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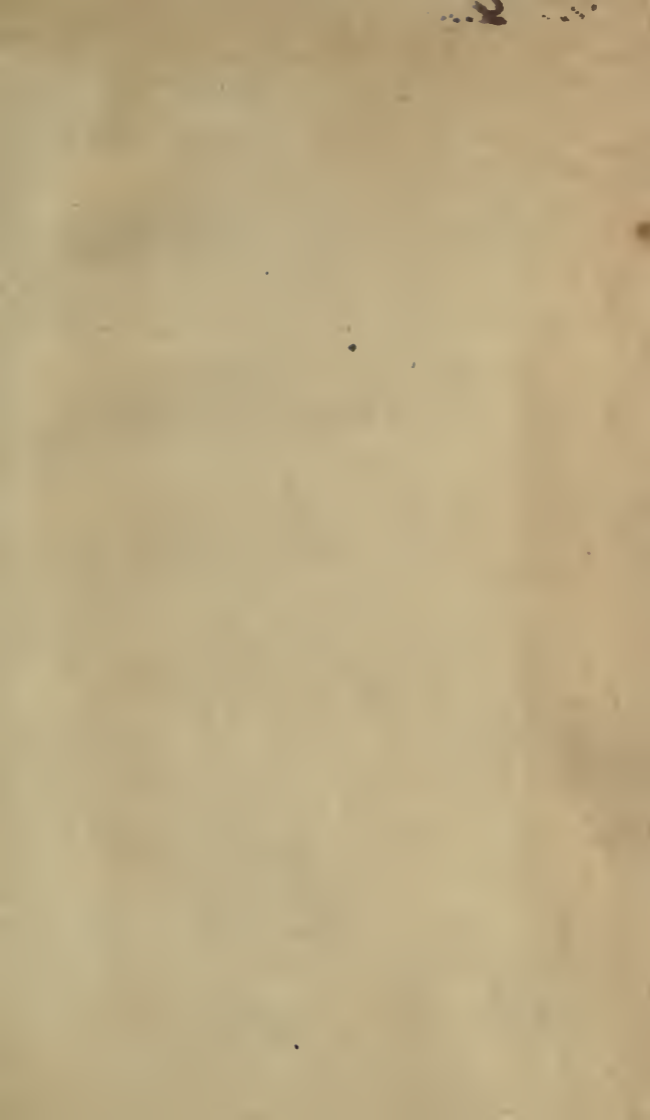
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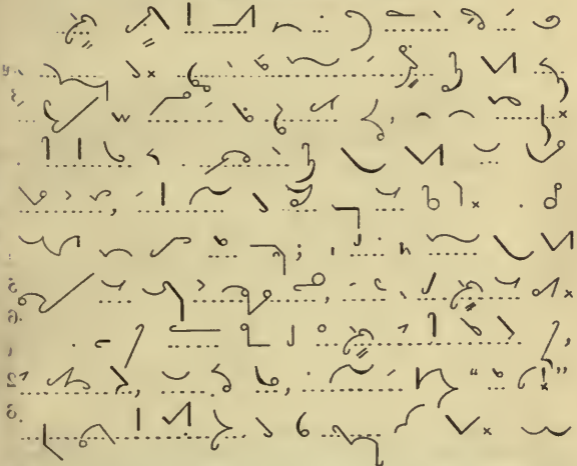
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P 685  
1913

## Selections from American Authors.

### THE BUCCANEER'S TREASURE.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

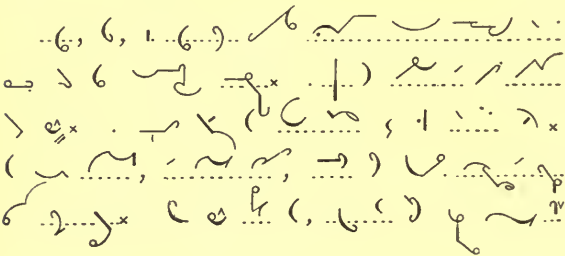
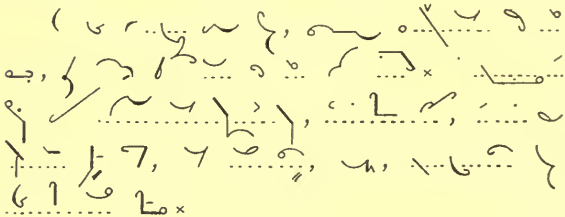


20 Wolfert Webber had carried home a fresh stock of stores and notions to ruminate upon. These accounts of pots of money and Spanish treasures, buried here and there and everywhere about the rocks and bays of these wild shores, made him almost dizzy. The doctor had often heard the rumours of treasure being buried in various parts of the island, and had long been anxious to get in the traces of it. The circumstances unfolded to him awakened all his cupidity; he had not a doubt of money being buried somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mysterious crosses, and offered to join Wolfert in the search.

The great church clock struck ten as Wolfert and the doctor passed by the churchyard, and the watchmen bawled, in hoarse voice, a long and doleful "All's well!" A deep sleep had already fallen upon this primitive little

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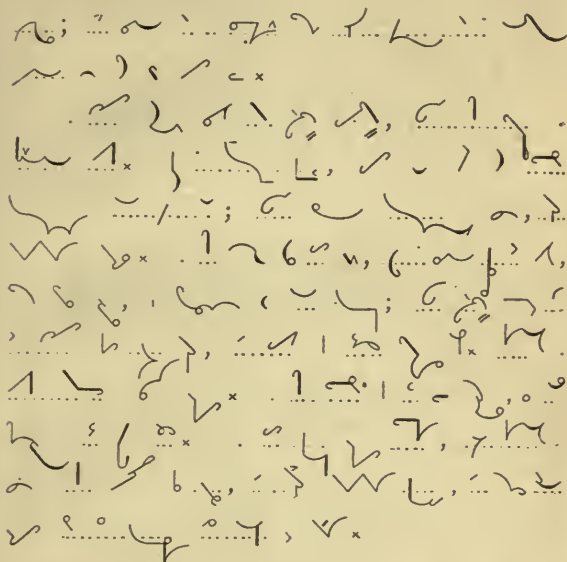


burgh. Nothing disturbed this awful silence, excepting now and then the bark of some profligate, night-walking dog, or the serenade of some romantic cat.

They found the old fisherman waiting for them, smoking his pipe in the stern of his skiff, which was moored just in front of his little cabin. A pickaxe and spade were lying in the bottom of the boat, with a dark lantern, and a stone bottle of good Dutch courage, in which honest Sam, no doubt, put even more faith than the doctor in his drugs.

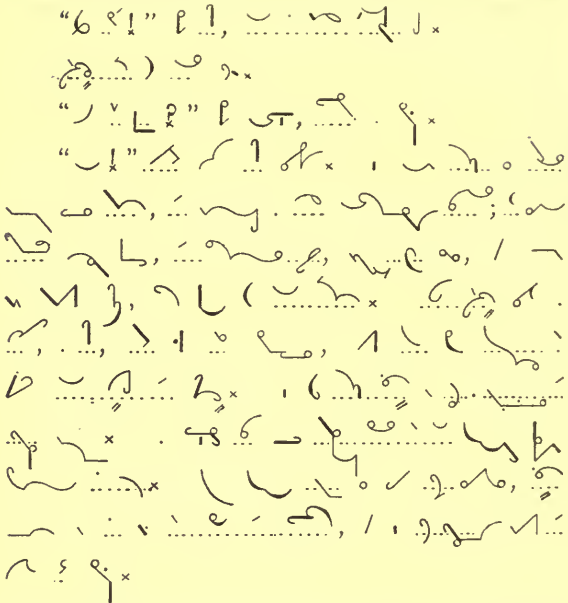
Thus, then, did these three worthies embark in their cockleshell of a skiff upon this nocturnal expedition. The tide was rising and running rapidly up the Sound. The current bore them along almost without the aid of an oar. They now landed, and lighting the lantern, gathered their various implements and proceeded slowly through the bushes. Every sound startled them, even that of their own footsteps among the dried leaves; and the hooting of





a screech-owl from the shattered chimney of a neighbouring ruin made their blood run cold.

The lantern was now held by Wolfert Webber, while the doctor produced a divining rod. It was a forked twig, one end of which was grasped firmly in each hand ; while the centre forming the stem, pointed perpendicularly upwards. The doctor moved this wand about, within a certain distance of the earth, from place to place, but for some time without any effect : while Wolfert kept the light of the lantern turned full upon it, and watched it with the most breathless interest. At length the rod began slowly to turn. The doctor grasped it with great earnestness, his hands trembling with the agitation of his mind. The wand continued to turn gradually, until at length the stem had reversed its position, and pointed perpendicularly downward, and remained pointing to one spot as fixedly as the needle to the pole.

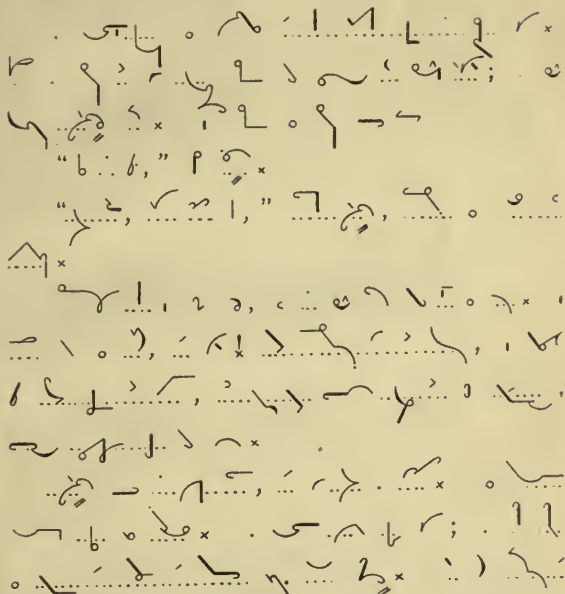


"This is the spot!" said the doctor, in an almost inaudible tone.

Wolfert's heart was in his throat.

"Shall I dig?" said the negro, grasping the spade.

"No!" replied the little doctor hastily. He now ordered his companions to keep close by him, and to maintain the most inflexible silence; that certain precautions must be taken, and ceremonies used, to prevent the evil spirits, which kept about buried treasure, from doing them any harm. While Wolfert held the lantern, the doctor, by the aid of his spectacles, read off several forms of conjuration in Latin and German. He then ordered Sam to seize the pickaxe and proceed to work. The close-bound soil gave obstinate signs of not having been disturbed for many a year. After having picked his way through the surface, Sam came to a bed of sand and gravel, which he threw briskly to right and left with the spade.



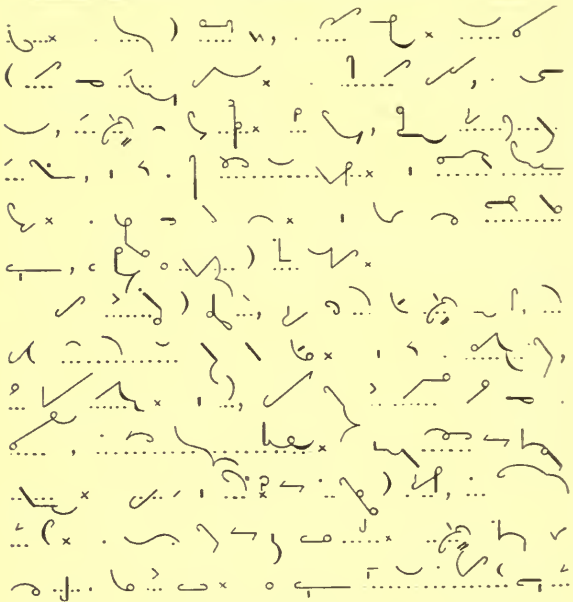
The negro continued his labours and had already digged a considerable hole. At last the spade of the old fisherman struck upon something that sounded hollow ; the sound vibrated to Wolfert's heart. He struck his spade again—

“ 'Tis a chest,” said Sam.

“ Full of gold, I'll warrant it ! ” cried Wolfert, clasping his hands with rapture.

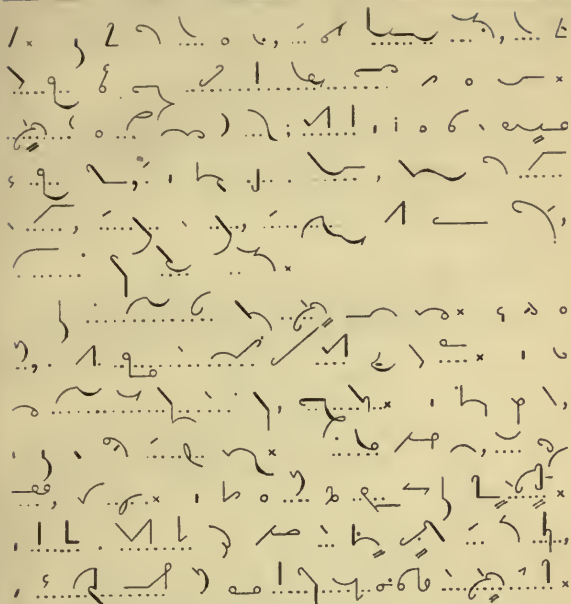
Scarcely had he uttered the words, when a sound from above caught his ear. He cast up his eyes, and lo ! by the expiring light of the fire, he beheld, just over the disk of the rock, what appeared to be the grim visage of the drowned buccaneer, grinning hideously down upon him.

Wolfert gave a loud cry, and let fall the lantern. His panic communicated itself to his companions. The negro leaped out of the hole ; the doctor dropped his book and basket, and began to pray in German. All was horror and



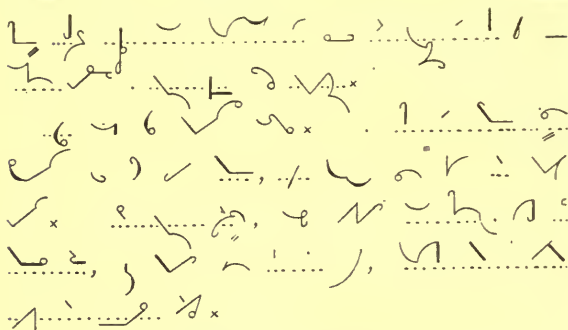
confusion. The fire was scattered about, the lantern extinguished. In their hurry they ran against and confounded one another. The doctor ran one way, the negro another, and Wolfert made for the waterside. As he plunged, struggling onward through bush and brake, he heard the tread of someone in pursuit. He scrambled frantically forward. The footsteps gained upon him. He felt himself grasped by his cloak, when suddenly his pursuer was attacked in turn.

One of the combatants was disposed of, but whether friend or foe, Wolfert could not tell, or whether they might or not both be foes. He heard the survivor approach, and his terror revived. He saw, where the profile of the rocks rose against the horizon, a human form advancing. He could not be mistaken—it must be the buccaneer. Whither should he fly?—a precipice was on one side, a murderer on the other. The enemy approached—he was close at hand. Wolfert attempted to let himself down the face of the cliff.



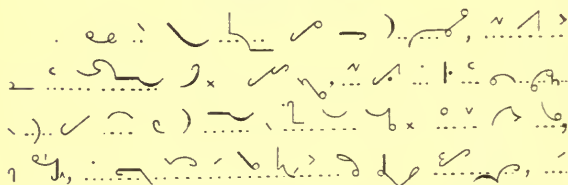
His cloak caught in a thorn that grew on the edge. He was jerked from off his feet, and held dangling in the air, half choked by the string with which his careful wife had fastened the garment round his neck. Wolfert thought his last moment was arrived; already had he committed his soul to St. Nicholas, when the string broke, and he tumbled down the bank, bumping from rock to rock, and bush to bush, and leaving the red cloak fluttering, like a bloody banner in the air.

It was a long while before Wolfert came to himself. When he opened his eyes, the ruddy streaks of morning were already shooting up the sky. He found himself lying in the bottom of a boat, grievously battered. He attempted to sit up, but he was too sore and stiff to move. A voice requested him, in friendly accents, to lie still. He turned his eyes towards the speaker—it was Dirk Waldron. He had dogged the party at the earnest request of Dame Webber and her daughter, who with the laudable curiosity



### MY EDITING.

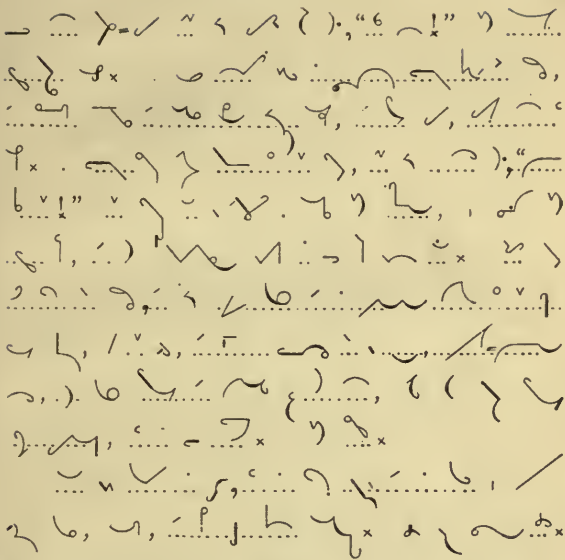
BY MARK TWAIN.



of their sex had pried into the secret consultations of Wolfert and the doctor. Dirk had been completely distanced in following the light skiff of the fisherman, and had just come in time to rescue the poor digger from his pursuer.

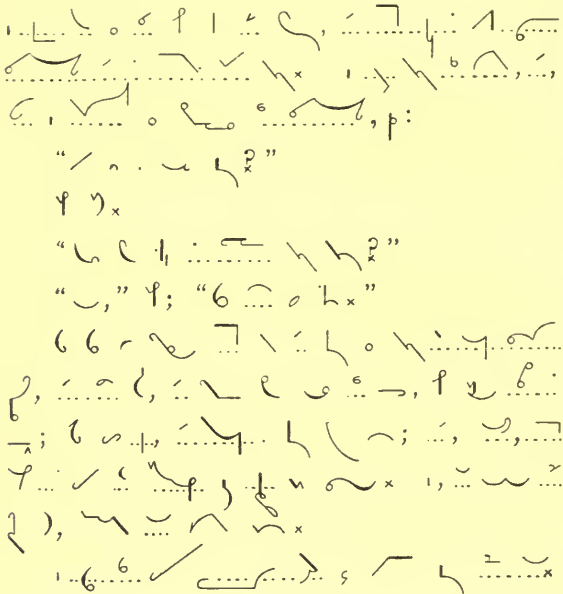
Thus ended this perilous enterprise. The doctor and black Sam severally found their way back, each having some tale of peril to relate. As to poor Wolfert, instead of returning in triumph, laden with bags of gold, he was borne home on a shutter, followed by a rabble rout of curious urchins.

The sensation of being at work once again was luxurious, and I wrought all the week with unflagging pleasure. We went to press, and I waited a day with some solicitude to see whether my effort was going to attract any notice. As I left the office, toward sundown, a group of men and boys at the foot of the stairs dispersed with one impulse, and



gave me passage-way, and I heard one or two of them say "That's him!" I was naturally pleased by this incident. The next morning I found a similar group at the foot of the stairs, and scattered couples and individuals standing here and there in the street, and over the way, watching me with interest. The group separated and fell back as I approached, and I heard a man say, "Look at his eye!" I pretended not to observe the notice I was attracting, but secretly I was pleased with it, and was purposing to write an account of it to my aunt. I went up the short flight of stairs, and heard cheery voices and a ringing laugh as I drew near the door, which I opened, and caught a glimpse of two young, rural-looking men, whose faces blanched and lengthened when they saw me, and then they both plunged through the window, with a great crash. I was surprised.

In about half-an-hour an old gentleman, with a flowing beard and a fine but rather austere face, entered, and sat down at my invitation. He seemed to have something on his mind. He took off his hat and set it on the floor, and



got out of it a red silk handkerchief and a copy of our paper. He put the paper on his lap, and, while he polished his spectacles with his handkerchief, he said :

“ Are you the new editor ? ”

I said I was.

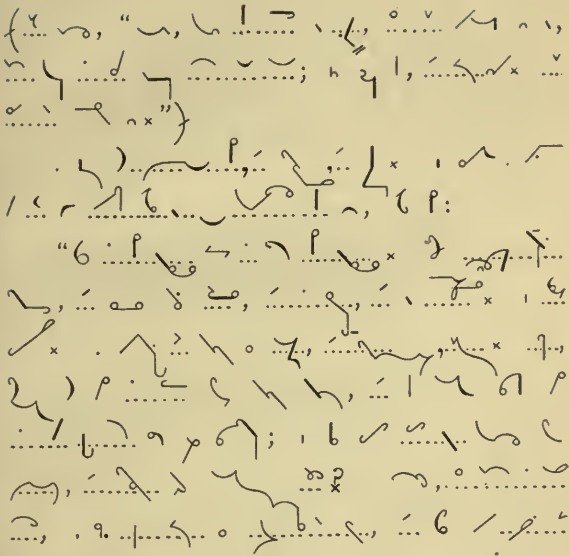
“ Have you ever edited an agricultural paper before ? ”

“ No,” I said ; “ this is my first attempt.”

Then this old person got up and tore his paper all into small shreds, and stamped on them, and broke several things with his cane, and said I did not know as much as a cow ; and then went out, and banged the door after him ; and, in short, acted in such a way that I fancied he was displeased about something. But, not knowing what the trouble was, I could not be any help to him.

But these thoughts were quickly banished when the regular editor walked in. (I thought to myself, “ Now,

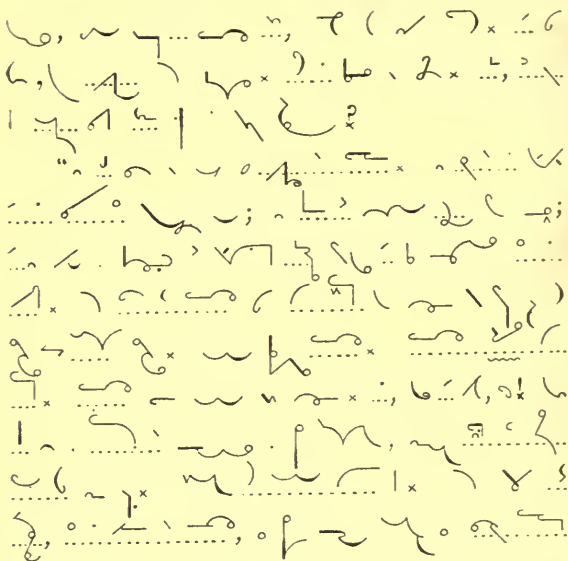




if you had gone to Egypt, as I recommended you to, I might have had a chance to get my hand in; but you wouldn't do it, and here you are. I sort of expected you.")

The editor was looking sad, and perplexed, and dejected. He surveyed the wreck which that old rioter and those two young farmers had made, and then said:

"This is a sad business—a very sad business. There is the mucilage bottle broken, and six panes of glass, and a spittoon, and two candlesticks. But that is not the worst. The reputation of the paper is injured, and permanently, I fear. True, there never was such a call for the paper before, and it never sold such a large edition or soared to such celebrity; but does one want to be famous for lunacy, and prosper upon the infirmities of his mind? My friend, as I am an honest man, the street out here is full of people, and others are roosting on the fences, waiting to get a



glimpse of you, because they think you are crazy. And well they might, after reading your editorials. They are a disgrace to journalism. Why, what put it into your head that you could edit a paper of this nature?

"You do not seem to know the first rudiments of agriculture. You speak of a furrow and a harrow as being the same thing; you talk of the moulting season for cows; and you recommend the domestication of the pole-cat on account of its playfulness and its excellence as a ratter. Your remark that clams will lie quiet if music be played to them was superfluous—entirely superfluous. Nothing disturbs clams. Clams *always* lie quiet. Clams care nothing whatever about music. Ah, heavens and earth, friend! if you had made the acquiring of ignorance the study of your life, you could not have graduated with higher honour than you could to-day. I never saw anything like it. Your observation that the horse-chestnut, as an article of commerce, is steadily gaining in favour is

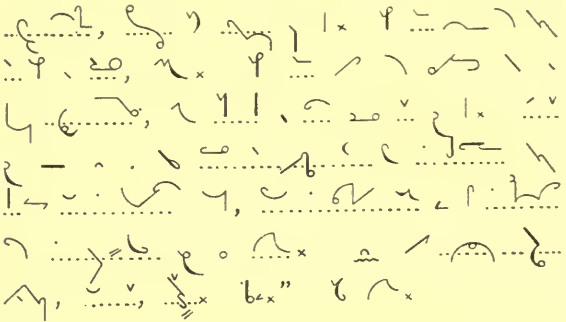
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simply calculated to destroy this journal. I want you to throw up your situation and go. I want no more holiday—I could not enjoy it if I had it. Certainly not with you in my chair. I would always stand in dread of what you might be going to recommend next. It makes me lose all patience every time I think of your discussing oyster-beds under the head of 'Landscape Gardening.' I want you to go. Nothing on earth could persuade me to take another holiday. Oh! why didn't you *tell* me that you didn't know anything about agriculture?"

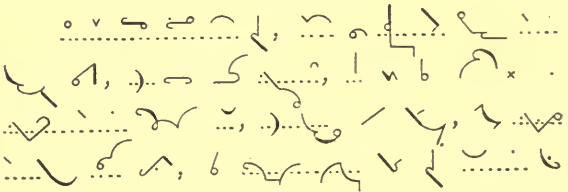
"Tell you, you cornstalk, you cabbage, you son of a cauliflower! It is the first time I ever heard such an unfeeling remark. I tell you I have been in the editorial business going on fourteen years, and it is the first time I ever heard of a man's having to know anything in order to edit a newspaper. You turnip!"

"I take my leave, sir! Since I have been treated as you have treated me, I am perfectly willing to go. But I



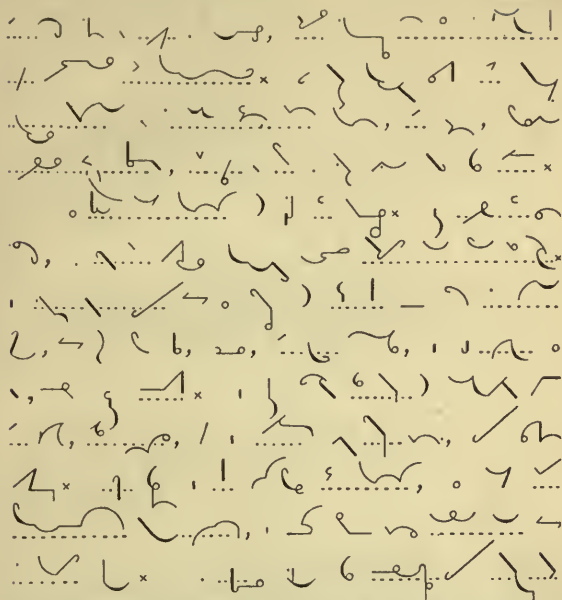
## A VENERABLE IMPOSTOR.

BY BRET HARTE.



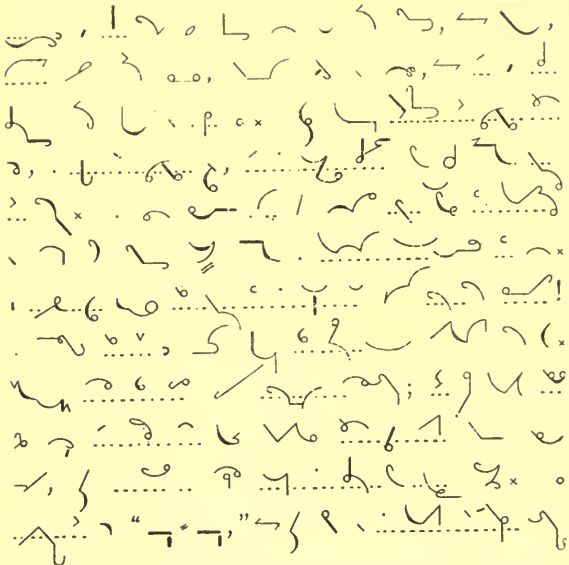
have done my duty. I have fulfilled my contract, as far as I was permitted to do it. I said I could make your paper of interest to all classes, and I have. I said I could run your circulation up to twenty thousand copies, and if I had had two more weeks I would have done it. And I would have given you the best class of readers that ever an agricultural paper had—not a farmer in it, nor a solitary individual who could tell a water-melon from a peach-vine to save his life. *You* are the loser by this rupture, not I, Pie-plant. Adios." I then left.

As I glance across my table, I am somewhat distracted by the spectacle of a venerable head, whose crown occasionally appears beyond, at about its level. The apparition of a very small hand, whose fingers are bunchy, and have the appearance of being slightly webbed, which is frequently lifted above the table in a vain and impotent attempt to reach the inkstand, always affects me as a

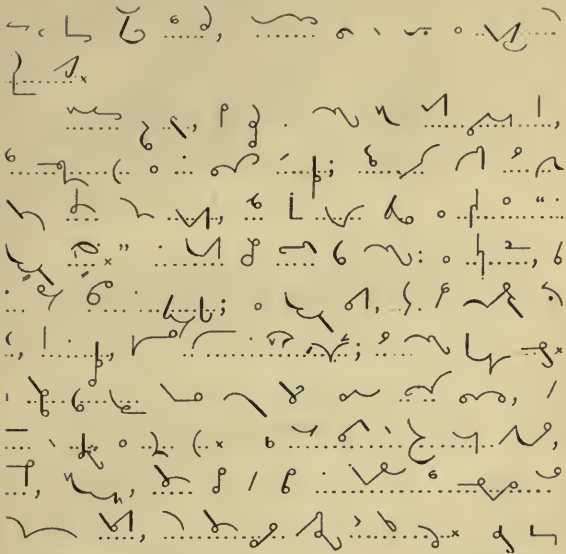


novelty at each recurrence of the phenomenon. Yet both the venerable head and the bunchy fingers belong to an individual with whom I am familiar, and to whom, for certain reasons hereafter described, I choose to apply the epithet written above this article.

His advent in the family was attended with peculiar circumstances. He was received with some concern, the number of retainers having been increased by one in honour of his arrival. He appeared to be weary—his pretence was that he had come from a long journey,—so that for days, weeks, and even months, he did not leave his bed, except when he was carried. But it was remarkable that his appetite was invariably regular and healthy, and that his meals, which he required should be brought to him, were seldom rejected. During this time he had little conversation with the family, his knowledge of our vernacular being limited, but occasionally spoke to himself in his own language—a foreign tongue. The difficulties attending this

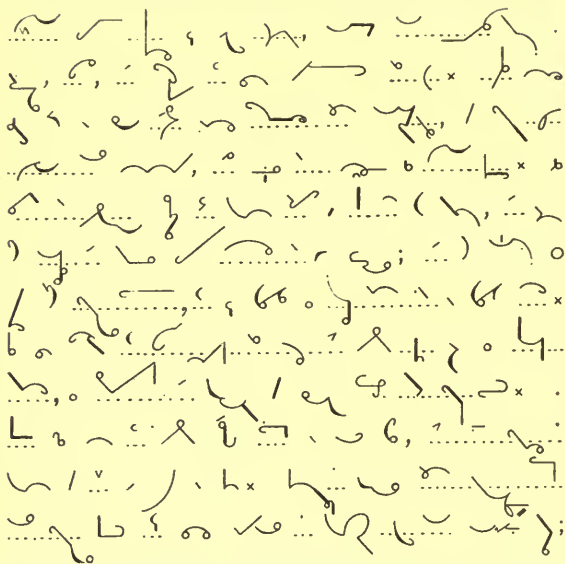


eccentricity were obviated by the young woman who had from the first taken him under her protection,—being, like the rest of her sex, peculiarly open to impositions,—and who at once disorganised her own tongue to suit his. This was effected by the contraction of the syllables of some words, the addition of syllables to others, and an ingenious disregard for tenses and the governing powers of the verb. The same singular law which impels people in conversation with foreigners to imitate their broken English governed the family in their communications with him. He received these evidences of his power with an indifference not wholly free from scorn! The expression of his eye would occasionally denote that his higher nature revolted from them. I have no doubt myself that his wants were frequently misinterpreted; that the stretching forth of his hands towards the moon and stars might have been the performance of some religious rite peculiar to his own country, which was in ours misconstrued into a desire for physical nourishment. His repetition of the word “goo-goo,”—which was subject to a variety of opposite



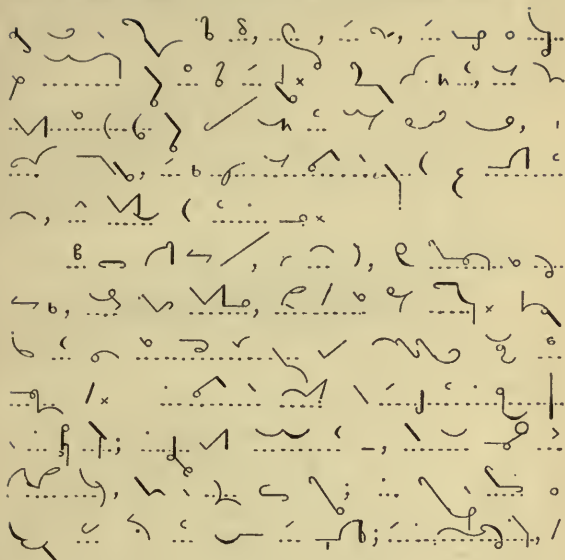
interpretations,—when taken in conjunction with his size, in my mind seemed to indicate his aboriginal or Aztec origin.

I incline to this belief, as it sustains the impression I have already hinted at, that his extreme youth is a simulation and deceit; that he is really older and has lived before at some remote period, and that his conduct fully justifies his title as "A Venerable Impostor." A variety of circumstances corroborate this impression: his tottering walk, which is a senile as well as a juvenile condition; his venerable head, thatched with such imperceptible hair that, at a distance, it looks like a mild aureola; and his imperfect dental exhibition. But besides these physical peculiarities may be observed certain moral symptoms, which go to disprove his assumed youth. He is in the habit of falling into reveries, caused, I have no doubt, by some circumstance which suggests a comparison with his experience in his remoter boyhood, or by some serious retrospection of the past years. He has been detected lying awake at times when he should have been asleep,



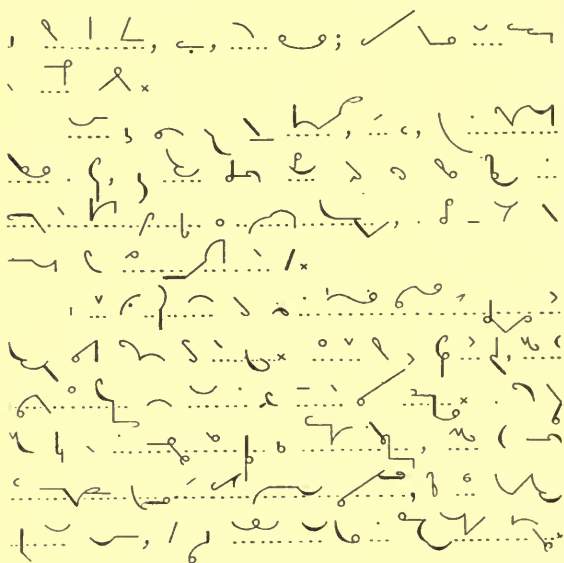
engaged in curiously comparing the bed-clothes, walls, and furniture with some recollection of his youth. At such moments he has been heard to sing softly to himself fragments of some unintelligible composition, which probably still linger in his memory, as the echoes of a music he has long outgrown. He has the habit of receiving strangers with the familiarity of one who had met them before, and to whom their antecedents and peculiarities were matters of old acquaintance; and so unerring is his judgment of their previous character, that when he withholds his confidence I am apt to withhold mine. It is somewhat remarkable that while the maturity of his years and the respect due to them is denied by man, his superiority and venerable age is never questioned by the brute creation. The dog treats him with a respect and consideration accorded to none others, and the cat permits a familiarity which I should shudder to attempt. It may be considered an evidence of some Pantheistic quality in his previous education that he seems to recognise a fellowship even in





inarticulate objects; he has been known to verbally address plants, flowers, and fruit, and to extend his confidence to such inanimate objects as chairs and tables. There can be little doubt that, in the remote period of his youth, these objects were endowed with not only sentient natures, but moral capabilities, and he is still in the habit of beating them when they collide with him, and of pardoning them with a kiss.

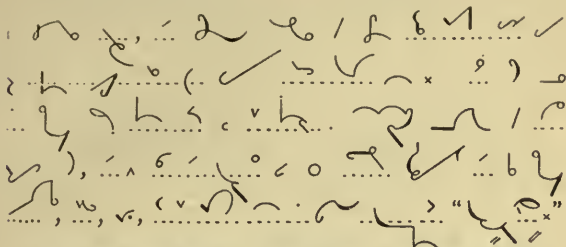
As he has grown older—rather, let me say, as we have approximated to his years—he has, in spite of the apparent paradox, lost much of his senile gravity. It must be confessed that some of his actions of late appear to our imperfect comprehension inconsistent with his extreme age. A habit of marching up and down with a string tied to a soda-water bottle; a disposition to ride anything that could, by any exercise of the liveliest fancy, be made to assume equine proportions; a propensity to blacken his venerable white hair with ink and coal-dust; and an omnivorous appetite, which did not stop at chalk, clay,



or cinders; were peculiarities not calculated to excite respect.

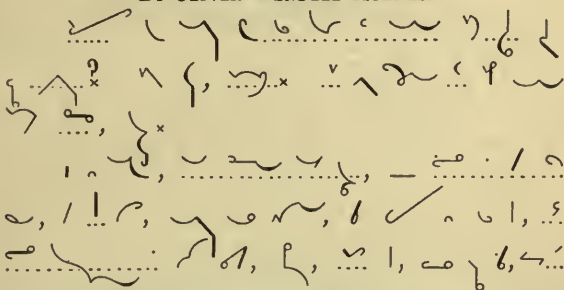
In fact, he would seem to have become demoralised, and when, after a prolonged absence the other day, he was finally discovered standing upon the front steps addressing a group of delighted children out of his limited vocabulary, the circumstance could only be accounted for as the garrulity of age.

But I lay aside my pen amidst an ominous silence and the disappearance of the venerable head from my plane of vision. As I step to the other side of the table, I find that sleep has overtaken him in an overt act of hoary wickedness. The very pages I have devoted to an exposition of his deceit he has quietly abstracted, and I find them covered with cabalistic figures and wild-looking hieroglyphs, traced with his forefinger dipped in ink, which doubtless in his own language conveys a scathing commentary on my composition. But he sleeps peacefully, and



**THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE.**

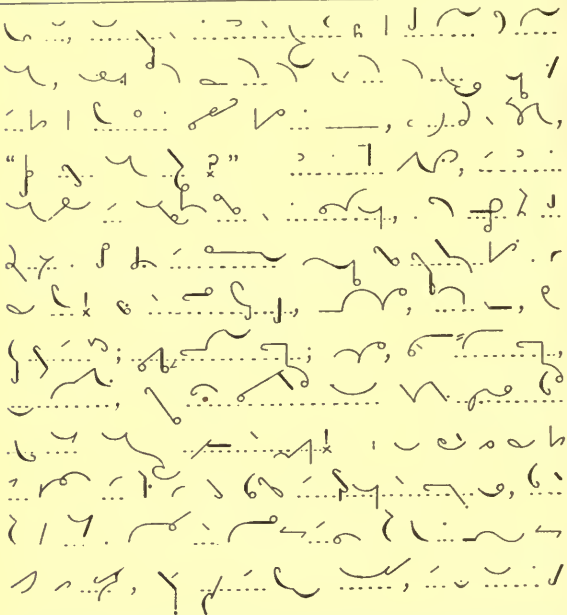
BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.



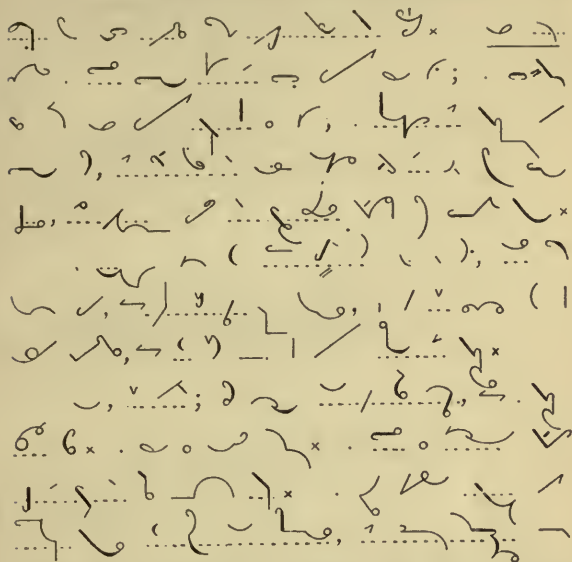
there is something in his face which tells me that he has already wandered away to that dim region of his youth where I cannot follow him. And as there comes a strange stirring at my heart when I contemplate the immeasurable gulf which lies between us, and how slight and feeble as yet is his grasp on this world and its strange realities, I find, too late, that I also am a willing victim of the "Venerable Impostor."

I wonder if anybody ever finds fault with anything I say at this table when it is repeated? I hope they do, I am sure. I should be very certain that I said nothing of much significance, if they did not.

Did you never, in walking in the fields, come across a large flat stone, which had lain, nobody knows how long, just where you found it, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, all round it, close to its edges,—and have



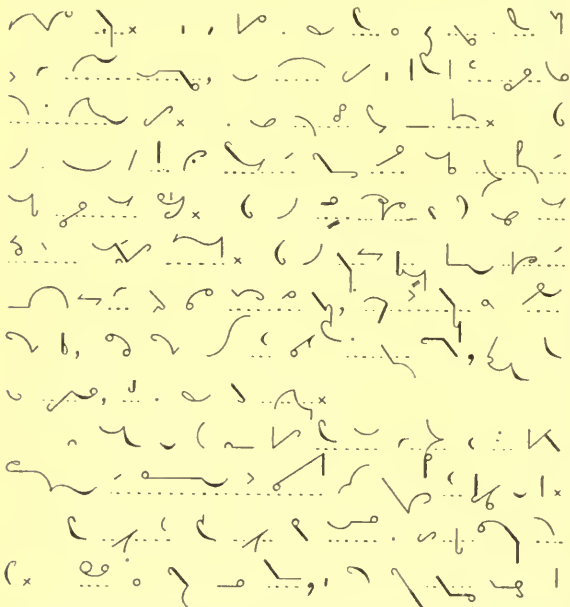
you not, in obedience to a kind of feeling that told you it had been lying there long enough, insinuated your stick or your foot or your fingers under its edge and turned it over as a housewife turns a cake, when she says to herself, "It's done brown enough by this time?" What an odd revelation, and what an unforeseen and unpleasant surprise to a small community, the very existence of which you had not suspected, until the sudden dismay and scattering among its members produced by your turning the old stone over! Blades of grass flattened down, colourless, matted together, as if they had been bleached and ironed; hideous crawling creatures, motionless, slug-like creatures, young larvae, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than even in the infernal wriggle of maturity! But no sooner is the stone turned and the wholesome light of day let upon this compressed and blinded community of creeping things, than all of them which enjoy the luxury of legs—and some of them have a good many—rush round wildly.



butting each other and everything in their way, and end in a general stampede for underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. *Next year* you will find the grass growing tall and green where the stone lay; the ground-bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole; the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect angels open and shut over their golden disks, as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

The young fellow whom they call John saw fit to say, in his very familiar way,—at which I do not choose to take offence, but which I sometimes think it necessary to repress,—that I was coming it rather strong on the butterflies.

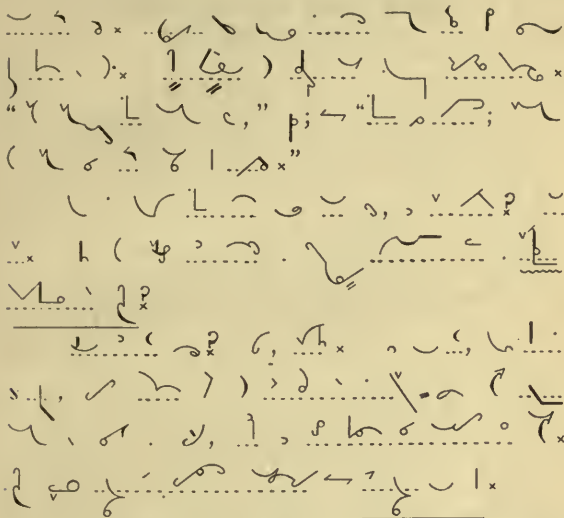
No, I replied; there is meaning in each of those images,—the butterfly as well as the others. The stone is ancient error. The grass is human nature borne down and bleached of all its colour by it. The shapes which are seen beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in darkness, and the weaker organisms kept helpless by it. He who



turns the stone over is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, no matter whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native hues in the sunshine. Then shall God's minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a new-born humanity. Then shall beauty—Divinity taking outlines and colour—light upon the souls of men as the butterfly, image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust, soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings, had not the stone been lifted.

You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it.

Every real thought on every real subject knocks the wind out of somebody or other. As soon as his breath comes back, he very probably begins to expend it in hard



words. These are the best evidence a man can have that he has said something it was time to say. Dr. Johnson was disappointed in the effect of one of his pamphlets. "I think I have not been attacked enough for it," he said;—"attack is the reaction; I never think I have hit hard unless it rebounds."

If a fellow attacked my opinions in print, would I reply? Not I. Do you think I don't understand what my friend the Professor long ago called *the hydrostatic paradox of controversy*?

Don't know what that means? Well, I will tell you. You know that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way—and *the fools know it.*

# THE WAY TO WEALTH.

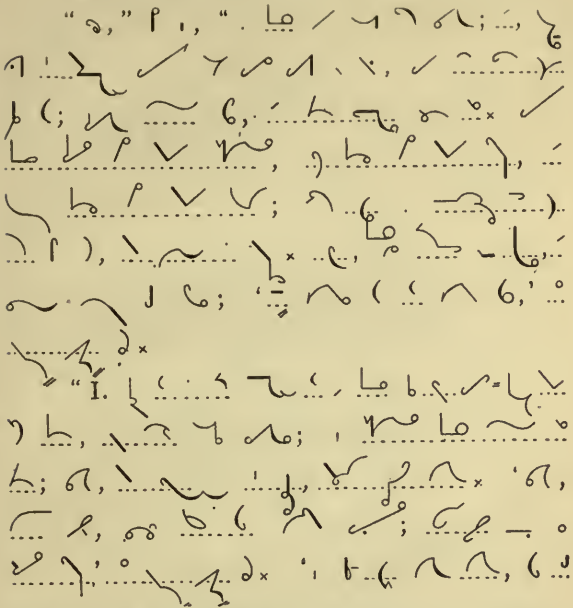
BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.



Courteous reader, I have heard that nothing gives an author so great pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by others. Judge, then, how much I must have been gratified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at an auction of merchants' goods. The hour of the sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times ; and one of the company called to a plain, clean, old man, with white locks, " Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the times ? Will not these heavy taxes quite ruin the country ? How shall we ever be able to pay them ? What would you advise us to ? " Father Abraham stood up and replied, " If you would have my advice, I will give it you in short ; for ' A word to the wise is enough,' as Poor Richard says." They joined in desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows.

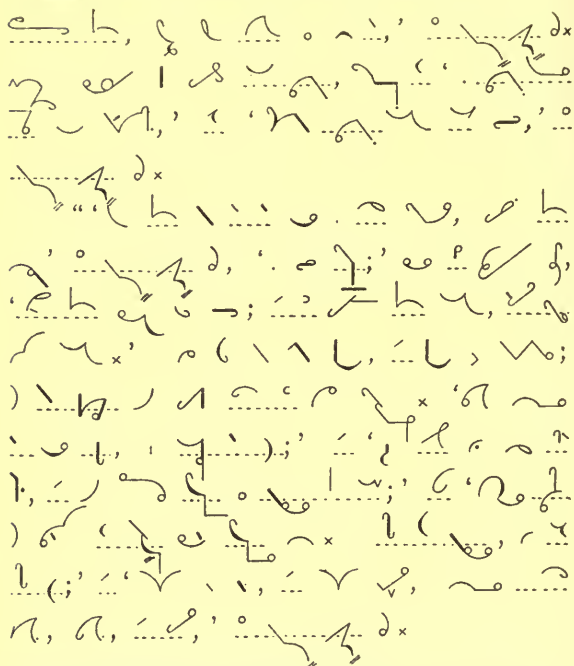
" Friends," said he, " the taxes are indeed very heavy, and, if those laid on by the government were the only





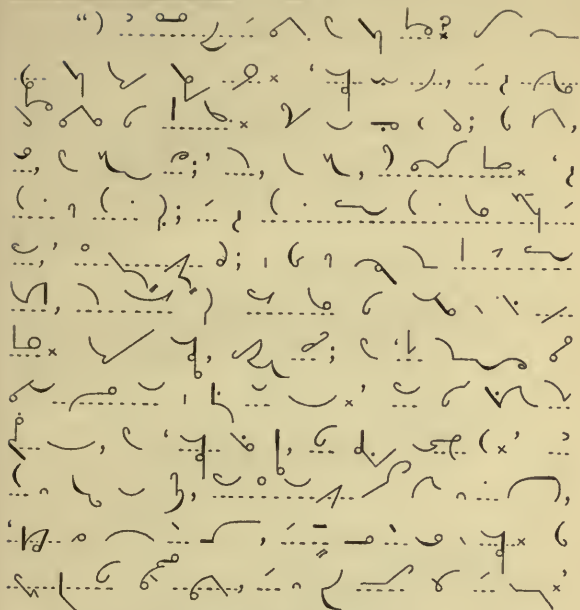
ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them ; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly ; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us, by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us ; ‘ God helps them that help themselves,’ as Poor Richard says.

“ I. It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their time, to be employed in its service ; but idleness taxes many of us much more ; sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. ‘ Sloth like rust, consumes faster than labour wears ; while the used key is always bright,’ as Poor Richard says. ‘ But dost thou love life, then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of,’ as Poor Richard says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting

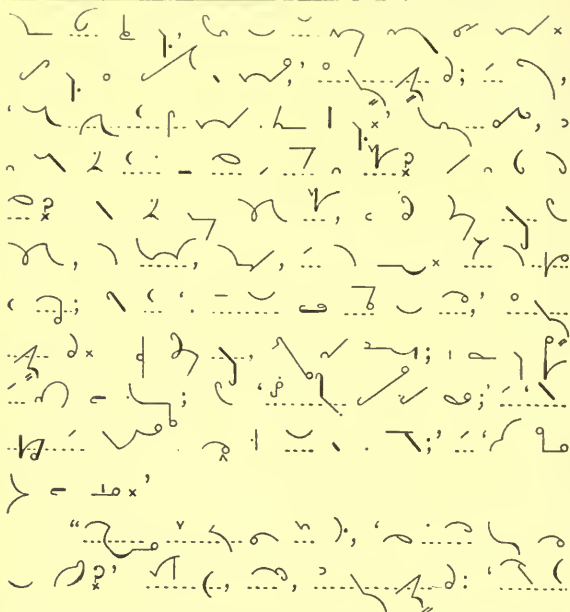


that 'The sleeping fox catches no poultry,' and that 'There will be sleeping enough in the grave,' as Poor Richard says.

"If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be,' as Poor Richard says, 'the greatest prodigality;' since, as he elsewhere tells us, 'Lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough, always proves little enough.' Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity. 'Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy;' and 'He that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night;' while 'Laziness travels so slowly, that Poverty soon overtakes him. Drive thy business, let not that drive thee;' and 'Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,' as Poor Richard says.

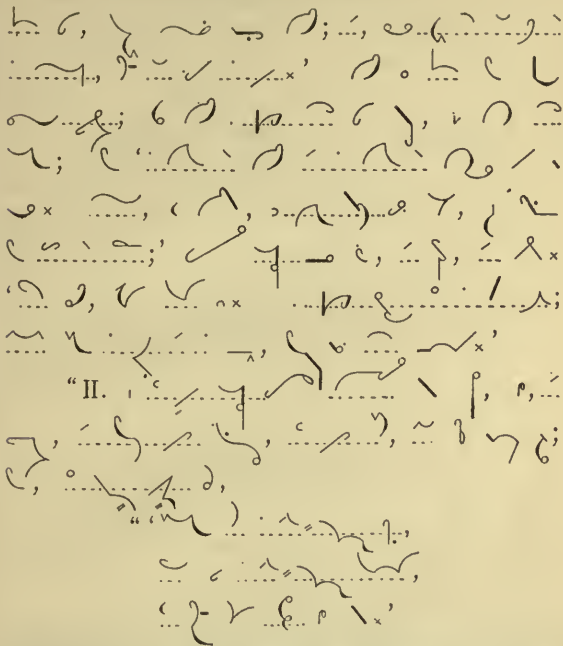


“ So what signifies wishing and hoping for better times ? We may make these times better if we bestir ourselves. ‘ Industry need not wish, and he that lives upon hopes will die fasting. There are no gains without pains ; then help, hands, for I have no lands ; ’ or, if I have, they are smartly taxed. ‘ He that hath a trade hath an estate ; and he that hath a calling hath an office of profit and honour,’ as Poor Richard says ; but then the trade must be worked at and the calling followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes. If we are industrious we shall never starve ; for ‘ At the working-man’s house hunger looks in, but dare not enter.’ Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter, for ‘ Industry pays debts, while despair increaseth them.’ What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy, ‘ Diligence is the mother of good luck, and God gives all things to industry. Then plough deep while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep.’ Work



while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow. 'One to-day is worth two to-morrows,' as Poor Richard says; and further, 'Never leave that till to-morrow which you can do to-day.' If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you then your own master? Be ashamed to catch yourself idle, when there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your king. Handle your tools without mittens; remember that 'The cat in gloves catches no mice,' as Poor Richard says. It is true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily and you will see great effects; for 'Constant dropping wears away stones;' and 'By diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable;' and 'Little strokes fell great oaks.'

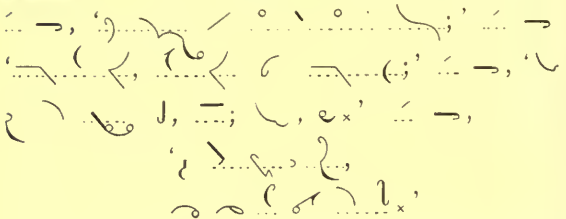
"Methinks I hear some of you say, 'Must a man afford himself no leisure?' I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says: 'Employ thy time well, if thou meanest



to gain leisure ; and, since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.' Leisure is time for doing something useful ; this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never ; for ' A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. Many, without labour, would live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock ;' whereas industry gives comfort, and plenty and respect. ' Fly pleasures, and they will follow you. The diligent spinner has a large shift ; and now I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me good morrow.'

" II. But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs, with our own eyes, and not trust too much to others ; for, as Poor Richard says, " ' I never saw an oft-removed tree,

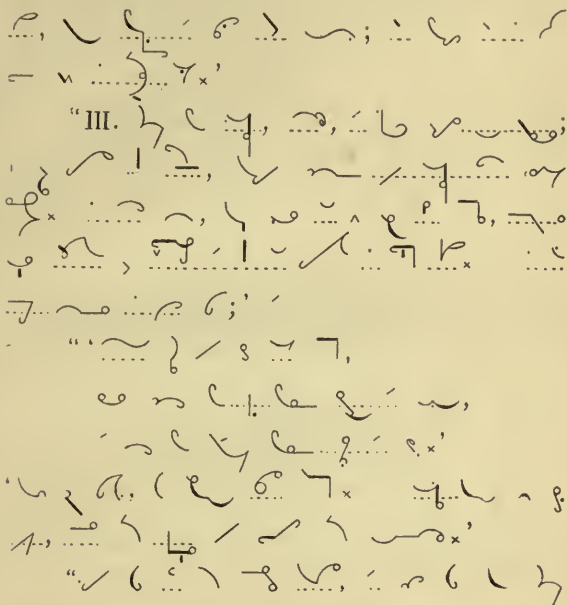
Nor yet an oft-removed family,  
That throve so well as those that settled be.'



And again, 'Three removes are as bad as a fire;' and again, 'Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;' and again, 'If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.' And again,

"He that by the plough would thrive,  
Himself must either hold or drive.'

And again, 'the eye of a master will do more work than both his hands;' and again, 'Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge;' and again, 'Not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open.' Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for 'In the affairs of this world men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it;' but a man's own care is profitable; for, 'If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like, serve yourself. A little neglect may breed great mischief; for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the



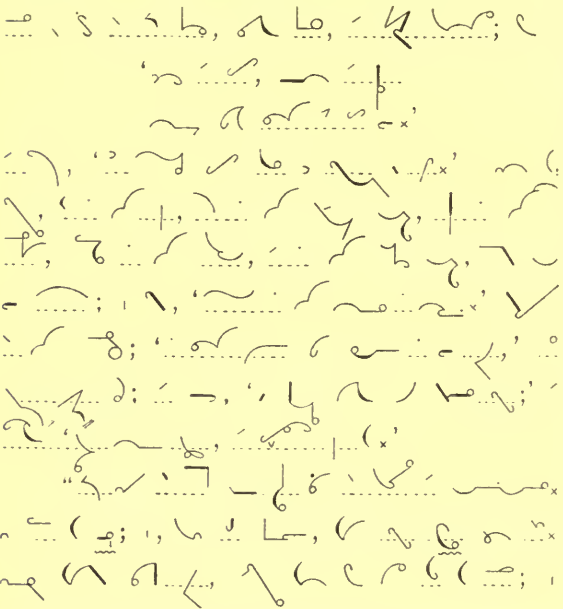
enemy; all for want of a little care about a horse-shoe nail.'

" III. So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, keep his nose all his life to the grindstone and die not worth a groat at last. 'A fat kitchen makes a lean will;' and

" ' Many estates are spent in the getting,  
 Since women for tea forsook spinning and knitting,  
 And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting.'

' If you would be wealthy, think of saving as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes are greater than her incomes.

" Away then with your expensive follies, and you will not then have so much cause to complain of hard times,

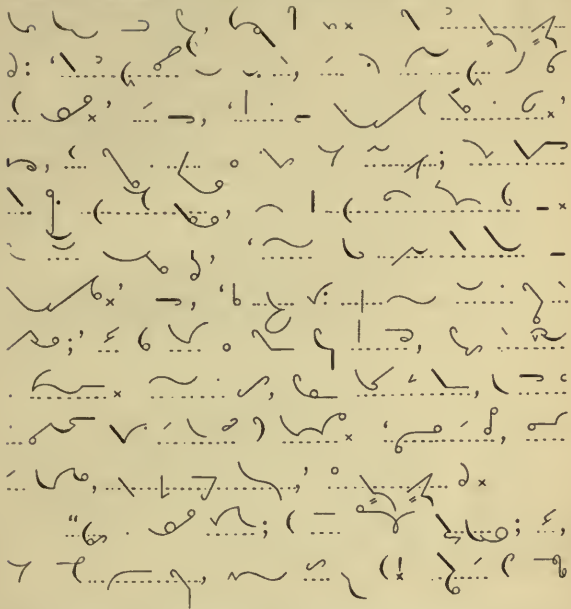


heavy taxes, and chargeable families ; for  
 ' Women and wine, game and deceit,  
 Make the wealth small and the want great.'

And further, ' What maintains one vice would bring up two children.' You may think, perhaps, that a little tea, or a little punch now and then, diet a little more costly, clothes a little finer, and a little entertainment now and then, can be no great matter ; but remember, ' Many a little makes a mickle.' Beware of little expenses ; ' A small leak will sink a great ship,' as Poor Richard says ; and again, ' Who dainties love, shall beggars prove ;' and moreover, ' Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them.'

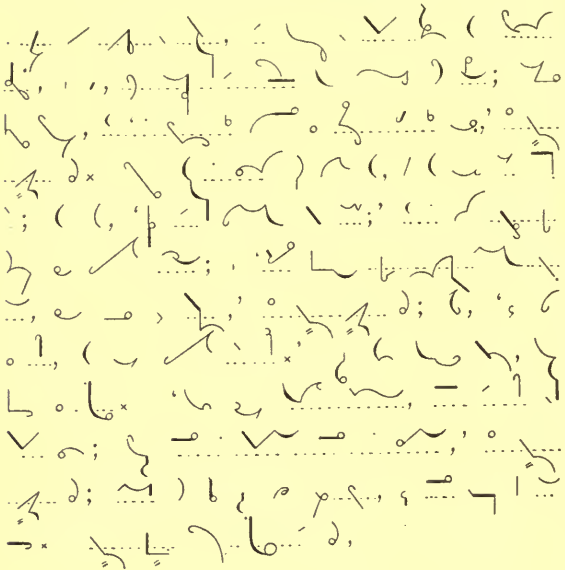
" Here you are all got together at this sale of fineries and knick-knacks. You call them *goods* ; but, if you do not take care, they will prove *evils* to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost ; but if you have no occasion for them,



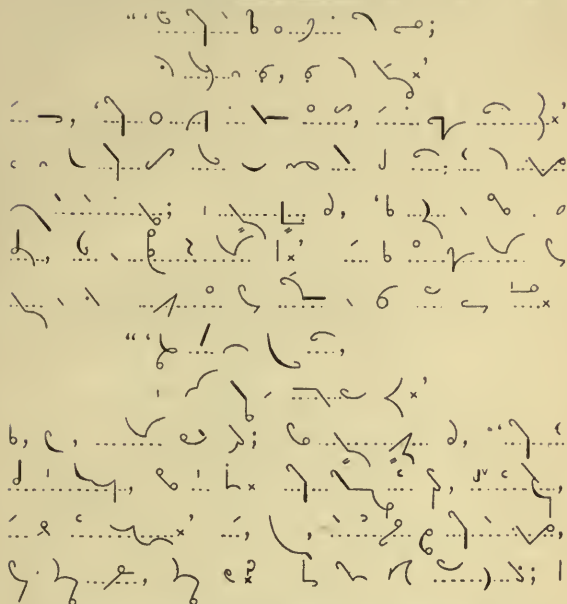


they must be dear to you. Remember what Poor Richard says : ' Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessaries.' And again, ' At a great pennyworth pause a while.' He means, that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only and not real ; or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, ' Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths.' Again, ' it is foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance ; ' and yet this folly is practised every day at auctions, for want of minding the *Almanac*. Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, have gone with a hungry belly and half-starved their families. ' Silks and satins, scarlet and velvets, put out the kitchen fire,' as Poor Richard says.

" These are not the necessaries of life ; they can scarcely be called the conveniences ; and yet, only because they look pretty, how many want to have them ! By these, and



other extravagances, the genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly, that 'A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees,' as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them, which they knew not the getting of; they think, 'It is day and will never be night;' that a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding; but 'Always taking out of the meal-tub and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom,' as Poor Richard says; and then, 'When the well is dry, they know the worth of water.' But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice. 'If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some; for he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing,' as Poor Richard says; and indeed so does he that lends to such people, when he goes to get it in again. Poor Dick further advises, and says,



“ ‘ Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse ;  
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse.’

And again, ‘ Pride is as loud a beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy.’ When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece ; but Poor Dick says, ‘ It is easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow it.’ And it is as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich, as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

“ ‘ Vessels large may venture more,  
But little boats should keep near shore.’

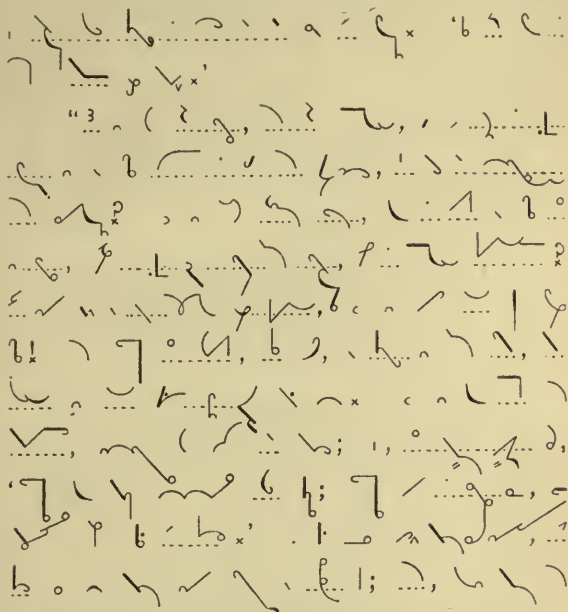
It is, however, a folly soon punished ; for as Poor Richard says, ‘ Pride that dines on vanity, sups on contempt. Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.’ And, after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered ? It cannot promote health nor ease pain ; it

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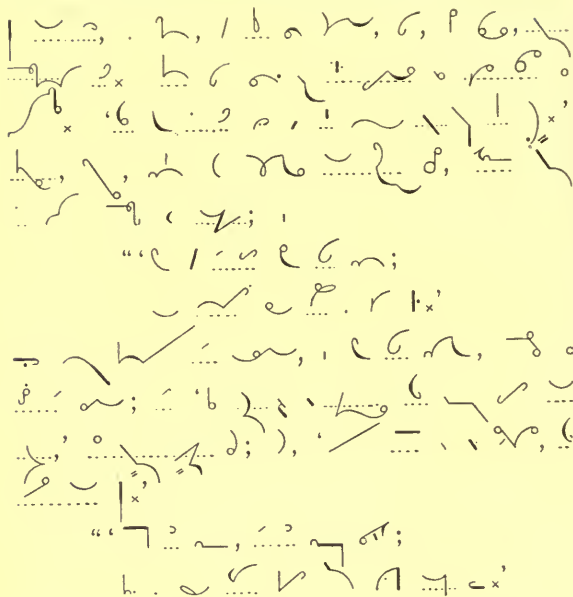
makes no increase of merit in the person ; it creates envy ; it hastens misfortune.

" But what madness must it be to *run in debt* for these superfluities ? We are offered, by the terms of this sale, six months' credit ; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah ! think what you do when you run in debt ; you give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor ; you will be in fear when you speak to him ; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses, and, by degrees, come to lose your veracity, and sink into base, downright lying ; for 'The second vice is lying, the first is running in debt,' as Poor Richard says ; and again, to the same purpose, 'Lying rides upon Debt's back ;' whereas a free-born Englishman ought not to be ashamed nor afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit



and virtue. 'It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright.'

"What would you think of that prince, or of that government, who should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman or gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that you were free, have a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges, and such a government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under such tyranny, when you run in debt for such dress! Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty, by confining you in jail till you shall be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of payment; but, as Poor Richard says, 'creditors have better memories than debtors; creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times.' The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in



mind, the term, which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. Time will seem to have added wings to his heels as well as his shoulders. 'Those have a short Lent who owe money to be paid at Easter.' At present, perhaps, you may think yourselves in thriving circumstances, and that you can bear a little extravagance, without injury; but

"For age and want save while you may;  
No morning sun lasts the whole day.'

Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever while you live, expense is constant and certain; and 'It is easier to build two chimneys than to keep one in fuel,' as Poor Richard says; so 'Rather go to bed supperless, than rise in debt.'

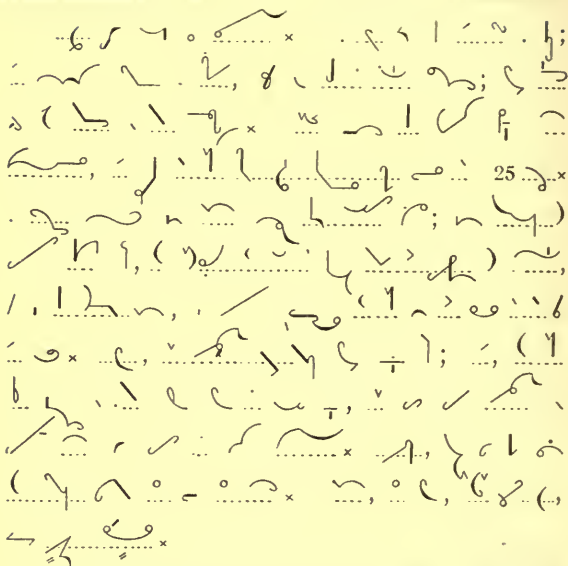
"Get what you can, and what you get hold;  
'Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into gold.'

"IV. 6

And, when you have got the Philosopher's Stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad times or the difficulty of paying taxes.

"IV. This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom ; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry, and frugality, and prudence, though excellent things : for they may all be blasted, without the blessing of Heaven ; and, therefore, ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember, Job suffered and was afterwards prosperous.

"And now, to conclude, 'Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other,' as Poor Richard says, and scarce in that ; for, it is true, 'We may give advice, but we cannot give conduct.' However, remember this, 'They that will not be counselled, cannot be helped ;' and further, that, 'If you will not hear Reason, she will surely rap your knuckles,' as Poor Richard says."

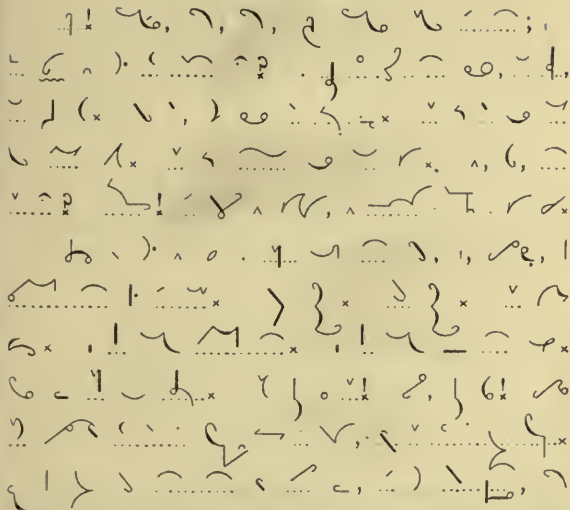


Thus the old gentleman ended his harangue. The people heard it and approved the doctrine; and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon; for the auction opened and they began to buy extravagantly. I found the good man had thoroughly studied my almanacks, and digested all I had dropped on these topics during the course of twenty-five years. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired anyone else; but my vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth part of the wisdom was my own, which he had ascribed to me, but rather the gleanings that I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it; and, though I had at first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away resolved to wear my old one a little longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same, thy profit will be as great as mine. I am, as ever, thine to serve thee,—RICHARD SAUNDERS.



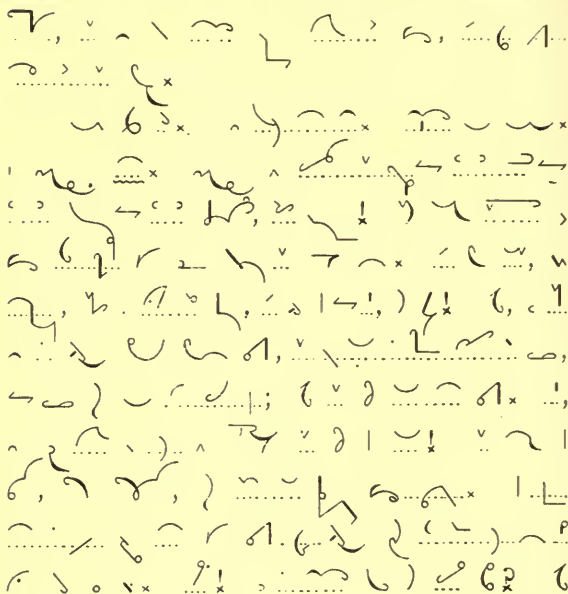
# THE TELL-TALE HEART.

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE.



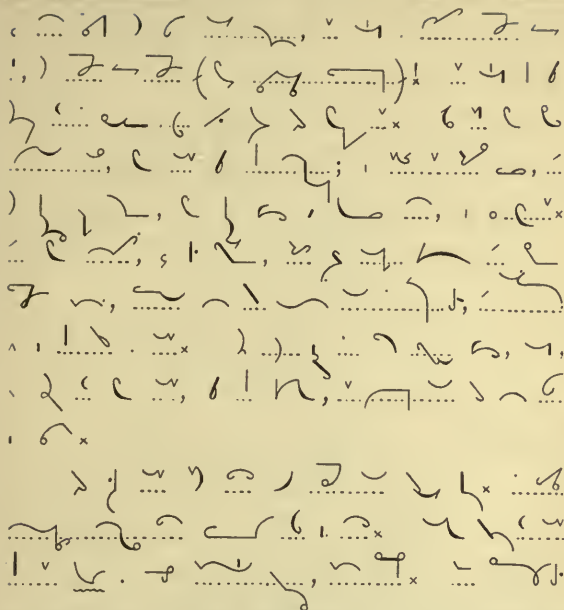
True! nervous, very, very, dreadfully nervous I have been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses, not destroyed, not dulled them. Above all, was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the Heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily, how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain, but, once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture—a pale, blue eye with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me my blood ran cold, and so by



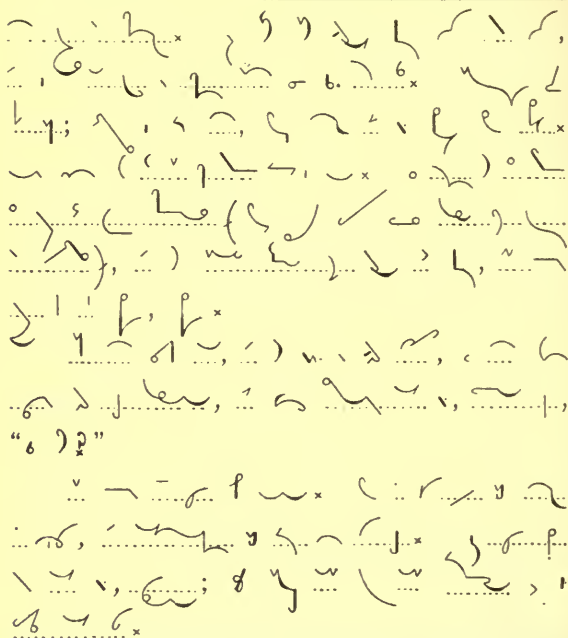
degrees, very gradually, I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye for ever.

Now, this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded—with what caution—with what foresight—with what dissimulation, I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door, and opened it—oh, so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern all closed,—closed so that no light shone out; and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly, very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this?



And then when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously—oh, so cautiously—cautiously (for the hinges creaked)! I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights, every night just at midnight; but I found the eye always closed, and so it was impossible to do the work, for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his evil eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he had passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

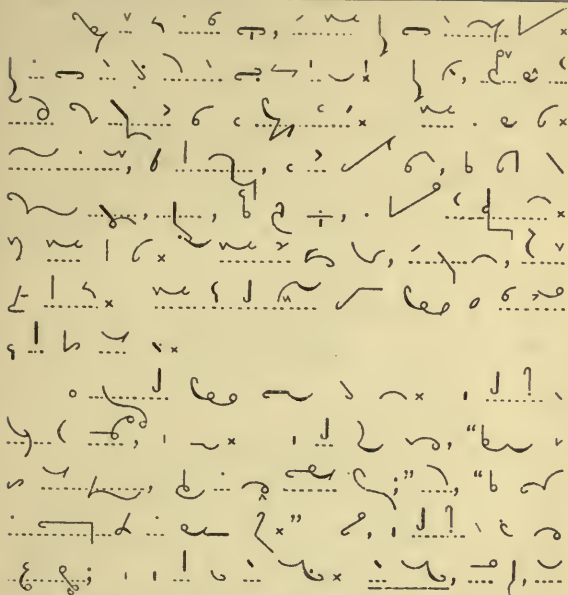
Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute-hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I *felt* the extent of my own powers, of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that



there I was opening the door little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me, for he moved on the bed suddenly as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness (for the shutters were close fastened through fear of robbers), and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

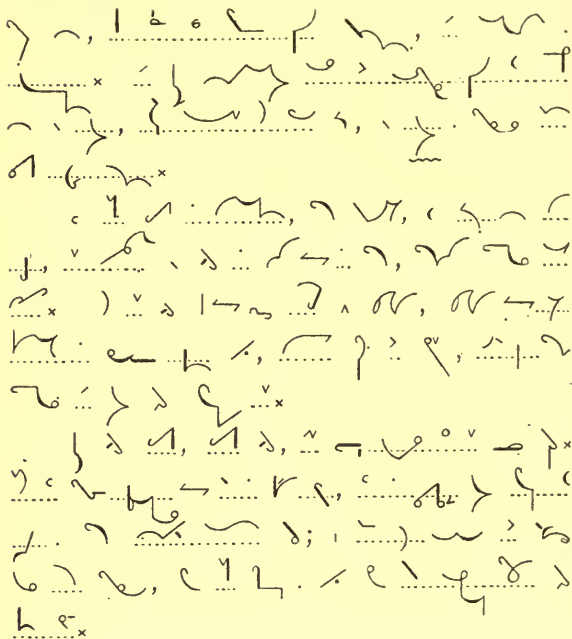
I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in the bed, crying out, "Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in bed, listening; just as I have done night after night, hearkening to the dead watches in the wall.



Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh no! It was the low, stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise when he had turned in the bed.

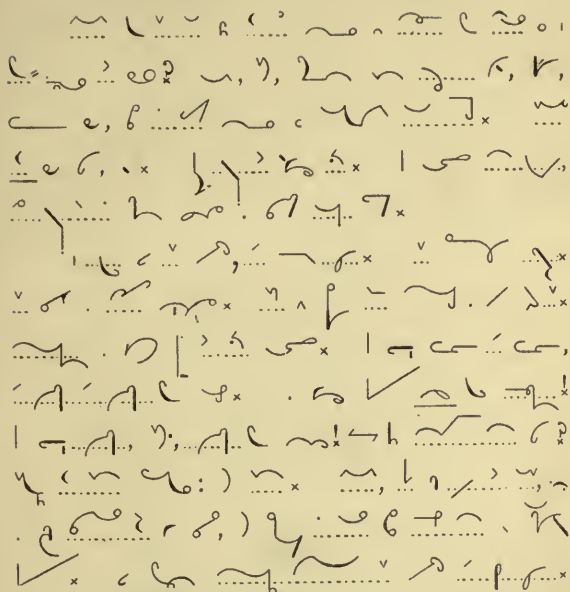
His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself, "It is nothing but the wind in the chimney, it is only a mouse crossing the floor;" or, "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. *All in vain*, because Death, in approaching him, had stalked with



his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel, although he neither saw nor heard, to *feel* the presence of my head within the room.

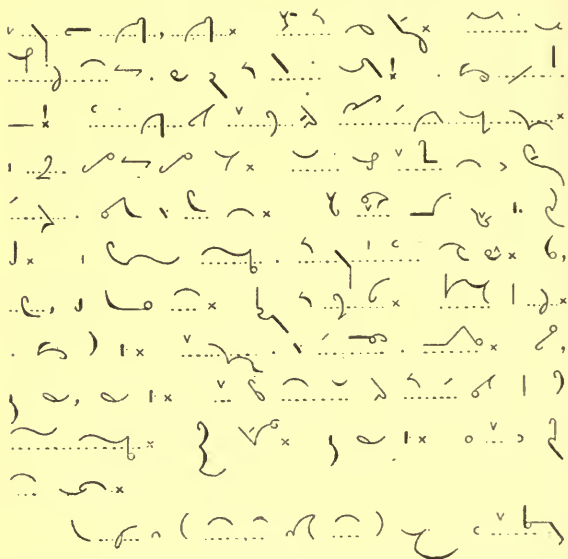
When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little—a very, very little—crevice in the lantern. So I opened it—you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily—until at length a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot out from the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye.

It was open, wide, wide open, and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw with perfect distinctness—all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person, for I had directed the ray as if by instinct precisely upon the damned spot.



And now have I not told you that what makes you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses? Now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew *that* sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

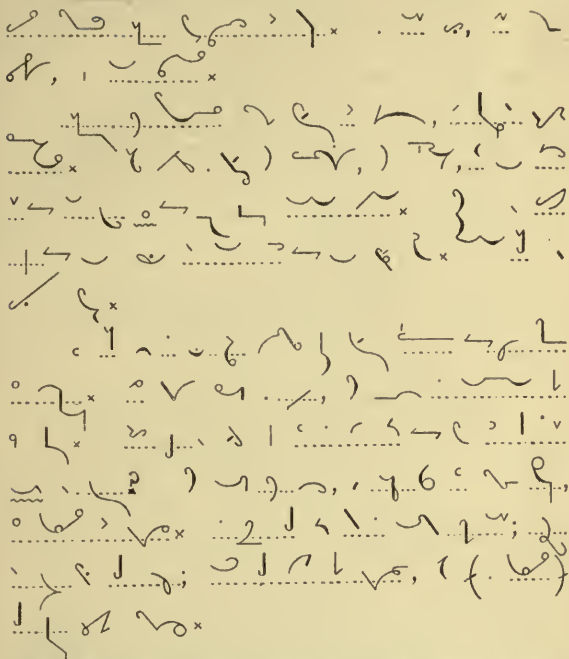
But even yet I refrained, and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror *must* have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment!—do you mark me well? I have told you that I am nervous; so I am. And now, at the dread hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I



refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder. I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me—the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once—once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But for many minutes the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

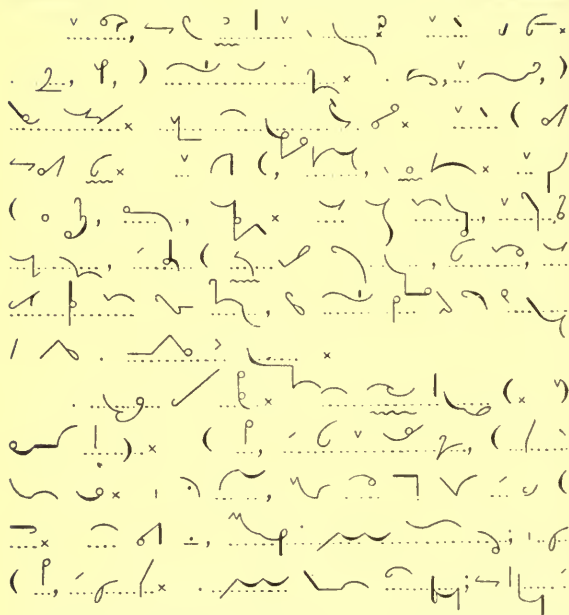
If still you think me mad, you will think me so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence.





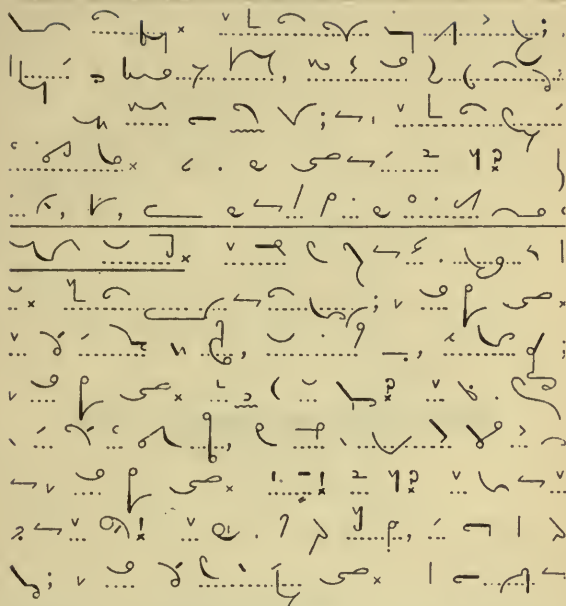
I took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye not even *his*—could have detected anything wrong. There was nothing to wash out—no stain of any kind—no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that.

When I had made an end of these labours it was four o'clock—still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart—for what had I *now* to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police-court, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.



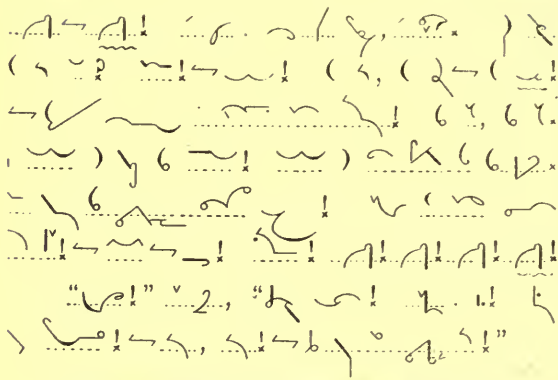
I smiled,—for *what* had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search—search *well*. I led them, at length, to *his* chamber, I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them *here* to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officials were satisfied. My *manner* had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears; but still they sat, and still chatted. The ringing became more



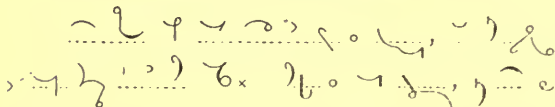
distinct;—it continued and became more distinct. I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling; but it continued and gained definiteness—until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew *very* pale;—but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased—and what could I do? It was a *low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton.* I gasped for breath—and yet the officials heard it not. I talked more quickly—more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key, and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why *would* they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men—but the noise steadily increased. O God! What could I do? I foamed—I raved—I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards;



## GREATNESS IN COMMON LIFE.

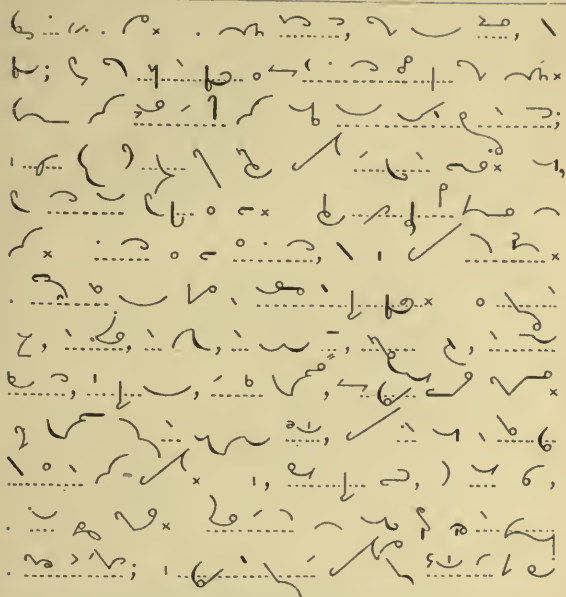
BY W. E. CHANNING.



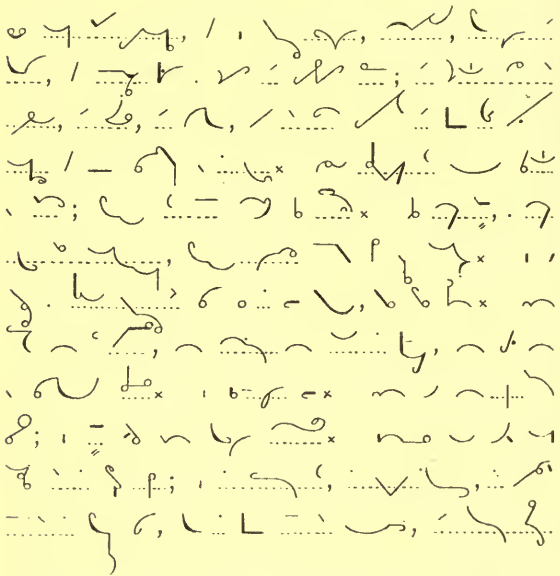
but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder—louder—*louder!* And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God!—no, no! They heard—they suspected—they *knew!*—they were making a mockery of my horror!—this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision. I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die!—And now—again!—hark! louder! louder! louder! *louder!*

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed!—tear up the planks!—here, here!—it is the beating of his hideous heart!”

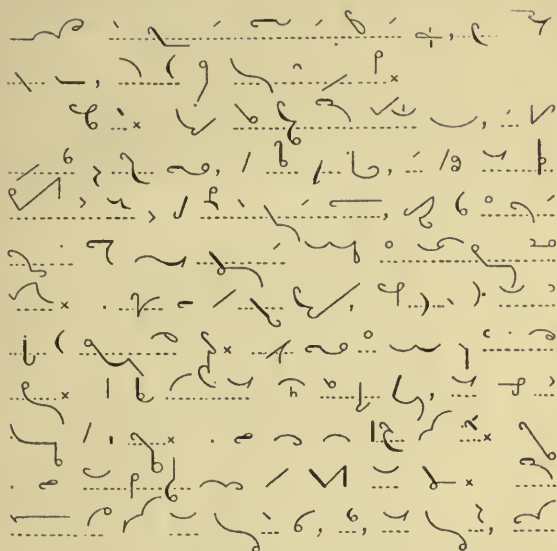
My strong interest in the mass of the people is founded, not on their usefulness to the community, so much as on what they are in themselves. Their condition is indeed obscure; but their importance is not on this account a



whit the less. The multitude of men cannot, from the nature of the case, be distinguished ; for the very idea of distinction is—that a man stands out from the multitude. They make little noise and draw little notice in their narrow spheres of action ; but still they have their full proportion of personal worth and even of greatness. Indeed, every man in every condition is great. It is only our own diseased sight which makes him little. A man is great as a man, be he where or what he may. The grandeur of his nature turns to insignificance all outward distinctions. His powers of intellect, of conscience, of love, of knowing God, of perceiving the beautiful, of acting on his own mind, on outward nature, and on his fellow-creatures,—these are glorious prerogatives. Through the vulgar error of undervaluing what is common, we are apt indeed to pass these by as of little worth. But, as in the outward creation, so in the soul, the common is the most precious. Science and art may invent splendid modes of illuminating the apartments of the opulent ; but these are all poor and worthless

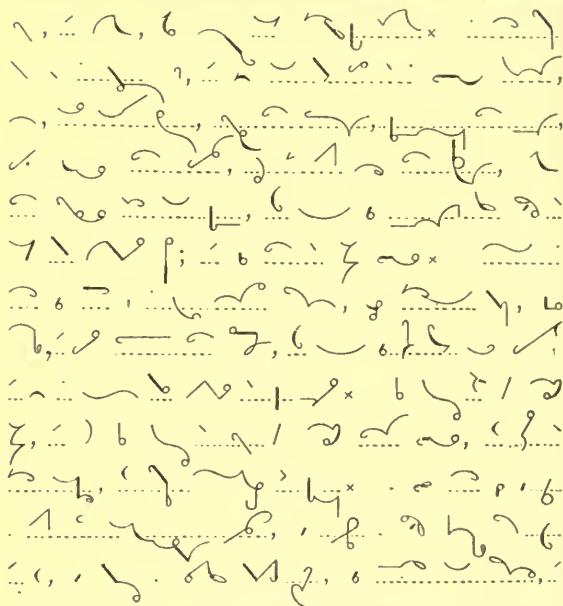


compared with the common light which the sun sends into all our windows, which he pours freely, impartially over hill and valley, which kindles daily the eastern and western sky; and so the common lights of reason, and conscience, and love, are of more worth and dignity than the rare endowments which give celebrity to a few. Let us not disparage that nature which is common to all men; for no thought can measure its grandeur. It is the image of God, the image even of His infinity, for no limits can be set to its unfolding. He who possesses the divine powers of the soul is a great being, be his place what it may. You may clothe him with rags, may immure him in a dungeon, may chain him to slavish tasks. But he is still great. You may shut him out of your houses; but God opens to him heavenly mansions. He makes no show indeed in the streets of a splendid city; but a clear thought, a pure affection, a resolute act of a virtuous will, have a dignity quite of another kind, and far higher than accumulations



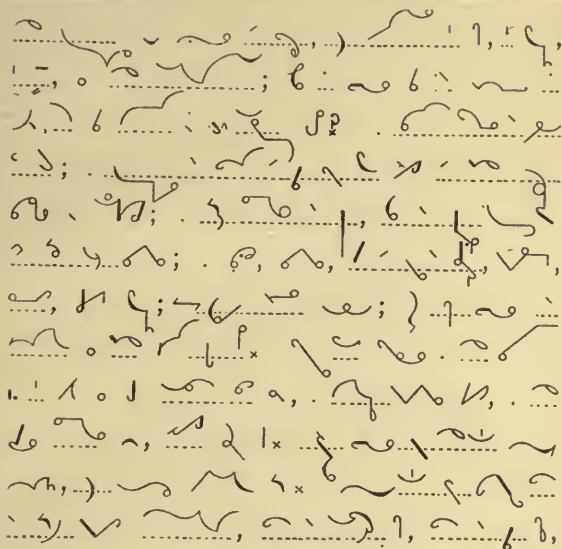
of brick and granite and plaster and stucco, however cunningly put together, or though stretching far beyond our sight.

Nor is this all. If we pass over this grandeur of our common nature, and turn our thoughts to that comparative greatness, which draws chief attention, and which consists in the decided superiority of the individual to the general standard of power and character, we shall find this as free and frequent a growth among the obscure and unnoticed as in more conspicuous walks of life. The truly great are to be found everywhere, nor is it easy to say in what condition they spring up most plentifully. Real greatness has nothing to do with a man's sphere. It does not lie in the magnitude of his outward agency, in the extent of the effects which he produces. The greatest men may do comparatively little abroad. Perhaps the greatest in our city at this moment are buried in obscurity. Grandeur of character lies wholly in force of soul, that is, in the force of thought, moral principle, and love, and this may

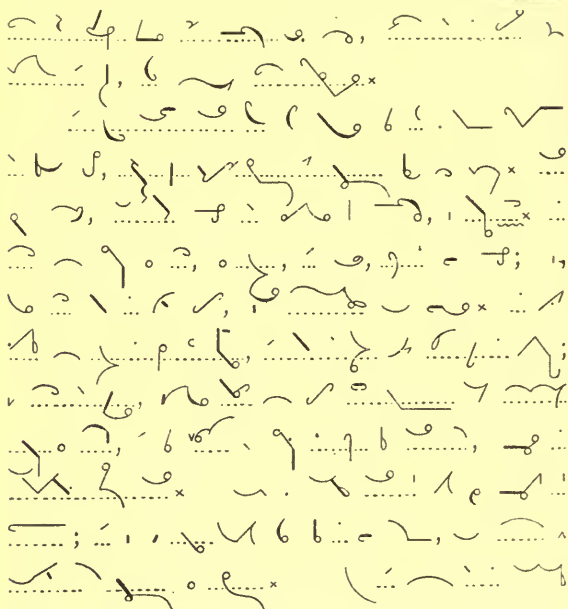


be found in the humblest condition of life. A man brought up to an obscure trade, and hemmed in by the wants of a growing family, may, in his narrow sphere, perceive more clearly, discriminate more keenly, weigh evidence more wisely, seize on the right means more decisively, and have more presence of mind in difficulty, than another who has accumulated vast stores of knowledge by laborious study; and he has more of intellectual greatness. Many a man who has gone but a few miles from home, understands human nature better, detects motives, and weighs character more sagaciously, than another who has travelled over the known world, and made a name by his reports of different countries. It is force of thought which measures intellectual, and so it is force of principle which measures moral greatness, that highest of human endowments, that brightest manifestation of the Divinity. The greatest man is he who chooses the right with invincible resolution, who resists the sorest temptations from within and without,



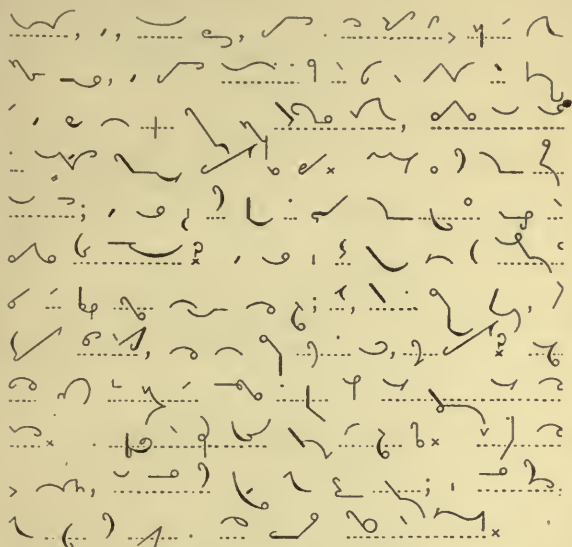


who bears the heaviest burden cheerfully, who is calmest in storms, and most fearless under menace and frowns, whose reliance on truth, on virtue, on God, is most unfaltering; and is this a greatness which is apt to make a show, or which is likely to abound in conspicuous station? The solemn conflicts of reason with passion; the victories of moral and religious principle over urgent and almost irresistible solicitations to self-indulgence; the hardest sacrifices of duty, those of deep-seated affection and of the heart's fondest hopes; the consolations, hopes, joy and peace of disappointed, persecuted, scorned, deserted virtue;—these are of course unseen; so that the true greatness of human life is almost wholly out of sight. Perhaps in our presence the most heroic deed on earth is done in some silent spirit, the loftiest purpose cherished, the most generous sacrifice made, and we do not suspect it. I believe this greatness to be most common among the multitude, whose names are never heard. Among common people will be found more of hardship borne manfully, more of unvarnished truth, more of religious trust, more



of that generosity which gives what the giver needs himself, and more of a wise estimate of life and death, than among the more prosperous.

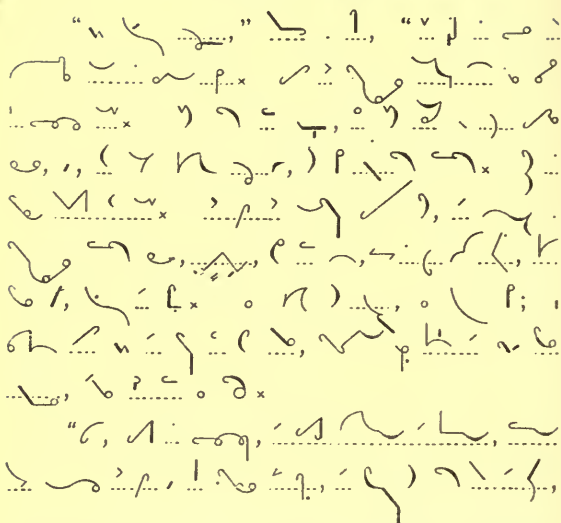
And even in regard to influence over other beings which is thought the peculiar prerogative of distinguished station, I believe that the difference between the conspicuous and the obscure does not amount to much. Influence is to be measured, not by the extent of surface it covers, but by its *kind*. A man may spread his mind, his feelings, and opinions, through a great extent; but, if his mind be a low one, he manifests no greatness. A wretched artist may fill a city with daubs, and by a false showy style achieve a reputation; but the man of genius, who leaves behind him one grand picture in which immortal beauty is embodied, and which is silently to spread a true taste in his art, exerts an incomparably higher influence. Now the noblest influence on earth is that exerted on character; and he who puts forth this does a great work, no matter



how narrow or obscure his sphere. The father and mother of an unnoticed family, who, in their seclusion, awaken the mind of one child to the idea and love of perfect goodness, who awaken in him a strength of will to repel all temptation, and who send him out prepared to profit by the conflicts of life, surpass in influence a Napoleon breaking the world to his sway. And not only is their work higher in kind; who knows but that they are doing a greater work even as to extent of surface than the conqueror? Who knows but that the being whom they inspire with holy and disinterested principles may communicate himself to others; and that, by a spreading agency of which they were the silent origin, improvements may spread through a nation, through the world? In these remarks you will see why I feel and express a deep interest in the obscure in the mass of men. The distinctions of society vanish before the light of these truths. I attach myself to the multitude, not because they are voters and have political power; but because they are men, and have within their reach the most glorious prizes of humanity.

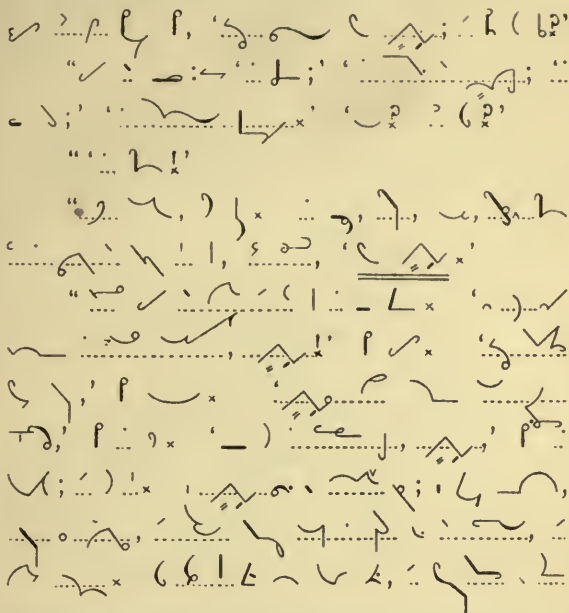
## THE STORY OF A DRUM.

BY BRET HARTE.



“About four years ago,” began the Doctor, “I attended a course of lectures in a certain city. One of the professors invited me to his house on Christmas night. I was very glad to go, as I was anxious to see one of his sons, who, though only twelve years old, was said to be very clever. There was a pleasant party that night. All the children of the neighbourhood were there, and among them the Professor’s clever son, Rupert, as they called him,—a thin little chap, tall for his age, fair and delicate. His health was feeble, his father said; he seldom ran about and played with other boys, preferring to stay at home and brood over his books, and compose what he called his verses.

“Well, we had a Christmas-tree, and we had been laughing and talking, calling off the names of the children who had presents on the tree, and everybody was very happy



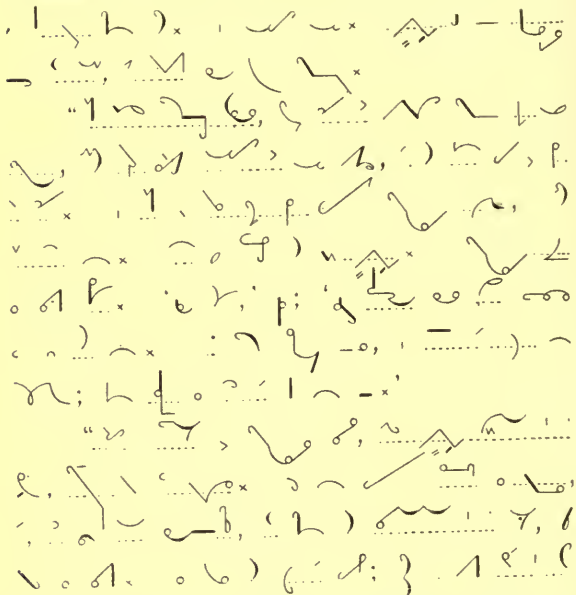
and joyous, when one of the children suddenly said, 'Here's something for Rupert; and what do you think it is?'

"We all guessed:—'A desk;' 'A copy of Milton;' 'A gold pen;' 'A rhyming dictionary.' 'No? what then?'"

"'A drum!'"

"Sure enough there it was. A good-sized, bright, new, brass-bound drum, with a slip of paper on it, with the inscription, 'FOR RUPERT.'

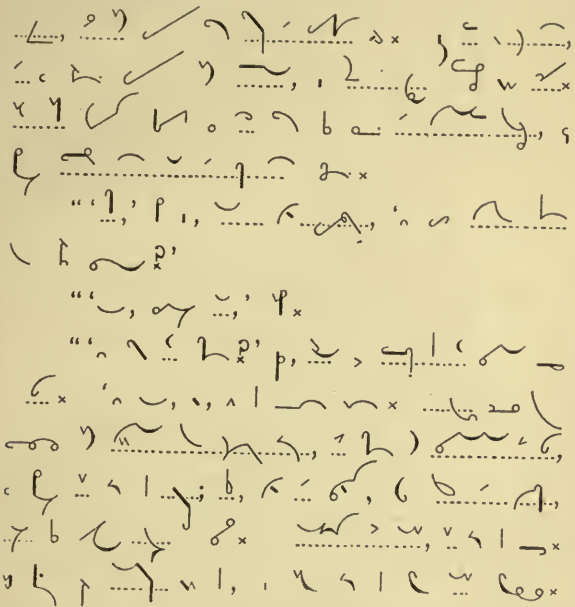
"Of course we all laughed, and thought it a good joke. 'You see you're to make a noise in the world, Rupert!'" said one. 'Here's parchment for the poet,' said another. 'Rupert's last work in sheepskin covers,' said a third. 'Give us a classical tune, Rupert,' said a fourth; and so on. But Rupert seemed too mortified to speak; he changed colour, bit his lips, and finally burst into a passionate fit of crying, and left the room. Then those who had joked him felt ashamed, and everybody began to ask



who had put the drum there. But no one knew. Rupert did not come downstairs again that night, and the party soon after broke up.

"I had almost forgotten those things, for the war of the Rebellion broke out the next spring, and I was appointed surgeon in one of the new regiments, and was on my way to the seat of war. But I had to pass through the city where the Professor lived, and there I met him. My first question was about Rupert. The Professor shook his head sadly. 'He's not so well,' he said; 'he has been declining since last Christmas, when you saw him. A very strange case, but go and see him yourself; it may distract his mind and do him good.'

"I went accordingly to the Professor's house, and found Rupert lying on a sofa, propped up with pillows. Around him were scattered his books, and, what seemed in singular contrast, that drum was hanging on a nail, just above his head. His face was thin and wasted; there was a red

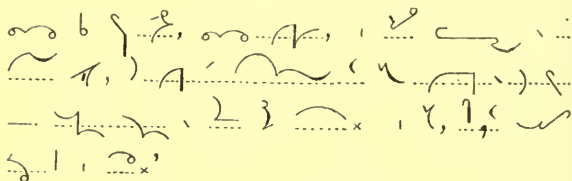


spot on either cheek, and his eyes were very bright and widely opened. He was glad to see me, and when I told him where I was going, he asked a thousand questions about the war. I thought I had thoroughly diverted his mind from its sick and languid fancies, when he suddenly grasped my hand and drew me towards him.

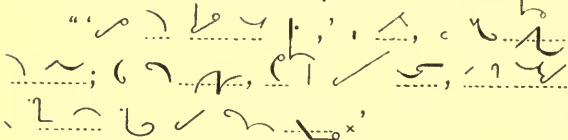
“‘Doctor,’ said he, in a low whisper, ‘you won’t laugh at me if I tell you something?’

“‘No, certainly not,’ I said.

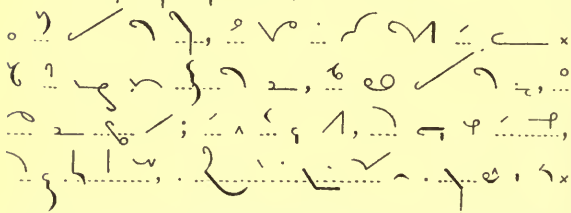
“‘You remember that drum?’ he said, pointing to the glittering toy that hung against the wall. ‘You know, too, how it came to me. A few weeks after Christmas, I was lying half asleep here, and the drum was hanging on the wall, when suddenly I heard it beaten; at first, low and slowly, then faster and louder, until its rolling filled the house. In the middle of the night, I heard it again. I did not dare to tell anybody about it, but I have heard it every night ever since. Sometimes it is played softly,



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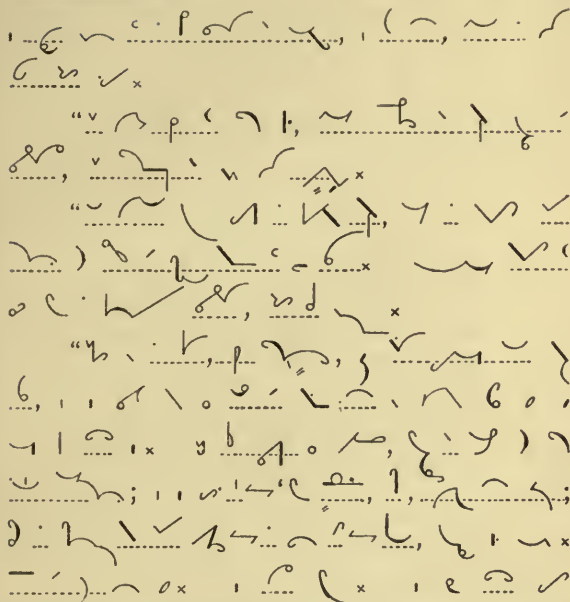
sometimes loudly, but always quickening to a long roll, so loud and alarming that I have looked to see people coming into my room to ask what was the matter. But I think, Doctor, that no one hears it but myself.'

"I thought so, too, but I asked him if he had heard it at any other times.

"'Once or twice in the daytime,' he replied, 'when I have been reading or writing; then very loudly, as though it were angry, and tried in that way to attract my attention from my books.

"I looked into his face, and placed my hand upon his pulse. His eyes were very bright, and his pulse a little flurried and quick. I then tried to explain to him that he was very weak, and that his senses were very acute, as most weak people's are; and how that when he read, or grew interested and excited, or when he was tired at night, the throbbing of a big artery made the beating sound he



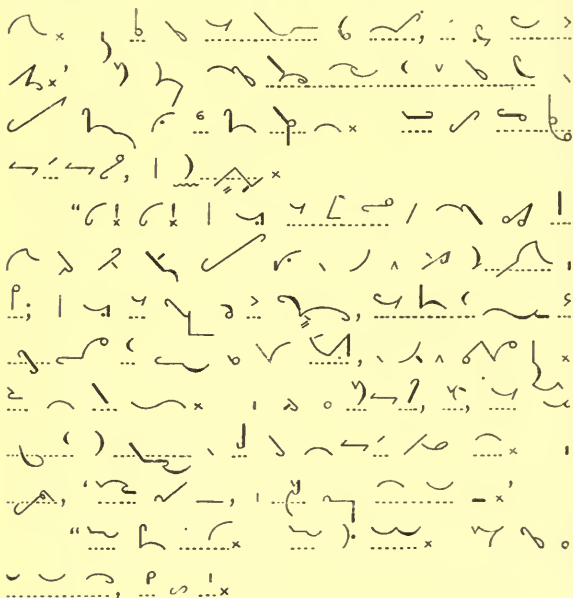


heard. He listened to me with a sad smile of unbelief, but thanked me, and in a little while I went away.

"I left the city that very day, and in the excitement of battlefields and hospitals, I forgot all about little Rupert.

"Not long after we had a terrible battle, in which a portion of our army was surprised and driven back with great slaughter. Entering the barn that served for a temporary hospital, I went at once to work.

"I turned to a tall, stout Vermonter, who was badly wounded in both thighs, but he held up his hands and begged me to help others first who needed it more than he. I did not at first heed his request, for this kind of unselfishness was very common in the army; but he went on—'For God's sake, Doctor, leave me here; there is a drummer-boy of our regiment—a mere child—dying, if he isn't dead now. Go and see him first. He lies over there. He saved more than one life. He was at his post in the

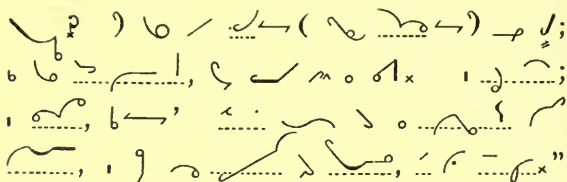


panic this morning, and saved the honour of the regiment. I was so much impressed by the man's manner that I passed over to where the drummer lay with his drum beside him. I gave one glance at his face—and—yes, it *was* Rupert.

"Well! well! it needed not the chalked cross which my brother surgeons had left upon the rough board whereon he lay to show how urgent was the relief he sought; it needed not the prophetic words of the Vermonter, nor the damp that mingled with the brown curls that clung to his pale forehead, to show how hopeless it was now. I called him by name. He opened his eyes—larger, I thought, in the new vision that was beginning to dawn upon him—and recognized me. He whispered, 'I'm glad you are come, but I don't think you can do me any good.'

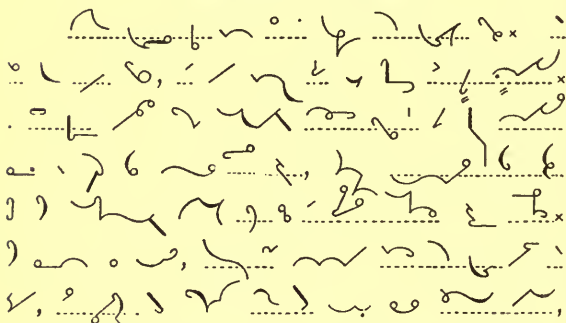
"I could not tell him a lie. I could not say anything I only pressed his hand in mine, as he went on.





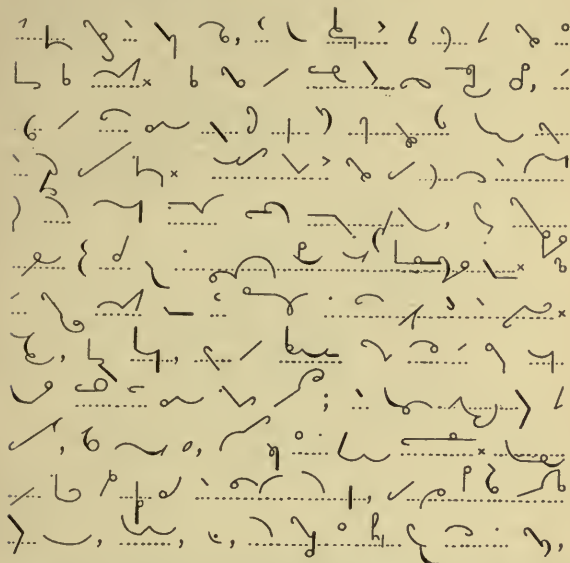
## THE PROCESSION OF LIFE.

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

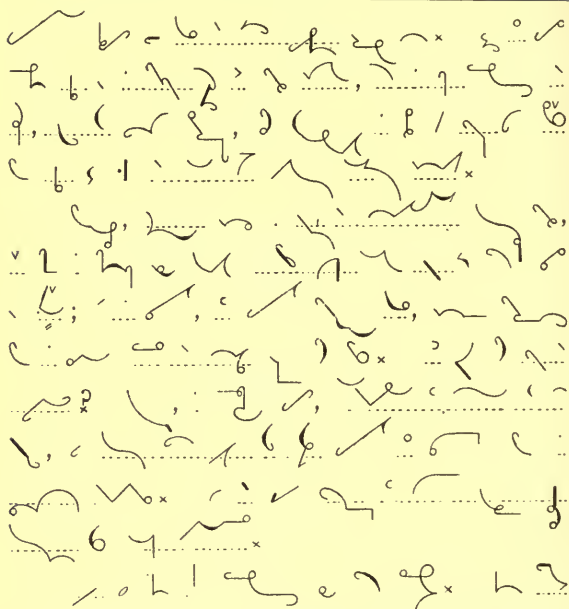


flash down the long line of bayonets? Their faces are shining—they present arms—there comes the General; but his face I cannot look at, for the glory round his head. He sees me; he smiles, it is——’ And with a name upon his lips that he learned long ago, he stretched himself wearily upon the planks, and lay quite still.”

Life figures itself to me as a festal or funereal procession. All of us have our places, and are to move onward under the direction of the Chief Marshal. The grand difficulty results from the invariably mistaken principles on which the deputy marshals seek to arrange this immense concourse of people, so much more numerous than those that train their interminable length through streets and highways in times of political excitement. Their scheme is ancient, far beyond the memory of man, or even the record of history, and has hitherto been very little modified by the innate sense of something wrong, and the dim perception



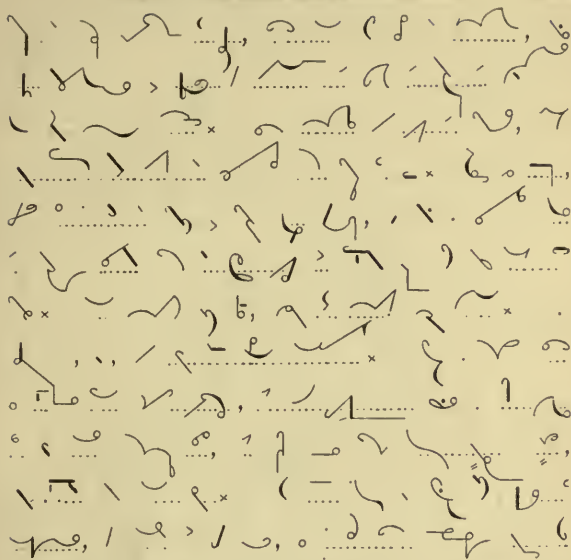
of better methods, that have disquieted all the ages through which the procession has taken its march. Its members are classified by the merest external circumstances, and thus are more certain to be thrown out of their true positions than if no principle of arrangement were attempted. In one part of the procession we see men of landed estate or moneyed capital gravely keeping each other company, for the preposterous reason that they chance to have a similar standing in the tax-gatherer's book. Trades and professions march together with scarcely a more real bond of union. In this manner, it cannot be denied, people are disentangled from the mass and separated into various classes according to certain apparent relations; all have some artificial badge which the world, and themselves among the first, learn to consider as a genuine characteristic. Fixing our attention on such outside shows of similarity or difference, we lose sight of those realities by which nature, fortune, fate, or Providence has constituted for every man a brotherhood,



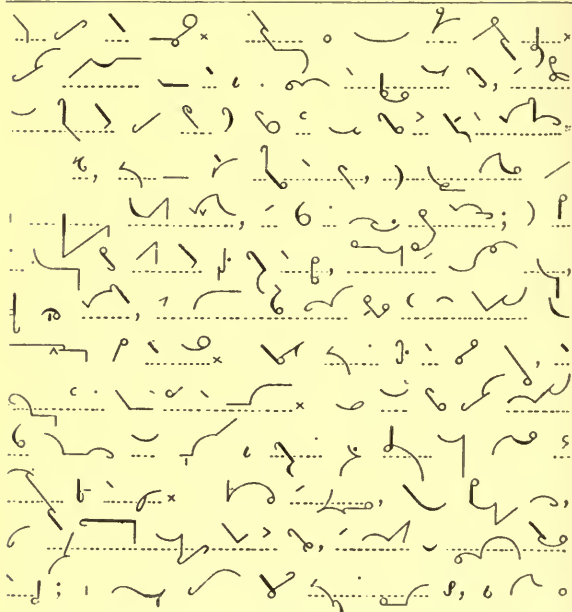
wherein it is one great office of human wisdom to classify him. When the mind has once accustomed itself to a proper arrangement of the Procession of Life, or a true classification of society, even though merely speculative, there is thenceforth a satisfaction which pretty well suffices for itself without the aid of any actual reformation in the order of march.

For instance, assuming to myself the power of marsha'ling the aforesaid procession, I direct a trumpeter to send forth a blast loud enough to be heard from hence to China; and a herald, with world-pervading voice, to make proclamation for a certain class of mortals to take their places. What shall be their principle of union? After all, an external one, in comparison with many that might be found, yet far more real than those which the world has selected for a similar purpose. Let all who are afflicted with like physical diseases form themselves into ranks.

Our first attempt at classification is not very successful.



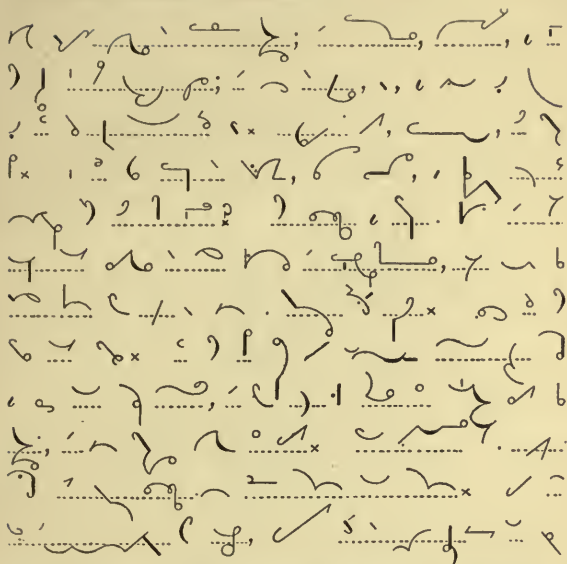
It may gratify the pride of aristocracy to reflect that disease, more than any other circumstance of human life, pays due observance to the distinctions which rank and wealth, and poverty and lowliness, have established among mankind. Some maladies are rich and precious, and only to be acquired by the right of inheritance or purchased with gold. Of this kind is the gout, which serves as a bond of brotherhood to the purple-visaged gentry who obey the herald's voice, and painfully hobble from all civilized regions of the globe to take their post in the grand procession. In mercy to their toes, let us hope that the march may not be long. The dyspeptics, too, are people of good standing in the world. For them the earliest salmon is caught in our eastern rivers, and the shy woodcock stains the dry leaves with his blood in his remotest haunts, and the turtle comes from the far Pacific Islands to be gobbled up in soup. They can afford to flavour all their dishes with indolence, which, in spite of the general opinion, is a sauce more exquisitely piquant than appetite won by exercise. Apoplexy is another highly respectable



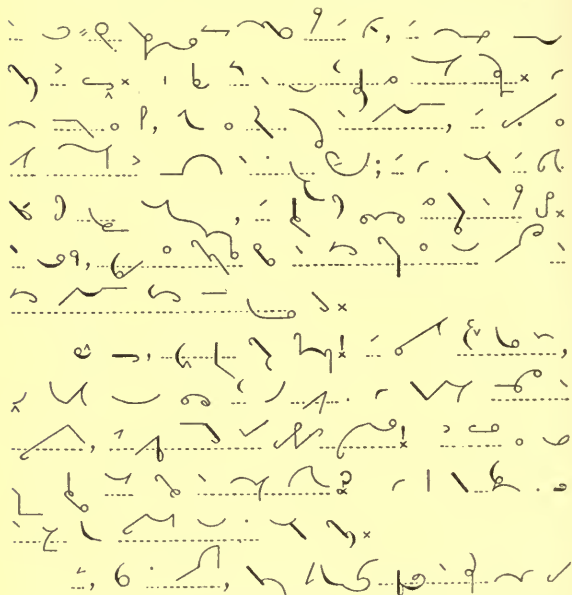
disease. We will rank together all who have the symptom of dizziness in the brain, and as fast as any drop by the way supply their places with new members of the board of aldermen.

On the other hand, here come whole tribes of people, whose physical lives are but a deteriorated variety of life, and themselves a meaner species of mankind; so sad an effect has been wrought by the tainted breath of cities, scanty and unwholesome food, destructive modes of labour, and the lack of those moral supports that might partially have counteracted such bad influences. Behold here a train of house painters, all afflicted with a peculiar sort of colic. Next in place we will marshal those workmen in cutlery, who have breathed a fatal disorder into their lungs with the impalpable dust of steel. Tailors and shoemakers, being sedentary men, will chiefly congregate into one part of the procession, and march under similar banners of disease; but among them we may observe here and





there a sickly student, who has left his health between the leaves of classic volumes; and clerks, likewise, who have caught their deaths on high official stools; and men of genius too, who have written sheet after sheet with pens dipped in their heart's blood. These are a wretched, quaking, short-breathed set. But what is this cloud of palé-checked, slender girls, who disturb the ear with the multiplicity of their short, dry coughs? They are seamstresses, who have plied the daily and nightly needle in the service of master tailors and close-fisted contractors, until now it is almost time for each to hem the borders of her own shroud. Consumption points their place in the procession. With their sad sisterhood are intermingled many youthful maidens who have sickened in aristocratic mansions, and for whose aid science has unavailingly searched its volumes, and whom breathless love has watched. In our ranks the rich maiden and the poor seamstress may walk arm in arm. We might find innumerable other instances, where the bond of mutual disease—not to speak of nation-sweeping



pestilence—embraces high and low, and makes the king brother of the clown. But it is not hard to own that disease is the natural aristocrat. Let him keep his state, and have his established orders of rank, and wear his royal mantle of the colour of a fever flush ; and let the noble and wealthy boast their own physical infirmities, and display their symptoms as the badges of high station. All things considered, these are as proper subjects of human pride as any relations of human rank that men can fix upon.

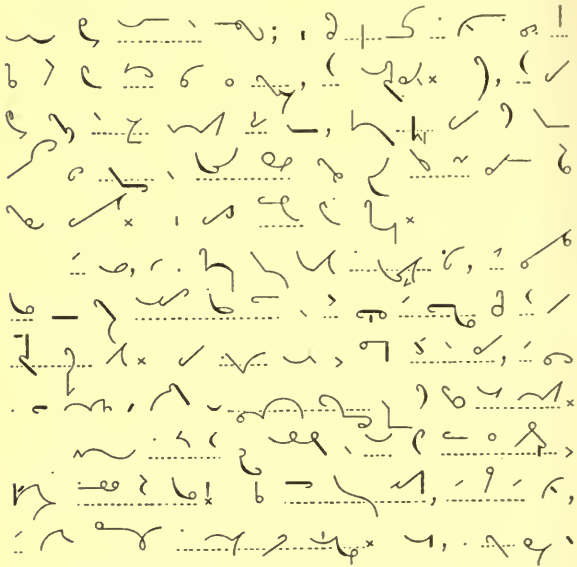
Sound again, thou deep-breathed trumpeter ! and herald with thy voice of might, shout forth another summons that shall reach the old baronial castles of Europe, and the rudest cabin of our western wilderness ! What class is next to take its place in the procession of mortal life ? Let it be those whom the gifts of intellect have united in a noble brotherhood.

Ay, this is a reality, before which the conventional distinctions of society melt away like a vapour when we would



grasp it with the hand. Were Byron now alive, and Burns, the first would come from his ancestral abbey, flinging aside, although unwillingly, the inherited honours of a thousand years, to take the arm of the mighty peasant who grew immortal while he stooped behind his plough. These are gone ; but the hall, the farmer's fireside, the hut, perhaps the palace, the counting room, the workshop, the village, the city, life's high places and low ones, may all produce their poets, whom a common temperament pervades like an electric sympathy. Peer or ploughman, we will muster them pair by pair and shoulder to shoulder. . . .

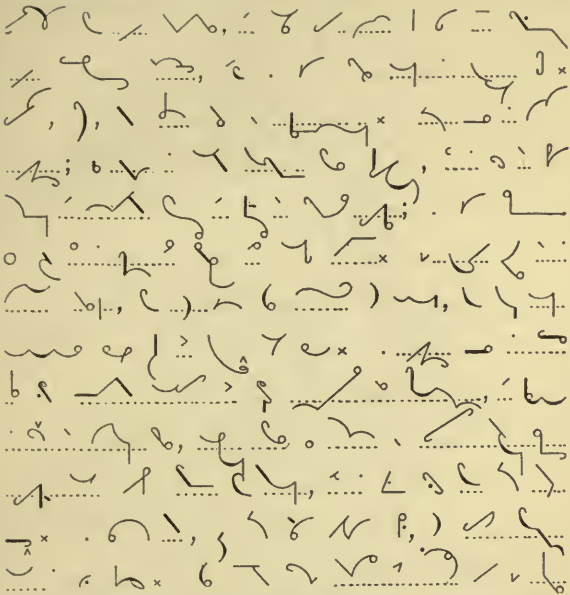
Yet the longer I reflect the less am I satisfied with the idea of forming a separate class of mankind on the basis of high intellectual power. At best it is but a higher development of innate gifts common to all. Perhaps, moreover, he whose genius appears deepest and truest excels his



fellows in nothing save the knack of expression ; he throws out occasionally a lucky hint at truths of which every soul is profoundly, though unutterably conscious. Therefore, though we suffer the brotherhood of intellect to march onward together, it may be doubted whether their peculiar relation will not begin to vanish as soon as the procession shall have passed beyond the circle of this present world. But we do not classify for eternity.

And next, let the trumpet pour forth a funeral wail, and the herald's voice give breath in one vast cry to all the groans and grievous utterances that are audible throughout the earth. We appeal now to the sacred bond of sorrow, and summon the great multitude who labour under similar afflictions to take their places in the march.

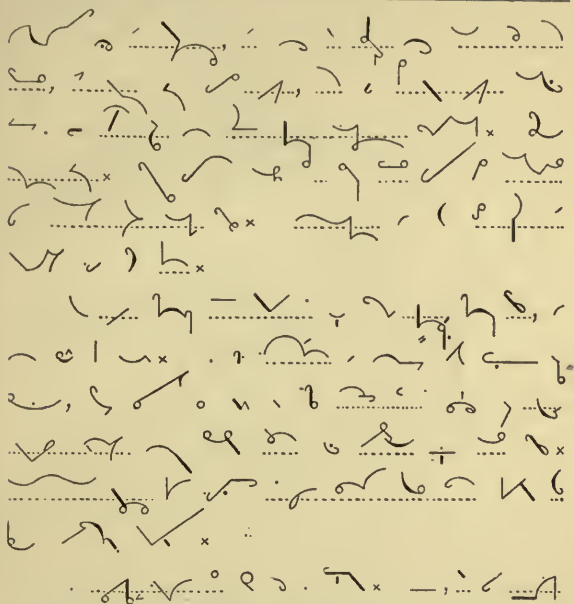
How many a heart that would have been insensible to any other call has responded to the doleful accents of that voice ! It has gone far and wide, and high and low, and left scarcely a mortal roof unvisited. Indeed, the principle is only too universal for our purpose, and unless we limit



it will quite break up our classification of mankind, and convert the whole procession into a funeral train. We will, therefore, be at some pains to discriminate. Here comes a lonely rich man; he has built a noble fabric for his dwelling-house, with a front of stately architecture and marble floors and doors of precious woods; the whole structure is as beautiful as a dream and as substantial as the native rock. But the visionary shapes of a long posterity, for whose home this mansion was intended have faded into nothingness since the death of the founder's only son. The rich man gives a glance at his sable garb in one of the splendid mirrors of his drawing-room, and descending a flight of lofty steps, instinctively offers his arm to yonder poverty-stricken widow in the rusty black bonnet, and with a check apron over her patched gown. The sailor boy, who was her sole earthly stay, was washed overboard in a late tempest. This couple from the palace and the almshouse are but the types of thousands more who represent the



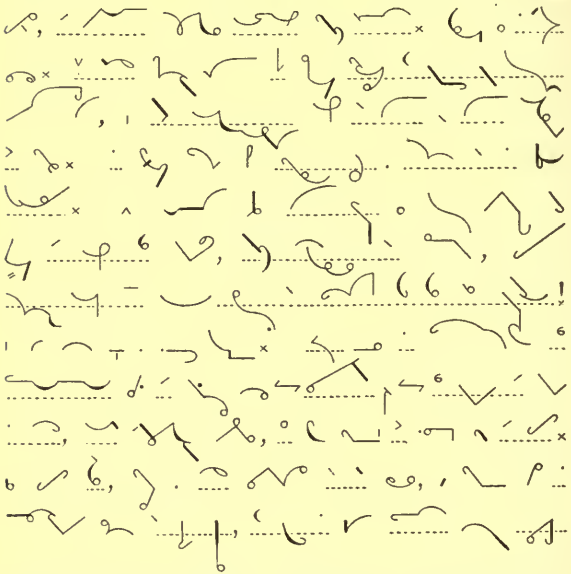
dark tragedy of life, and seldom quarrel for the upper parts. Grief is such a leveller, with its own dignity and its own humility, that the noble and the peasant, the beggar and the monarch, will waive their pretensions to external rank without the officiousness of interference on our part. If pride—the influence of the world's false distinctions—remain in the heart, then sorrow lacks the earnestness which makes it holy and reverend. It loses its reality and becomes a miserable shadow. On this ground we have an opportunity to assign over multitudes who would willingly claim places here to other parts of the procession. If the mourner have anything dearer than his grief he must seek his true position elsewhere. There are so many unsubstantial sorrows which the necessity of our mortal state begets on idleness, that an observer, casting aside sentiment, is sometimes led to question whether there be any real woe, except absolute physical suffering and the loss of closest friends. A crowd who exhibit what they deem to



be broken hearts—and among them many lovelorn maids and bachelors, and men of disappointed ambition in arts or politics, and the poor who were once rich, or who have sought to be rich in vain—the great majority of these may ask admittance into some other fraternity. There is no room here. Perhaps we may institute a separate class where such unfortunates will naturally fall into the procession. Meantime let them stand aside and patiently await their time.

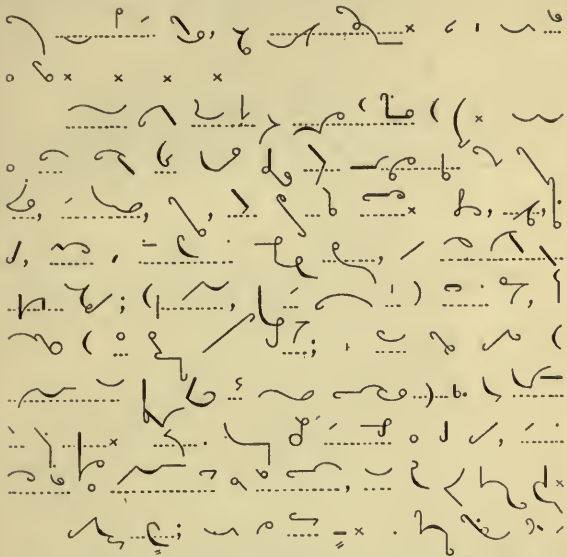
If our trumpeter can borrow a note from the doomsday trumpet blast, let him sound it now. The dread alarm should make the earth quake to its centre, for the herald is about to address mankind with a summons to which even the purest mortal may be sensible of some faint responding echo in his breast. In many bosoms it will awaken a still small voice more terrible than its own reverberating uproar.

The hideous appeal has swept round the globe. Come all ye guilty ones, and rank yourselves in accordance with



the brotherhood of crime. This, indeed, is an awful summons. I almost tremble to look at the strange partnerships that begin to be formed, reluctantly, but by the invincible necessity of like to like in this part of the procession. A forger from the state prison seizes the arm of a distinguished financier. How indignantly does the latter plead his fair reputation upon 'Change and insist that his operations, by their magnificence of scope, were removed into quite another sphere of morality than those of his pitiful companion! But let him cut the connection, if he can. Here comes a murderer with his clanking chains, and pairs himself—horrible to tell—with as pure and upright a man, in all observable respects, as ever partook of the consecrated bread and wine. He is one of those, perchance the most hopeless of all sinners, who practise such an exemplary system of outward duties, that even a deadly crime may be hidden from their own sight and remembrance, under this unreal frostwork. Yet he now finds his place. . . .





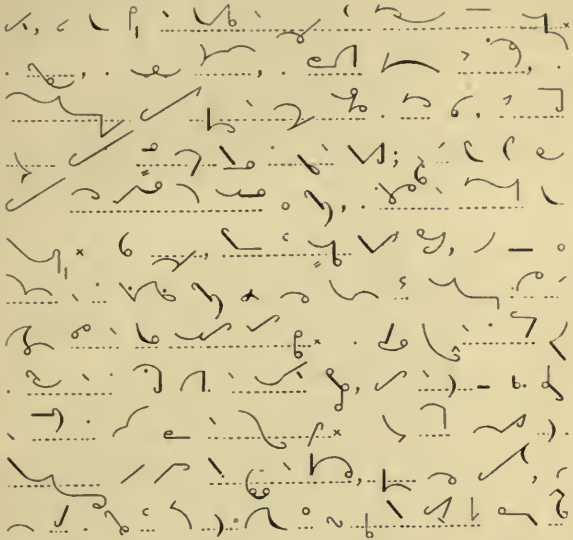
Many will be astonished at the fatal impulse that drags them thitherward. Nothing is more remarkable than the various deceptions by which guilt conceals itself from the perpetrator's conscience, and oftenest, perhaps, by the splendour of its garments. Statesmen, rulers, generals, and all men who act over an extensive sphere, are most liable to be deluded in this way; they commit wrong, devastation, and murder, on so grand a scale, that it impresses them as speculative rather than actual; but in our procession we find them linked in detestable conjunction with the meanest criminals whose deeds have the vulgarity of petty details. Here the effect of circumstances and accident is done away, and a man finds his rank according to the spirit of his crime, in whatever shape it may have been developed.

We have called the Evil; now let us call the Good. The trumpet's brazen throat should pour heavenly music over the earth, and the herald's voice go forth with the sweetness

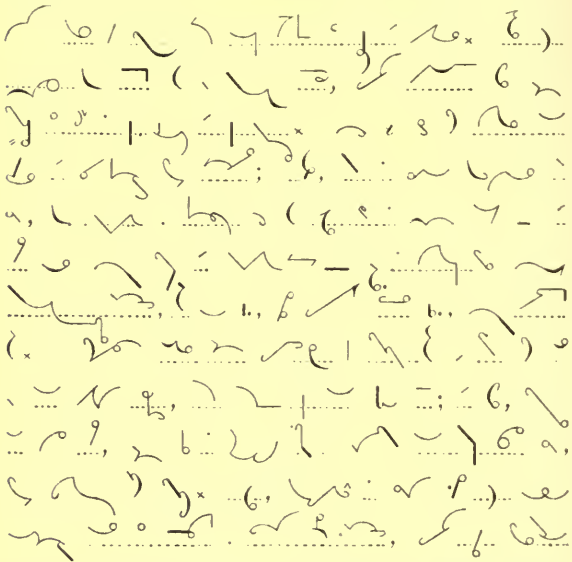


of an angel's accent, as if to summon each upright man to his reward. But how is this? Does none answer to the call? Not one: for the just, the pure, the true, and all who might most worthily obey it, shrink sadly back, as most conscious of error and imperfection. Then let the summons be to those whose pervading principle is Love. This classification will embrace all the truly good, and none in whose souls there exists not something that may expand itself into a heaven, both of well-doing and felicity.

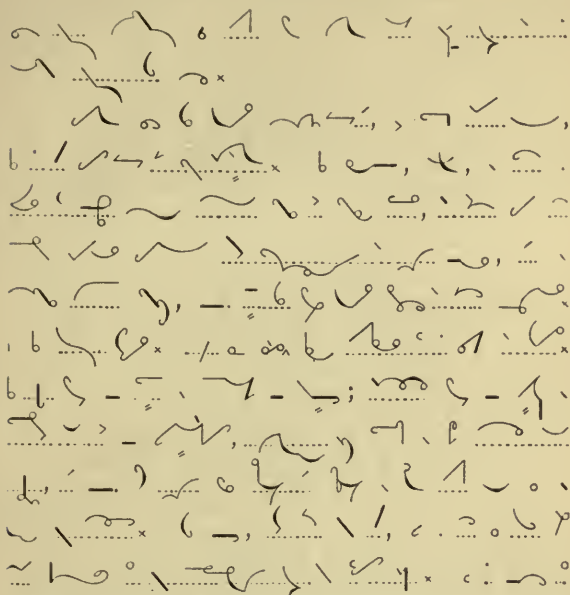
The first that presents himself is a man of wealth, who has bequeathed the bulk of his property to a hospital; his ghost, methinks, would have a better right here than his living body. But here they come, the genuine benefactors of their race. Some have wandered about the earth with pictures of bliss in their imagination, and with hearts that shrank sensitively from the idea of pain and woe, yet have



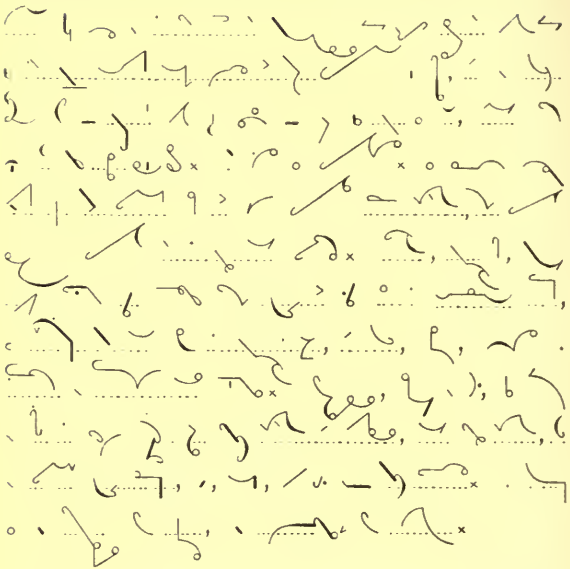
studied all varieties of misery that human nature can endure. The prison, the insane asylum, the squalid chamber of the alms-house, the manufactory where the demon of machinery annihilates the human soul, and the cotton field where God's image becomes a beast of burden; to these and every other scene where man wrongs or neglects his brother, the apostles of humanity have penetrated. This missionary, black with India's burning sunshine, shall give his arm to a pale-faced brother who has made himself familiar with the infected alleys and loathsome haunts of vice in one of our own cities. The generous founder of a college shall be the partner of a maiden lady of narrow substance, one of whose good deeds it has been to gather a little school of orphan children. If the mighty merchant whose benefactions are reckoned by thousands of dollars, deem himself worthy, let him join the procession with her whose love has proved itself by watchings at the sick bed and all those lowly offices which bring her into actual contact with disease and wretchedness. And with those whose impulses have guided them to benevolent actions,



we will rank others to whom Providence has assigned a different tendency and different powers. Men who have spent their lives in generous and holy contemplation for the human race ; those who, by a certain heavenliness of spirit, have purified the atmosphere around them, and thus supplied a medium in which good and high things may be projected and performed—give to these a lofty place among the benefactors of mankind, although no deed, such as the world calls deeds, may be recorded of them. There are some individuals of whom we cannot conceive it proper that they should apply their hands to any earthly instrument or work out any definite act ; and others, perhaps not less high, to whom it is an essential attribute to labour in body as well as spirit, for the welfare of their brethren. Thus, if we find a spiritual sage whose unseen, inestimable influence has exalted the moral standard of mankind, we will choose for his companion some poor labourer who has wrought for love in the potato field of a neighbour poorer than himself.



We have summoned this various multitude—and, to the credit of our nature, it is a large one—on the principle of Love. It is singular, nevertheless, to remark the shyness that exists among many members of the present class, all of whom we might expect to recognise one another by the freemasonry of mutual goodness, and to embrace like brethren, giving God thanks for such various specimens of human excellence. But it is far otherwise. Each sect surrounds its own righteousness with a hedge of thorns. It is difficult for the good Christian to acknowledge the good Pagan; almost impossible for the good Orthodox to grasp the hand of the good Unitarian, leaving to their Creator to settle the matters in dispute, and giving their mutual efforts strongly and trustingly to whatever right thing is too evident to be mistaken. Then again, though the heart be large, yet the mind is often of such moderate dimensions as to be exclusively filled up with one idea. When a good man has long devoted himself to a particular



kind of beneficence—to one species of reform—he is apt to become narrowed into the limits of the path wherein he treads, and to fancy that there is no other good to be done on earth but that selfsame good to which he has put his hand, and in the very mode that best suits his own conceptions. All else is worthless. His scheme must be wrought out by the united strength of the whole world's stock of love, or the world is no longer worthy of a position in the universe. Moreover, powerful Truth, being the rich grape juice expressed from the vineyard of the ages, has an intoxicating quality, when imbibed by any save a powerful intellect, and often, as it were, impels the quaffer to quarrel in his cups. For these reasons, strange to say, it is harder to contrive a friendly arrangement of these brethren of love and righteousness, in the procession of life, than to unite even the wicked, who, indeed, are chained together by their crimes. The fact is too preposterous for tears, too lugubrious for laughter.



But, let good men push and elbow one another as they may during their earthly march, all will be peace among them when the honourable array of their procession shall tread on heavenly ground. There they will doubtless find that they have been working each for the other's cause, and that every well-delivered stroke, which, with an honest purpose, any mortal struck, even for a narrow object, was indeed stricken for the universal cause of good. Their own view may be bounded by country, creed, profession, the diversities of individual character—but above them all is the breadth of Providence. How many, who have deemed themselves antagonists, will smile hereafter, when they look back upon the world's wide harvest field, and perceive that, in unconscious brotherhood, they were helping to bind the selfsame sheaf!

But, come! The sun is hastening westward, while the march of human life, that never paused before, is delayed by our attempt to rearrange its order. It is desirable to find some comprehensive principle, that shall render our task easier by bringing thousands into the ranks where



hitherto we have brought one. Therefore let the trumpet, if possible, split its brazen throat with a louder note than ever, and the herald summon all mortals who, from whatever cause, have lost, or never found, their proper places in the world.

Obedient to this call, a great multitude come together, most of them with a listless gait, betokening weariness of soul, yet with a gleam of satisfaction in their faces, at a prospect of at length reaching those positions which, hitherto, they have vainly sought. But here will be another disappointment; for we can attempt no more than merely to associate, in one fraternity, all who are afflicted with the same vague trouble. Some great mistake in life is the chief condition of admittance into this class. Here are members of the learned professions, whom Providence endowed with special gifts for the plough, the forge, and the wheelbarrow, or for the routine of unintellectual business. We will assign to them, as partners in





the march, those lowly labourers and handicraftsmen, who have pined, as with a dying thirst, after the unattainable fountains of knowledge. The latter have lost less than their companions ; yet more, because they deem it infinite. Perchance the two species of unfortunates may comfort one another. . . .

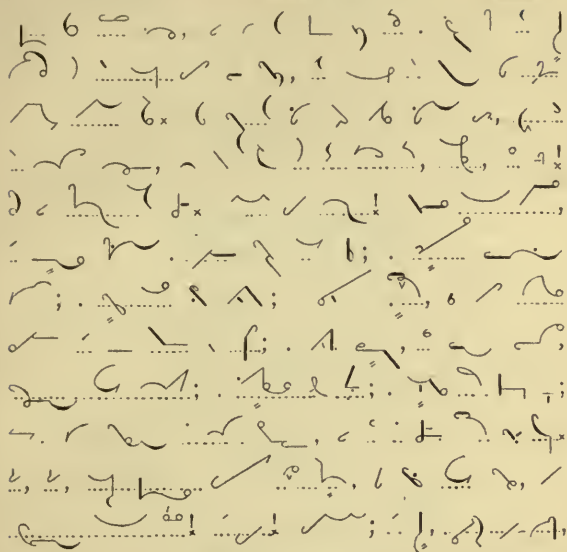
Shall we bid the trumpet sound again ? It is hardly worth the while. There remain a few idle men of fortune, and people of crooked intellect or temper, all of whom may find their like, or some tolerable approach to it, in the plentiful diversity of our latter class. There too, as his ultimate destiny, must we rank the dreamer, who, all his life long, has cherished the idea that he was peculiarly apt for something, but never could determine what it was ; and there the most unfortunate of men, whose purpose it has been to enjoy life's pleasures, but to avoid a manful struggle with its toil and sorrow. The remainder, if any, may connect themselves with whatever rank of the



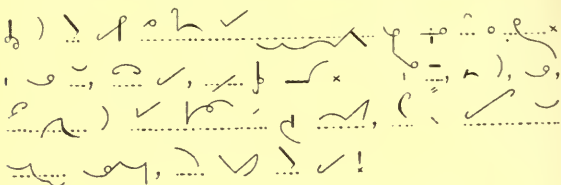
procession they shall find best adapted to their tastes and consciences. The worst possible fate would be to remain behind, shivering in the solitude of time, while all the world is on the move towards eternity. Our attempt to classify society is now complete. The result may be anything but perfect: yet better—to give it the very lowest praise—than the antique rule of the herald's office, or the modern one of the tax-gatherer, whereby the accidents and superficial attributes, with which the real nature of individuals has least to do, are acted upon as the deepest characteristics of mankind. Our task is done! Now let the grand procession move!

Yet pause a while! We had forgotten the Chief Marshal.

Hark! That world-wide swell of solemn music, with the clang of a mighty bell breaking forth through its regulated uproar, announces his approach. He comes; a severe, sedate, immovable, dark rider, waving his truncheon of universal sway, as he passes along the lengthened

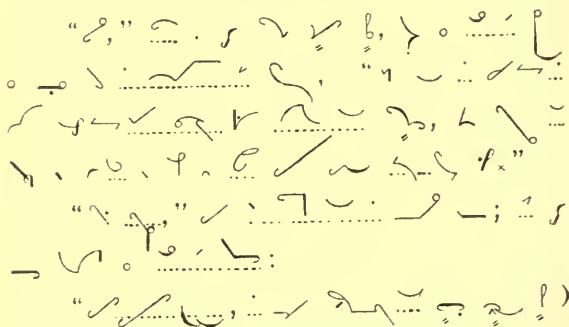


line, on the pale horse of the Revelation. It is Death ! Who else could assume the guidance of a procession that comprehends all humanity ? And, if some, among these many millions, should deem themselves classed amiss, yet let them take to their hearts the comfortable truth, that Death levels us all into one great brotherhood, and that another state of being will surely rectify the wrong of this. Then breathe thy wail upon the earth's wailing wind, thou band of melancholy music, made up of every sigh that the human heart, unsatisfied, has uttered ! There is yet triumph in thy tones. And now we move ! Beggars in their rags, and Kings trailing the regal purple in the dust ; the Warrior's gleaming helmet ; the Priest in his sable robe ; the hoary grandsire, who has run life's circle and come back to childhood ; the ruddy Schoolboy with his golden curls, frisking along the march ; the Artisan's stuff jacket ; the Noble's star-decorated coat ;—the whole presenting a motley spectacle, yet with a dusky grandeur brooding over it. Onward, onward, into that dimness where the lights of Time, which have blazed along the



## A MELTING STORY.

BY MARK TWAIN.

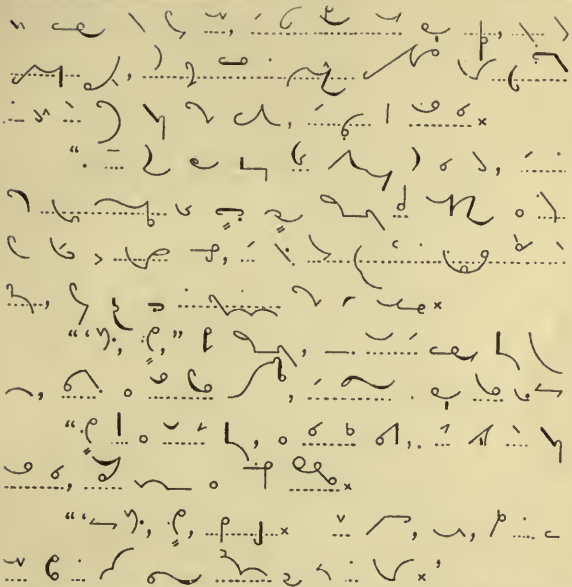


procession, are flickering in their sockets ! And whither ! We know not ; and Death, hitherto our leader, deserts us by the wayside as the tramp of our innumerable footsteps echoes beyond his sphere. He knows not, more than we, our destined goal. But God, who made us, knows, and will not leave us on our toilsome and doubtful march, either to wander in infinite uncertainty, or perish by the way !

“ Yes,” remarked the old gentleman from the Eastern States, folding his hands and steadying his gaze upon a mark on the floor, “ I did know a story—a little incident—of our simple daily life in Vermont, which might perhaps not be considered too old-fashioned to interest you whilst we are waiting here for the stage.”

“ Pray proceed,” we all cried in a chorus together ; and the old gentleman again folded his hands and began :

“ One winter evening, a country storekeeper in the Green Mountain State was about closing up for the night,



and while standing in the snow outside, putting up the window shutters, saw through the glass a lounging worthless fellow within grab a pound of fresh butter from the shelf, and conceal it in his hat.

"The act was no sooner detected than the revenge was hit upon, and a very few minutes found the Green Mountain storekeeper at once indulging his appetite for fun to the fullest extent, and paying off the thief with a facetious sort of torture, for which he would have gained a premium from the old Inquisition.

" 'I say, Seth,' said the storekeeper, coming in and closing the door after him, slapping his hands over his shoulders and stamping the snow off his feet—

"Seth had his hand on the door, his hat on his head, and the roll of butter in his hat, anxious to make his exit as soon as possible.

" '—I say, Seth, sit down. I reckon, now, on such a cold night as this a little something warm would not hurt a fellow.'

"Seth felt very uncertain. He had the butter, and was exceedingly anxious to be off; but the temptation of something warm sadly interfered with his resolution to go.

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"This hesitation was settled by the owner of the butter taking Seth by the shoulders and planting him in a seat close to the stove, where he was in such a manner cornered in by the boxes and barrels that, while the grocer stood before him, there was no possibility of getting out; and right in this very place, sure enough, the storekeeper sat down.

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"'Seth, we'll have a little warm Santa Cruz,' said the Green Mountain grocer; so he opened the stove door, and stuffed in as many sticks as the place would admit: 'without it you'd freeze going out such a night as this.'

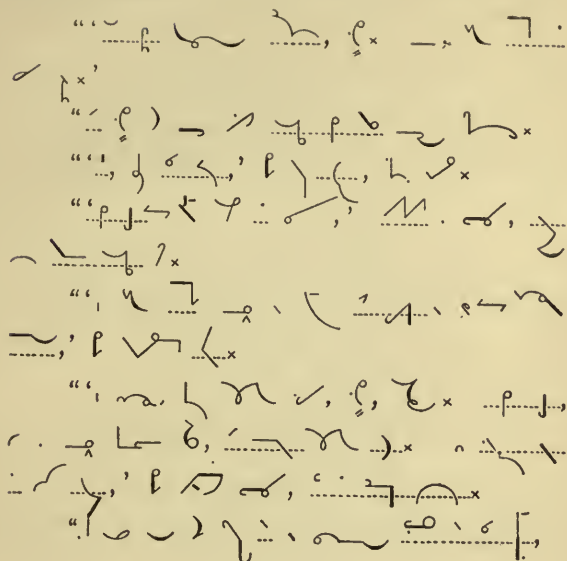
"Seth already felt the butter settling down closer to his hair, and he jumped up, declaring he must go.

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“ ‘Not till you have something warm, Seth. Come, I’ve got a story to tell you.’

“ ‘And Seth was again rushed into his seat by his cunning tormentor.

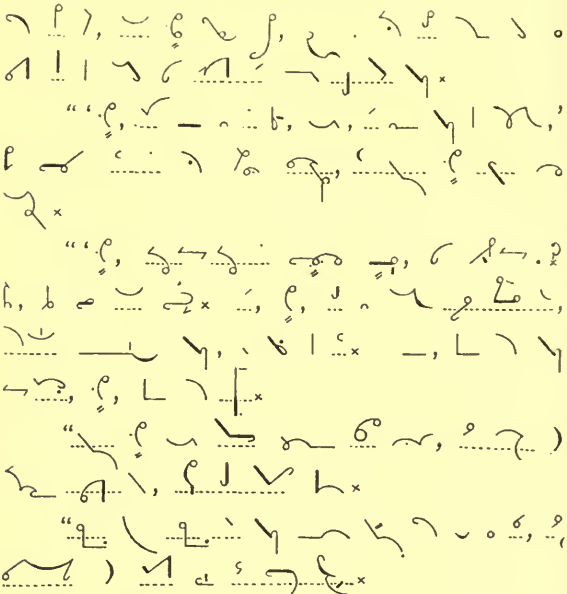
“ ‘Oh, it’s so hot here.’ said the petty thief, attempting to rise.

“ ‘Sit down—don’t be in such a hurry,’ retorted the grocer, pushing him back into his chair.

“ ‘But I’ve got the cows to fodder and the wood to split—I must be going,’ said the persecuted chap.

“ ‘But you mustn’t tear yourself away, Seth, in this manner. Sit down, let the cows take care of themselves, and keep yourself easy. You appear to be a little fidgety,’ said the roguish grocer, with a wicked leer.

“ ‘The next thing was the production of two smoking glasses of hot toddy, the very sight of which, in Seth’s



present situation, would have made the hair stand erect upon his head had it not been well oiled and kept down by the butter.

“ ‘Seth, I will give you a toast, now, and you can butter it yourself,’ said the grocer, with an air of such consummate simplicity, that poor Seth believed himself unsuspected.

“ ‘Seth, here’s—here’s a Christmas Goose, well roasted—eh? I tell you, it’s the greatest in creation. And, Seth, don’t you never use hog’s fat, or common cooking butter, to baste it with. Come, take your butter—I mean, Seth, take your toddy.’

“ Poor Seth now began to smoke as well as melt, and his mouth was hermetically sealed up, as though he had been born dumb.

“ Streak after streak of butter came pouring from under his hat, and his handkerchief was already soaked with the greasy overflow.



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" Talking away as if nothing was the matter, the fun-loving grocer kept stuffing wood into the stove, while poor Seth sat upright, with his back against the counter, and his knees touching the red-hot furnace before him.

" ' Cold night this,' said the grocer. ' Why, Seth, you seem to perspire as if you were warm. Why don't you take your hat off? Here, let me put your hat away.'

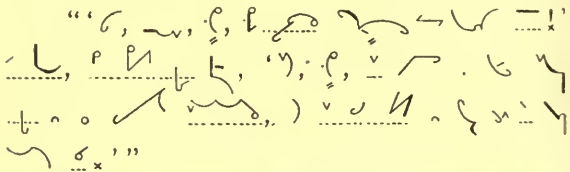
" ' No!' exclaimed poor Seth at last. ' No! I must go!

" ' Let me out!

" ' I ain't well!

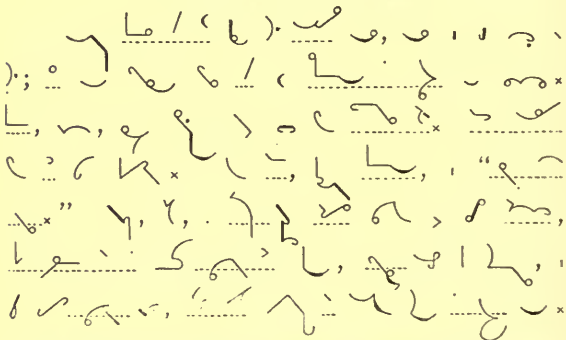
" ' Let me go!'

" A greasy cataract was now pouring down the poor man's face and neck, and soaking into his clothes, and trickling down his body into his boots, so that he was literally in a perfect bath of oil.



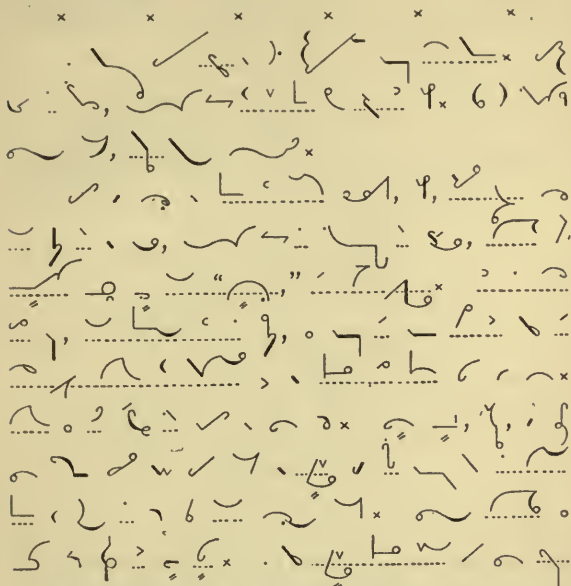
## THE PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.



“ ‘ Well, good night, Seth,’ said the humorous Vermonter — ‘ if you will go !’ And adding, as he started out of the door— ‘ I say, Seth, I reckon the fun I have had out of you is worth ninepence, so I shan’t charge you for that pound of butter in your hat.’ ”

Nobody talks much that doesn’t say unwise things, things he didn’t mean to say ; as no person plays much without striking a false note sometimes. Talk to me, is only spading up the ground for crops of thought. I cannot answer for what will turn up. If I could, it would not be talking, but “ speaking my piece.” Better, I think, the hearty abandonment of one’s self to the suggestions of the moment, at the risk of an occasional slip of the tongue, perceived the instant it escapes, but just one syllable too late, than the royal reputation of never saying a foolish thing.



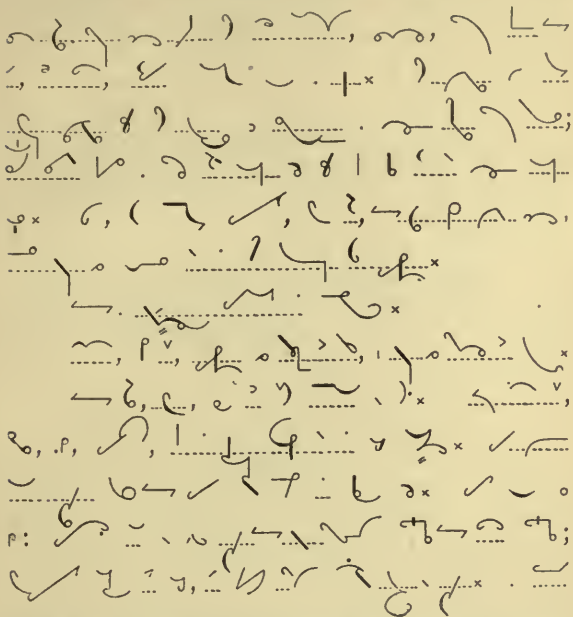
The boarders were pleased to say that they were glad to get me back. One of them ventured a compliment, namely—that I talked as if I believed what I said. This was apparently considered something unusual, by its being mentioned.

One who means to talk with entire sincerity, I said, always feels himself in danger of two things, namely—an affectation of bluntness, like that of which Cornwall accuses Kent in "Lear," and actual rudeness. What a man wants to do, in talking with a stranger, is to get and to give as much of the best and most real life that belongs to the two talkers as the time will let him. Life is short, and conversation apt to run to mere words. Mr. Huc, I think it is, who tells us some very good stories about the way in which two Chinese gentlemen contrive to keep up a long talk without saying a word which has any meaning in it. Something like this is occasionally heard on this side of the Great Wall. The best Chinese talkers I know are



some pretty women whom I meet from time to time. Pleasant, airy, complimentary, the little flakes of flattery glimmering in their talk; their accents flowing on in a soft ripple,—never a wave, and never a calm; words nicely fitted but never a coloured phrase or a high-flavoured epithet; they turn air into syllables so gracefully that we find meaning for the music they make as we find faces in the coals and fairy palaces in the clouds. There is something very odd, though, about this mechanical talk.

You have sometimes been in a train on the railroad when the engine was detached a long way from the station you were approaching? Well, you have noticed how quietly and rapidly the cars kept on, just as if the locomotive were drawing them? Indeed, you would not have suspected that you were travelling on the strength of a dead fact if you had not seen the engine running away from you on a side-track. Upon my conscience, I believe some of these pretty women detach their minds entirely, sometimes, from their talk,—and, what is more, that we never know the difference. Their lips let off the fluty syllables

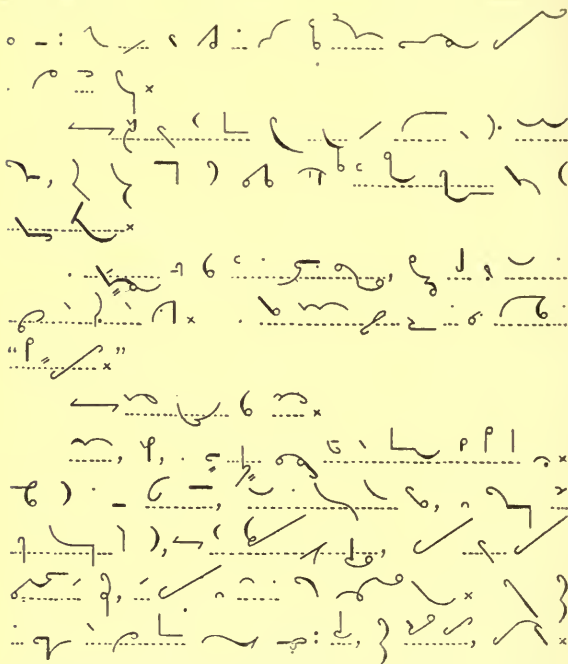


just as their fingers would sprinkle the music drops from their pianos; unconscious habit turns the phrase of thought into words just as it does that of music into notes. Well, they govern the world, for all that,—these sweet-lipped women,—because beauty is the index of a larger fact than wisdom.

—The Bombazine wanted an explanation.

Madam, said I, wisdom is the abstract of the past, but beauty is the promise of the future.

—All this, however, is not what I was going to say. Here am I, suppose, seated, we will say, at a dinner-table, alongside of an intelligent Englishman. We look in each other's faces—we exchange a dozen words. One thing is settled: we mean not to offend each other—to be perfectly courteous—more than courteous; for we are the entertainer and the entertained, and cherish particularly amiable feelings to each other. The claret is good: and if



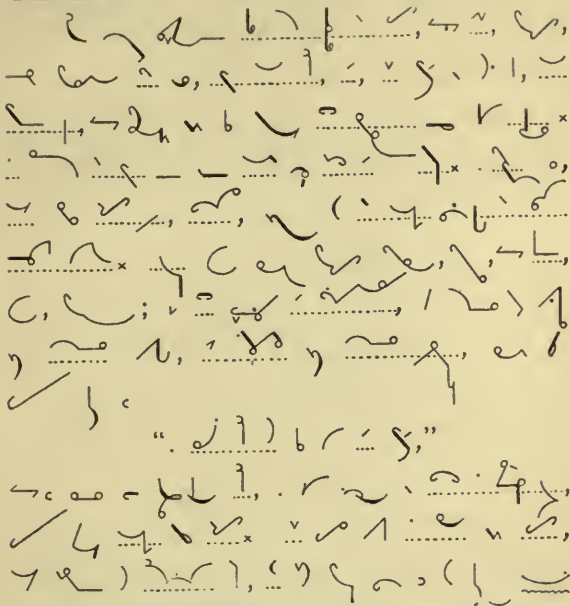
our blood reddens a little with its warm crimson, we are none the less kind for it.

—I don't think people that talk over their victuals are like to say anything very great, especially if they get their heads muddled with strong drink before they begin jabbering.

The Bombazine uttered this with a sugary sourness, as if the words had been steeped in a solution of acetate of lead. The boys of my time used to call a hit like this a "side-winder."

—I must finish this woman.

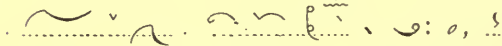
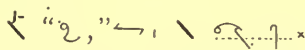
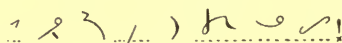
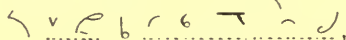
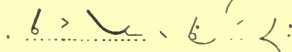
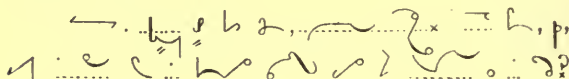
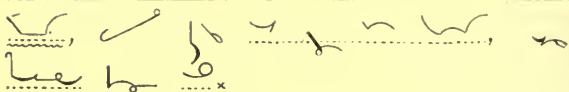
Madam, I said, the Great Teacher seems to have been fond of talking as he sat at meat. Because this was a good while ago, in a far-off place, you forget what the true fact of it was,—that those were real dinners, where people were



hungry and thirsty, and where you met a very miscellaneous company. Probably there was a great deal of loose talk among the guests : at any rate, there was always wine, we may believe.

Whatever may be the hygienic advantages or disadvantages of wine,—and I, for one, except for certain particular ends, believe in water, and, I blush to say it, in black tea,—there is no doubt about its being the grand specific against dull dinners. A score of people come together in all moods of mind and body. The problem is, in the space of one hour, more or less, to bring them all into the same condition of slightly exalted life. Food alone is enough for one person, perhaps,—talk, alone, for another ; but the grand equalizer and fraternizer, which works up the radiators to their maximum radiation, and the absorbents to their maximum receptivity, is now just where it was when

“ The conscious water saw its Lord and blushed,”



—when six great vessels containing water, the whole amounting to more than a hogshead-full, were changed into the best of wine. I once wrote a song about wine, in which I spoke so warmly of it, that I was afraid some would think it was written *inter pocula*; whereas it was composed in the bosom of my family, under the most tranquillizing domestic influences.

—The Divinity-Student turned towards me, looking mischievous. Can you tell me, he said, who wrote a song for a temperance celebration once, of which the following is a verse?

Alas for the loved one, too gentle and fair

The joys of the banquet to chasten and share; .

Her eye lost its light that his goblet might shine,

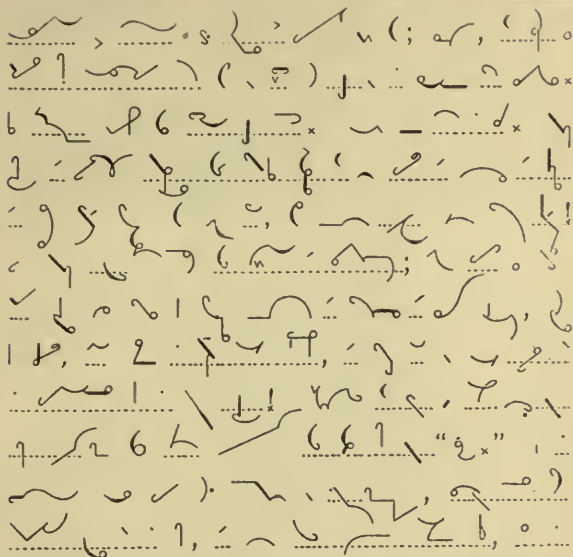
And the rose of her cheek was dissolved in his wine!

I did, I answered. What are you going to do about it?

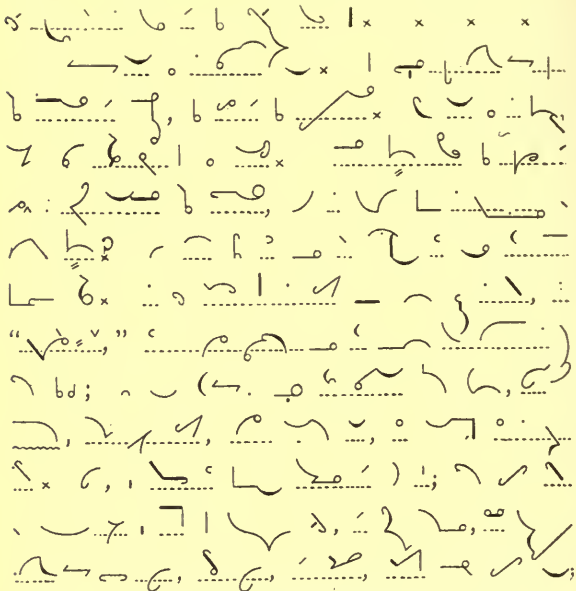
I will tell you another line I wrote long ago:—

Don't be "consistent,"—but be simply *true*.



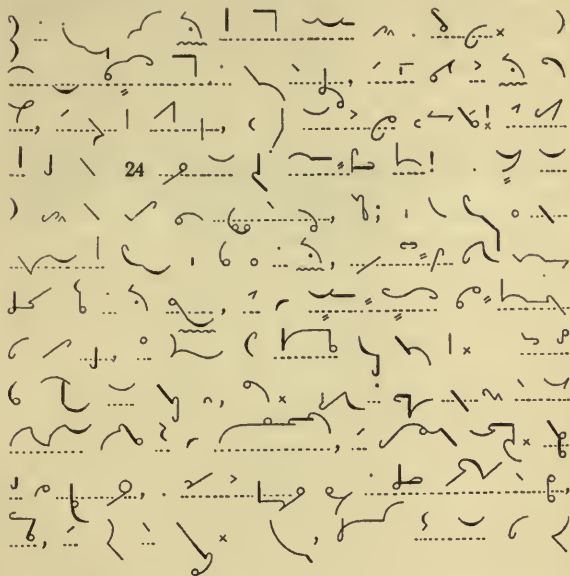


The longer I live, the more I am satisfied of two things : first, that the truest lives are those that are cut rose-diamond-fashion, with many facets answering to the many planed aspects of the world about them : secondly, that society is always trying in some way or other to grind us down to a single flat surface. It is hard work to resist this grinding-down action. Now give me a chance. Better eternal and universal abstinence than the brutalities of those days that made wives and mothers and daughters and sisters blush for those whom they should have honoured, as they came reeling home from their debauches ! Yet better even excess than lying and hypocrisy ; and if wine is upon all our tables, let us praise it for its colour and fragrance and social tendency, so far as it deserves, and not hug a bottle in the closet, and pretend not to know the use of a wine-glass at a public dinner ! I think you will find that people who honestly mean to be true really contradict themselves much more rarely than those who try to be " consistent." But a great many things we say can be made to appear contradictory, simply because

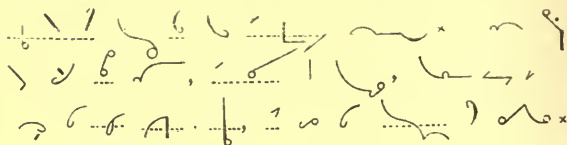


they are partial views of a truth, and may often look unlike at first, as a front view of a face and its profile often do.

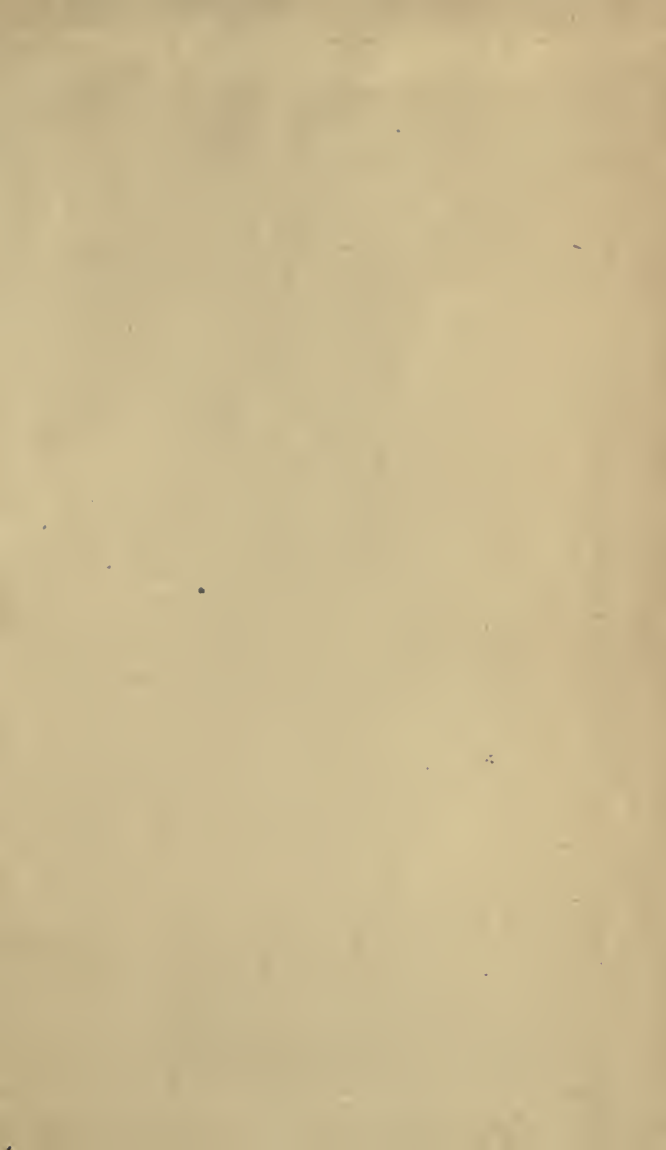
—Language is a solemn thing. It grows out of life—out of its agonies and ecstasies, its wants and its weariness. Every language is a temple, in which the soul of those who speak it is enshrined. Because Time softens its outlines and rounds the sharp angles of its cornices, shall a fellow take a pickaxe to help time? Let me tell you what comes of meddling with things that can take care of themselves. A friend of mine had a watch given him, when he was a boy, a "bull's eye," with a loose silver case that came off like an oyster-shell from its contents; you know them—the cases that you hang on your thumb, while the *core*, or the real watch, lies in your hand, as naked as a peeled apple. Well, he began with taking off the case and so on; from one liberty to another, until he got it fairly open, and there were the works, as good as if they were alive—crown-wheel, balance-wheel, and all the rest, all right except one thing; there



was a confounded little *hair* had got entangled round the balance-wheel. So my young Solomon got a pair of tweezers, and caught hold of the *hair* very nicely, and pulled it right out, without touching any of the wheels—when—buzz! and the watch had done up twenty-four hours in double magnetic-telegraph time! The English language was wound up to run some thousands of years, I trust; but if everybody is to be pulling at everything he thinks is a *hair*, our grand-children will have to make the discovery that it is a *hair-spring*, and the old Anglo-Norman soul's-timekeeper will run down, as so many other dialects have done before it. I can't stand this meddling any better than you, sir. But we have a great deal to be proud of in the lifelong labours of that old lexicographer, and we mustn't be ungrateful. Besides, don't let us deceive ourselves, the war of the dictionaries is only a disguised rivalry of cities, colleges, and especially of publishers. After all, it is likely that the language will shape



itself by larger forces than phonography and dictionary-making. You may spade up the ocean as much as you like, and harrow it afterwards, if you can—but the moon will still lead the tides, and the winds will form their surface.



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