the sake of turning out one first-class newspaper man.

The qualifications of a man in a prominent position in journalism are so numerous that it would be hard to mention and classify them. Every American thinks himself able to edit a newspaper, and I don't know that many of

them are mistaken; but among foreigners I cannot recall at this instant more than two who would be equal to the demands of the New York press were they not otherwise engaged at the present time: one is the Pope and the other is Bismarck.

To name all the clever fellows who are supplying the world with news, yet find time to be cheerful with any half-way decent fellow who comes along, would take more space than the entirety of this book, even if the names were set in double columns in directory style. Of course they are not all in New York. I never yet reached the town that had a newspaper of any account without finding at least one good fellow of the journalist fraternity, but naturally I am best acquainted with those who say things through the medium of the press of the metropolis.

Among the crowd is my friend Col. Cockerill. It is astonishing how little the world knows about some men whose names are on every one's lips. A little while ago I actually heard an intelligent American allude to Cockerill as having gained his rank in the Confederate Army. There were plenty of good fellows, I have no doubt, in the Confederate Army; in fact, I have met a great many of them in

recent years ; but as for Cockerill,—well, allow me to reproduce a story by Gen. Sherman, told at the Press Club ; it runs thus, as nearly as I can remember the General's words : " If you fellows would promise not to sing ' Marching through Georgia ' I'll tell you a little story. I came here to the Press Club to-night especially to pay my respects to your president, Col. Cockerill. I presume most of you don't know what it is to stand in the position of a man having charge of the lives of one hundred thousand men. Fortunately or unfortunately, I do. Some years ago, down at the little village of Paducah, Ohio, the 17th Ohio Regiment reported to me. Cockerill was in that regiment as a drummer boy. His father was there too. The boy got his education in Virginia, but he was true to the nation. He stood heavy fire in those days, and that is what made him so staunch a friend. He went ahead, right straight along, as he has been doing ever since. As the sins of the father go down to the fourth generation, as the Bible says, it is a comfort to realize that the virtues go down too. His father was a splendid man, and his son is a chip out of the old block. I know him to be a fellow of the right stamp, and I congratulate you on having chosen him for your president.

I believe he is about forty years old. I hope he will live to be forty more." I guess these remarks dispose of the story which a good many people were inclined to believe, that the Colonel won his rank in the Confederate Army.

Like all the other smart fellows of the world, Cockerill can't hear of anything without being reminded of a story; the last one he told me was about two Englishmen who had been rich but later became so severely reduced in circumstances that one became a waiter in a shilling restaurant in London and the other had become reduced to a shilling and hadn't had anything to eat for a day or two. Finally, when he reached the point where he had either to give up his shilling or give up his life, he went into a restaurant to get a dinner, and found his old comrade there waiting on the the table. "'Pon my word," said he, "it's very hard, old friend, for me to see you here as low down as this,—actually a waiter in a shilling restaurant." "Yes, old chappie," said the other cheerily, "it's pretty hard to be a waiter here, I confess, but all the same I've never got down so low that I have had to eat my dinner here."

One of Cockerill's stories has gone all over the country in print. I have heard many

stories with double meanings, but I never before struck any which were as doubly suggestive as are some of his.

Another famous story-teller on the New York press—he is also a Member of Congress—is Amos Cummings. Some one was telling about having been mixed up in a discussion over abstract principles where hairs were split and split until each of the principals lost entire sight of the original point he was aiming at. It reminded Amos of this story: An Irishman walked up to the refreshment stand of a railway station and said to the young lady, "What have you got there?" "Apples," she said. "How much?" "Five cents apiece." He took an apple in his hand, looked at another plate of fruit, and said: "What's these?" "Oranges, sir." "How much are they?" "Five cents each." "Same price as the apples?" "Yes." "Would you mind givin' me an orange for this apple?" "You are quite welcome," says she, "to exchange them." He took the orange and ate it, and was going out, when the young woman shouted, "Wont you pay for it?" "Pay for what?" says Pat. "Why, for the orange, to be sure." "Why, I gave you the apple for the orange." "Yes, sir, but you haven't paid for the apple."

“Well, I gave you back the apple, what do you want,—the whole earth?”

I have heard a great deal about the imaginative faculty in Irishmen, but I never knew it better delineated than by Amos Cummings when he told of an Irishman who was wheeling a heavy barrel up a road and some one said to him, “Mike, what have you in that barrel?” “Well, sor,” was the reply, “upon my word I don’t know. One side of it says Rye Whiskey and the other’s marked Pat Duffy.”

Joe Howard is another famous newspaper man in the metropolis. I could scarcely tell to what paper he is attached if I tried,—he writes for so many. Joe has a dome of thought resembling that of the late lamented William Shakespeare, a resemblance to which his moustache and goatee tellingly contribute. I suppose he is pretty well along in years, as he has several married children, but his spirits are about eighteen years of age and grow younger every moment while he talks. He not only can tell a first-rate story, but he can turn some other man’s story in a direction which the original owner never would have imagined. One day, over at the Press Club, my dear old friend Peter Cooper, of sainted memory, was giving the boys some good

advice. He knew that newspaper men worked very hard, earned a great deal of money, spent it freely, and he wanted to give them a practical hint, so he told them that one of the most useful things in the world to a young man, after a good character, was a bank account. Even if he contributed to it very slowly he would find it a tower of strength and a source of comfort. I know that his remarks had upon a number of members the effect which he desired, nevertheless I was amused when Joe Howard popped up and remarked: "I wish to add the weight of my testimony, such as it is, to that which our venerable and esteemed friend has so kindly given us. A few years ago he said to me just what he has said to all of you to-night, and impressed me so powerfully that I went out and opened a bank account at once. I have it yet. Yes, gentlemen, I am happy to say I have it yet. It has been about \$400 overdrawn for two years; still, that bank account is mine." Even Mr. Cooper had to laugh then.

Willie Winter is another one of the wits of the New York press. He is a very solemn-looking fellow, and I have heard that he confines his humourous exuberance to the columns of the newspaper on whose staff he has been a

valuable contributor for a good many years, but the only time I ever heard him speak in public he was quite equal to the occasion. It was a dinner at which General Sherman presided. My name was on the list, but perhaps the General had mislaid his glasses, for instead of calling for Wilder he named Winter. Winter, who had seen the list himself, arose and remarked gravely : "I had found myself almost entirely forgotten here, but General Sherman, who never yet disappointed any expectations which were made of him, looked for me in the person of my esteemed friend, Marshall Wilder. I was not in the least disappointed. It reminded me of an old yarn about a negro preacher who used to open a Bible at random when he went into the pulpit, and one day he stumbled on a chapter which is the terror of young people who attempt to commit the Bible to memory, and read as follows : 'And unto Enoch was born Irad, and Irad forgot Mehujael, and Mehujael forgot Methusael, and Methusael forgot Lamech, and Lamech took unto him two wives and forgot Jabal.—Now, my beloved bruddern, dis text am meant to show you firstly dat dem old patriarchs, dey was mighty forgetful.' Never mind about the 'rest.'"

Henry Guy Carleton is another clever newspaper man. He used to be an officer of the regular army, and his sketches of army life on the border, published a few years ago in the *New York Times*, are so killingly funny that I have never been able to understand why they didn't appear afterward in book form, so that people could laugh over them not only for a day but for all time. The first I heard of Carleton was at a dinner of the Commercial Travellers' Club. I did my best when my turn came to speak, for I knew those travellers were a remarkably smart set of fellows, and knew more about chestnuts than all the Italians who infest our street corners combined. I did the best I could. Joe Howard also made a tremendous hit. Carleton couldn't go, but he sent a letter which put the assemblage in fits. It is as follows:

“WILL L. HEYER:—

“DEAR SIR: I pen these few lines with a soul full of emotion, sorrowing that I cannot be with you to-night. I feel that by staying away from the large, long feed to which you so kindly invited me, I am losing the one opportunity of my life to get square with the drummers. During my long and variable career as a private citizen I have travelled a great deal, but I have never yet seen a real live drummer. I

have often heard of him, but he was always about ten minutes ahead of me. All the best rooms were occupied when I arrived, and the affections of the prettiest girls had all been placed. I never got a lower berth on a train but once, and that was when a drummer, who had got in ahead of me, gave it up so that he could offer his condolences to a poor little orphan girl, aged about twenty-five years, in another car, who was on her way to join her parents in Kankakee. I once paid \$4 a day in Denver where I was shown up to room 947 on the eighth floor, with a cracked mirror, no soap, one towel, a package of insect powder, and a bureau with no handles on it, while the blue-eyed drummer with gold filling in his front teeth who arrived just before me got the best chamber for \$2, with ten per cent. off for cash. But let this pass; I have noticed that drummers are always complaining of loss of appetite, but I have also observed that there is seldom anything left after they get through, except the cut-glass pickle dish, four corks, and the mustard. I would be a drummer myself, but my intimate friends say that I am not shy and retiring enough; they say also that I talk too much.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY GUY CARLETON.”

Bob Morris is also noted in the journalistic fraternity as a story-teller. Bob is very lame in both feet and needs a thick cane to help him

along. He ought to have a medal of honor big enough to cover his entire breast and hang all over him beside, for many years ago, when he was an athletic young sailor and officer in the merchant marine, both his feet were frozen on account of his heroic endeavors to save the lives of some of his messmates who were in danger of drowning, during a wreck. The disability didn't reach his head, however; it didn't even get up to his heart, for Bob is always bubbling over with good stories. In recent years he has written several plays, and I am glad to say he is on the high road to success. I don't know of any one who more richly deserves it.

Joe Clarke is another famous story-teller. His duties as managing editor confine him very closely to his desk, but when any acquaintance chances to catch him on the elevated train between his office and his house they are sure of getting a good story, and probably half a dozen. Joe is one of the few men who look as if hard work agreed with them. He is rotund, smooth-faced, bright-eyed, has a fine complexion, and like his hearty admirer, the author, never drinks anything stronger than water.

Another famous fellow for good stories is John Reed. John has done so much long and steady work as a managing editor that his ac-

quaintances have been able to catch him only about as they catch angels' visits—that is, un-awares; but after two o'clock at night, or rather in the morning, when the paper is made up, John will sit down at any of the all-night soda fountains and tell stories as long as any one else will prompt him by telling stories themselves. He doesn't allow any one to get ahead of him.

Will Starks has about as large a collection of good stories as any man on the New York press, and he makes them all the better by telling them with as solemn a face as if he were a Presbyterian minister warning his hearers to flee from the wrath to come. Bill looks to be about thirty-five years of age, but as he was a famous war correspondent twenty-five years ago, and a most effective cavalry officer before that, I guess he must have found the fountain of youth somewhere. When he recalls a first-rate thing from his memories of every State of the Union, and some foreign countries besides, he does not, like some men I know, go out at once to find some one to try it on, but he writes it out, puts it in print, and modestly but hypocritically credits it to some other newspaper. Bill knows as much about Cuba and Mexico as most men do about the United States. He is a rich mine

of war reminiscences, but never gives up a war story unless it is dragged out of him by main force. When that occurs, however, it is safe for the listeners to loosen a vest-button or two and draw a full breath.

Should any man be pining for a war story, and can't get one anywhere else, he can be accommodated by applying in proper manner to George F. Williams, who will be pleasantly recalled by every one when I say it was he who devised and managed the children's excursions which were such a delightful indication of New York's big heart a few years ago. George also was a soldier and war correspondent, and although sometimes he grew very weary through lack of sleep during the discharge of the serious duties incumbent upon him, his memory was never weakened in the slightest degree. He knew every general in the army, always got his copy in on time, never did any padding, and yet heard every good story that was told in any department of our great army. Still more, he could always find time to drop in wherever there were any prisoners of war and catalogue the jokes that were current on the other side. George is almost as tall as the late lamented General Scott, has splendid broad shoulders, and honorably wears the old "knapsack stoop"

of the volunteer army, although he quickly earned shoulder straps and an enviable rank, which he resigned solely for the purpose of going back to his first love, which was the journalistic profession.

The New York newspaper men have two clubs—the Press Club and the Fellowcraft, the latter being so high-toned and exclusive that there's many a millionaire who hasn't influence enough to pass its doors. That's all right, though; if newspaper men don't deserve a cozy, quiet place of retreat, I don't know who does.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOME POINTS OF BUSINESS.—NO TRICK ABOUT IT.—A MATTER OF LONG PRACTICE.—MY EARLIEST APPEARANCE.—JOE JEFFERSON.—A GALLOWS FOR A STAGE.—BUFFALO BILL WITH RED HAIR.—MY FRIENDS THE NEWSBOYS.—I LEARNED SOMETHING FROM TALMAGE.—A HINT TO PREACHERS.—MARCUS SPRING'S STORY.—THE BOSTON COMMON INCIDENT ADAPTED.

AMONG my best friends—those who are most heartily pleased at all success which I have achieved in my profession—are a number who are more and more surprised, as time goes on, that I get along as well as I do. They are not in the business themselves, so they look on from afar off and imagine there is some trick about it in some way. I have heard people talk the same way after listening to Patti sing through an opera requiring great abilities in acting, vocalization, and facial expression, and wonder how she succeeded in getting everything “down fine.” There is nothing wonderful about it to me, for she went on the stage at a very early age. I am told her first appearance was during her third year, when she was carried on in a child's part.

Well, begging pardon for comparing myself in any way with so incomparable an artist as Madame Patti, I want to explain to my friends that I didn't jump suddenly into the business which now occupies most of my time. I had a long preparatory course of an irregular nature. I have already alluded to the barn theatrical company which I managed when I was a small boy, but I look back to those days with considerable satisfaction, for they set me to thinking about how to secure an effect upon an audience, and the habit then formed has never left me.

My first attempt, however, to amuse the public was made still earlier. I was only about eight years of age when the people in the rural district in which I lived planned an entertainment. They played Mary Queen of Scots. Your stalwart American backwoodsman has a faculty of always trying the hardest thing first ; that is why he develops into such a splendid fellow. When Mary came upon the stage with the headsman, the propertyman had failed to remember that an axe was necessary, in keeping up the illusion, and the performance had to wait while they sent out and borrowed a meat-axe from the nearest butcher. Everybody in the vicinity knew that

meat-axe at sight, and as the headsman took it and stalked across the stage very solemnly, to chills-and-fever music by the local band, I shouted out: "Save me a spare-rib!" That scene was a failure for the company, but as my first attempt at wit it made a tremendous success, which so pleased me that I have ever since had my mind running on that sort of thing.

My first appearance on the professional stage was made at Roberts' Opera House, Hartford, when I was a school-boy in that town. Joe Jefferson came there to play Rip Van Winkle, and, as every one remembers, he makes his first appearance in the play with a child on his back and a number of other children following. It was always desirable to secure a youngster who was not very heavy, to sit on Rip's shoulders, yet old enough not to be frightened at the applause with which the scene is always greeted. I was always hanging about that opera house, and frequently succeeded, being very short, in hiding under a seat so that I could be in the house without a ticket before the performance began. The janitor knew this trick of mine, and thought he might as well make use of me in some way to pay expenses, so he selected me on one

occasion as the boy to sit on Jefferson's shoulders.

Then I considered myself in luck. I reached the theatre at half-past six,—an hour and a half too early, so as to be sure to be there on time. Jefferson arrived late, and was kind enough to ask me into his dressing-room, and perhaps my mouth and eyes weren't wide opened as I saw him make up for his part! Finally, he said, "Now, little fellow," and stooped down. I jumped upon his back, and off he started for the stage. The instant he appeared there was a tremendous round of applause, which I, with the customary modesty of childhood, imagined was intended entirely for me. A happier boy never lived.

This experience made me so in love with the theatre that I again began to give dramatic entertainments myself. I couldn't hire a hall, and the janitor cruelly refused me the use of the opera house, but where there is a will there is a way. The old Hartford Jail had a garret in the top of the building, and the jailer's family lived on the floor beneath it; the jailer's son was a friend of mine, and as fond of theatricals as I, so we used to give entertainments up in that garret. The town gallows, when not in use, was kept up there,

and we rigged that up as a stage and hung a curtain in front of it. When Buffalo Bill visited Hartford with Ned Buntline's company fifteen or twenty years ago, my friend and I saw him as often as possible, and remembered all we could of the play; then we would give it, to a carefully selected audience-up in that garret. The jailer's son played Buffalo Bill's part; he had fiery red hair, which was cut very short; consequently he did not resemble Bill very much, but between our histrionic ability and the extra attraction of our playing from the gallows from which some men had been hung, we succeeded in extorting five cents for every ticket. Even at this late day I don't hesitate to say the show was worth the money. I'd give a hundred times as much now to see a lot of boys go through the same performance from so suggestive a stage.

Having been a boy, and not so very long ago either, I have a great deal of sympathy with the youngsters and hearty fondness for them. No part of my professional duties has been more pleasant than that of entertaining newsboys and bootblacks in New York, as I do frequently. What delights me most about it is that my juvenile audiences never forget

me. I had an amusing and touching illustration of it not very long ago. I was at the foot of the elevated railway stairs at Chambers Street trying to get up. There was a great crowd there, and a very big fellow, not noticing me, pushed me aside. Instantly two newsboys rushed up, and one of them shouted: "See here; don't you shove that little fellow or knock him around; that's Wilder the humourist, and when you hit him you hit us." The man turned around, and when he could bend his neck enough to look down to where I was he said pleasantly: "Beg pardon, Mr. Wilder; I didn't see you." But the boys were not quick to accept his explanation; their lips were rolled out, and their teeth exposed plainly, until the big fellow took me under his wing and guarded me safely all the way up the stairs.

While my juvenile head was full of dramatic projects and possibilities, I got an important lesson from the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage. I know that he is not a professor in the school of acting, nevertheless you can learn something from anybody if you will take the trouble to listen and not be conceited. He came to Rochester once when I was a school-boy there, and was to lecture at Corinthian Hall. I happened to be hanging about there during the

afternoon when he dropped in to look at the place where he was to speak, and he saw me and patted me on the head and said: "Well, my little man, are you coming to hear my lecture to-night?" I looked up and said: "Well, sir; I don't think your lecture will be entertaining to boys." "You don't, eh," he laughed; "why, what am I myself but a boy?" That caught me, so I went there that evening and enjoyed the lecture very much. I looked at him all the while. I couldn't possibly help it, for I was curious every minute, almost every second, to see what he would do next. He was never quiet. He talked with his face as much as with his tongue, and he put in a good deal of work with his hands, with his feet, and all the rest of his body. He was all over that platform at least sixty times in the course of the hour in which he spoke, and I heartily approve of everything he did. I got the idea there, which some conscientious readers and recitationists seem to have missed all their lives, that when a man has a good thing to get off he must not trust it entirely to his tongue.

That is just the difference between acting and preaching. I learned it during that evening, and I never forgot to act accordingly. There is scarcely a thing that I say on the

stage or platform which has not been said by a great many other people, but I help my tongue along to the best of my ability with face, eyes, cheeks, hands, and feet. There is everything in the way a thing is put. If there wasn't, a school dialogue would be as good as one of Booth's tragedies or Daly's comedies. I have seen some atrocious plays draw for a hundred successive nights in New York, not for anything that the author had said or done, but because of the ability of the artists. A great many preachers now living could profit as much as I did by studying Talmage for a little while.

The difference reminds me of a story which the late Marcus Spring of New Jersey, a gentleman who left a most enviable reputation behind him for geniality and courtesy, used to tell about an old colored woman who lived in his vicinity. Spring was quite a persistent church-goer, and one day he was astonished to see this old woman get in an ecstasy of smiles and tears over a very poor sermon,—a sermon by one of the old-fashioned pulpit-pounding, Gospel-chewing preachers, whose sermons have as much verbiage and little sense as a dictionary after it has been ground to bits in a coffee-mill. Said Mr. Spring: "Auntie, I

don't see why you make such a fuss over what that man said to you. If you are affected by that sort of thing, I believe I could make you cry and shout by simply saying, 'See that rabbit run across that field!' She resented the imputation, so I immediately struck a pulpit attitude and in my most impressive manner repeated the words given above. Sure enough, the old woman burst into a flood of tears and got off several pious ejaculations. 'There,' said I, 'didn't I tell you I could do it?' 'Yes, Massa Spring,' said she, 'you did, but,—oh, you didn't tell me you was goin' to put de heavenly twang into it. Dat's what took me, massa.'"

One of my most successful appearances was in imitation of a historic character dear to all small boys; I allude to the spokesman of that crowd of little Bostonians who went to Gen. Howe once during the British occupation of Boston and protested against the abridgement of their liberties to the extent of playing on Boston Common. Right beside our school in Rochester was a bit of ground on which we boys used to play ball, but an old German living near by protested against the game because we made so much noise and disturbed him. I guess he drank too much beer, and had a bad

stomach. The old fellow went to police headquarters, and an order was issued from there that the boys should stop playing ball on that ground. We fellows held a wrathful consultation, and it was decided that something should be done. Recalling the Boston incident, it was agreed that we should make an appeal to the Mayor. A committee of four was appointed, and I was selected, as spokesman. We went to the Mayor's office, and I stated the case to Mayor Parsons. My heart was in my mouth all the while, but the boys said I did splendidly, and I guess I did, for the Mayor compelled the police to rescind their order. Before that the boys didn't seem to think much of me, because I couldn't work and wasn't equal to all the onerous duties of ball playing, but after that I was the biggest man at the school. To my great delight, last summer, at Saratoga, I met Mayor Parsons and recalled the incident. He remembered it at once, and we had a hearty laugh over it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PART OF MY PAY.—THE FUN I GET FROM MY HEARERS.—
THEY ASKED FOR MY FATHER.—A THRIFTY HEBREW.—
NO CREED ABOUT MONEY.—EXPECTED TO PARADE.—SOME
GREAT-HEARTED PHILADELPHIANS.—A BLIND ORCHESTRA.
—CABMEN'S JOKES.—CARL ZERRAHN'S PREDICAMENT.—
TAMING A BEAR.—MIND READING.

SINCE I succeeded in becoming pretty well known as a man who makes people smile, I have received very good pay, better, I suspect sometimes, than I deserve, but a great deal of my compensation comes out of the fun which I stumble upon unexpectedly in the course of my work.

It is not always fun ; for instance, sometimes when I give an entertainment for the benefit of a Sunday-school or church, and the church building itself is the place in which I am to speak, the minister will come to me and say : " Now, Mr. Wilder, you must be very careful ; please remember that this a church. I hope you will select your words very carefully while you are on the platform." It isn't specially inspiring to have this sort of thing said just as you " go on."

There is no end to the funny incidents that come to me through my smallness of stature. I remember going to one town and, on landing at the station, finding nobody there but two men who were looking around in a helpless manner. One of them finally said to the other: "Well, I guess he isn't coming; I don't know what we're going to do; the only passenger that came off that train was that little boy there. I guess we'll have to go up and get the dominie to make a speech, and then get the choir to sing Moody and Sankey hymns or something. I'll never engage another of them lecturers to come down from New York City again. There's that whole town-hall full of people by this time, and they are all going to be disappointed." I went up to him and said: "Are you one of the lecture committee?" "Yes," said he, "My name is Brown." "Well," said I, "my name is Wilder." "Oh," said he, "it is, eh? Well, sonny, where is your dad?"

Some entertainment committees act, regarding their financial engagements, in a way that reminds me of an enterprising Hebrew who once came to engage me. He said: "Mr. Wilder, I want to give an entertainment to some of my friends, and I'd stand five or ten dollars to have you there to say something. Have

you anything to do next Monday night?" "No," said I, "but my price is fifty dollars." "Oh, well," said he, "that's all right as a rule, but if you haven't got anything to do Monday night, why don't you come? You'll be ten dollars ahead." Still I declined. "Well," he argued, "if you don't come, like as not you'll go to the theatre and take a lady with you, and spend five or ten dollars, and you'll miss the ten dollars you might have got from me; then you'll be fifteen or twenty dollars out. Now, I don't care about a few dollars; I'll make it twenty." "No," said I, "I can't cut rates, it won't be fair to other fellows in the business, I won't go for less than fifty." "Well," said he, "I guess I can fix it in some way; tell you what I'll do; I wont give the company anything to drink; that will leave me five dollars ahead; I'll make it twenty-five for you." "No," said I, "my price is fifty; I must stick to it." Finally he said: "Well, tell you how I'll fix it. I wont give the company anything to eat; so I can afford to give you the fifty dollars." The engagement consequently was closed. After the entertainment was over, the host took me aside, and handed me forty dollars. "See here," said I, "I've kept my part of the agreement; why don't you keep yours? My terms

were fifty dollars." Then he handed me a ten-dollar bill, and said: "Oh, pshaw! Can't you take a joke?"

I met another Hebrew, a first-rate fellow too, at the Narragansett Hotel in Providence once. He happened to know my friend, J. M. Hill, the theatrical manager, who was in town at that time, and he asked Hill, "Isn't that Wilder?" "Yes," said Mr. Hill, introducing us. "Mr. Wilder," said he, "I want to hear you. I've been trying for a long time; I'm going to do it the first opportunity." "Well," said Hill, "Mr. Wilder's going to read here to-night." "What! right here in Providence? I'll go to hear him; I don't care what it costs. Where's he going to read?" "At the Young Men's Christian Association," replied Mr. Hill. "Oh," said the fellow, "they wont let me in there, I'm a Hebrew." Mr. Hill laid his left hand on the fellow's shoulder, shook the fore-finger of his right hand impressively, and said, with the most solemn expression in the world: "My friend, there isn't any creed about money."

At another place I had posted my lithograph "ads." all around town, and on each of them were copies of photographs of my face, in different characters and in different parts of my

entertainments. I am rather proud of these pictures, for I make it a point never to put on the same face twice in succession in an evening. A countryman came up to me and said, "Are you the show?" "Yes," said I. "Be them your pictures there?" I said yes. "Well, when are you going to make your parade?" He had seen all the faces, and he thought that they meant as many different men. He didn't mean to compliment me, I suppose, but I took it as such, and went off patting myself on the back.

I meet a great many good men as well as odd ones in my trips about the country, and one of them is Mr. Clarkson, the great Philadelphia clothier, who employs thousands of people, and each month gives them an entertainment, for which purpose he hires the Academy of Music. The artists whom he engages are not those who can be picked up for little money, but the very best singers, lecturers, and other performers that can be found, the entertainment being free to all his employees. In the summer time he gives them excursions. I said to him once, "Mr. Clarkson, this sort of thing must cost you a great deal of money." "Yes," said he, "it does, but it all comes back to me, though I never expected it when I began. My employees are an appreciative lot of people,

and I believe they pay a great deal more attention to my business from finding me interested in them."

Another man of the same kind is Mr. Stetson, proprietor of a great hat factory in Philadelphia. A peculiar feature of the little orchestra which he maintains is that all the performers are blind. I have heard a great many orchestras, but I must say those fellows put more soul into their music than I ever heard from any others. A touching incident occurred there one night when I chanced to be the entertainer. I was reciting a sketch called "The Surgeon's Story," at which a fire is spoken of, and I suppose I must have done it pretty well, for the audience was thoroughly worked up. One of the lines read:

"The corporal's quarters is all on fire." At that moment, it being the time of the Centennial celebration, a number of fireworks in an adjoining street were let off, and the inevitable lunatic who is to be found in every audience got up and shouted "Fire!" There was a general stampede. I turned to the blind orchestra, and said: "Be entirely quiet; there is no need for alarm; there is no fire here." The instant I spoke the poor fellows began playing to keep the audience quiet, and succeeded. I

never before or since took such satisfaction in any one's accepting my word for exactly what it was worth.

I have had a great deal of fun out of the cabmen of London, Dublin, and other European towns. Cab-fares are small over there. A fellow who has to kill time can do it a great deal cheaper riding around in a cab than by lounging in a bar-room and drinking with his friends. One day when I happened to have got a great deal of copper in change, I made up my mind to relieve myself of extra weight by paying the cabby in pennies. His fare was eighteen pence; so, taking a handful of copper from my pocket, I counted it over very carefully, beginning, "One, two, three," etc., aloud. As I looked up the cabby was regarding me with a mixture of pity and contempt, and as I handed him his fare he said between his teeth: "You've been savin' up a long time, haven't you, sonny?" Another time, after riding around in a cab on a rainy day, I said to the cabman on dismounting at my hotel, "Mike, are you wet?" "Well, sor," he replied, "if I was as wet outside as I am inside, I'd be as dry as a bone." I'm a temperance man myself, but that fellow didn't remain dry a minute longer.

One of the most amusing and at the same

time most dreadful times that I ever had in the business was when I went up to New England to a musical convention of which the noted Carl Zerrahn of Boston was the leader. What he doesn't know about music would be hard for any one else to find out; but he didn't know anything about me, and the more he inquired the more he was bothered to know what to do with me in the entertainment. I had been engaged by the management, and would have to be paid, so I ought to appear; but whenever my name was upon the programme, and I went on the stage, all the good temper was taken out of Mr. Zerrahn for at least half an hour, and he would mutter to some of the musicians about him: "Dis will never do; dis man breaks de programme all up." Finally he came to me and said: "Mr. Vilder, when you come up here again and go on de programme, vill you please tell me vhat you vant to do, and den do it all at vonce? I'll vait, no matter how long it is." I told him that I'd been sent there to make people laugh, and I was obliged to do it, but I was sorry for him. It reminded me of the days when I was at school, and the children didn't like to appear after me on exhibition-day, because I'd make them laugh and break them all up. They used to complain to

the teacher that "Marshall Wilder was making faces."

I am a good-natured man, and purpose to be cheerful on all occasions, but once in a while I meet some one whom I have to sit down upon. I am not very heavy, but all the weight there is to me I try to drop on a single spot. Once, in the Catskills, where I was to give an entertainment, I saw an old gentleman with four charming daughters seated about him. As I passed them, he chanced to pick up one of my programmes, and he said: "Oh, is that homely little fellow to give an entertainment here to-night?" (I am perfectly willing to admit that I am not quite as handsome as Bill Nye.) One of the girls replied. "Yes, he's going to recite 'Asleep at the Switch,' among other things." "Well," said he, loud enough for me to hear, and apparently for the purpose of my hearing it, "I wont go to hear him; if I have heard that once I've heard it a hundred times." I went right up to him and said: "What's that you say about 'Asleep at the Switch?'" "Who are you?" he asked. "My name is Marshall P. Wilder," said I, "and I heard your remark about my programme. I don't care whether you come to hear me at all. You're a bear. Suppose you

have heard 'Asleep at the Switch' a hundred times. Haven't you heard the Lord's Prayer a hundred times as often? And if you have, do you object to hearing that again? There is a good deal in the way that a thing is done. I claim to recite 'Asleep at the Switch' well, but I don't want you to come and hear me. I don't want to see your face in the house to-night; it will make me ill, I can't stand it."

Well, as I went in that night there in one of the front seats sat that very man. I gave him a look as much as say, "I thought I told you to keep away from here?" The audience, many of whom had heard the conversation of the afternoon, seemed to translate my face at once, and there was a general titter all over the house. Whether they were laughing at me or at him I don't know, but I made up my mind to find out, so I gave my whole entertainment to that one old individual. I devoted myself entirely to him. It annoyed him, and soon he took a pencil from his pocket and tried to write something to divert his mind. When I recited "Over the Hill to the Poor-house;" tears began to roll down the old man's face. I had got him. When the performance was over, he came up to me and put

two ten-dollar bills into my hand and said, "My boy, you have taught me a lesson that I never shall forget." This old man is now one of my best friends, and I go to see him frequently, and his daughters are like sisters to me.

Occasionally I go to places where it is the custom for some private family to take charge of the entertainer, there being no good hotel near by. Generally I am capitally entertained. I usually know, as soon as I enter the house, the character of the entire family. There are two sure indications: one is the manner of the servants, and the other is the manner of the children. It does not take long to get acquainted with a child, and as soon as you have done it you know the parents; in fact, you know the ancestors back for two or three generations. It is a good deal the same way with the servants. When a lady tells me that she has simply a dreadful time with her servants, I have made up my mind that some one who is within speaking distance of me does not know how to manage her house, and the chances are about one hundred to one that I am entirely correct about it.

Occasionally I have stepped out of my regular line and given a voluntary entertain-

ment of a sort which never fails to astonish people, although I never pretended that there was any mystery about it. It is in the line of mind-reading, about which the public have listened to a great deal of nonsense. Mind-reading is nothing but muscle-reading. A person who will concentrate his attention upon one subject, and who is at all sensitive, can generally succeed in finding what other people are thinking of. I have succeeded in performing just such feats as have made Mr. Bishop and Mr. Cumberland famous; our methods may differ, but there is a great deal of trick about it. If I take you by the hand and lead you about the room and concentrate my attention upon your hand, you will lead me unconsciously just where you don't want to go, and the harder you try to keep me away from the article the easier it is for me to find it, for the muscular movements of your hand give me the cue. The same thing can be done with an article passed from hand to hand between five or six people, the last one retaining it.

Here is a specimen case which occurred at the Hoffman House in New York. A diamond brooch belonging to Mrs. Frank Leslie, who was one of the party, was to be taken by a

gentlemen who would drive off with it behind a team of horses and hide it within a mile of the hotel. A committee was appointed to supervise the performance. The men who were to hide the article were selected by the operator himself, and he was careful to select nervous, sympathetic people. The carriage drove through Broadway to Twenty-first Street, over to Fourth Avenue, and then to Gramercy Park, where it stopped. The party went into the Gramercy Building, entered a room, hid the article there, and returned, the committee being with him. The operator was then blindfolded, and to make assurance double sure a black cap was placed over his eyes. The operator took the hand of the man who hid the article and traced different routes on a map before him until he struck the right one. After he had made up his mind where the article was hidden, he got into a carriage, accompanied by the committee, drove to the house, entered it, took the hand of one of the committee, and easily found the article. I have succeeded in doing similar tricks many times, all through muscle-reading—not mind-reading.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN OCEAN TRIP.—A GLORIOUS BRACER.—SOME PEOPLE WHOM YOU DON'T MEET.—CREDITORS.—PEOPLE YOU ARE SURE TO SEE.—THE DOCTOR.—FRED DOUGLASS.—HONEYMOON COUPLES.—GOSSIP.—THE RESURRECTION OF "PLUG" HATS.—CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICIALS.—THE TRAVELLING DUDE.—WHEN BLAINE SMILED.

WHEN I want a real jolly time and don't know how else to get it, I generally take a run across the ocean, one way or the other. A great many people dislike the idea of going to sea, but during May, June, July, and August the trip is generally pleasant. Persons who fear the torments of sea-sickness can generally have their minds relieved by their family physicians, and if not sick I can't imagine any place where they'll get more rest and recreation than on a first-class ocean steamer. All they need is to remain on deck as much as possible, look about them, make no special effort to obtain new acquaintances, and make a little effort to avoid having new acquaintances pushed upon them; soon they will feel all right.

The sweetest rest in the world is to be found on the ocean. While there you can't receive any letters or telegraphic dispatches or newspapers, and if you are anxious about any of them you may feel entirely sure that you will get them all as soon as you reach port. Simply to eat and drink and sleep and breathe pure air—and, on occasion, even a little fog—will rejuvenate a tired-out person sooner than anything else I know of. I ought to know what I'm talking about, for I have tried it a number of times, and always found the experiment successful.

Of course you meet all sorts of people on shipboard; besides the ordinary run of tourists, there are men running away from their wives, and wives running away from their husbands, and people of both sexes trying to get away from the police; but it isn't necessary to associate with any of these. Besides, there are a great many people who are getting away from their creditors.

I have a great deal of respect for a creditor, perhaps because I don't owe anything to anybody now, but there have been times when, to preserve my reputation for truthfulness, I have had to keep out of the way of collectors. I didn't dare tell them the truth, and I didn't

want to lie to them, so there was nothing else to do but keep out of the way. Creditors are entirely respectable individuals. They have been shamefully abused in literature. They want only what is due them, and if the rest of us are like them in this respect we are a great deal better than any one has given us credit for. One day during a remote impecunious period I said to a persistent collector, "Do you suppose a man's creditors will ever get to Heaven?" "They ought to," he replied, curtly, "they have to suffer more than any one else on earth." This remark affected me so seriously that within forty-eight hours I went out and borrowed the amount and paid him. The late Dr. George M. Beard, a very clever fellow, once reasoned this subject out as follows: "I look at it from the basis of applied mathematics. Will there be room in heaven for all the creditors? There are in this world about a billion and a quarter human beings. To each one of these, according to my experience, there are about twenty collectors—ministering angels of finance—a crowd of witnesses by whom we are surrounded. Surely the bounds of heaven cannot contain so many."

"Besides," continued the Doctor, "the man who is hard up financially is not a free moral

agent. Next to marriage, debt is the closest of all connections. It has been said by those who regard themselves wise that you must winter and summer with a man before you can know him; but I recommend a shorter and surer road to acquaintanceship,—get into debt to a man, or allow him to fall in debt to you. No man can be said to know another until he has been either his debtor or creditor. In other human relations it is different. Marriages are sometimes followed by separations and divorces, and more often by infidelity, but my creditors or their representatives never run away. They are always faithful to me. I was looking a few days ago at a picture of Washington Irving and his friends. If the picture of any one of a hundred men I know and his creditors could be painted, no canvas that ever was put on a frame would contain all the figures. It would be a tell-tale picture, though—some of the creditors or collectors sitting in a corner, others standing in front, a few lying on lounges, and quite a number lying in wait outside the front door.

“And yet,” the Doctor went on, “there are some very good points about creditors. Man is a believing animal. Tell him something, and the odds are about ten to one that

he will accept your statement. Why does a man promise to pay? Because he wants to pay and his creditors want him to. To a creditor, promises are what drinks are to inebriates; the more they have the more they want. Promises to creditors, like relays in the telegraph, take up messages and convey them to a distance. If they would only convey the debtor also, a great deal of trouble would be spared this world, and a great deal of lying would be prevented."

No one can cross the ocean on one of the popular steamers without making new acquaintances whom he never afterward loses, and whom, after he gets them, it seems he never could have lived without. Travel, like poverty, makes strange companions. On ship-board I have met many men whom I never would have noticed on shore, and I'm sure they never would have noticed me, yet we have been good friends ever since. To mention names would be to introduce a number of people in whom perhaps the reader could not be expected to take any interest, but I want to say a word or two about one historic character whom I once met on a voyage. He was Fred Douglass—an American citizen of African extraction, who was born and reared a

slave, but has made himself one of the noblest of freemen. When he first appeared upon deck, a number of his fellow-passengers decided to cut him. They didn't want to associate with a colored man. The old man—for he is old now—said nothing about it. I suppose he was used to that sort of thing. After we were two days out I was so indignant at the discourtesy shown toward a man whom I knew to be intelligent and honorable, that I approached him, introduced myself, and began chatting with him. After we had talked a little while we grew well enough acquainted to call each other by first names. There were a few moments of silence while Douglass looked off in a dreamy way over the expanse of water. Finally he said: "Marshall, do you see the difference in the altitude of those waves? Doesn't it remind you of the difference in men? Some are very high and some very low, but taking them altogether they go to make up the whole." Other people were standing within listening distance as we talked. It was not long before a number of men made themselves acquainted with Mr. Douglass, and before the voyage was over he had won the heart of all persons aboard ship. Not quite all, either, for on one occasion, when

he was asked to take charge of an entertainment in the cabin, which he did with admirable tact, talent, and courtesy, there was one Southerner present who announced that he would have nothing whatever to do with it if it was to be managed by a colored man.

You will see any amount of fun on a steamer crossing the ocean if you keep your eyes open. For instance, a fellow comes up to me, recognizes me, and says: "Hallo, Wilder, you going to Europe? So am I. We will have lots of fun going over; we'll have seven days on ship-board. I have some friends I want to bid good-by to on the dock, and I'll see you again." The chances are I won't see him till seven days afterward, and then he will come up from his stateroom looking as if he had spent the entire time in taking emetics, starving himself, and being rubbed down to get rid of superfluous flesh.

On shipboard there are two things about which you are sure to hear a great deal; one is sea-sickness and the other is gossip. If you are rightly constructed you will let the gossip go in one ear and out of the other, and I don't know of any better way to treat stories about sea-sickness.

I don't know which is the bigger man aboard

ship, the Captain or the Doctor. The Captain is almost sure to be a man who, if not otherwise engaged, would make a good President of the United States or King of England, but he is likely to be pretty busy all the way over. The Doctor has some leisure on his hands, and as a rule he is charged with the formal entertainments that may be given. He is a great fellow to go around and cheer people up. Cheer counts for more than medicine when people are feeling squeamish. He is as hospitable and hearty as if he owned the whole ship. He isn't like the old lady I heard of who asked some people to come and see her, to come early, bring their things for lunch, and she would see that they got home before tea-time. Neither does he keep people's minds on sea-sickness, or whatever subject is worrying them most. If there are some on board who are suffering from incurable diseases, he takes pains not to talk about it, although his professional advice is always at their service.

Some people ashore aren't that way. I know a good-hearted old lady who had a friend with heart disease, and upon whom she precipitated herself one afternoon with the following speech: "Mary, I thought I'd just run down and cheer you up a little this

afternoon. I just came up the road and I saw your husband shot out there, but don't you mind it; you can find a better one after a while. Don't look so white about it. I once knew a woman who looked as white as you, and she didn't live more than five minutes. Well, if he happens to be dead when he's brought in, don't hesitate to send for me; I'm dreadful good at funerals."

Of course the Doctor has to listen to a great deal of nonsense. I heard one lady say to him, "Oh, Doctor, I had a most terrible loss last night." "Indeed," said he, sympathetically, "what did you lose?" "Why, I lost my tooth-brush." Another said: "Doctor, isn't that moon beautiful? Do you suppose it is the same moon they have in Jersey City?"

On board ship you are almost certain to meet at least one bridal couple who are crossing the ocean on their honeymoon trip. I haven't been married yet, but when I am I shant take an ocean trip for the purpose of getting fairly acquainted with my wife. I don't know of a worse place in which to spend a honeymoon. A cheap and crowded New York boarding-house would be heaven compared to it. There is an expression on the bride's face, a permanent expression, which seems to say to the

groom, "Oh, I wish I had never seen you!" and the bridegroom looks as if he would say, "I wish to heaven you would take your things out of my trunk and go home to your mother and leave me to myself."

A great deal of courage is displayed in efforts to avoid sea-sickness, but sometimes they come to grief. You meet a fellow-passenger and say, "How are you to-day, Brown?" "Oh, I'm first rate." "Been ill yet?" "No, not at all." "Did you notice last night how the ship rose and fell on the waves?" Then Brown puts his hand about where the waist-band of his trousers meets, and gasps, "Oh, don't say that, please; don't say that; it breaks me all up."

Not being accustomed to ocean travel, some sensible people on ship-board say very odd things, and some others are foolish enough to take the remarks in earnest. One day an old lady at dinner-table, while the ship was pitching frightfully, spilled some coffee on my coat, and exclaimed at once: "I beg your pardon, I'm sorry I spilled anything on your coat; I'm willing to pay if I spoiled it; how much ought I to pay?" I thought the best thing to do was to relieve her mind on the subject at once, so I replied: "Well, I don't really know; how

much do you usually pay in such cases?" Then she laughed, and that settled the matter.

The day you reach Liverpool it is odd to see all the men come up on deck with new hats on; you don't know them. At sea a fellow learns to wear anything on his head that will stick there tightest; consequently he seldom wears a "stovepipe" hat; so when he appears with such a decoration just as he is going into port, the chances are that if he is your bosom friend you don't know him at sight.

I must record the fact—and leave my readers to make their own inferences—that Custom House officers on the English side are far more courteous and considerate than those of this country, and their system is much better than ours, where you have to open your trunks on a dock, perhaps where a lot of guano is stored or a lot of caustic potash is sprinkled around, and stand in a draft and expose yourself to all sorts of weather. The English customs officers are fussy only over two things. One is printed matter—for instance a book or a printed song, and the other is liquor. One of them said to a fellow-passenger of mine: "Have you anything to drink in your trunk?" My friend said: "No, I've nothing in that trunk except wearing apparel." But when the trunk was

opened the officer looked up reproachfully and said: "You said you hadn't anything in the trunk except your clothing. How do you account for this dozen bottles of brandy?" "Oh," said my friend, "that's all right; those are night-caps." The officer saw the point.

There are always some dudes on a steamer, no matter which way it is going, and I'm glad of it, because they always make a great deal of fun for other people. I heard of one who on a voyage over was reproved by his wife for not restraining the children more carefully from being nuisances to the passengers. One day the children were making themselves unusually offensive, and she exclaimed: "Charley, do speak to the children." Her husband straightened himself up, put on a helpless sort of manner, and then said, "How do you do, children?"

I noticed in England a great number of American dudes. Going through a parlor there one day I met one fellow, who said to me, "Ah, when did you come from America?" I replied, "Oh, about a month ago. Are you from America?" "Yes," he said, "I am from Philadelphia." "How do you like London?" I asked. "Oh," he said, "I like it very much. I would prefer to live here." "How do you

like London society?" "Very well; but—one meets so many Americans here, don't you know."

On one of my recent passages from England to America I succeeded in amusing Mr. Blaine. We were coming up New York Bay, the most beautiful bay on the face of the earth, and the sunshine was simply sparkling about us. It was real American sunshine, and it struck us after three solid months of English rain and Scotch mist. Mr. Blaine turned to me and said: "Ah, Marshall, did you ever see such sunshine in a free-trade country?" "No," said I, "it's another one of the blessings of protection."

Then Blaine smiled.

CHAPTER XXV.

MYSELF ONCE MORE.—ONE USE OF AFFLICTION.—PICKING UP MATERIAL.—DINING CUSTOMS.—NOT THE RIGHT STORY.—TWO STAMMERERS.—I LAUGH AT MY JOKES.—SOMETIMES THE AUDIENCE LAUGH AT THE WRONG PLACE.—CRITICAL AUDIENCES.—HARD WORK.—GOOD-BY.

ONCE more let me talk about myself. This is positively my last appearance in this book. I know I have appeared several times before, but I've done it only for the purpose of answering questions which are put to me orally so often that I feel I ought to answer them in bulk to a number of persons who yet may be desirous of propounding them.

As I said at the beginning, nature originally was unkind to me in some ways, but I can't say that I regret it. My dear old friend Henry Ward Beecher used to preach frequently on the blessings of affliction, and I can say from personal experience that a man has to be slightly afflicted to know how much kindness and good-heartedness there is in this world. I have hundreds and thousands, I think, of friends, whom I might never have known ex-

cept for some peculiarities which old Dame Nature inflicted upon me. Probably she knew her business best, but at any rate, like the little fellow with no feet whom I have already alluded to, "I'm not kicking."

I have been asked again and again how I always contrive to be ready to speak at short notice, and whether I don't prepare myself in advance for any sort of emergency. I can say truthfully that I make no preparation whatever. When I go upon the stage or platform I seldom know what I am going to say or do. I don't look to myself for inspiration, but to my audience, and no two audiences are exactly alike.

I am also asked frequently where I get the material for my sketches and recitations. Well, so far as chestnuts are concerned, I have already explained sufficiently, but I am constantly giving off new sketches, and using new material. Where do I get it? Why, anywhere and everywhere. In the long run everything I talk about is human nature,—only that and nothing more,—and that can be seen and found anywhere, and, as my readers often have heard, probably, truth is stranger than fiction. If I were going to recite to-night, and were assured that nothing I had ever done before would be

appreciated by the audience I was to meet, I shouldn't be at all troubled in mind. I would simply walk upon a horse-car, or into a club, or stand at a street-corner, or in a theater lobby, and in a little while would have enough good material for half-a-dozen recitations. Human nature is what people like to hear about. You can't please any one better than by telling him well,—please note the qualification,—by telling him well about something which he already understands. The most popular books and plays and poems in existence are not those which contain something new, but those which confine themselves to subjects upon which every one thinks he knows everything.

Some of my most successful work has been in the line of after-dinner speeches, and I have been asked how I could go through ten or twelve courses of food, and six or eight different kinds of wine, and then have any head on my shoulders. Well, the answer is very easy—I don't. I never drink wine or any other liquor. Stronger men than I, who think they need such things, are respectfully referred to my stature and fighting weight in illustration of the fact that if a man doesn't want to drink he doesn't need to. As to the dining, I never

have any trouble about eating enough to keep myself alive, and if I am going to any place where a big dinner is to be served, I take the precaution of eating first a quiet dinner somewhere else; then I am certain my digestion will not be upset. I don't wish to give away any other man's business secrets, but I venture to say that the best after-dinner speakers in the United States are the most moderate diners. If you will cast your eye at the table in front of some man at a big dinner who gets up and makes a capital speech, you will probably see one of two things—either that all his glasses are turned upside down or that they are entirely full. In other words, he has been drinking little or nothing. One of the most famous givers of good dinners in the United States never eats anything himself but a mutton chop and a couple of slices of dry toast. He drinks nothing but tea, and yet his health, complexion, and spirits are all that any one could desire. I don't wish to imply that I am an ascetic. I take my three meals a day, and I insist that they shall be as good as my pocket can stand, but I don't propose to upset my digestion for the sake of the best company in the world.

When it falls to my lot to make a speech or

tell a story, I assume that the gathering is one of good fellows, and that it isn't advisable to hit anybody or hurt any one's feelings. It is often possible to tell a good story with a very bad result. Every one has his peculiarity, and it isn't easy to avoid treading upon toes. I was at a church-sociable one night in which an old folks' tableau was given. Suddenly the director pointed to a young man in one of the front seats, and asked him if he would come up on the platform. He responded at once. She placed him in an attitude of extreme joy, asked him to smile ecstatically, and then said to the audience, "This is a tableau of a young man's glee on receiving the news that his scolding wife has just died." The young man suddenly straightened as stiffly as a fence-post. His own wife, who had been a terrible scold, had been buried only the week before.

Such mistakes can't be helped once in a while. A man who is a stammerer was riding on an elevated railway train once, and the brakeman put his head in the door as the train was slowing up, and said: "The next station is F-f-f-fourteenth Street." The man stepped up to him and said: "L-l-let me know when you get to F-f-f-forty-second Street." Then the passenger dropped into a peaceful doze.

In the course of half an hour the brakeman shouted, "H-h-h-harlem; all out!" The passenger went up to him and said angrily: "Didn't I t-t-tell you to l-l-let me know when you got to F-f-f-forty-second Street?" "Yes," said the brakeman, "b-b-but I saw you were making f-f-fun of me, and I wouldn't do it."

I always laugh at my own jokes. I believe I have said this before, but I want to say it again for this sake of explaining. I don't do it for the sake of business, but because I can't help it. A number of years ago I determined to be good-natured under all circumstances, and enjoy everything humourous I heard, and I don't find myself able to break the rule now, even when the funny thing happens to be said by myself. It does me a lot of good in the way of business, but I never put it in on that account. I simply can't help it. If ever you come to hear me talk and see me begin to laugh, and make up your mind that you wont follow my example, why, go right ahead; I shant feel hurt, I shant feel sorry the least bit—except for you.

Don't imagine, though, that I always laugh, for once in a while I don't. There are times when other people laugh before I, and sometimes it is embarrassing. One night I was giv-

ing an entertainment at Dr. Talmage's church, and I had just reached the line,

“ And the old man sighed.”

when something in the big organ gave way either by accident or design, and through one of the pipes came a sigh such as might have been given by a giant who had been lunching on green apples. After the audience got through laughing I went on, but the poem wasn't pathetic any longer, although the author meant it to be.

Some actors, singers, and musicians find themselves terribly broken up and nervous when the management, with more solicitude than sense, blunders into informing them that the audience is very critical; that sort of speech never troubles me a bit. I always think of a man who was said not to have any spirits, but who, when he got into a discussion with his wife, would frequently reach a state of mind in which it was desirable to call for the police. Some one once called his attention to the fact that, as a rule, he was a most mild-mannered person, and consequently it was surprising to see him give way to such an ebullition of temper. “ Well,” he replied, “ that's so; but my wife nagged me up to it.” That is just the way a critical audience affects me, and if there

is any stimulus of that sort going about I can stand all of it that any one can give me.

To the numerous people that seem to think I have nothing to do in this world but enjoy myself, I want to say that I work for my living quite as hard as any one else. Just look for a moment, by way of comparison, at the difference between the single individual expected to entertain people, and a company of dramatic artists on the stage. The average duration of the recitation and acting of a play is about two hours, and there seldom are less than ten people in the cast. Even if the play is what is called a star piece, in which most of the work is assigned to the leading character, not one of the company is busy more than one hour during the course of the evening. Sometimes I have to talk two hours on a stretch, with intermissions of only a moment or two, and even then I am on the stage or platform so that I can't change my clothes, or take a bite of something, or try two or three whiffs of a cigar, as almost any actor can in his dressing-room. Many a time I attend three or four different receptions in the course of an evening,—always on business. I am expected at each to do my very best, which I always try to do. It isn't always easy to be funny to order. All sorts of unex-

pected things occur to upset a man's plans, and I am no exception to the general run of human nature. I have to attend strictly to business on such occasions, and sometimes it requires all the strength and self-control there is in me—not that I have anything to worry me especially regarding myself, but that I feel responsible for what the several audiences expect of me.

Still, I have nothing to complain of. I have plenty of friends, a solacing bank account, and I succeed in having a good deal of time to myself. Whenever I have an unemployed evening I make it my business to go out and enjoy myself. No one enjoys better than I hearing other people sing, or laugh, or talk to entertain the public. I know how the old preacher felt who, going with his son, also a minister, to hear a sermon by some one else, heaved a deep sigh of content, and said: "Son, it's a great comfort to hear somebody else hold forth." Well, that comfort is mine very frequently. I strike some golden days once in a while, or golden nights. When a reception is given by Mrs. Croly, or Mrs. Frank Leslie, or some other of my kind friends, and I don't chance to be engaged that night, I am as happy as a boy who has found a new bag of marbles.

When I go to a theatre or opera, I listen to the other people and enjoy myself a great deal more than any one else in the audience, for I know by experience just how much trouble and pains they are taking to entertain other people.

That's the sort of a fellow I am.

Good-by!

FINIS.

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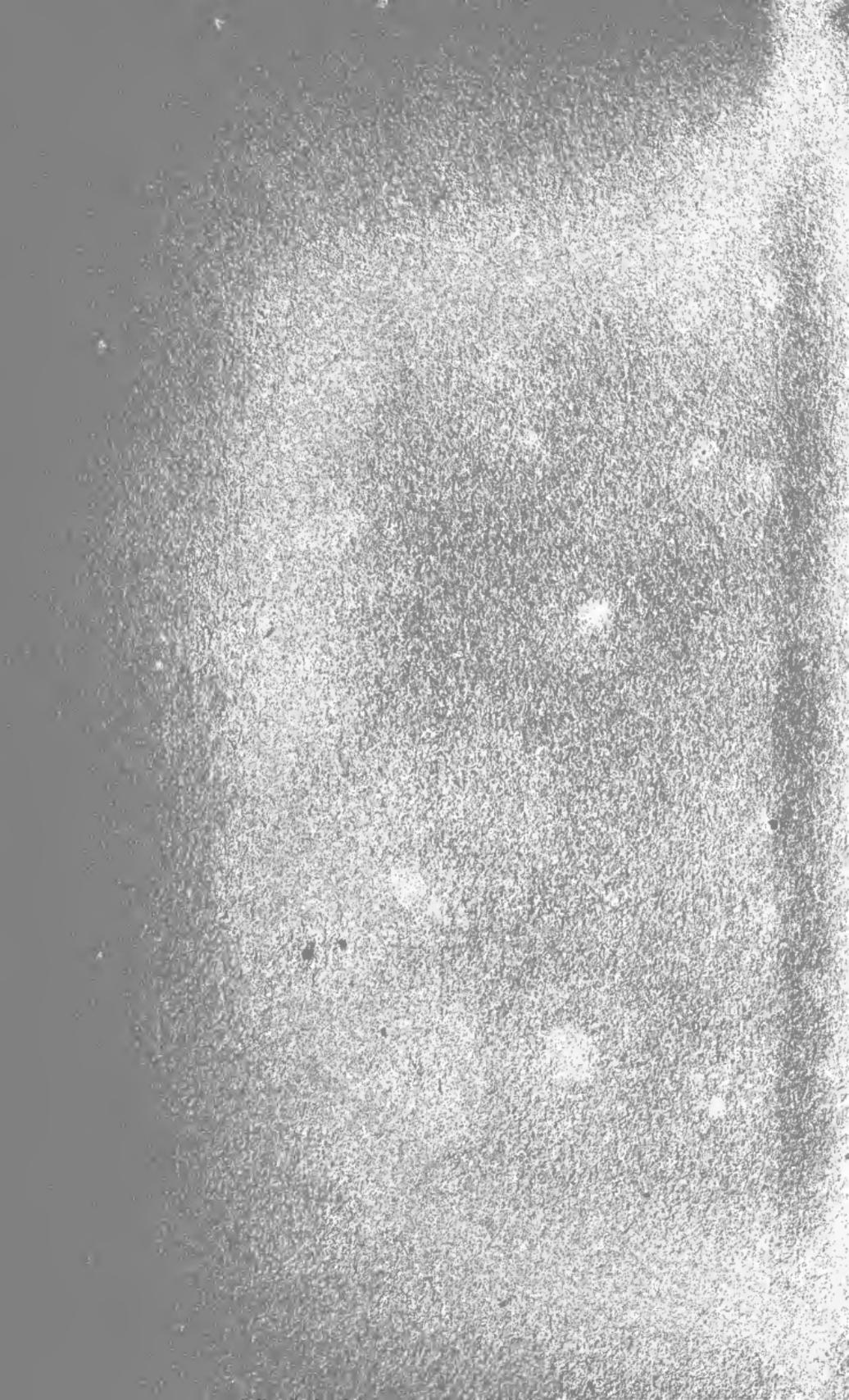
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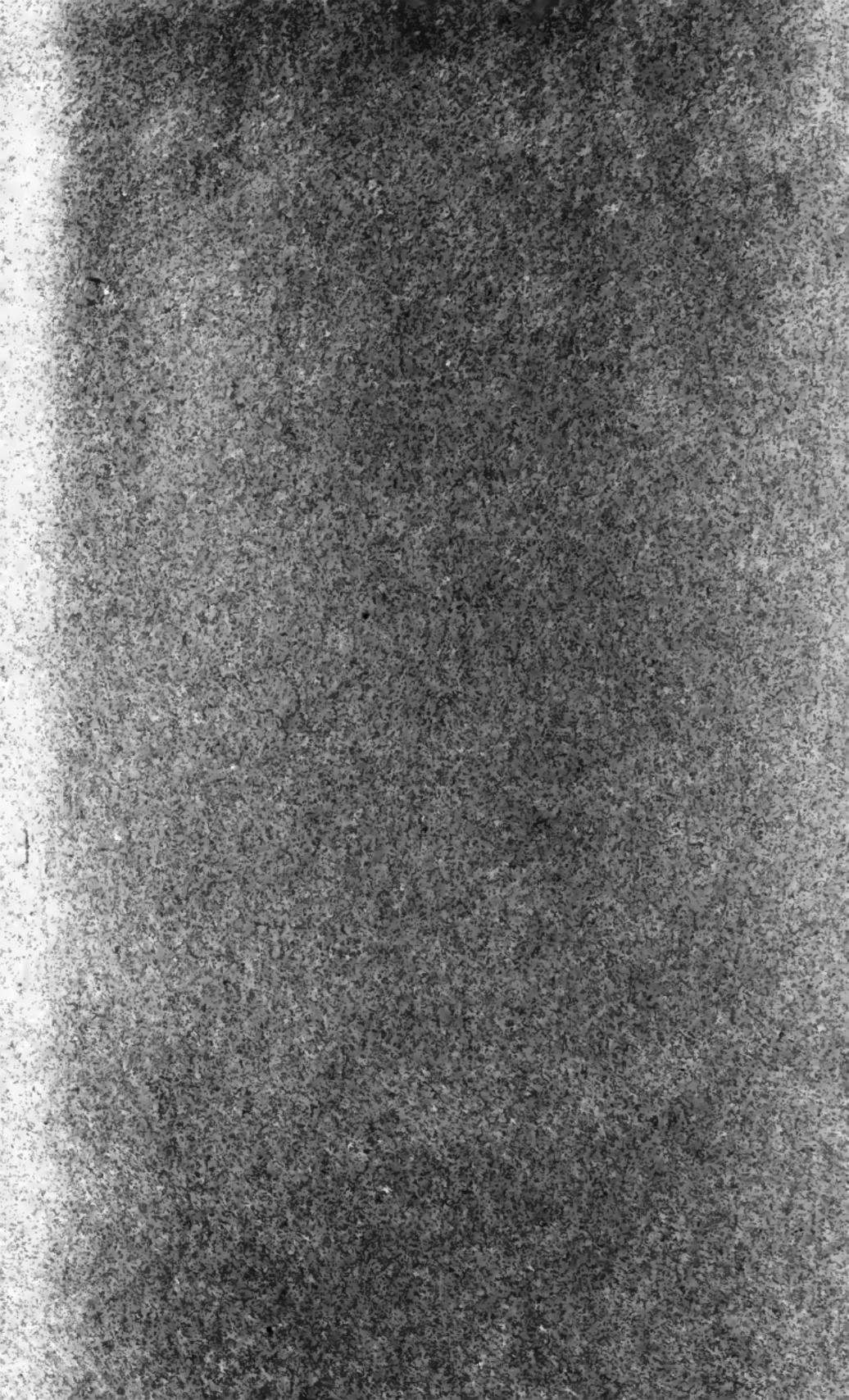
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