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Perfect Freedom of Thought and Action for every individual within the limits of his own personality.

Self-Government the only true Government Liberty and Responsibility the only Basis of Morality.

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A Good Price.

The letter of Representative Price, of Wisconsin, the one member of Congress who voted against granting the pension to Mrs. Grant, written to the Chicago Inter-Ocean in reply to that journal's savage attack upon him, should be read by every citizen of the country. Mr. Price seems to be the one man in the Republican party, the one man in public life who believes that the widow of a general is no better than the widow of a private soldier, the one Congressman who has the courage to say that the widow of the men who, as president, voted the bill equalizing the bounties of soldiers and signed the bill doubling his own salary, should not be rewarded in a greater degree than the widows of those soldiers. All honor to Mr. Price. W.

According to the Boston Traveler 75 per cent. of the successful candidates before the Massachusetts civil service commission are recent graduates from the public schools, "and of these a very large percentage are deficient in their knowledge of the ordinary rules of syntax, and while they have shown proficiency in geography, history and other branches of learning, they have not been able to write a simple business letter correctly." It is probable that the public schools in Massachusetts are as top-heavy and ill-balanced as those of Connecticut.—Wintend (Conn.) Press.

And the same can truthfully be said of the graduates of our common schools in all parts of the country. Those studies, such as geography and history, which are simply, as pursued, processes of mind-stuffing, send the averages away up, but the results thus attained count for very little in the real work of life. It is a comparatively rare thing to find a young man or woman who has had no other training than that afforded by the common school who can "write a simple business letter correctly," or who can send a ten line item to a paper, which does not require rewriting before it can be put into the hands of the compositor. W.

The N. E. Labor Reform League. The Eighteenth Annual Convention of the New England Labor Reform League met in Chapel Hall, 820 Washington St., Boston, Sunday, Jan. 31st, forenoon, afternoon, evening. E. H. Heywood, Secretary, presented several resolutions, the first and sixth of which we give below:

Resolved—That since the tendency of Legislation is to increase and perpetuate the power of Capital to rob Labor,—rent and interest being twin thieves between whom Enterprise is crucified,—we work to abolish government, the chief hindrance to opportunity and reciprocity, to Collective Order becoming the immediate fruit of Individual Freedom.

Resolved—That Rum and Mormonism, two alleged devils which drank "temperance" and "virtuous" debauchery now try to cast out of the body politic, represent persono-religious liberty with rights of property and association which all good citizens should unite to maintain; that individual sobriety, social thrift and domestic purity are possible only through unconditional repeal of prohibitory and obscenity laws, leaving all citizens free in thought and action, to judge for themselves what is right.

THE CASE WELL STATED.

The daily Times, (Kansas City, Mo.) for Wednesday of this week, puts the case of the American laboring people truthfully and forcibly as follows:

America, when its area of arable and mineral land is considered, does worse for its laboring people than England. The splendid endowments which the country has had from nature, ought, if distributed with any approach to equality, to give every industrious inhabitant a comfortable support. Yet the majority of citizens do not and cannot obtain more than a bare livelihood while at work, and when sick or want of employment comes, want follows close behind. It will be said that every man has an opportunity to get rich, and it is his own fault if he does not succeed. It is the happiness of the American that he has signal ability, industry and health he has an untrammelled right to win fame or wealth. But those natural advantages are given to very few, and they are after all, relative. If the whole population had what would now be called signal ability, industry and health, there would still be only a few who could acquire a large share of worldly possessions.

The italics are ours. Just here is seen the tremendous mistake of those who are forever prating of the superiority of American institutions in giving to all a chance to get rich. The road to wealth is like the road to office—although nominally open to all, it is really open only to the favored few. It is no more possible for all men to be rich than it is possible for all men to be president, senators or congressmen of the United States. Congressmen imply and necessitate constituents, and so likewise, rich men imply and necessitate poor men. No man can get rich by his own labor, and since labor produces all the wealth of the country, it follows with mathematical certainty that enormous wealth in the hands of the few necessitates the robbery of the many, legally or otherwise. (Exception to this rule is sometimes made in favor of the lucky discoverer of natural wealth, and also the inventor of labor-saving machinery; but on close inspection it will be found that there is no such thing as natural wealth, and that a monopoly of opportunity in the field of thought, or of ideas, is as unjust as a monopoly in material things.)

THE SYSTEM.

The following paragraph contains statements and statistics that should be kept blazoned in letters of living light before the gaze of every reader and thinker in the land, until the workers rouse themselves to the necessity of taking their cause into their own hands instead of trusting to the soulless machine called "government."

Says the Times:

The entire system which has prevailed recently has had the effect of creating a small band of wealthy and powerful men who control business and government. Mr. Arthur T. Hadley, the labor statistician of Connecticut, told the Yale students only last week, that "10,000,000 handworkers in the United States earn \$100 apiece on the average." In other words almost the entire body of handworkers must be content to live upon about \$1.33 a day for the six working days of the week. This average does not represent the condition of the majority of the 10,000,000. Taking out the skilled laborers in certain lines of trade and the rest would be found earning an average of less than a dollar a day. Mr. Hadley said also that at the present rate capital invested in corporations increases from 50 to 75 per cent in a decade, while the wealth of the country increases only 10 per cent. No rounded periods of the most consummate orator could convey so eloquently a world of meaning as does that simple sentence. While the country's aggregate wealth increases 10 per cent, corporate wealth increases from 50 to 75 per cent. Whence does the difference come? From the individual citizens of the country, of course. "The corporations have extended their powerful tentacles over every industry. They are drawing to themselves and concentrating the wealth which should be distributed among individuals. They dictate what shall be the price of a day's labor, a bushel of corn, a bale of cotton, a ton of coal, an ounce of silver, a mile of railroad transportation, and the vote of a legislator. Having all these things in their hands, they dole out to the laborer and the farmer barely enough to live upon and keep the profits of land and labor for themselves.

THE GREAT ISSUE.

The Times sums up the matter in the following terse sentence:

The greatest issue between labor and capital is whether the majority of mankind shall be reduced to a state of industrial slavery, whether the individual shall be a cheap machine and the corporation the owner.

One of the most hopeful signs of the age is the fact that quite a number of the large and influential dailies have the courage to give utterance to protests like the foregoing. The daily paper is now the most

powerful means of reaching and rousing the masses. Only a decade ago the daily paper was read by but few; now the demand for latest news is so nearly universal that the daily messenger is regarded as a matter of prime necessity; therefore upon the heads of the conductors of these dailies rests a fearful responsibility.

THE CHURCH AND SLAVERY.

"Acts of the Anti-slavery Apostles," By Parker Pillsbury. "And they went everywhere preaching the word." Acts viii, 4. Concord, N. H., 1883.

This work has been noticed before, in these columns, and we call attention to it again, chiefly for these reasons:

First, the question is frequently asked, "Where can I find a reliable history showing the attitude of the American churches towards African Slavery?" This book, written by a prominent actor in the Anti-slavery conflict, shows what that attitude was, better, perhaps than any other single volume.

(2d) We call attention to this volume now because of the unblushing persistence with which Christians claim the credit of liberating the slave. Many Freethinkers, even, are much fogged on this subject. Only yesterday, in this office, a subscriber maintained that the Methodist church (North) had always been the faithful defender of freedom for the African.

Third, and last, we call attention to this book now because the veterans of the "Old Guard" in the fight for free bodies and free minds, are rapidly passing away from the scenes of their labors. Parker Pillsbury and Jeremiah Haeker are almost the only remaining representatives of the grand old corps that included such names as Garrison, Phillips, Lovejoy, Sunderland, Wright, Post, Foster, Beach, etc. Mr. Pillsbury is his own publisher, and as we learn from a private letter, he has lost "heavily by the publication, not to speak of the hardest year's work of my life in getting it up," and now we think it no more than just and right that we who enjoy the fruits of his labors in the domain of intellectual enfranchisement, should make a little effort to make bright and prosperous the declining days of this brave old worker and thinker.

The book is well printed on good paper and makes a handsome volume of five hundred pages, price \$1.50

The closing paragraph of the preface says:

"So now the order of the book will be: A chapter on Garrison; a second on Mr. Rogers; a third on slavery as it was; then one on anti-slavery, what it was not, and what it is; and then follow the acts of the anti-slavery apostles; with the acts of the pro-slavery apostles subjoined; the latter generally telling their own words, works, and ways, no cross-questioning ever entering into their truly judgment-day assizes, as will be made fully to appear to a surrounding world. And it scarcely need be added that the abundant testimony adduced, is only a small part of what the churches and their ministers have treasured up against themselves, to be hereafter unfolded from their own archives, should occasion for it ever arise."

Sent direct by the author and publisher, Concord, N. H., or from this office at publisher's price. II.

"CONSCIENCE" AND BIGOTRY.

But if the politico-religious creed which it proposes to insert in the national Constitution must be subscribed to or approved of by all who hold office in the government; it is to be administered as a test for office; then not only will atheists and infidels object but also many Christians, even a majority of them we think.—Prof. D. McMill, D. D., Xenia Ohio.

Upon this utterance Rev. M. A. Gault, in Christian Statesman, comments as follows:

And does it not occur to you that, as the Constitution now stands, every Christian believer elected to office must swear to, and subscribe, a politico-infidel creed which makes the people the source of all authority and their will the supreme law; that blots the name of God from the oath and prohibits a moral and religious qualification for office? You seem to have more respect for the atheist and infidel without a conscience, than for the conscientious believer. Have you forgotten that the day is coming when all professed Christians who deny the Kingship of Christ over the nations, together with their infidel confederates, will at Christ's command be slain before His face, "because they would not have him to reign over them."

A FEW QUERIES.

1st. Is "conscience" really a good thing when it prompts its own-

er to write a paragraph like the one just quoted? Do you really believe what you say, Mr. Gault, when you in effect assert that the "atheist and infidel" have no conscience, and that the Christian "believer" possesses a monopoly of that article? Not long since, in the same paper, when replying to an utterance of ours in Lucifer, you said of us: "You have on your side all the criminal classes of society, but we have on our side the moral forces." Were you sincere and conscientious when you made that statement? Conscientious you may have been, but sincere? hardly; for your daily intercourse with mankind and your knowledge of current and past history, all tell you a very different story.

The simple fact is that conscience is a very unreliable factor in the make-up of human character. Of itself conscience is neither good nor bad. It is a thing of education. The conscience of the Hindoo widow teaches her to immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre; the conscience of the medieval Christians prompted them to torture and burn heretics, Jews and infidels; the conscience of Chas. Freeman told him to kill his child, and the same "inward monitor" told Guiteau to "remove" Garfield. The conscience of the early Christians, according to Mosheim, prompted them to defend the use of "deception and falsehood" when the "cause of piety could be promoted thereby. Rev. Howard Crosby of New York, is said to have publicly defended the same tactics, and Mr. Gault seems to be an apt pupil of these eminent teachers.

Some one has said, "There is nothing can hate like conscience," and the history of all times verifies the truth of the saying. An equally true statement would be: "There is nothing can lie like conscience, when educated in the school of superstition, or of anti-naturalism.

Query 2nd. Do you really believe, Mr. Gault, that "the day is coming when all who deny the kingship of Christ over the nations, will at Christ's command, be slain before his face, because they would not have him to reign over them"? If such is your honest belief, then all your intolerant utterances and slanderous statements concerning "atheists and infidels," are easily accounted for. We cannot expect a man to be better than his highest ideal of goodness. A common soldier is not apt to be better than his captain, or a servant than his master. Neither is a devotee likely to be better than the god he worships. The most inhuman monster that ever disgraced an earthly throne could do no worse than cause his enemies to be "slain before his face" simply "because they would not have him to reign over them!"

Just think a moment, Mr. Gault! This king of yours will not only have people slain for no other reason than that they prefer to be "free and independent," but the killing must be done "before his face"—that is, in his immediate presence!—so that he may enjoy the sight of their dying agonies!

Third Query. How many of the American people want a "king" of any sort to rule over them? And if they want a king instead of a republic of equal rights, how many would choose such a monster of cruelty as Mr. Gault describes his lord and master to be? How many will vote to put this government under the control of Mr. Gault & Co., to the exclusion of all who will not bow the knee to "King Jesus"?

Finally, we would just say that of the two authorities just quoted, Mr. Gault is doubtless the better Christian. "Prof. D. M. McMill, D. D." seems to oppose the adoption of a "politico-religious creed" as a "test for office"—that is, he thinks atheists and infidels should have some rights that their Christian neighbors are bound to respect, and therefore he is, to that extent, infidel to the Christian's Bible which makes unbefitting the most heinous of crimes. II.

The K. of L. is the strongest temperance organization in the world, and this fact alone should commend it to all good citizens. The order does not advocate prohibitory legislation, or take a fanatical position on this question; but it labors to emancipate men from the thrall-dom of drink by education, example and kindness. It seeks to make men of all laboring men.—Manchester, New Hampshire, Weekly Budget.

"BREAD OR BLOOD."

"As ye sow, so also shall ye reap." "He that soweth the wind shall reap the whirlwind."

It would seem that the prediction of Macaulay is about to be verified in London. He told the English people, in effect, that that their social and governmental systems are now breeding a race of barbarians in their very midst, that in time would prove a more formidable enemy to deal with than were the Götis and Huns of the middle ages. There seems to be a law of compensation, of retribution, running throughout nature's realms that is ever asserting itself—silently, slowly and obscurely, often, then again, openly, palpably, and with terrific suddenness and force.

At this writing (Feb. 11) it is difficult to predict what the result will be of the London outbreak. Whether the day of retribution, so long delayed, has now fully come, that must grind to dust the robber system of monarchy, aristocracy and hierarchy, or whether the inevitable day of reckoning will be again postponed by compromise or by the terrorism of organized and time honored governmental machinery—we cannot now foresee.

To the intelligent humanitarian the saddest feature of the outlook is the fact that these English insurgents, like their oppressed brethren everywhere, are too ignorant to grasp the real significance of the situation—too thoroughly brutalized by their life-long struggle with want and misery, to care for anything beyond the gratification of their animal desires and instincts. The love of Liberty and of Justice, as a controlling or impelling force, is unknown to them. Hence their triumph would probably bring no permanent improvement to their condition. As in the case of the French Revolutions, the triumph of the masses over their lords would result simply in a change of masters—nothing more. II.

FOR LUCIFER.

"Treason, Arson, Murder, etc."

Vanwinkle thinks the legitimate results of their teaching (Walker, Harman, Edgeworth, Cook, & Co.) are Treason, arson, murder, indiscriminate robbery, theft and unbridled license, debauchery, lust and every abomination that can be thought of; an open bid for every cut-throat, robber and scoundrel in the land to make common cause with you. I call a halt. If you ever make an attempt to put your infamous principles in operation utter destruction will be your doom, and you will be classed in history with the Thugs of India.—R. A. VanWinkle in Lucifer, Jan. 29.

I should like to inquire, Is the man mad, drunk, or possessed by the spirit of a departed Jesuit, that causes the utterance of such ravings as these? Does he expect in this way to crush the spirit of investigation—of honest inquiry into the causes of the misery and degradation seen on every hand? He calls a "halt," forsooth! A halt to what? To "treason"? Treason to what or whom? As Freethinkers we acknowledge allegiance to nothing but Truth; and as we are most diligently striving to obey the behests of this divinity we indignantly deny the charge of treason. As Vanwinkle seems a worshiper of Authority it is possible he means that we are traitors to our civil government. Let us see. What is civil government, and where does it get the power and authority to govern? Is it something that came to us from an outside power called God? No. This is said to be a government of the people, by the people and for the people. And who are the people? Individual men and women constitute the people. Then, when we search for the right to govern we are brought at last to the individual man and woman, and as no man can show any right to govern his fellow-man, then we must acknowledge that he cannot delegate any such right to his servant or representative called a president, senator, congressman or police officer. So, then, we utterly fail to find anything in civil government that can claim allegiance from us; that is, any higher allegiance than that which every individual owes to himself and hence we say the words "treason," "allegiance," "loyalty," etc., have no meaning or should have none, when applied to our civil government. Loyalty to the flag of our government, "treason to the flag," etc. is simply bosh and childish twaddle.

"If this be treason," let Mr. VanWinkle and all his ilk, "make the most of it!" More Anon. ICONOCLAST.

For Lucifer:

THE DAWN OF LIBERTY. "Give me more rum," the drunkard cried, "To quench my burning thirst— Without strong drink to cheer me up, My tortured brain would burst."

THE THEOLOGIAN CRIED: "Whate'er the evils they may bring, I'll not have them denied."

"Give me more gods and endless life," The theologian cried;

"And governments more strong; Don't argue, friend, I know what's right: For what's not law is wrong."

And so the dogmatists all round Ignore each stubborn fact; And each one tighter pulls the cord, Which binds his every act.

When will each slave of church and state Cast off all tyranny?

When men grow wise and realize The truths of Anarchy.

DAVID A. ANDRADE. South Yarra, Melbourne, Australia.

A Woman's Earnest Plea for Freedom and Justice.

EDITOR LUCIFER: Such silly effusions as the one emanating from the pen of A. J. Searl concerning Free Love and marriage, are scarcely worth the attention of thinking minds, only as it is a deplorable fact that many more such specimens of masculinity exist, and are constantly ventilating their thoughts, which renders it necessary that some one keep after them to correct their lies, and I give the public some ideas of life, and the social question founded upon the laws of progress. A. J. Searl could read, observe, and reflect for years before his thoughts would be of any benefit to the public, unless a simple fool is of utility to a paper claiming to diffuse light upon so deep a question as the true way out of our present social degradation.

I am not going to attempt replies to all the jibes of A. J. Searl, but would like to call his attention to a few points which need to be considered from a standpoint of true humanitarianism before one is qualified to pronounce, pro or con, upon our present legal statutes and customs of the so-called Love relations of life.

All love is free. It never was anything else, and never will be. It always blesses its object and seeks its highest good and happiness. It is a spontaneous outgoing of an invisible, incomprehensible something which we cannot measure by any law regulating the cruder forms of materiality. We may repress and control the manifestations of love, and it is often best and wise to do so, but down deep in the heart we cannot change the divine law of attraction. The better, more moral, more humane portion of human kind have outgrown the sentiment which underlies our present marriage system. The idea of ownership originated in an age when physical force was the ruling power. It is quite likely at some epoch in the early history of the race, men became cognizant of the fact that reproduction did not always follow copulation, and the subtlety of intellect reasoned out the idea of prostituting the sex organs of the female to gratify the propensities of the male, and after a lapse of time she became physically inferior and gradually sunk to the position of slavery we find her occupying in the early ages, and of which our present marriage system is only a modification.

A. J. Searl says "let us countenance Free Love and have the glorious age of prostitution." My dear sir, we've got it, with a vengeance, too, and there is more of it in married life, the detectable state where a man owns his wife, than out of it. I have known of twice as many women who live in continual dread of the sexual demands of their legal rulers as I do those who feel free in that respect, to copulate when nature and reason prompt them to the act. I look upon the moral quality of the act as the same when a wife is compelled to buy all the favors and kindnesses she receives, also her food and clothes, by submitting to the sexual propensities of her husband when they are distasteful to her, as I do upon the woman who sells herself for \$5 or more per night; the stigma of society and the liability to disease are all that change the colors of the monstrosity, for in either case it is an evil which is not excelled in magnitude, for it is destruction and death to the soul and blights it for long ages, even in a more sublimated form of existence. Many persons take a very circumscribed view of the meaning of the word "prostitution," thinking it means only illegal sexual intercourse. I should say that the using of one's appetites, physical powers, talents or genius for base purposes, such as tend to degeneracy of the individual and those associated with

him, is prostitution, and I think Webster in his definition of the word, covers all that ground. Mr. Searl's vituperation is simply infamous, for all the progressive people I ever knew are eminently in favor of the monogamic idea of marriage; if it is to be for life so much the better. The fewer changes in conjugal relations the better. Ownership in love relations is the cause of all the mischief which is the burden of Mr. Searl's article. We, who he pleases to dub as free lovers, are mostly persons who believe only in copulation for reproductive purposes; for myself I have long taken that position. It does away with prostitution. There is not a chance for the using of the sex organs for debasing purposes if the human race were educated out of the idea of copulation or pleasure, and that other artifice of the devil, balancing the physical forces. The man or woman who cannot control their appetites, is on the brute plane of existence, and of course will seek to own one of the other sex as a safety-valve for their abnormal condition. It looks to them the cheapest way in dollars and cents to live out a self seeking existence. I should say fully one-half of the masculine sex marry for this purpose. If they can fix a woman in a position she cannot get out of, why then they are secure, for no "rented woman" would stoop so low as to accept the paltry pittance they consider so munificent a reward for the opportunity to mingle their soul with such a degraded status of human development. No, A. J. Searl, married women by the score do that which no rented woman would stoop to do, for they copulate year after year for the munificent reward of a few calico dresses and cheap shoes, and some coarse food, and work through it all fifteen hours daily, pregnant fully one half the time besides, wishing themselves dead, and deploring the day they were foolish enough to put their heads through the conjugal yoke. How ridiculous to talk about equality in property matters when a man handles all the finances and a woman is compelled to go to him like a beggar, for a nickel to pay a letter postage with. Like Flora Fox, I say it is time for us to kick and keep the ball rolling which shall give us a hand at law making, an opportunity to wipe from the statute books such infamous laws as the one that a married man can not rape his wife. Why my poor uninformed Brother Searl, it ought to be the law that a man who uses coercive measures with his wife in sexual relations should be fined and punished, and if he is cross and snarls continually because he cannot rule over her in this respect, she ought to leave his bed for all coming time, and society should stigmatize him as it now does the "rented woman," until he is purged of his brutishness. Yes, we are just in the morning twilight of a new age, but it will not be "the age of prostitution," it will be the age of reason, and liberty, and woman downtrodden for so many long centuries, will take her rightful place beside man in all the affairs of life, as a companion and equal being able through the ballot to protect herself from physical and brutish rulings. Palmer, Kan. Mrs. M. C. GUNNEX.

Word to Van Winkle.

EDITORS LUCIFER: Friend Van Winkle, "the Arrington Sleeper," seems to be of very slow growth. In Lucifer Jan. 23, he says: "As to the money question, the world has decided the case against free money; let every fellow try his hand at money making, would it not be glorious? We should soon have wagon loads of it, handle it by the scoopful, and then dump it and the authors thereof in the nearest mill-pond, both being too worthless for any use whatever." I do not think Van Winkle, and in fact the majority of the people, know just what money is. Allow me to give my definition of money, and then I would like to ask him if he would want to throw it into the nearest mill-pond: Money is, or represents, accumulated labor. Labor is the just and true base of all money, all property. Anything which does not contain or represent accumulated labor is not money, is not property, in a just and true sense.

Thus, the miner digs the gold and silver out of the earth. The metal obtained is accumulated labor, (that is, the labor it took to get the metal) the government has declared that a certain amount of those metals when properly coined, weighed and stamped, shall be a dollar in the payment of debts, and it would be a violation of contracts, or robbery, to change the amount in any way. The original office and purpose of government in coining money, was to properly weigh, assay and guarantee the coins to be of the standard weight and

fineness, or of equal value; that is all. That is the only right or duty of government in the matter. It has no right or business to refuse to coin money for individuals. It has no right to go into the market and buy bullion and coin the same into money for purposes of speculation. It should be obliged to coin money for each and every individual who presents the metal, charging only for the actual labor performed in weighing, coining and doing the business, the same as carrying the mail. In that case gold and silver bullion would always be worth as much as coin, less the cost of coining the same. Yet even then we could not have a just money, as it does not always take the same amount of labor to mine the gold and silver; also, it is exceedingly unjust to give those having accumulated labor in the form of gold and silver a precedence over all others having accumulated labor in other labor-products, such as houses and corn, cannot be coined into a convenient money they would have to have a representative money, the same as a mortgage is representative property. The greenback is not money, never was money, and can never become money, as it is not accumulated labor. It is simply an evidence of debt, a note or promise (not to pay but) to receive from any one upon whom the government has a claim, except in certain privileged cases. It is a fraud, a usurpation of authority.

I will suggest one way in which, under our present form of government, any one can make or issue money and no one be injured thereby. Every person having accumulated labor useful to others, or property, is assessed for the same, and has to pay taxes on it. Every such person should have the right and privilege to deposit a mortgage upon the same with the recorder for, say, one-half the assessed value; the recorder, county clerk or other officer, elected for that purpose, to give the depositor the amount in engraved bills (kept on hand by him for that purpose) similar to National Bank notes; said notes to be signed by him and to receive the seal of the county and number of the mortgage, the county guaranteeing the payment of same and receiving same in payment of taxes and all dues. For further security, the party issuing the money should sign the bills, and then use them as he sees fit. I will not go into the details further at present, as my letter is getting long, but can give the sleepy ones further light if they desire it. Sioux City, Ia. C. S. WOOD.

R. Smith's Reply to L. and W. in Lucifer.

TO BLIND I: You ask why our good God did not save the perishing from the cold, in Kansas? Why, bless you, are you so blind? Read the 147 Psalm; 17th verse, "Who can stand before his cold?" Had I been in Kansas a few months ago, and told you if God's warm weather on earth did not bring you to repentance he might try cold blizzards and see it in that way you would submit to him. I can now hear you say, "fiddlesticks," "B-n-h." "He is too stiff in his old joints to get up a cold I cannot stand!" Now you complain, will you? You just keep on if you dare! You will find something after you worse than a blizzard! God's children sooner go to heaven from a blizzard than from a summer's day. The mother and child bears him coming in his cold chariot to take them to a warm Heaven! Where must he put you? I will let you say. Can't you see these storms are all for you? To simply blow you back from a lake of fire. I warn you to stop at once; and repent in dust and ashes at the feet of Jesus. I cannot give you up.

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him, is prostitution, and I think Webster in his definition of the word, covers all that ground. Mr. Searl's vituperation is simply infamous, for all the progressive people I ever knew are eminently in favor of the monogamic idea of marriage; if it is to be for life so much the better. The fewer changes in conjugal relations the better. Ownership in love relations is the cause of all the mischief which is the burden of Mr. Searl's article. We, who he pleases to dub as free lovers, are mostly persons who believe only in copulation for reproductive purposes; for myself I have long taken that position. It does away with prostitution. There is not a chance for the using of the sex organs for debasing purposes if the human race were educated out of the idea of copulation or pleasure, and that other artifice of the devil, balancing the physical forces. The man or woman who cannot control their appetites, is on the brute plane of existence, and of course will seek to own one of the other sex as a safety-valve for their abnormal condition. It looks to them the cheapest way in dollars and cents to live out a self seeking existence. I should say fully one-half of the masculine sex marry for this purpose. If they can fix a woman in a position she cannot get out of, why then they are secure, for no "rented woman" would stoop so low as to accept the paltry pittance they consider so munificent a reward for the opportunity to mingle their soul with such a degraded status of human development. No, A. J. Searl, married women by the score do that which no rented woman would stoop to do, for they copulate year after year for the munificent reward of a few calico dresses and cheap shoes, and some coarse food, and work through it all fifteen hours daily, pregnant fully one half the time besides, wishing themselves dead, and deploring the day they were foolish enough to put their heads through the conjugal yoke. How ridiculous to talk about equality in property matters when a man handles all the finances and a woman is compelled to go to him like a beggar, for a nickel to pay a letter postage with. Like Flora Fox, I say it is time for us to kick and keep the ball rolling which shall give us a hand at law making, an opportunity to wipe from the statute books such infamous laws as the one that a married man can not rape his wife. Why my poor uninformed Brother Searl, it ought to be the law that a man who uses coercive measures with his wife in sexual relations should be fined and punished, and if he is cross and snarls continually because he cannot rule over her in this respect, she ought to leave his bed for all coming time, and society should stigmatize him as it now does the "rented woman," until he is purged of his brutishness. Yes, we are just in the morning twilight of a new age, but it will not be "the age of prostitution," it will be the age of reason, and liberty, and woman downtrodden for so many long centuries, will take her rightful place beside man in all the affairs of life, as a companion and equal being able through the ballot to protect herself from physical and brutish rulings. Palmer, Kan. Mrs. M. C. GUNNEX.

Word to Van Winkle.

EDITORS LUCIFER: Friend Van Winkle, "the Arrington Sleeper," seems to be of very slow growth. In Lucifer Jan. 23, he says: "As to the money question, the world has decided the case against free money; let every fellow try his hand at money making, would it not be glorious? We should soon have wagon loads of it, handle it by the scoopful, and then dump it and the authors thereof in the nearest mill-pond, both being too worthless for any use whatever." I do not think Van Winkle, and in fact the majority of the people, know just what money is. Allow me to give my definition of money, and then I would like to ask him if he would want to throw it into the nearest mill-pond: Money is, or represents, accumulated labor. Labor is the just and true base of all money, all property. Anything which does not contain or represent accumulated labor is not money, is not property, in a just and true sense.

Thus, the miner digs the gold and silver out of the earth. The metal obtained is accumulated labor, (that is, the labor it took to get the metal) the government has declared that a certain amount of those metals when properly coined, weighed and stamped, shall be a dollar in the payment of debts, and it would be a violation of contracts, or robbery, to change the amount in any way. The original office and purpose of government in coining money, was to properly weigh, assay and guarantee the coins to be of the standard weight and

fineness, or of equal value; that is all. That is the only right or duty of government in the matter. It has no right or business to refuse to coin money for individuals. It has no right to go into the market and buy bullion and coin the same into money for purposes of speculation. It should be obliged to coin money for each and every individual who presents the metal, charging only for the actual labor performed in weighing, coining and doing the business, the same as carrying the mail. In that case gold and silver bullion would always be worth as much as coin, less the cost of coining the same. Yet even then we could not have a just money, as it does not always take the same amount of labor to mine the gold and silver; also, it is exceedingly unjust to give those having accumulated labor in the form of gold and silver a precedence over all others having accumulated labor in other labor-products, such as houses and corn, cannot be coined into a convenient money they would have to have a representative money, the same as a mortgage is representative property. The greenback is not money, never was money, and can never become money, as it is not accumulated labor. It is simply an evidence of debt, a note or promise (not to pay but) to receive from any one upon whom the government has a claim, except in certain privileged cases. It is a fraud, a usurpation of authority.

I will suggest one way in which, under our present form of government, any one can make or issue money and no one be injured thereby. Every person having accumulated labor useful to others, or property, is assessed for the same, and has to pay taxes on it. Every such person should have the right and privilege to deposit a mortgage upon the same with the recorder for, say, one-half the assessed value; the recorder, county clerk or other officer, elected for that purpose, to give the depositor the amount in engraved bills (kept on hand by him for that purpose) similar to National Bank notes; said notes to be signed by him and to receive the seal of the county and number of the mortgage, the county guaranteeing the payment of same and receiving same in payment of taxes and all dues. For further security, the party issuing the money should sign the bills, and then use them as he sees fit. I will not go into the details further at present, as my letter is getting long, but can give the sleepy ones further light if they desire it. Sioux City, Ia. C. S. WOOD.

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THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

FRIENDS HARRMAN & WALKER: I have carefully read the last four issues of LUCIFER:—the first numbers I have ever seen. I am exceedingly well pleased with it and find in its pages less to criticize than in almost any paper that comes under my eye. You handle the marriage question exceptionally well. I must make especial mention of the reply to R. E. Rice, by "W." in January 8, the article of C. L. James, in January 15, and Mrs. Severance in January 22. I have read these articles with profound satisfaction, and wish they could be read by every intelligent and honest man and woman in the world. Although embracing but a small part of all there is to be said, these three articles alone constitute a triumphant vindication of our principles.

The marriage question for the most part has been handled in a loose, disjointed, sloppy, sleek-twisted, hodge-podge sort of style. In saying this I do not forget that Mary Wolstonecraft, Frances Wright, T. L. and Mary Gove Nichols, Andrews, Lazarus, Heywood, and many others, have said a great many things just as well as they could be said. I would have the marriage question treated precisely as the old Garrisonian Abolitionists treated the negro slavery question. I demand the immediate and unconditional abolition of this vile system that ever cursed the earth. Marriage is legalized prostitution, rape, baby-stealing, and murder. Marriage is as much worse than any one of the diabolisms of which it is composed, as any whole is greater than any one of its parts. The term marriage is more offensive than the terms rape, murder or prostitution, because it includes all of them and all combined are worse than either one alone. To say "true marriage" is as ridiculous as to say true prostitution, or true rape, or true murder. The true "wife" is more offensive than the term prostitute, for the reason that popular prostitution (itself the offspring and necessary attendant of marriage) bad as it is, is not so bad as the forced prostitution of marriage. Furthermore, the wife, besides being the most degraded of all prostitutes, a forced prostitute, has no legal right to her own body, and may be murdered with impunity in a way infinitely more horrible than by the bullet or knife of the assassin. I would as soon think of telling what rape ought to be, or what murder ought to be.

The emancipation of woman constitutes the abolition of marriage. The man who pretends to be in favor of woman's emancipation and yet upholds marriage, is a liar and hypocrite, or an ignoramus. The man who pretends that Free Love, or the absolute self-ownership of woman, would result in licentiousness, in the base sense of that term, is a rover and slanderer of womankind. Absolute Freedom is the right of humanity. To what freedom will lead, in the matter of the relations of the sexes, except that such relations will be equal and amicable, and mutually beneficial, nobody knows and nobody ought to care. And while I am in favor of absolute freedom of thought, and speech, and the press, and the mails, yet if there is one subject that is utterly unprofitable for discussion, it is the question of exclusiveness of non-exclusiveness in love. We shall have freedom, absolute and universal, and whatever it brings. Whatever it brings will be right, and will be accepted. All our discussion of the subject will not make "one hair white or black." Only this is to be understood. The woman (or man) who has two lovers or more, or none at all, is by virtue of her supreme womanhood, to be treated with absolute and infinite respect. There will then be no "old maids," for there will be no marriage. And the man who now applies this offensive appellation to a woman because she has refused to be bound and given helpless into the power of a legalized, priest-mounted ravisher, is guilty of base unmanliness.

But I did not set out to make an argument, but only to send you hearty greetings. FRANCIS BARRY. Kent, Ohio.

A BARGAIN.

For Sale. A perfectly new copy of Hitchcock's New and Complete Analysis of the Bible, 1150 octavo, double column pages. Includes Cruden's Concordance of the Bible, and pronouncing Dictionary of Scripture-Propriety names; Dictionary of Denominations; History of the Bible, etc., etc. Finest style of Binding—Morocco, leather corners, gilt edges. This work is indispensable to every Free-thought lecturer and writer. For sale at a special price, \$1.75. I will send this new copy, postage or express charges prepaid, for \$2.00. Order early if you want a bargain. Address, E. C. WALKER, Valley Falls, Kans.

Letter from the Antipodes.

TO THE PROPRIETORS OF LUCIFER, Gentlemen:— Please find enclosed P. O. O. for \$1.75, payable to M. Harrman & E. C. Walker.

This is in payment of one year's subscription to your excellent paper, "LUCIFER" commencing with January 1st, 1886. Please see that each number is securely wrapped and duly posted, as newspapers often get badly torn in coming all this distance and any damage or omission is difficult to rectify.

Wishing that LUCIFER may long continue in its useful and successful career, I am, Yours Truly, DAVID A. ANDRADE, South Yarra, Melbourne, Australia.

What is Liberty?

True liberty dars not infringe upon the rights of individuals or of communities of individuals. When such an attempt is made—when one man exercises authority beyond the limits of selfhood, then some other man's rights are invaded, liberty is crushed and licentiousness is instituted. Here we have the relative conditions of liberty and license. The genuine essence of all liberty is non-interference, and to secure universal non-interference is the first and most essential object of all political or social association.

Past ages reveal the effect of licentious tyranny, when every man's thought was scrutinized, and he was tortured by the ruthless arm of power and carried to the stake, a live offering of bigotry to the demon superstition. "Freedom of discussion" is the great turning point of liberty; hence we demand liberty of thought, liberty of speech, liberty of publication and liberty of action, that we may test the powers of individualism. MORANON. J. E. FARLEY, M. D.

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E. C. WALKER.

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An exchange says the daily wages of the King of Belgium is \$1,610 Queen of England 6,300 King of Italy 6,400 Emperor of Germany 8,000 Emperor of Austria 18,008 Sultan of Turkey 18,000 Emperor of Russia 25,000 A Workingman 1

And yet one humble and industrious workingman is infinitely more beneficial to society than all these legalized paupers combined. The sums set opposite the names of Kings, queens, and emperors, are the simple price of the people's oppression, and paid by them. Labor builds the world, and these costly appendages occupy and enjoy it.—Lyons Advertiser.

Right, Bro. Advertiser! Our national government itself is little else than a monstrous mortgage on the land and labor of the U. S. Every time we elect a new president or a new Congress we renew the mortgage. The holders of this mortgage are the plutocrats—the bankers, the R. R. syndicates, etc.

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A FAMILY AFFAIR.

BY THE LATE HUGH CONWAY.

"Yes, I had heard something about it, but the reality overwhelmed me. Uncle Horace doing woodwork was my first experience. The next morning I found Uncle Herbert doling out stores to the cook. And to see them manage the house better than any woman!"

"Delightful. I could tell you some very amusing things, Miss Clauson."

"Please don't. They are so kind and amiable I can't bear to laugh at them."

"They are kind. I love them dearly. What my poor people would do without them I can't think. If they'll leave you enough to do, you're certain to be happy here."

Beatrice smiled. She remembered the horror they had displayed at the mere thought of her having any part in the domestic arrangements of Hazlewood House. It seemed to Mr. Mordle that he had never seen Miss Clauson look so bright and lively as she looked today. She looked most longingly at the child, who, tired of his play, lay peacefully on her lap.

"But I have not enough to do," she said, her hand the while caressing the boy's golden head. "Mr. Mordle, I wish you would help me in something."

"Anything—everything—command me," said the curate in his quickest, most decisive way.

"I have taken such a fancy to this dear little man, that, supposing his people do not reveal themselves, I want to persuade my uncles to let me keep him. I could do so happily with him here." She kissed and fondled the boy.

Now that he saw whither his rash promise was to lead him, Mr. Mordle paused and hesitated. "I am sure Uncle Herbert wouldn't mind," added Beatrice.

"Mr. Talbert would never consent," said Mr. Mordle.

"What harm would it do?" asked Beatrice. "The Reverend Sylvanus was silent. He did not like to tell the girl that the retention at Hazlewood House of this mysteriously-sent child might create scandal."

"You will help me, will you not?" pleaded Beatrice. The look in her eyes turned Sylvanus's heart into wax.

So, with the weakness of male humanity when thus assailed, he promised to do what he could to insure her wish being carried out. Beatrice gave him a look of gratitude, the very remembrance of which he felt would repay him for a much greater service than the one she entreated of him. By and by he took his leave of her in that happy frame of mind peculiar to the man who has laid a lovely woman under an obligation.

Horace and Herbert he did not see. They were detained for an indefinite period. The linen paid in by the laundress did not balance with the counterfoils in the washing-book, so they had to go through it again—an annoying, but a necessary task.

CHAPTER VI. BEATRICE TRIUMPHANT.

Miss Clauson carried her point. Her success was due to a curious combination of events, as well as to her own persistence and eloquent pleading. She managed to get Uncle Herbert alone—a difficult matter, as the "Tabbies" were almost always together—and, after sundry argument and entreaties, if unable to win his consent to her proposed arrangement, exacted a promise from him that he would not object if Horace approved of her keeping the boy. To be sure he had not the faintest idea that Horace would consent.

Mr. Mordle, the adviser of the family, and Herbert Talbert thus brought on her side or rendered neutral, Horace remained the arbiter of the boy's fate, and Miss Clauson directed all her energies toward making him yield.

Like a clever girl she took care that the young intruder should be no nuisance to any one, not even to the servants. When her uncles saw him they saw him at his best. At the first signs of bad behavior Beatrice whipped him away. As he had not yet run amuck through their brie-a-brac, nor demolished a ruby-backed plate, or defaced a Chelsea figure, they had no fault to find with his general behavior. Indeed they liked to see the little fellow about the place, and the confiding way in which sometimes he climbed upon Horace's knee was quite touching. He was not a bit afraid of these tall grave men. Children see further in some ways than grown-up people, and no doubt the little boy felt instinctively that many excellent feminine traits were hidden under the broad bosoms of the stalwart "Tabbies."

They tacitly left his fate in her hands for more than a week. Then Beatrice, who perhaps trembled lest some childish act of mischief might defeat her ends, and who thought that the boy had well done his part in the affair by making himself so easily tolerated, attacked her uncles once more. True to his promise, Herbert said his brother must decide the matter.

"Do you want the child to stay?" asked Horace, turning to the speaker.

"I told Beatrice you should decide."

This answer assured Horace that Herbert knew everything that was to be known.

"My dear Beatrice," he said, "the thing is quite impracticable."

Her mouth quivered. It was clear she had set her heart on keeping her new pet. "Why is it impracticable? What difference can a child make in a house like this? He will be my sole care."

Uncle Horace looked uneasy. "My dear, you forget it may give rise to scandal."

"Scandal! What scandal?"

Horace grew red. One can't talk plainly to young innocent girls without feeling how bad mankind in general is.

"Hum—ha," he said. "You must remember, Beatrice, we are two single men; not elderly men. As soon as it is known that we have kept the child sent here so strangely, we give a handle to suspicion and scandal. Do you agree with me, Herbert?"

"I am afraid it will be so, Beatrice," said Herbert, regretfully.

Miss Clauson drew herself up proudly. It was an action the Talberts always liked to see in the girl, and which had a great effect on them.

"Surely," she said, "you of all people are above suspicion and scandal!"

They were pleased to think this was the truth. They felt that Beatrice was right. What after all had scandal to do with them? The domestic virtues and clockwork regulation of Hazlewood House might defy the breath of the most censorious world. As this great truth came home to him Horace seemed to purr with pleasure.

But he had no intention of yielding. He was for one thing much annoyed with Herbert. Herbert evidently wanted the boy to stay. If so he should say so outright, not let Beatrice fight his battles. So the most Beatrice could get him to promise was that the boy might remain for a few days longer.

In those few days something happened. First of all a piece of gossip went round the neighborhood and eventually reached the ears of those who were gossiped about—the Talberts. They heard that they were having boring Lord Hadwyn's eldest son, whose mysterious disappearance had been reported in the papers. Lord Hadwyn was an utter reprobate, and it was well known that his injured wife had smuggled the child out of his way. Lady Hadwyn was an acquaintance of the Talberts; so that even Horace was for a moment staggered when he heard the theory propounded by his neighbors. Then some kind scribbler wrote to the bereft husband, and his lordship dashed down to Oakbury fierce as a consuming flame—a flame which resolved itself into smoke when he was shown the boy, and found him nothing like his missing son. After this, gossip should have died a natural death, but it did not. People who are determined to swallow a monstrous tale will lick it into the shape they can deal with best. In spite of the Talberts' strenuous denials and plain statements as to how the child had been thrown upon their hands, everybody would say that if not Lord Hadwyn's son he was some one else's—meaning some one, a nobleman's probably, whose wife had, for private reasons of her own, intrusted him to the Talberts.

Even the reputation of being a harbor of refuge for a duchess or a countess in her distress is a flattering thing; and the Talberts, especially Horace, felt pleased, while laughing at the absurd idea. Perhaps it was for this reason that Horace at last yielded to his niece's solicitations and astonished her one day by saying—

"Beatrice, if you really mean to keep that child for awhile, we will engage a nurse for it."

She said nothing, but gave Uncle Horace a most grateful kiss. She must have grown wondrously fond of the baby, as her eyes were full of glad tears.

That afternoon she drove into Blacktown, and rigged the child out from head to foot in new and dainty raiment; nothing was too good for him. Horace and Herbert, who knew the price of lace, linens, and canopies to a penny a yard, wondered how far her whim was going to carry her. Perhaps they felt rather aggrieved that their old had not been asked. They dearly loved a little shopping, and could have chosen a trousseau or a layette with any woman under the sun.

But the affair of the nursemaid was peculiarly their own. If the Talberts had one gift of housewifery above another, it was their skill in engaging suitable servants. When they called on a lady for a maid's character, the questions they put were of the most searching and cogent nature. They were not satisfied with the broad assertion that she was sober, honest, and cleanly—they cross-examined until they found out all the weak and strong points in her composition, then engaged her or not as they thought best. Many a confiding young woman, who fancied in going into the service of two rich bachelor gentlemen, she was about to have a grand, lazy, slatternly time of it, found herself grossly deceived. Some even declared they'd rather have twenty mistresses than two such masters. Nevertheless it was a good place, and any girl who had stayed at Hazlewood House a twelvemonth might have had the pick of vacancies in the neighborhood. To have given satisfaction to the Talberts for so long was a three-volume character.

At last, after a number of interviews with candidates, they found a nurse-girl who came up to the standard of their requirements. One who had no followers, and who made no objection to wearing a cap—moreover, the cap of the pattern they had themselves designed. A member of the Church of England, of course, who promised to communicate every two months, and to be contented with Dorset butter during the winter.

So the mysterious child was as good as adopted at Hazlewood House.

A serious question arose as to whether the infant had ever been christened. Miss Clauson felt sure it had been. The child came to them too well dressed to suppose such an important rite had been omitted. The Reverend Sylvanus, who was known to be disgracefully lax about such matters, did not urge that assurance should be made doubly sure, so no baptismal ceremony took place. After some consultation it was decided that the boy should be known as Henry.

"Henry," said Uncle Horace, "is a safe name; thoroughly adaptable to any station in life."

So Henry it was. The surname they left in abeyance, trusting that time or chance might some day reveal it.

Every article of clothing worn by the child on its arrival was folded up and together with the direction card placed in the big

sare. They might hereafter be needed for the purposes of identification.

So Beatrice Clauson was confirmed in the possession of her toy—her toy! In a month's time little Henry was every one's toy. The Talberts themselves were ashamed to say how glad they were that Beatrice's whim had been carried out, but it was currently reported that shortly afterward, when the boy was suffering from some transient childish ailment, the two tall brothers were seen intently poring over that interesting work, Dr. Bull's *Hints to Mothers!* But this, I believe, was scandal.

CHAPTER VII. THE GREAT JUNE ACID.

The wisest sometimes make mistakes. The most careful housekeeper has been known to spoil a party by putting salt instead of sugar on it. Let it, then, be no detraction from the Talberts' general administrative ability, that the nurse girl turned out badly. They had been so successful with cooks, parlormaids, housemaids, and kitchenmaids, that their failure in this one instance must not be considered.

The girl's misdeeds need not be detailed, suffice it to say the culmination of them was this—Horace and Herbert driving up the lane one evening, saw a young man and woman embracing vigorously and generally having a happy time of it. They could not recognize the girl, but felt sure she was one of their household, so the discreet Whittaker was ordered to wait at the side door and send the first arrival to his masters.

Of course, she repelled the accusation. She had indeed stepped out for a minute to post a letter to her aged mother, but as for speaking to, much less kissing a man—well she never did! Alas for feminine veracity! On the back of her print dress was the impression of four fingers and a thumb, printed there in good black mold, for it was an under-gardener who had succumbed to her charms. It was Herbert, who, whilst Horace expostulated, was seated at the table and

so saw her back, who drew all this damning evidence. This was a blow to her confidence and a month's warning, given in the most dignified and calm way by her masters.

They decided to engage an older and staid body, and being perhaps rather crestfallen allowed Miss Clauson to have a voice in the matter. One morning a quiet-looking pale-faced woman walked upon them. She heard that a nurse was wanted and offered her services. Character she had none to give, having been out of service for some years, but plenty of people would speak for her respectability. The Talberts were much taken with her general demeanor; but hummed and bowed when they found she did not come red-hot from a place. Horace examined her attentively through his eye-glasses.

"Haven't I seen you before?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, I lived many years ago with Mr. Merton of Cavendish Square. You were often at the house."

She said her name was Miller, and that she was a widow. She spoke well and in that respectful, but not servile, way which the Talberts liked. If they could bring themselves to get over the absence of credentials, and deny themselves the pleasure of calling on and cross-examining a former mistress, they thought this woman might do.

Beatrice had no doubt about it, and upon such inquiries as could be made being answered satisfactorily, Mrs. Miller was installed in the place of the frail failure whose escapade with the gardener had lowered the whole moral tone of the establishment. A giddy girl in a bachelor's establishment means destruction.

But Mrs. Miller was a very different matter. Miss Clauson found her perfect—limbless, kind, and experienced—moreover quite qualified to fulfill the duties of lady's maid when occasion required. Whittaker approved of her. She was a coadjutor after his own respectable heart. The first one to be considered, the boy, took to her as readily as he had taken to Beatrice. Horace and Herbert, in spite of the sharp look out they kept for a while, could find no flaw in her conduct, and when at the end of two months they ascertained that she had used less soap—four cakes less than her predecessor had during her short stay, they began to think they had acquired a treasure.

"For the child looks as clean as ever," said Herbert to Horace. "I always felt sure that girl left the soap in the hot water and forgot all about it."

The last winter months and the spring months passed very quietly at Hazlewood House. The Talberts and their niece dined occasionally with the best families in the neighborhood, and in return the Talberts asked the best families to dine with them. The seven days' wonder about the boy had almost died away. Every one of course felt sure he was somebody, but no one knew what body. If there was any scandal the serene brothers heard it not. It is true that old Lady Bowker, a very important personage, paid them a visit on purpose to find out all about everything. She had known the Talberts as boys, so felt entitled to ask them point blank for an explanation. People who have known you as a boy are as a rule great nuisances.

She told them she wanted to speak to them on private business, so Beatrice left the room. Then she turned from one to the other of the grave, long-faced men—

"Now, Horace, now, Herbert, what the meaning of this affair? Who is the boy you are making such a fuss about?"

"I don't think we ever make fusses," said Herbert, in a deprecating way.

"Certainly not," said Horace, with decision.

"Well, mysteries, then—we will want to know who this child really is—the child who came in the dead of night wrapped up in an antimacassar or something—came by Pickford's van, I am told."

"I wish you could tell us, Lady Bowker. We know no more than you do."

"That's all nonsense, Horace. I hear you have engaged a nurse, and that the child is to stay with you. I think you are most inconsiderate."

"We are never inconsiderate," said Horace.

"Certainly not," said his brother.

"Yes, you are. You are inconsiderate in not letting at least one safe discreet person into the secret. Some one like myself who could vouch for you."

"We don't want to be vouched for."

"Yes, you do—I don't see you are any better than other people."

Lady Bowker was growing cross at their mild obsequy.

"You are most inconsiderate toward Miss Clauson. Here, a week after she comes to live with you, this infant makes its appearance. Of course people say you were only waiting until there was a lady at Hazlewood House to look after him."

"People say that, do they?" asked Horace, reflectively.

"What else can they say? I don't say so; but then I have known you so long. I say that you have some excellent reason for keeping this child; but you ought to tell one person at least who he really is."

"But we don't know."

"Yes, you do. Now tell me, like good men."

To be Continued.

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