

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A JOHNNY

Edited by One Who Knew Him Well

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By THOMAS SAWYER SPIVEY



A VISION OF THE BOARD WALK, ATLANTIC CITY

FRONTISPIECE

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Mr. Butinsky.

APOLOGIES

It matters not a farthing to me what I am called, so I am called in time to get my meals regularly, or jump down the fire-escape when the hurry wagon comes.

My reason for this "dare-devil" break is, some of my so-called bosom friends are calling me an iconoclast, because I choose to throw down my own idols and kick them into cocked hats.

If the fact that I have found mine to be putty

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and *papier-mâché* seems to throw a dubious light upon their own, that is no affair of mine. I shall go right on throwing my putty balls at imaginary heads, and kicking my *papier-mâché* collection of curios and antiques into imaginary spring bonnets or German pancakes, just as though I were the King of Iconoclasts on a "rare jag."

If I find an occasional faded rose or a crumpled little glove over which I linger a bit affectionately, that is my affair too.

I am not necessarily an iconoclast because I draw aside the asbestos curtain, at a critical moment, and reveal the wriggling, writhing mass of funny things it conceals. I had to pass through it myself before I recognized it to be one continuous vaudeville in which every man and woman must at some time play a foolish part.

I am no "purist" or "goody-goody." I frankly admit I have a few just kicks coming, and I am going to administer them in the proper spot to make the most *lasting* impression, and, incidentally, cause a few loafers and cads to take their meals off the top of the ice chest for a while. It would require a hydra-footed kicking machine to do justice to all of them, and it would have to work overtime.

I am the "horrible example." I shall not spare myself. So must the others stand up and take their hourly doses without making faces. I'm the doctor this time.

The so-called social world may accuse me of "reckless automobiling," or class my story as "batty," or

due to "brain-fag," upon reading this, my *autobiography*, but I am out of the game and I could not pass peacefully into a state of oblivious desuetude without administering righteous rebuke to a sinful world for having made me old before my time and for having caused me untold misery and wretchedness during my brief and dissipated life. The pain I have suffered has more than off-set the monumental fun I have had.

There is no using holding on. I am *passé*. I can not be sustained by the false belief that the pristine beauty of youth is as fresh at fifty as when the bloom upon my innocent cheek was perennial and renewed only by the stealthy little fairies that "paint things" while we sleep, like those silly "cascarets."

Now I must keep the blamed "stuff" upon my dressing-table to keep up the appearance, for the sake of some old society "hag" whom I courted thirty years ago.

I am so disgusted I am driven to tell the truth.

I have gone the pace that cripples, but does not kill outright.

I sit, in my misery, and dare not even think, because when I think my mind assumes a retrospective mood and torments me beyond endurance. It is then I see things.

All my past passes before my eyes—a writhing, wriggling vortex of foolishness, labeled "fun."

In the midst of it all I see myself, a wrinkled, warty old bump; my garments hanging in grotesque disorder; my crown, a tarnished ruin, cocked on

the side of my "nut," for all the world like a second edition of "King Dodo," with a pathetic stare in my face, and a squeak in my joints like a rusty hinge. I could be the real thing in the "Wizard of Oz" and save the cost of the "armor."

The red-fire which once threw a glamour about me has been displaced by the cynical halo of the purple and gray of a "has been."

I see myself as others see me, then I yearn to tear something. In such moments of desperation I rend with much violence the three little sprigs of hair which fringe my glossy pate.

I seize my bucket and sponge and sob myself to sleep—unless I can get my hands onto a champagne bucket, then I put myself to sleep, just the same.

What I am now trying to figure out is, what is that spirit which never wears out nor grows old, but remains always vigorous, to torment, tease, and laugh at the broken old husk of a body which has spent its vitality in a whirl before it gets on to the true purpose of life?

Why does it bob up, every now and then, to give us the "willies" and make us wish we had never been born?

All of my former companions in "social foolishness" are, like myself, *passé*, therefore I can indulge in this my last foible without suits for "damages," "promise of marriage," or "alienation of affection"—I have had more than my share of these inevitable luxuries.

I am convinced the latter cause is an absolute

fallacy in all cases, and only useful to fatten the fee boxes of impecunious lawyers.

Alas, poor me! Hell is located right here, near "Haversac." The period when one breaks in is when he discovers himself to be an old *roué*, wholly and irrevocably out of the game. Then retrospection opens up a vista of a past heaven which makes the present a perfectly well-regulated antithesis.

Of all the sights a sinner can see
Is to see himself as he is,
And contemplate the frightful fate
That soon his hide will siz
For the deeds of crime,
Over years of time,
He has committed to wriggling rhyme,
While his head was befuddled with fiz.

This is positively my last effort. It makes me sick at the stomach to think back over the old "tow-path," when the sweet alder-bush grew where Sherry now "cops the coin," and the cheerful buck-wheat cakes seemed to grow on the bushes out at "Aunt Jane McCormick's" Harlem farm. Only the very old timers remember back this far.

But, "what's the use?"—this is not my purpose.

I desire to sacrifice myself; make of myself a "horrible example" to younger men just starting into the whirl. I admit I should like to be that myself again. I could do better with another try.

Thanks to a robust constitution and a manly determination to live down the past,—after finding myself getting too old to carry a load,—I survive

to tell this horrible "nightmare." Horrible, because I know I am wide-awake and it is the real thing. "My bolt is shot."

Well, I am no saint, although I am sorry that I was so great a sinner. However, I am mean enough to say I can gloat over my own "cussedness" and "misery," because in telling of them I can get even with some of the "he and she fiends" who "help Satan some." Moreover, these are things they can not take from me.

They took my heart and bumped it about like a borrowed umbrella.

They took my money—but never mind, I had my fling. There is no kick coming on that score.

I was always called a "game loser," whatever that means; thousands of men have gone broke or to jail because they were "game losers" and "good fellows." I suppose I am bound for the "Old Johnnys' Rest," which should be next to—any old place.

But I am going to give some of my "lady friends" (?) a jolt.

I am going to remind a few of those "butterflies" who fluttered about my "light" that they were not the only "human cherries" in the bottle. They all played me false! I knew it, but, the dear irresponsible things, if we vulgar men would not set the bad example, and let it "get out," they would be truer and better "playthings" and more worthy of life companionship.

Cut out the gush! Well, I can not help it;

there is a time for remorse, and it is no respecter of person.

It is when we sit and pick at the wrinkles on the face and hands, or rub our rheumatic or gouty joints, that remorse, regret, and sorrow seize us, and shake us, like old-fashioned "buck ague."

I sit thinking of those "rosy days" and my telephone rings. "Hello!" A familiar voice, by Jove! "Is that you, Johnny, old boy?" comes trickling down the wire like a basket of broken glass.

There is something dangerously familiar about it, notwithstanding the husky, raspy tones.

"Yes, this is I. What is this, pray? Pardon me, I mean who is this?"

"Why, you fickle old jade, you have even forgotten my voice," comes another basket of "stage glass."

In sheer desperation, I make a guess: "O; it's you, Gracie; pardon me, the 'phone is not talking well to-day. It must have been up on Broadway too late last evening. Ha, ha! How are you, girly, anyway? Ha, ha! I'm very glad to see you."

"Well! I like that," comes an ominous rumble over the trembling 'phone. "Gracie! No, this is not Gracie! This is Florence."

"O, forgive me, Florence." Who the devil is Florence, anyway?

"Why, of course, old chap. I'm only here for a few days, and felt I could take the liberty of calling you up once more, for old times' sake, eh?"

The same old story. The same old stunt. Let the asbestos curtain drop right here. That "once

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more, for old times' sake," has made many men and good women go batty once too often—there are no good men.

Florence must line up with the balance of the derelicts. I was the "derelict," however. She jilted me for no good cause. I wanted to marry her. I wanted to marry all of them, at some stage of the game, as far as that was concerned.

In fact, there was a period in my life when I thought to be a full-fledged Mormon was about the next thing to being the Sultan of Morocco, but with less real responsibility.

That day is passed. No good woman will marry me now, which is another cause for shame and remorse.

I started to tell my life story, but the "old lights" seem to flare up, and in the fluttering glare I look again into the past—that period of "old Delmonico and respectable lush."

Every man should be compelled by law to drown himself at fifty, or lose himself, to make room for the younger set.

Those "mangy old maudles" used to "make me sick." I attribute my chronic liver trouble to an uncompromising antipathy for the gray and purple old "has beens" who used to butt in and make my life miserable. They are always infested with that most disgusting of all the vile habits indulged in by coarse, vulgar men, "chronic ogle," or "evil eye." Thanks to the fact that self-respecting women loathe such creatures, but few men, young or old, will allow

themselves to be caught thus insulting women, and these few sooner or later feel the sting and swish of a pliable cane, the ire of an old-fashioned magistrate, or the door out of public places at the end of an unyielding brogan.

Discriminating magistrates never punish a man for thrashing a "masher." By a "masher" I mean the "puppy-witted fellow" who insults every woman he sees, with his persistent, impudent stare, in the belief that he can attract her attention and rake up an acquaintance which he is too low and vulgar to seek by legitimate introduction. He may be of any age.

The old fellows are not necessarily mashers. They have known so many people in their day they only have to stand around and try to brush up with the younger set. This is what makes them odious. They spoil the legitimate fun of others who are in their prime.

I admit it! I admit it! I, myself, played along the "frilled edges" some years after my legitimate time. I make due apology.

But who knows where the dropping off time comes? We are not always "as young as we feel."

And what are you going to do with the "old cubs?"

I say "colonize" them. Why not? Surround them only with their kind—the "has beens."

Call it the "Has Beens' Home," or some other appropriate name describing the purpose, like "The Old Johnnys' Rest," or the "Oglers' Roost."

I have something to be thankful for. I discovered the limit in time to regale myself with a little innocent sport at the expense of those who gave me the merry ha, ha! at times when I was doing my best to amuse and edify them.

I shall not spare the lash for those fickle little wretches who used to "eat me up" to-night and then let me see them "maudlin" with Tom, Dick, or Harry the next evening.

They rubbed it into me, bless their wicked souls. Now my time is come, and I'm going to rub mine in with a wire brush.

I hate a fickle jade as much as she adores a prosperous "Johnny."

I was exceedingly impressionable when in my prime. I quickly got in love, and it clung to me like malarial fever. When I was in love I "ran to poetry" like a June-bug runs to a corn-flower.

I was in love so much it became chronic, and I have never been able to boil the "poison" out of my system. It will break out on the slightest provocation, or the sight of a provokingly pretty woman.

My "mental jags" took grotesque turns. Sometimes my effusions would stick, at other times they wouldn't, consequently I could never tell positively, in advance, whether it would be a "suit for damages," one for "breach of promise," or just a plain "cuddle," with no earthly hope of breaking it off without breaking my neck.

Well, I must confess it, although I blush for my humiliation, this went on for years, before I tumbled

to the fact that I was the victim of my own conceit, and that I was at no stage of the game "the only swallow in the chimney."

There was that inevitable "lobster," with money, with his two per cent for cash charm, his red "gent's tie," his "tan shoes," and squawky clothes, his big cigar, and plethoric purse.

He is only one of the "fifty-seven varieties of human pickles" that butt in and make life miserable. He puts a commercial value on the sweetest sentiments of life.



That inevitable lobster with money.

He takes the sentiment and romance out of the pretty things by his vulgar methods, yet mighty few of the ladies can resist falling a victim to him when he starts after them with his money-baited hooks.

The humble "Johnny," with one bottle of wine in sight at a time, looks puny—and sober—by the side of a "bulgy man" with a lot of "friends" and a

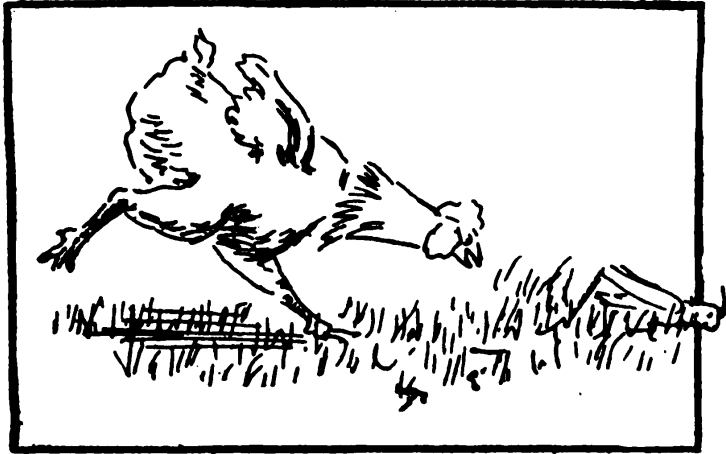
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tub full of ice, out of which may be seen sticking the cold noses of a "dozen quarts."

It is this which arouses the instinct of murder and causes us to lie awake at night devising refined methods of torture for such individuals, and incidentally for the pretty flirt who has deserted you for him. She, in fact, was the first cause of it all. When she looks up to him she passes out of her class and joins the ranks of "Mr. Puddinhead John-sing."

My hour of revenge has come, and I gloat, actually gloat, over the possibility of hurting—something. No! on sober second thought I do not mean that. I would not for a world of money hurt any of my dear old chums and partners in the "social whirl." They will doubtless laugh with the balance of the world over my grumpy "squeal," and say, "O, he's only a colicky old has-been."

In fact, I do not wish or desire to hurt any one. My sole purpose is to present, in a spicy way, the things which are carelessly done by the smart people which could as well be left undone without detracting from the real, substantial pleasures of living.



"Oh, the delights of the chase!"

CHAPTER I

THE PASSIONS OF THE CHASE

Were it a crime to love, all nature would be in jail more than half the time.

In the cramped environs of European cities the bright-eyed gazelles hunt men.

In the wilds of the United States there are certain centers called cities. Men gather here and club each other for dollars.

When they get sore or tired they hunt or fish for other game. The chief hunting grounds are called "seaside resorts," "health resorts," "pleasure re-

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sorts," or such fancy names as will gloss over their exact purpose.

Whether hunting or fishing, those who love the chase use "doughnuts" for sinkers and dollars for bait.

Politicians make the laws to suppress what they call vice in the cities and go to these "rests" to "recuperate" and indulge in those things prohibited at home by their own laws.

Preachers hand wrathful sermons to their congregations on Sunday and are "put on the carpet" on Wednesday for "chasing" one of the "leading members of the congregation."

Oh, the delights of the chase!

By the chase I mean that keen instinct which wants zest to tincture the labors of getting those things which add spice and flavor to our too monotonous life.

The hungry bird will rip and tear his feathers, fluttering through the shrubbery in chase of a gaudy butterfly.

A lumbering "cochin-china rooster" will jump out of a tub of oats up to his neck, and tear down half the garden fence, in chase of a big green and yellow grasshopper, just like a hungry Johnny chases a pretty chorus girl in a big green hat. They both want to eat the game from the standpoint of gush and sentiment.

A dog will jump off a seven-story building to chase a cat.

But these are only modified forms of the chase to

prove the hereditary tendency for human beings to go on the hunt, like other carnivorous animals.

"Johnny" knows the real thing. He goes after big game, the "tigress." He chases the "cat" some, too, and very often catches one—to his sorrow.

Some of his game can not be caught with dollars. Like Johnny himself, they seek the high-keyed pleasures of living—and find what they, for a time, think is the real thing.

You who have not tasted of the unalloyed pleasure and joy of capturing a sweet maiden who has been making "goo-goo eyes" at you for a week, know not the purpose of living.

You who have tasted of the utter disgust at finding the fair deceiver with whom you have been flirting, at the window across the street, for weeks, is a warty old hen of fifty, are too stingy to go to a pawn shop and buy a battered old pair of field-glasses with which to regale your idle hours and incidentally watch "the enemy."

You who have not worried yourself into a lather because the pretty woman in the next chair to you on the railroad train seems so contented when you "know" she is pining for some one to entertain her, would freeze to death in—well, almost anywhere.

You who have not waited patiently for five hours for the comb to be jostled out of her back hair so you might butt your brains out grabbing for it, so she would laugh, thank you profusely and "break the ice," have never known the excruciating anxiety of such trying ordeals.

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You do not know the trials and hardships of a "chaser."

Johnny is not that sort of a chaser, however.

I remember when a lad I had grown to that abnormal size when I was permitted to go into the forests alone with a gun.

My first big duck hunt was a lesson which I did not recognize until late in life.

It was on a chain of small lakes. There were four in the party. Each took his stand at a certain point on the lakes and we were to shoot the ducks back and forth to each other. That is, as they would alight one would get his shot and the poor frightened ducks would fly to the next lake, and so on, only to be filled full of shot again, until they could not tell whether their craws were full of wild rice or lead.

I was stationed at the head of the chain, and in a little while the firing began, and "practice proved the theory," for the ducks came flocking into the waters about me.

My first thought was, "how much prettier and more interesting a live duck is than a dead one," and I fell to watching them. "They were too cunning for any use." I forgot all about my gun and I was soon literally surrounded by ducks. They saw me, and at first rose out of the waters, circled around and lit again until they concluded I was harmless, then they came almost to the very edge of the water, some having the audacity to examine me critically with their heads cocked on the side,

like I have seen some women's hats look—after the second cocktail.

All at once it occurred to me that I was neglecting my duty as a mighty hunter, and I started to reach for my gun. No, I would not abuse such confidence. I was being much more amused by watching their graceful antics than I would be by killing them. I had a bully afternoon, but killed no ducks.

Every person believes he has an occasional dream which is a premonition of good or evil. I believe in it myself. Singular to say, when I dream of watching ducks at play in the waters, something good happens to me; but when I see them shot to pieces on the surface of the water, evil is pending.

The lesson which grew out of this experience is the best I have ever learned from nature.

Boys, sit still and "watch the ducks play." If you do this they will get so gentle and confiding they will come and "play wis you."

Don't chase them away. Don't hurt them. They fear the hunter's tread and they don't like to be chased. They are better alive than dead.

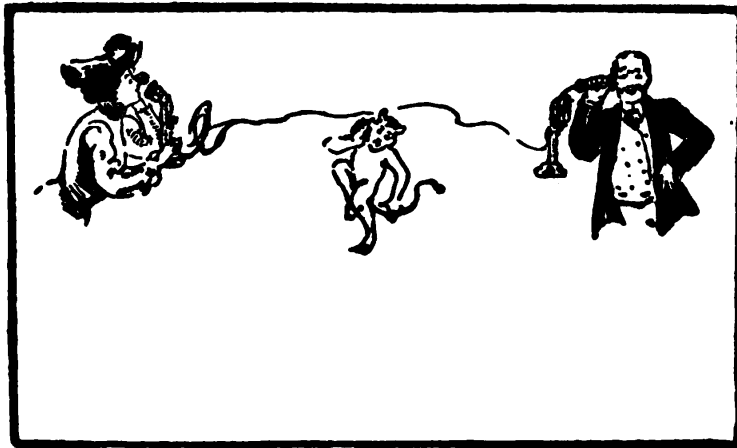
Did you ever pay fifty cents and sit for two hours, thoroughly entertained, in "Hagenback's animal show?" What was the enduring lesson you learned? I'll venture to say it was that the master of wild animals who used "kindness" and "gentle suasion" gave a better show, and his animals seemed to be brighter, cleaner, and better tempered than was the

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case of the trainer with a "big stick," who bribed his animals with bits of "raw meat."

We are all but modified forms of these same animals. Those who must master and control the others can get much better results by using kind, gentle methods.

If we are each other's legitimate game, I can say to both men and women, the "chaser" is not the hunter to whom we give our best confidence.



"Once more, Chappie, for old times' sake."

CHAPTER II

FLORENCE

That same wily Florence did "back up," after ten years of desuetude, and crack the telephone with, "Once more, Chappie, for old times' sake."

I, like a blank fool, did, and it cost me the last fifty I had in my seedy clothes. My rent was due; I owed my tailor, cabby, and boots, and every other menial down the line.

After that night I was ashamed to look myself in the face, and I bought a safety razor so I could shave in the dark.

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Well do I recall the first time I ever saw Florence. A looker! Well, you never saw anything just like her.

The sun went out of business when the radiant creature was covered only by the canopy of heaven—she could seldom boast of being covered by much else, after sunset.

Subsequently I have thought the sun took refuge behind the world to blush, but then I was enamoured of the effulgence of fair women in evening gowns. I did not know their satin skins were stuffed, mainly with "lobster" and "cotton," after the "pickle bristles" had been singed off.

Florence was a night owl. She could put the whole bunch into a trance, and bob up as fresh as a daisy the next morning, at ten o'clock, looking for a "hungry breakfast"—her breakfast usually cost as much as an ordinary dinner.

Her father must have been a hod-carrier, for she was as robust as a bullock.

Well, I was something of a "husky buck" myself then and took it upon myself to give Florence the "hypnotic eye" upon the occasion of our first meeting.

She gave me the "cheerful response" and I won out, or rather "in."

The other fellows took a side step when I came into the bunch where Florence was regaling them with "violet odors" and "sweet smiles." She had the art of smiling down pat. One particular "cork screw" smile of hers just set me crazy.

There is no denying the truth. Florence did have that "takey" something about her that made one love her, even after he had found her pretty hooks fumbling about in his vest pocket.

Not until I had cut my wisdom teeth did I learn that most of the aforesaid "side steps," on the part of the other chappies, were considered "life savers." Some of the "wise guys" were on. I was a lobster. Who ever heard of a lobster getting on to anything but a hot griddle?

My first real hit with Florence—she hit me several times for loans of \$10, \$20 and even \$100—was when I began to shoot "poetry" at her. Every time I got in love those days I took to poetry.

I can hear a suspicious gurgle in my heart as I repeat the first lines I sent to her. I loved her dearly. As far as I knew she was a respectable, spirited woman.

A LOVE SONG TO FLORENCE

I LOVE YOU

Tell me not in mournful numbers
 Life is but an empty dream,
 And that all these pains and pleasures
 Are not what they really seem.
 All may not be gold that glitters,
 All that's said may not be true,
 But there's one thing true forever—
 I love you!

Kingly crowns may turn and tarnish
 And their gold may turn to dross;
 Every pain must have its pleasure,
 Every profit has its loss;

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We grow used to disappointments,
And our pleasures are but few.
My greatest pleasure has no sorrow—
I love you!

The face of nature may be altered,
Nature's laws may change their course,
Lakes and rivers lose their waters,
Wind and tide may lose their force.
The moon may cease to lift the darkness,
Stars may fall from heaven's blue,
But there's one thing lives forever—
I love you!

Our souls are often racked with sorrow,
Hearts are often torn with pain,
Our lives may soon be cast asunder,
Ne'er to tell our loves again.
Cherished hopes are often shattered,
Dreams of love may not come true,
But there's one thing fixed forever—
I love you!

The very next day she struck me for a loan of two hundred dollars, when I didn't have two hundred cents to my name. It was a very good try out. I told her frankly how badly off I was and she squeezed my hand and said, "Never mind, we'll get along all right." The poetry had jarred her heart a bit.

She got the money somewhere. I never found out where.

This could not last long, however. She was not made for a poor man. She asked for ten. I couldn't make good, and she never forgave me for my "impecuniosity," as she called it.

She never knew that I had been sued that day

by a little, pot-headed tailor, on 18th Street, for my last pair of trousers.

Farewell, Florence! I forgive you. It was a hot bout while it lasted. You did get a twist in the pucker string of my heart sure enough.

I survived, but it was a long time before I could distinguish between my heart and "a coil of rope."

It was not your fault, Florence, that I recovered. You knew how sincere my love was for you, and you "threw me down," knowing how it would hurt.

I hope your soul may be as husky as your body. Peter will have a good, hard tussle to keep you out if it is.



"My life was no longer lonely."

CHAPTER III

CLARA

After my convalescence—I always had a hard spell of sickness after each "throw down"—I ventured to go to Coney Island for recuperation. It was a great resort at that time.

I had not been there two hours when, radiant as the sun, there loomed up before me a combination of all that was sweet and lovely, Clara.

I got a new dent in my heart, sure enough, when Clara came into my "lonely life."

My life was no longer lonely.

My longing for something to make me forget the past was appeased. It was not long before I would have given much to forget the present. I could read my future without the aid of a clairvoyant.

It took all the police of Coney Island to get her off of me when she decided to give me the "razzle dazzle."

I only wrote her one small verse, but she misunderstood it. I didn't mean it the way she took it, and I am sorry I ever sent it to her, even now, for I have never found a dentist who could successfully replace the teeth she broke off when she struck me with the knob of her umbrella—the three gold teeth, which look like a "pawn broker's sign," are they, two above and one below.

After hitting me, she wept, but I had her arrested nevertheless.

Well, they let her go when she pulled my poetry, and it took some tall begging to keep that bald-headed, blear-eyed, addle-pated justice from soaking me; but I have since thought, possibly he was right.

Coney Island lost its charm for me.

The innocent jingle which caused all the trouble, and the loss of Clara, not speaking of my three beautiful teeth, was the following:

ONE BIG DIMPLE

To count all the dimples in her chin and her cheeks
Would keep one counting for weeks and weeks,

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I tell you the truth, I couldn't keep track
Of all the funny dimples in her fat little back.
Her hands are full of dimples, so are her feet,
Which you can't finish counting unless you cheat.
There are dimples on her fingers, dimples on her toes,
And dimples everywhere, except on her nose.
There isn't a mole, a scratch or a pimple,
But wherever you look, you find a dimple.
To count all her dimples isn't so simple,
So I just say: "Dolly, you're one big Dimple."

I afterwards learned that she thought these lines reflected on her character, but she had forgotten that I had seen her in evening gown and ultra-smart bathing suit, which gave me the license of the poet.



"I would not forget if I could."

CHAPTER IV

HELEN

After my thrilling encounter with Clara, at Coney Island, I had "nightmare" for a month.

Singular to say, I found myself eyeing, suspiciously, every woman carrying an umbrella. I hated the things. I gave my own to the janitor of my apartment, and I locked myself in my rooms on rainy days.

Clara's was a deadly weapon. It was an iron ball concealed in a dainty enamel of porcelain.

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I clung to Fifth Avenue for some time. I could stand things off better, here, about my old stamping-grounds.

I might as well have remained at Coney Island, for it was on Fifth Avenue I met Johnny Mayberry. He introduced me to Helen, and blacked my eye the next day, because she "cuddled" to me.

I went out of town for a week to recover, during which time I got one on Johnny by bombarding Helen with poetry and getting her solid.

At first I had no intention of making up to Helen, because of the code of ethics governing well-regulated, self-respecting "Johnnys."

This code is more stringent than that of "honor among thieves," because no gentleman will deliberately take another's girl away from him; but Johnny Mayberry was not a gentleman. He not only made me angry with him when he blacked my eye, but he lost the respect of Helen, and, as subsequent events proved, made her my friend for life.

My first effusion to Helen ran like this:

NATURE BEQUEATHED LOVE TO YOU

Love was born in the sparkling dew,
In the blooming meadows, where the bluebells grew.

 In Love's sweet thrill
 Nature made her will
And bequeathed this love to you.

When you go, the sad winds sigh,
Growing weaker and weaker till they die.

 They are whispering low
 Their tale of woe
To all that is passing by.

In another moment of ecstatic aberration I dashed off these lines, believing they would surely make Helen mine for life. I did want to marry her, at this time.

I SEE YOU EVERYWHERE

When wandering in the meadows,
I am thinking then of you,
And I see your face reflected
In each drop of dew.
In the fragrant roses
I see your ruddy cheek,
Everywhere I turn my gaze
I see the face I seek.
In the bending willow
I see your graceful form,
And in each thing of beauty
I see a borrowed charm.
Borrowed from the only thing
That nature made so fair,
That when I seek your lovely face,
I see you everywhere.
From you they stole their beauty,
From you they took their charms;
They would take you wholly,
But, they have no arms.

To make a very sad story short, a watery-eyed old cock from Milwaukee, with "money to burn," blew into town, and didn't do a thing but "buy" Helen.

Some years later some interesting ass called my attention to the fact that Helen was happy and had a number of little "watery-eyed cocks" tugging at her apron strings. Then, in a spirit of pure, un-

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adulterated cussedness, I wrote her the following unkind, ungentlemanly screed:

Helen was fickle,
She married a pickle,
Shedding never a sigh or a tear.
She thought it was funny
To jilt a poor Johnny
For a bottle of blue-ribbon beer.

He came from Milwaukee,
His clothes were squawky,
His manners were noisy and rash;
He thought it so funny
To squander his money,
He bought fickle Helen for cash.

When Helen got busy
She made him so dizzy
He couldn't tell his feet from his face.
Now a house full of tots
Like blue-ribbon "bots"
Are rolling all over the place.

No one ever knew how near I came to jumping off Brooklyn Bridge upon receiving from the dear girl the following generous reply:

"My Dear Johnny:

"I must, in justice to myself, answer the unkind missive you recently addressed to me.

"That it was penned unthoughtedly, I am willing to believe, for I remember one other little verse which you once gave to me—one which I shall always cherish. It has never left a little locket I wear.

"Bless those sweet days, when you and I were friends. We were so thoughtless, yet I would not forget them if I could.

"I am contented. I have a happy family—a good husband and three sweet, rosy children, two boys and one girl, named Helen.

"If you should ever come to this delightful German city, I and my good husband shall be delighted to offer you the hospitality of our home.

"Believe me, I hold your memory only in the warmest place in my heart, where I keep my buried treasures.

"Love and duty are two entirely different things.

"Yours sincerely,

"HELEN."

This was the hardest bump against my sense of self-respect I had ever had. It gave me a true insight to the woman I had lost. She was a treasure.

I searched for the little verse to which she referred, and at last found it to be one which I had secretly given to many others, only changing the color of the eyes to green, blue, gray, etc., etc., to suit the emergency.

In Helen's case it was brown.

SONG

I looked into her great brown eyes,
An hundred fathoms deep.
I saw the passion slumbering there
Awaken from its sleep.
From out her snowy bosom
She plucked a Cupid's dart,

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And those eyes were laughing
 As she stabbed me in the heart.
I bade her leave the arrow there
 If it were her sweet will,
And though she stabbed me o'er and o'er,
 I'd love those brown eyes still.



She was a Spanish beauty.

CHAPTER V

MADALINE

It took me a long time to fully recover from the jolt Helen gave me.

My doctor nearly scared me into the grave-yard by telling me that I had incipient pulmonary trouble. He prescribed "California."

The evening before my departure for the land of gold coin and grapes I enjoyed a little dinner at Delmonico's with a select party of friends.

In the party was a little, dried-up-herring of an

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old-maid, rich as cream, but ugly enough to break the face of a town clock.

She was always intruding herself upon me, but, being too self-respecting to marry a "curio" and linger in the lap of luxurious pensionary, I repulsed her.

She was unusually intrusive and affectionate this evening.

She insisted that I write a verse for her on one of the pretty musical programs.

Fearing that she might use it as evidence against me, I departed from my usual themes and wrote her the following lines appropriate to the occasion:

HO! FOR THE WEST

Ho! for the West, the glowing West,
Over the billowing sands.
The star of empire follows the trail
Of the pioneer bands.
Down the slope, the golden slope,
Into the plunging sea,
Onward moves deluded man
In search of a land of the free.

The next few days I spent in travel.

I advise all weak, "namby-pamby" and chicken-hearted men to cut out California, with its languid, amorous climate.

I had hardly struck the State line when I felt it coming on. In a month, I had them galloping after me in droves. They worried me more than the mosquitoes and buffalo gnats.

Holy Gee! It gives me cold feet to this day to think of it.

California! No more for me. Coney Island is good enough for me in a pinch.

My unfortunate experience in the sun-kissed land of "chicory" and "cheap wine" would befuddle a Philadelphia lawyer.

It was "Madaline" I met in California; a dark, creamy, Spanish girl; a regular gipsy-queen in appearance and temperament. She was fearfully jealous and fiery in her nature.

I was afraid of her from the very beginning, but I couldn't let go. She had me hypnotized. I am willing to swear I didn't take her, she took me.

I saw I could only take one safe jump to escape her, and that was to "jump off the earth."

I thought seriously of running away in a fishing smack, but upon looking at this craft I wilted. It smelled too much like Fulton Market, where I used to go to get oysters by the gallon.

In spite of it all, she was truly great, in her way. Rich, self-possessed, and usually possessed of whatever she desired to call her own.

I did have many exquisite hours with Madaline, notwithstanding the tragic ending of our affair.

It took two years for me to shake off the habit of looking behind me when going out after dark alone.

I do believe she was a member of the "Mafia."

Madaline wanted me to marry her and be respectable.

The slightest intimation on my part of any other sentiment would almost cost me my life.

She believed all of my gush, and her passionate nature nailed it to her heart in a way to make it dangerous at times.

Anything she wanted to do was usually backed up by a vigor which no one dared to dispute or oppose.

At an inopportune moment, when I was feeling quite affectionate toward my Spanish beauty, I dashed off the following lines and sent them to her. I surely was momentarily crazy, knowing what I did. It carried her clear off her feet. She wanted me to flee with her at once to some lonely island, where we might gorge ourselves.

TO MY GIPSY QUEEN

Far away in the sun-kissed lands
Where the sky is ever blue,
Where the ocean plays with the shifting sands,
And tints the endless view ;
Where the white-winged gull swoops down to the sea
And greets his downy mate,
And the snowy billows, bounding free,
Roll in through the golden gate,
There, 'neath the leaves of the climbing rose,
With the sunbeams stealing through,
Is a beautiful woman in sweet repose,
Dreaming of love that is true ;
Dreaming of the day that is drawing near,
When, folded in her lover's arms,
She will listen to the songs of the one so dear
For whom she is saving her charms.

It was next to impossible for me to leave her long

enough to shave after that. She followed me as far east as Denver, and there, at night, thinking it was I, she assaulted a man, nearly killing him before finding out her mistake. She was "pinched."

I was kind enough to myself to jump the town that night.

I never heard from her again. I don't want to hear from her.

If my body is ever found much mutilated with pistol wounds or dagger stabs, look for Madaline. You will find her very shoes soaked in my gore.



I was deeply embarrassed.

CHAPTER VI

CORA

I had quite a hard spell after losing out on Madeline. The doctor called it "malarial fever," but I knew better. I had had it so often that I always found some of my medicine about some place, left over from the last spell.

When I felt it coming on I took some of the "left-over dope."

There was something stale in that decoction, for when I was able to "sit up and notice things a bit,"

I was horrified to find I had turned as yellow as a ripe pumpkin—even the whites of my eyes had turned a saffron hue.

Casting about to find a mineral spring to fade or bleach a jaundiced pumpkin, I heard of a place in the Hoosier State, called “West Baden Springs”—“guaranteed to raise the dead or money refunded.”

I went there, much to my disgust, and in some respects to my discredit.

The water is all right, wonderfully efficacious for my kind of trouble—that is, the yellow part of it.

I must admit, physically, it made a new man of me; but for moral reasons it should be put under martial (not marital) law.

For the sake of future generations, busy husbands who cannot accompany their “sick” (?) wives to West Baden Springs should chip in and enjoin its being put on the maps, in order to lose it.

It is the limit in more ways than one.

I had to wear goggles, while there, to keep the cockroaches out of my eyes.

And ants! Great Bulger! All the ants in the world have found their way to West Baden. A few scraggly bunches may be found at other places, but you will find their trend always toward West Baden.

You not alone have them in your soup and your pie, but you awaken each morning to find your head alive with them.

On the tip end of each individual hair of your head is an ant, waving his six arms to his neighbors.

I tried to interpret the signal code, but could not make it out. It was more difficult of interpretation than the "wig-wag code of the bath-room shutters" of the hotels at Atlantic City.

Like the historical "cascarets" they "work while you sleep," building their snug little nests in your ears and eyebrows.

I took up two studies while at West Baden. Natural history—ants and cockroaches; and human nature—widows.

There were fifty-seven varieties of the former and six hundred kinds of widows.

Some appreciation of the dangers of sojourning there over night may be had by the following snatch of conversation, overheard on the hotel veranda.

Stout gent, there to take off flesh (speaking of the widows in general, and one just passing in particular): "You must know them to appreciate them. Now there goes one, for instance. She grows on one."

Cadaver, there to take on flesh (in alarm): "By Jove! I should hate to wake up and find that thing growing on me. I'd mighty soon have it amputated, if I never recovered from the operation. Better dead without, than alive with that hanging to you."

That was the average conversation. Yet, in spite of it all, I got a hot touch of the old disease. Cora was her name.

I met her at "No. 5," purely accidental, for "No. 5" was for inebriates only.

Cora did not belong to the apple family, although she was both "Cora" and "Seedy." She was a peach in all other respects.

Cora's wardrobe was both limited and plain, as I had reasons to know.

The fool who in a fit of insanity leaps into a raging whirlpool—two feet deep—and saves the life of a "drowning maid," as homely as a sausage, is to be pitied; but when a man deliberately throws himself in the way of what I ran up against! Well, he is plain "bug house," and should be locked up for life.

Cora rambled in the woods, and in one of my fits of mental aberration I spouted to her as follows:

TO CORA

Come with me into the deep woodlands, where the wild rose, the honeysuckle and the jasmine vie with each other, which can most fill the air with sweet fragrance. Listen to nature's lullaby. Each zephyr is laden with gentle caresses; each breeze whispers sweet love stories. Listen to the song of the mother bird as she cradles her nestlings to sleep on the swinging bough. Listen to the cheerful chirrup of the cricket as he sings his constant song. The nimble squirrel barks his protest against the intrusion upon his forest fastness.

Come there with me, where Nature's carpet, woven in brightest colors, with each figure a fragrant flower, and the soft green moss as a woof, prevents discordant sounds as our footsteps intrude upon the silent song of mirth and revelry surrounding us—there will I teach you what love is. I will sing to you a song of the heart and these will be the words:

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(SONG)

I love thee, fairest woman,
More than words of song can tell.
I will let my heart's voice tell thee
That I love thee and how well;
I will let my heart's voice, etc., etc.

You ask me why I love thee.
Love hath no reason to give.
I only know that I love thee
And that to love thee I live;
I only know I love thee, etc., etc.

Look into mine eyes, dear,
And see the love-light beaming,
Awaiting the rapturous waking
Of a heart that lies a-dreaming;
Awaiting the rapturous waking, etc., etc.

Life is not worth the living
Without thy presence and love.
To have thee and keep thee forever
I'd forfeit the heavens above;
To have thee and keep thee, etc., etc.

Come, fly with me to the woodland,
To live there forever in bliss,
Where Cupid has built us a bower,
Binding each tie with a kiss;
Where Cupid has built us, etc., etc.

This is my song of love to thee always.

Well, she went—or rather, we went—up into that blamed “hickory-nut hollow,” above the hotel, where the bushes and shrubs have grown human in their instincts, having their hooks out for everything they can grab.

They didn't do a thing but grab Cora's walking skirt and pull it almost off her back, the nasty things.

Say! Why can't we turn off the sun with a button, like we can electric lights?

To say I was shocked is like saying to a man who has fallen into a coal hole and broken his leg, "You ought to be ashamed."

The laughing rills, tumbling down the hillside, just stopped "rilling" and held their "hillsides" with laughter.

I came within an ace of jumping over a hundred-foot precipice to hide my embarrassment.

This was not the worst part of the thrilling adventure. Not a hundred yards down the road a three-seated wagon came galloping toward us, just as though the people in it were on their way to some "polite vaudeville."

It was loaded to the brim with a very merry party.

With one final effort Cora ripped a few panels out of that skirt and rescued it.

The clever manner in which she got out of this embarrassing situation would have done justice to a Japanese juggler.

As the wagon went tearing by she manfully held the skirt in place with one hand while she saluted some acquaintances with the other, and the crowd was none the wiser. My heart was in my hat, fearing they might take it into their addle-pated heads to stop.

I assisted her, as best I knew how, to fasten it

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in a presentable manner, and by dint of pinning the ribs with thorns we got her together and back to her room.

Her cool head and sensible actions on this occasion made me her friend "for the balance of the meeting."

For two whole days she avoided me. This silent act was clever if she was only fooling.

By "accident" I confronted her in one of the narrow paths—all the paths are narrow at West Baden, and quite crooked.

"Why do you shun me?" I asked.

She looked down at the ground and actually blushed all down her pretty neck, then she poked holes in the gravel walk with the shepherd's staff which she carried in all her rambles, never once raising her eyes or speaking a word.

"It wasn't my fault," I blurted. "I've seen much worse on the stage."

She only twisted her body like a bashful girl, looked at me, and made a face.

I stood, punching the bark off a tree with my own stock. It looked for all the world like a lovers' quarrel.

For a few minutes we stood thus, neither looking at the other; then, as if by mutual consent, we strolled along the path together.

She was extremely pretty that morning. "Pluto" was getting in his work. I felt my old self for one fatal moment.

It was too late. She had won me. We were "off

in a bunch." From this day she clung to me like a gourd vine to a garden fence.

It was cheap and we stayed an extra week, cutting down our liquid rations, of course.

Not to tire the reader with "Cora," I will briefly relate the tragedy which separated us, and left me tangled in a psychological proposition to puzzle a Pythagoras.

I was much in love with Cora, and we spent many busy hours in the really romantic "hickory-nut hollow," where we made friends with the cunning squirrels which infested it.

Should these same little squirrels learn to talk English, I fear the consequences. There were many secret nooks where we could hide ourselves from view, yet see any one passing near by. We used to read aloud to each other in these cozy spots.

One morning I strolled into the woods quite early, long before Cora was in the habit of getting out of her snug bed.

Seated on a fallen tree I had aroused the curiosity of a squirrel and he ventured to come down the trunk of the tree till I could almost reach him.

So intent was I watching his funny antics I did not notice an approaching figure till it was quite close to my place of hiding. I at once recognized Cora. I was elated to see her alone, believing in my heart she was out searching for me.

I planned to give her a scare, therefore kept perfectly quiet, awaiting her approach.

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Presently I heard a low whistle and saw Cora stop and prick up her little ears.

Coming from the opposite direction I saw a man approaching, only a few paces away.

Cora looked furtively about, made one glad bound and landed plump into the arms of the big fellow, who lifted her off her feet like a baby as he hugged and kissed her to beat the band.

Holy Gee! what if I were discovered?

I shook in my shoes to think about it. He was as big as old John L. Sullivan and looked like a prize fighter.

I could almost reach out my arm and touch them as they seated themselves on a piece of the same tree where I was. She just leaned her pretty head right over on his shoulder, and he placed his arm around her in the most affectionate manner.

"Well, you little devil, what mischief are you in here?" he asked of Cora.

"None at all, I assure you, dear," she replied in a plaintive, weak voice; "but I have been so dreadfully lonesome. I could have drowned myself in 'Pluto Spring.' As it is, I have literally drunk myself into a stupor. I would pawn my shoes for a cocktail. We dare not drink anything while taking this water cure."

Then she snuggled. Wow! it makes me creep yet to think of it.

I was so insanely jealous I felt murder in my heart.

Her lover just put his beastly arms about her and gave her an immense squeeze.

It was apparent he was hugging the real thing. There could be no steel or other armor on that plump body. The little bunch of fat yielded and squeezed up into a ball like a fluffy kitten.

Cora had told me she lived in Cincinnati.

"When are you going home, girlie?" her fellow asked with an extra squeeze.

"Just as soon as you say you will be there, dear," she squeaked.

"Well," he said, "I shall run over to Cincinnati, Wednesday, and you can run up home on the same day. On Thursday I will take the Big Four at noon and arrive in Chicago at 8:40 that evening. Now don't you let a soul know you are coming. Meet me at the Northwestern Depot and we will run up to Milwaukee that night and take a peep at the old brewery." With this he gave her an immense hug.

"That's fine," she said, "but a bit risky, isn't it?" You know I am supposed to write home every day I am here. If I fail in this, the mischief will be to pay."

"I have thought of all that," responded "John L.," "that is why I am up at French Lick. I have a chum over there, and I will arrange with him to mail your letters to Chicago, then you can plump yourself home and the old lobster will never suspect anything, see?"

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Yes, she saw, and so did I.

At this juncture I felt something crawling up my leg. It felt about as long and as big as a shoe spoon. Yell, I dare not. Move, I could not, without betraying myself, which at this stage of the play would have been fatal.

I was in mortal fear of being bitten by some poisonous thing—a snake perhaps.

I took a death grip on my trousers leg, but the blame thing got out and ran higher. I grabbed frantically at him and slid half off the log. Finally I got a grip on him that held him down.

The perspiration stood out on my face as I wondered how long they would stay there, while probably I was already in the throes of a poisonous death.

I heaved a sigh as big as a ship's anchor when I saw them stroll off in the direction of West Baden.

I cautiously went after the intruder in my trousers and found him to be one of those little brown lizards, half as long as a lead pencil. I had mutilated him some, but turned him loose, with the admonition not to do so again. I was glad of the scientific fact that he could grow a new tail.

I took a short way and dallied for Cora, knowing he would "cut it" at some point this side of Baden.

I surely was born for a military strategist, for my maneuvers soon found the enemy cut off from his base of supplies, and I could see him, or rather the smoke from his big cigar, in full retreat toward French Lick.

Then I captured Cora without loss of life.

"Oh, how you scared me!" she exclaimed, as I pinioned her arms to her sides from behind.

"You are very naughty this morning," she said, as I gave her plump person a parting little squeeze. "Pray tell me where you have been so early in the day?" There was anxiety in her eyes.

"I missed you, dear,"—we were calling each other dear now,—“and fearing you might conclude to go up to French Lick and drown your sorrows in ‘Pluto,’ I came to look for you,” was my indiscreet rejoinder.

She looked a little startled, I thought, but after a searching gaze into my face she only laughed an amused little chuckle and started to walk on.

"Don't go in yet, Cora dear, will you?" I pleaded. "The morning is fine, and I want to talk to you."

"How did you know I was out?" she asked in a low, anxious voice.

"Very simple matter," I replied. "I saw the maid in your room as I passed through the hall."

This was a "white lie," but it seemed to partially appease her anxiety.

"Where have you been?" was her next question.

"See that rock up there?" I asked, pointing to a well known rock on the side of the hill. "I have been perched up there watching for you."

"Oh, how sweet of you!" she cooed, in a relieved and satisfied voice. The little devil, I could have drowned her!

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She poked her soft hand through my arm as we began climbing the hill to the very nook I had pointed out to her.

"I'll try her out to the limit," I thought to myself.

She is a double-dyed villain-ess, preying upon "innocent, susceptible men."

I was positive she had three on her fish line at this time—the fellow in Chicago, whoever he might be; the big duffer, and myself. The good Lord, who protects flirts, knows how many more she was deceiving.

Talk about men, a self-respecting man seldom has more than one on his string—at a time.

Reaching the cozy nook for which we were making, we seated ourselves upon a nice clean rock, very close together.

"Cora," I began, "isn't it funny, here I am calling you 'Cora' and 'dearie,' just as though I had known you for ages."

"Do I look that old?" she meekly inquired.

"But I have seen so much of you the little while I have known you," I continued.

I paused to speculate upon how she could summon that blush so easily. She was actually blushing red all down her pretty neck, her quick mind having surmised that I referred to the episode in "hickory-nut hollow."

I tried to draw her to me. I actually felt a desire to befriend her, even though I knew her to be a false, fickle jade.

She drew away, and suddenly turning upon me, with more spirit than I had ever before seen her display, she said: "I want to tell you a little story about myself. Will you listen to it?"

"Indeed, I will," I responded eagerly, feeling certain that the thoroughly bad creature was going to "string me."

"Well, I am not such a bad woman as you might think," she began, "and you do not seem to be a very bad man. I feel that I can confide in you. I am greatly tempted to do something which I fear would be the beginning of a bad ending. I am not a widow, but a married woman. My husband is a well-to-do Chicago lawyer. I married him against my will, when too young to resist my parents' urgent insistence. I do not love him. I do love another man, the one I would have married from choice. I know it is wrong, yet I suffer the greatest anguish in my desire to be with him. I have not done any serious wrong. My husband is a mean, sordid man, not cruel, but neglectful and indifferent, yet insanely jealous. He leaves me absolutely alone nine-tenths of the time. It almost makes me crazy. He will not permit me to make close friends to help break the monotony of my lonely life.

"Now I am going to tell you a real secret. My sweetheart is at French Lick Springs and I saw him this morning. That is why I was out so early this morning. He urges me to go to Milwaukee before returning home. Do tell me what to do. I am not responsible under such a temptation. I have an aunt

living there and by visiting her I have greater liberty."

"Great Scott!" I exclaimed to myself, "a good woman." This explains the blushes. By Jove! I would marry her myself had I the opportunity. I ought to be kicked for my unblushing conduct in "hickory-nut hollow." I did look at her through both corners of both my eyes. She was so attractive, I couldn't help it, but there was no necessity for my rubbing it in as I had just done.

I looked at the dejected attitude and said: "Well, girlie, I am worse than you have given me credit for being; but, by Jove, I am good enough to respect a good woman who is truthful. Many a good woman loves a man other than her husband. The law can say, you shall not live with a man other than your lawful husband, but it cannot prevent your loving your real affinity. Nature and safety must decide to what limit you may go. I do not believe one's conscience can prevent it if opportunity comes for two longing hearts to unite.

"I can not advise you. Follow the dictates of your own heart. It will tell you if the neglect at home, or the inharmony there, justifies your course. One thing I can tell you. If you starve your heart, you will kill your brain, humiliate your body, and insult nature."

She arose, smiled, held out her hand and said, "Let's go back."

Two days later she was gone, and I was the loneliest man at West Baden Springs.

Now, the question arises to haunt me, Did Cora see me in the old snugery in "hickory-nut hollow," after it was too late? And was she stringing me? Was this a clever piece of work or was she a good woman telling the truth, without a knowledge that I had overheard the conversation between her lover and herself?

I was so uncertain I came within an ace of experiencing a relapse of my old malady. She certainly was a lovable woman, though a bit seedy, possibly spending her own pin money to come here, really for her health.

I have a never-failing sign or symptom of real affection, a gurgle in my heart,—“mitral insufficiency,” the doctors call it,—when I think about those whom I have thought I loved. I always feel that symptom when I think of Cora, and wonder what was her fate.

How I do hate that place—West Baden. I went there to recuperate. My body did recuperate, but I had a sore heart for a month.

I cut back East as fast as my cash would carry me—I felt it running low with no one here I could tap.

Singular to say I was quite sober for some time after returning to New York.

The old places did not have the same charm for me.

The girls looked bleary and the men looked bad.

Even Johnny Mayberry had perceptibly retrograded, and he was considered the pink of perfec-

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tion by the colony of Johnnys infesting the "red light district" after decent people had been in bed for several hours.

I tried to settle an old score with him by steering him to West Baden, but he wouldn't.

Clarence Pierce was "it" just now, because of his capacity. He was as robust as a rhinoceros.

Perry Miller had married a pretty girl and settled down on Long Island.



Viewing the "piggy brat."

Joe Ebbett had married a fine Baltimore girl, as rich as cream, and he had worn grooves in his little perch, going to bed early.

Gee! the crowd that was left was certainly a "nawsty" one.

They were cutting the "good fellows" among the "home-grown" girls and taking on the brazen things being imported by the theatrical managers from the slums of London and Paris.

The "Johnnys" were going back fast.

The wily manager, in wig and spectacles, could tell the first night how much money 'his contract was worth by the actions of the "Johnnys" who came in at the time of the "special stunt" of the newly imported, usually a "piggy" little brat with a "big bosom" and "bulgy legs."

If the carefully recorded "conversation" was right, the "newly imported" could ride her bicycle into church the second Sunday.

If the "Johnnys" left before the stunt was finished, she was on a par with "Martin's imported sausages."

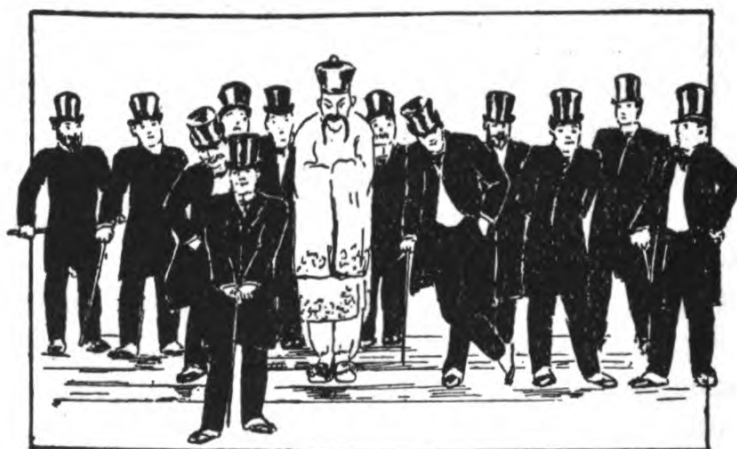
Johnny was the theatrical king in those days.

The newspapers would not take the "stuff" till Johnny had "blue penciled" or "ok'd" the "piggy brat."

It was all so disgusting, I had a wholesome respect for myself.

Great Scott! I did not know it, but this was the period when I was "flirting around the frilled edges" after my contract had expired.

These were the symptoms of my dotage and I was not aware of it.



"The dozen raw."

CHAPTER VII

THE HAPPY HOOLIGANS AND "THE DOZEN RAW"

It burdens my already overladen soul to find that, notwithstanding I have all of my wisdom teeth, thanks to the fact that the iron ball on "Clara's" umbrella was too large to be rammed down my throat, I am continually bumping up against certain fatalities which seem to be waiting for me to get into striking distance, that they may whack me in the weakest spot.

One particularly embarrassing and ambitious "freak of fortune" took a shy at me in a way I shall

not soon forget, and I shall here relate the circumstances as a warning to all men of the "Chesterfieldian type," that they must now go to night school and learn the new code of "safety manners for self protection."

If we would keep out of trouble ourselves, we must shut our eyes to the troubles of others.

There is much good philosophy in this. When thrown upon their own resources, women, and other things, are more on the alert not to drop their "packages" or let their "baby carriages" run into the gutter, to tempt willing passers-by to perform the "Happy Hooligan shuffle," contrary to the laws of nature.

We are all, more or less, Happy Hooligans at some time in our lives.

Every one of us may glance back over our zig-zag trail and pick out, here and there, quite convincing proof that "Happy Hooligan" typifies perfectly a trait common to most human beings.

The most distressing and embarrassing incidents of our lives were due to accident or unpremeditated error over which we had no control.

It is a law in human nature to throw a six-legged stool at the fellow mixing into other people's troubles.

Moral: Do as the policeman does, don't turn the corner until the trouble is over.

The soul-rending incident which caused the foregoing philosophy to germinate and blossom occurred

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on my way east from the "garden of the gods and widows," West Baden Springs.

As usual, I was cast for the star part and acquitted myself in favor of misfortune. I would not know how to take any incident that terminated wholly in my favor. It would be a "joke." I don't like jokes or jokers. I should certainly feel as though I had found something that did not belong to me and should expect some one to come and take it away from me.

While I have taken some things myself, the best things are always grabbed by some selfish loafer at the moment I am settled down to enjoy them.

I do not recollect the circumstance that caused the aberration of mind which made me purchase my ticket "via Cincinnati," but I have had stamped on all my cuffs in indelible ink, "never do it again." If I must go that way I shall get out at a sub-station and pass around the "dusky queen," even though I must carry my "saratoga" on my shoulders through Cumminsville, the home of all the bulgy policemen of Cincinnati.

There is a big sign stretched across a whole city block visible from the B. & O. cars which reads: "This way, sinners." A devil of a lot of sinners have followed this sign or else Cincinnati is an awfully wicked place.

By the use of a snow-plow and a search-light the engineer penetrated the gloom and re-discovered Cincinnati, which is located on the Ohio River,

"opposite Covington, Ky." On clear days it can be distinctly seen from the hill-tops, with the naked eye.

"Cincinnati! Cin-cin-nati! out this way!" called the porter, in stentorian tones, and everybody crowded up to that end of the car, each scowling at the other, because each thought that he had the right to get out first. I wonder why this is?

The porter, as usual, had blocked the way with a mountainous pile of "grips" and suit cases. What's the use of this? Why not let every fellow carry his own luggage to the door, there to be assisted down by the porter? The car could be emptied in half the time, because every fellow in the rear is dying to kick the fellow in front of him.

Like a pall of mourning, a cloud of smoke wrapped the station building as in the folds of a black blanket. It was depressing.

The trains pass into the station head on, then the passenger must walk the balance of the distance—to Cincinnati.

If it is a long train it seems about a mile to the gate! Every disgruntled passenger swears like a barn-storming "tie inspector."

I believe if a test case were made the railroad companies could be compelled to furnish "rolling chairs" for passengers put off in the yards, in which to continue the trip to the gates of the city.

I was to wait some hours in Cincinnati, therefore decided to do my best to get a glimpse of it.

Drifting out of the gate with the shuffling throng I looked about for a cab.

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A row of large vehicles stood backed up against the curb.

They were a cross between a "Jersey City ferry-boat" and a "Wanamaker delivery wagon," and each held about ten passengers.

The travelers were swarming into these vans, crawling over each other, trampling corns, stumbling over bags and cultivating "breathless profanity and facial contortion."

"He who hesitates is lost." I hesitated until the last seat was taken and found myself standing there, looking at empty space and listening to the "bum-bum" of a man in a restaurant door, beating a brass gong. I heard the same barbarian music at one time at either Kokomo or Kalamazoo, I forget which.

I was aroused by hearing a "rip-saw" voice grate into my ear, "Cab, sur?" It sounded like tearing a piece of cloth. "Whiskey gurgle" they call it.

He looked so much like a burglar that I was afraid to say no. I instinctively put my hand on my watch and followed him out of the car shed to what he called a "cab." Ugh! Murder! Help! Police! Of all the carriage outfits I have ever seen, that of Cincinnati puts to shame the very limit.

It is a wonder the city authorities would permit these "sea-going crafts" to be seen about public places. They certainly make a bad impression upon strangers coming into the city. They are filthy beyond description, and disreputable and dangerous

in every conceivable way. Disease lurks in every fold of the well worn and shabby upholstery.

The poor devils who doze away their lives "waiting for freight" look as though they might be capable of almost any crime, but driving a cab.

Eager-eyed, my "Jehu" pushed me into the dirty, greasy, malodorous box, slammed the drooping lid three or four times, mounted his box and up the hill we started, at a "snail's gallop."

I noticed he kept looking back toward the rear of the cab and I at once surmised that he had a "pal" lurking back there, "to slug" me when I alighted. Suddenly he stopped, jumped down from his box, ran back to one of the hinder wheels and gave it a furious kick, which suggested that the wheel might come off at any moment and the old "pill box" collapse under me.

I was actually afraid of his villainous face and dared not refuse to ride farther. I calculated upon making a spring from the vehicle in case of a breakdown. With this idea in mind I tried the door, to make sure that it would open easily. To my dismay I found no handle on it. I tried the other, and upon turning the broken handle the whole door dropped "down and out" at the top and hung flapping, by the lower hinge.

To save my life I could not make that lobster hear me, for the constant "dingdong" and preposterous "clanging" of immense gongs attached to the front ends of all the street cars. Consequently I was compelled to hold the blamed old door in place

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till we reached the St. Michael Hotel, a "brassy" little house, shining forth like a diamond in a coal pile.

It was only four squares from the station. I had not asked what his fee would be, therefore imagine my surprise when cabby released me, with my left arm almost paralyzed with holding the broken door, and said, "One dollar, please."

I seldom quarrel with such men, having long ago learned that it is not profitable and only makes one conspicuous and small.

I was provoked at this exorbitant hold-up, however, and looking at the fellow in disgust, I said, "How much for the whole outfit?" He never blinked an eye nor hesitated as he replied, "Seven dollars." I retorted, "Too high," and handed him the dollar. "Take it at five!" he yelled at me as, with a scornful laugh, he drove the "bean wagon" away.

Both sides of Fourth Street were crowded with people, all standing stiff, and quietly staring at the front of St. Michael's.

For anything to be quiet in Cincinnati is suspicious. It is the noisiest city in the world.

The street car gongs never cease their "nerve-racking clang" on this the principal thoroughfare. They make a very bedlam of the place.

Something was doing sure enough, for I noticed a "special trolley car" stop in front of the hotel, and twelve men alight therefrom.

They were all dressed exactly alike. Had it not

been for the heterogeneous mixture of size and facial characteristics, I could not have distinguished one from another.

Each tall hat was an advertisement for "Rising Sun Stove Polish" and a year out of date.

Each Prince Albert coat was undoubtedly the product of the same tailoring establishment, for they were all of the same material, the same length and about four inches shy of the fashion.

All wore light, striped trousers, apparently off the same piece of cloth, and too tight in the legs.

All wore black kid gloves.

Only in the color of their ties did they differ. The style ran from the narrow, old-fashioned, white string dress tie, to a dazzling red to bring a blush to the face of a horse.

"Funeral or pink tea?" I asked of the smart-looking porter at the door.

"O no sir," he answered, "it's the committee of 'prom'nent citizens' appointed by the Chamber of Commerce to entertain the Chinese Minister, who is here from Washington. You see it's this way, when a dignitary comes here the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Men's Club resolute and a committee of the 'best known citizens' is formed to 'boom Cincinnati' and do us proud."

"Why do they all dress so nearly alike; is this a uniform?" I meekly asked, wishing to learn all I could about the case.

"Well, you see, these men are all members of some political organization, like the 'Boom Club,' and

these suits are always convenient on such occasions, and when they have their annual parades; at least, that's how it appears to me."

With this wise statement the porter grabbed a bag from an incoming traveler and disappeared for a few moments.

Subsequent events proved that he had guessed the "exact number of beans in the bag," for I afterwards saw some of these same men, wearing the same identical clothes, in an inaugural parade on Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington, D. C.

I was glad to have the porter reappear. I wanted to question him more.

"Do they always select the same men to do this entertaining act?" I asked of him.

"Most always, it seems; at least, these same men have served so long they have been dubbed the 'dozen raw,' " he said, with a laugh.

Well, it was a mixture of "Blue Points" and "Lynn Havens," for when they stood about the little ones always seemed to pair off with the big ones. The similarity of dress made the comparison quite "Weber and Fieldish."

However, the "dozen raw" were quite "fresh" and seemed well satisfied with themselves. They were not blushing.

Notwithstanding every one present knew them, they exhibited a proper appreciation of the distinction bestowed upon them by disdaining to notice or talk to others outside of their own uniformed ranks. It was truly childlike, amusing, and pathetic to

watch them attempt to be immensely important and dignified, with a thousand "appreciative" fellow-citizens jeering at them.

There is no use arguing the matter, the American people should not attempt pomp and splendor in uniform. It does not fit them, nor do they fit such things gracefully, especially in their semi-developed Western cities.

This I found was the occasion of Minister Wu's visit to Cincinnati.

It was more edifying and amusing to watch these proceedings than it was for me to prowl about looking at the dingy, dirty fronts of old-fashioned, unsightly buildings, therefore I stayed with the "mob."

Moreover, the streets were filthy beyond description, and I did not care to again risk my life inside of a Cincinnati cab.

I will wager a bucket of soap that, had Mr. Hercules gone to Elis "via Cincinnati" his job of cleaning the Augean stables would not have seemed so arduous. The morning papers of Ephyrus would not have wasted space recording his mythological feats. His job was a "pink tea" compared to that of cleaning Cincinnati.

The "dozen raw" had passed inside the hotel. Presently they emerged, with startled Mr. Wu in their midst.

Did you ever get tangled up with the mob of *coccheri* on the docks at Naples, when you could not speak a word of Italian? Well, Mr. Wu had doubtless experienced that sensation, for he looked it.

It looked exactly as though he were being "put out of the hotel," for no less than six "Lynn Havens" had hold of him at one time.

The six "Blue Points" didn't seem to know what was required of them. They stood about, with a sort of "kangaroo stoop," and all their ten fingers pointing straight to the floor.

A "half dozen Lynn Havens" would have been quite sufficient. But Wu was a "big man."

As they started down the steps the Minister from the land of yellow stopped suddenly, looked out into the crowded street and asked, "Is this a fish mart?"

This question was a puzzler. None could guess what prompted it.

Wu always asked puzzling questions. Had he been born in this country it would have been in Missouri, for he always asked to be shown that which he could not see.

The "Lynn Haven" wearing the red tie—a banker, the willing porter said—spoke up. "Why no, this is not a fish market. Why do you ask?"

"Then why do all your women carry fish nets?" asked Wu, and an innocent smile trickled down his chin.

It was a curious fact, a large proportion of the women in sight carried in their hands "net bags," trailing almost to the pavement, the most peculiar shopping outfit I had ever seen.

They were crammed and jammed with every conceivable kind of merchandise, from shoes to pickles, prunes and celery.

I was so impressed with the thing I subsequently made observations, and I found it peculiar only to Cincinnati. Nowhere else that I am aware of do they use these "butterfly chasers."

They are ugly in the extreme, and make women who carry them appear common. They are used alike by bankers' wives and scrub-women.

Upon being enlightened as to the purpose of the "fish nets," Mr. Wu was taken with a healthy fit of coughing to politely conceal the husky chuckle which seemed determined to kick off his lavender chest protector.

Either he was laughing or he was troubled with a severe bronchial ailment.

But what I started to relate as an illustration of my "Happy Hooligan proposition" concerned one of the identical bags, and the incident occurred right then and there.

It was this way.

I carried a good healthy stick, with a crook of buck horn. As the crowd broke away I concluded that I would stroll on Fourth Street, the principal business street of the town.

As I stepped to the pavement a "lady"—also carrying a "fish net"—dropped a package, which I promptly stooped to restore to her, in true Happy Hooligan fashion. In so doing the crook of my stick was hooked into the "Wu bag" of a big raw-boned woman who weighed about a ton. Her bag fell to the pavement with a crash, the pucker-string

broke, and the mess that spread out and over the pavement was a sight to make the gods weep.

Ripe tomatoes, corn, potatoes, celery, a paper bucket of oysters, half a dozen bananas, some oranges, a pair of shoes, and a conglomeration of other things impossible to describe. How she ever got all that stuff into the bag was a puzzle to me.

A bag of eggs had blossomed into little suns on the pavement. The oysters lay there, with their smiling faces turned up to the sky, and a bottle of horse-radish had crept over and started a flirtation with a broken pot of mustard.

It looked as though a St. Michael's banquet was being served on the pavement.

The most embarrassing thing that unrolled itself out of this wreck was a little round package, which first slowly uncoiled like a snake, then suddenly it leaped into the air and burst open, and a half-dozen whale-bones commenced to chase each other about the spot like live things.

I am usually solicitous regarding the difficulties of others, and polite to women under all circumstances, but when I viewed this mix-up I wanted to run.

Pandora's plight, compared to this spill, was as a "tallow dip to a Brush electric light." It was a fortunate thing for the world that she did not carry a "Wu bag" instead of a collar-box.

All the same, all the devilment that she did not carry in her box was let loose in this disaster. Even "hope" was gone, and I was in for it.

I tried to make hasty apology and retreat, but the old lady wouldn't have it that way.

She raised such a "holler," the whole crowd was ready to mob me on the spot.

A burly policeman was standing on the corner, and upon hearing the row came rushing to the spot, rudely shoving women and children from his path-way, doing a hundred times more real damage than the breaking of the "pucker string" in the market woman's "grab-bag."

Well, I was Happy Hooligan right on the spot.

Pointing her beefy hand at me, she, in the most dramatic manner and stagey voice, sputtered:

"Officer-r-r, ar-r-est that man. He deliberately hooked that dog catcher's pole of his in my bag and jerked it right out of my hand. Look there!" and she pointed her finger at the "mess." I would swear I saw one of the oysters commit suicide by jumping into the gutter.

I knew I had to act quickly and wisely.

Putting on my most dignified and injured air, I retorted:

"Madam, it is absurd for you to say I purposely did this thing. You know it was purely accidental. However, see what your loss is and I will pay you for it."

The officer looked puzzled and hesitating. I took advantage of this, and giving him the "friendly eye," I said:

"This is certainly the most embarrassing thing I ever had happen to me. I hope madam will appre-

ciate this fact as much as I deplore her predicament. I will do all in my power to alleviate the situation."

She had begun to gather up the wreckage and I hoped the storm had spent its fury.

I had in my trousers pocket a five-dollar bill, a one-dollar bill and some small change. This was all I had and I didn't know a soul upon whom I could call. I could not spare the five, therefore, at a venture, I proffered her the one-dollar bill. Fatal moment! That old cat sprang at me in a manner to make me bite my tongue, and yelled:

"Now insult me, you dir-r-r-ty loafer. Does your dir-r-r-ty dollar pay for my tramping through the Sixth Street Market for two hours? And look at this skirt, does it pay for the ruining of that, too?"

At this point it looked as though she would choke and I would surely have a charge of murder or "manslaughter" slated up against me instead of "disturbing the peace," or "malicious destruction of property."

Her mangy old skirt cost, originally, about one dollar and eighty cents, and there was no sign of anything out of that grab-bag having touched it.

But this was no time or place to argue with a wrathful woman, especially of her "hippopotamic proportions." The mob wanted me, and the big policeman—all Cincinnati policemen measure twelve feet around the girth—looked as though he were ready to give me the "Hooligan Fling."

Quickly pulling out my last "lovely fiver," I

handed it to her, with a gulp as big as one of her juicy oysters.

She nearly tore it in two, so eager was she to get her devilish hooks upon it.

I rushed into the hotel and collapsed. For an hour I sat in a sort of stupor. I had lost all desire to see the "insides" of Cincinnati, therefore I contented myself with looking about the best thing in it, the "St. Michael Hotel." A real nice, cozy little place, with a good restaurant, and an unappreciative patronage, as "cheap as tar paper."

I lunched in what was called the ladies' restaurant, a very comfortable place, entirely out of keeping with all the other parts of this dirty, noisy city.

The genial proprietor deserves great credit for maintaining this luxury for the people here, for I saw evidences of "vaudeville accomplishments" which put the "nice" people on a different plane; "sword swallowing" and "juggling stunts" to command "scare heads" on any bill—and many of them were "big salaried" people.

But my experience has been that you can tell the social standing of the people patronizing any popular restaurant by the height to which the teeth marks extend up the cutlery. The points of half the knives and spoons here were eaten off.

Some of the small things I noticed here betrayed two things—the rapidity of the rise of some of the "big Cincinnati men" and their utter self-conceit, which deterred their learning the most rudimentary table manners.

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One man was pointed out to me as a very rich local "railway" man. He was "kicking" because there were no toothpicks placed upon the table, although he was eating oysters at the time. He plied the toothpicks as diligently as he did the table cutlery, making a screen of his *serviette*.

Another was a "big business man." I nearly broke my arm in trying to hold a fork in the manner that he held his, just to see how it was possible for him to avoid getting his oysters into his left ear.

Quite the majority of the men, and a good sprinkle of the ladies, carefully draped their ample bosoms with the snow white *serviettes*. The table linen was beautiful.

I lingered to see the fun, and was astonished to see one couple after another leave the room, every man dancing a sort of "buck dance" in his effort to keep off his lady's trail. I'll wager a pretty sum that the future generations of Cincinnati will show a larger percentage of "hereditary club feet" than any other city in the world, due to this mental strain.

Once, I am informed, Cincinnati had a society second to none in the country, but this is almost wiped out. The low origin of the men who have long ruled the city has caused its social level to go away below standard. Society, like water, seeks a level. The bad political element has not risen above its normal manners, but has attained financial importance to give it a table in the St. Michael. A good name for this new class is the *nouveautes*.

I know it isn't nice to criticise other people thus

frankly, but why is it that smart men, extremely bright in other ways, are ashamed to go to "night school" and learn the simple but elegant manners of polite society before they intrude themselves upon those who have a right to feel shocked.

"Money talks," it is said, but not all talk is pleasing to the people who must listen. Those men or women who are too vain and conceited to see their glaring faults are not suitable persons to cordially take to one's household bosom, not to mention being humiliated by them in public places.

In the smoker on the train I told my fellow-travelers about my "Wu bag" adventure, and asked if any one could explain why it was so popular in Cincinnati. One man volunteered an explanation.

"I am connected with one of the large stores there," he said, "and I will explain the true origin of the 'net bag' in Cincinnati.

"Some years ago a gang of professional shop-lifters swooped down upon Cincinnati and played havoc with all the stores. They were headed by a notorious character named Sophia Lyons.

"They stole thousands of dollars' worth of goods of every description.

"They were equipped with large cloth bags, strapped to them underneath the old-fashioned wrap, then in vogue, called the 'dolman.' Its ample folds concealed the bulk of the well-filled bags.

"They were finally run down, captured, and, notwithstanding they were caught red-handed, by some

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political chicanery and the free use of bribe money, they escaped.

"This was a real calamity to Cincinnati. The newspapers were full of the sensation and told minutely all the tricks of shop-lifting, the result being that hundreds of local women, seeing with what ease strangers could escape punishment, themselves took to shop-lifting, until every woman seen with a cloth bag was watched with some suspicion.

"Some ingenious person devised the 'net bags,' through which the contents may be seen—and now women may shop to their hearts' content without being suspected of shop-lifting.

"The old thing promptly came into general use and now all Cincinnati women carry in it everything, except their babies."

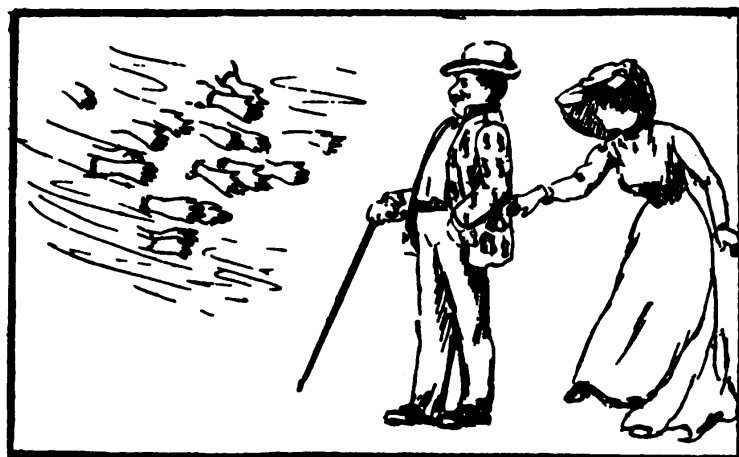
I ended the talk by suggesting that possibly the old cat who had mulcted me of my "fiver" so willingly, plied her trade in the vegetable market, where all potatoes and cabbages look alike and are not wrapped.

It looked as though she had "lifted" half the market that day.

It is a curious human trait that impels people promptly to take sides with a boisterous, abusive woman when she seeks a quarrel in a public place, notwithstanding it is perfectly plain she is unjust and vicious. Some coarse creatures seem to take delight in seeking the slightest pretext for thus "playing to the gallery," to gain a sort of sensational sympathy, as an excuse to publicly vent their spleen

and gain notoriety and publicity. They care not how humiliating their actions may be to the innocent victims.

I am mean enough to write this clause, hoping it may shame respectable women into abandoning the "Wu bag" in public places. The proper place for such things is not in the fashionable thoroughfares, nor in the beautiful stores, but in the place where Wu thought they belonged, "the fish mart."



The glad hand at Atlantic City.

CHAPTER VIII

ATLANTIC CITY

I heard much of the sport at Atlantic City, and in order to shake off the feeling of *ennui* which was becoming chronic, I concluded to "take a look."

I went down and took a "box-stall" in one of the big barns called "American plan" hotels, along with the other asses. It is hard to distinguish between the crowded hotel dining-rooms and the "board-walk." There is not much difference between being bumped by a "rolling chair" and a nigger with

a tray full of dishes, excepting when you get a dish of hot squash down your collar.

I had seen all kinds of life, having traveled the world over, but I must confess I was puzzled at what I saw at Atlantic City.

I never felt quite so much like a fool before. You can not shake off that feeling that you are foolish for being there, but you see so many other "nuts" about, you grow into a belief that you have stumbled into "fools' paradise," and it is where you belong.

You soon forget that sanity and self-respect are necessary adjuncts to a well-regulated life, and begin to drift along the "board-walk" with the balance of the crazy ones.

That is the freak thing about Atlantic City. Everybody at first tries to find out what people are there for. They do find out, about the third day, then they learn that "hell has been removed from Haversac."

Like the "West Baden widow," Atlantic City grows on you. The longer and bigger it grows, the more you are determined to amputate it, but the pull of the thing keeps you there to see "what will really happen." Calamity is always being predicted, but it only causes greater flocks to gather there to see some new horror or curiosity not already on exhibition along the "midway" or on the groaning steel piers.

Excursion trains actually ran over here from large cities to see the place swept away by a predicted

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tidal wave, and morbid curiosity came near being satisfied for once.

If sanity is only an adjunct to a well-regulated life, it has no place at Atlantic City; for nothing is well regulated there, excepting the "pace that kills," and it kills like some of the big western slaughtering houses, by the wholesale. They either "walk themselves to death," "drink themselves to death," or drown.

This is not on the surface. You seldom see anything beyond the coat of "bum veneer"—the "board-walk," excepting in the surf. "Oh! if the waters would only talk."

Few women ever leave Atlantic City as sweet and wholesome as when they first visit the place.

Sin of the most degrading sort—the promiscuous—is in the dark background, "beneath the water" in day, and in the questionable restaurants and resorts by night. Thousands of revellers patronize these places till the early morning hours.

The temptations are brazen. Many men and women who go there as "regulars," go there for no other purpose but to *lose themselves in the vast throng*, and incidentally lose every lingering sense of morality and self-respect they possess.

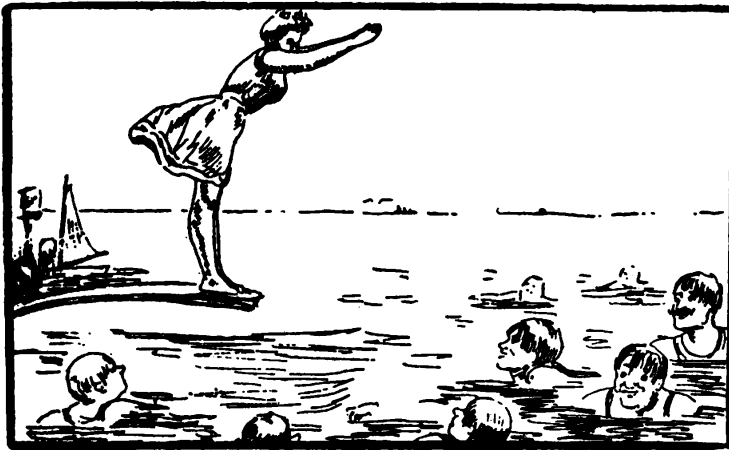
The man who permits his pretty young wife to go there without his protection deserves to lose her, and generally does. It is all very well for him to boast of how he trusts her. It is the most vicious and immoral spot in the world.

At all the hours of the night the revellers literally

wallow in intoxication and vulgarity of every description. The respectable ones do not see this.

A search-light thrown upon the beach at night revealed so much, the authorities prohibited it, on the ground that it would "reflect" to the discredit of the place.

Hundreds of half-clad men, women, and children thronged the streets. Men with their arms, shoul-



A common scene in the water.

ders, and legs bare; women with an inch or more of white skin showing between the stocking and the short skirt.

The newspapers assured the blushing public that steps would be taken to stop this promiscuous vulgarity and confine it to the beach, but such assurance was sheer nonsense. The "people" do as they please, and the authorities wink.

Women go into the water with bathing costumes

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of thin white "brilliantine," which upon becoming wet is as thin and gauzy as an "organdie." Around these women the men flock and frolic like crazy things.

Very many women leave their limbs bare to the knee.

The vulgar, slimy conduct, rolling about in the sand, the men embracing and kissing the women, became so vicious that the authorities found it absolutely necessary to suppress it. In a single morning's walk the officers had to warn over two hundred people, arresting some and fining them in the police court. This does not tell the smallest part of it. Nowhere else in the world is such vicious conduct openly permitted.

The hotels are open nearly all night for the accommodation of those who desire to stay out till two, three and even four o'clock. The most vicious of the all-night places never close.

It is pitiful to see the derelicts sneaking in at the basement elevators during the small hours of the night, many so drunk they do not know the number of their rooms. It is at such times that men insult women in Atlantic City.

It is at such times you see men with other men's wives, and wives with other women's husbands, in confidential relations—it is long after decent, self-respecting people are asleep.

It is a peculiar and remarkable fact that quite a good class of people, so far as their own acquaint-

ances know, permit their wives or husbands to go to this place alone.

Husbands bring their pretty young wives here, get them located and then return home.

Their train has scarcely left the depot before a hot wire is informing some one of the "joyful" event.

If the "lucky" fellow has been prowling around "waiting," he immediately bobs up and the fun begins. It is open and patent to all, but these "human-ostriches" think no one sees.

They may go here the first time in utter ignorance of its heinous character, but not the second, if they are "put wise."

Did you ever hear of a woman spending her second season at Atlantic City, that she did not tell of the innumerable "good times" she had while there, and the "nice men" she met?

Did you ever hear a man talking of Atlantic City, that he did not tell how he had met there Mrs. So and So, and what a "hot old time" they had for three weeks? Did he not bandy the names of many women he had met there? Did you believe he was lying?

No one has ever been able to define what a woman means by a "good time," but if the "time" she has at Atlantic City is the correct definition, then no woman can be good and have a "good time."

I can hear a thousand voices yelling a protest. Maybe they are the "first timers" who have only "looked" but have not "touched," and are longing for the next season to come around; or maybe they

are the "regulars," who do not want their fun interrupted. To either I can say: "Keep quiet, you are either bad or want to be. For Heaven's sake, can't you be bad without trying to fool other people? You know all that I have said is true. I think I have been kind enough to reserve more than half unsaid." Suppose I should accidentally lose my original notes, containing names, dates and places, some newspaper reporter could retire on the proceeds of making "news matter" of them.

The question is, naturally, what will put an end to it? I will not attempt to suggest a remedy.

Many will say, "Why! the idea, of saying that every woman who goes there alone is bad." Very well, there are many equally as good places from a climatic standpoint. If you insist upon going to Atlantic City, do so and take the consequences. It is true, there are thousands of good people who go there and do not know the truth. Moreover, with its wickedness eliminated it is a delightful place.

If you can not forego this place, for the good of the whole country you are the one to be spotted. It is your kind that supports such vile practices as are found done there beneath the innocent varnish of laughter and apparent joy.

It will be no hardship for those who value their reputation to stay away, rather than be there alone.

To those women who go to Atlantic City and parade up and down the sands or the board-walk to show their beautiful limbs, never once during the season wetting the hem of their pretty "bathing"

costumes, we would say, the *ballet* is the legitimate place for such displays, and far more respectable. The same brazen indecency is not permitted anywhere else in the world.

The wild orgies at night in Atlantic City brand it as the modern Babylon. Ask the "rounder" and the "search-light man."

Here is a profitable theme for the clergy of the country.



The pace that kills.

It is not the "Johnny who goes to Atlantic City to debauch the wives of other men. It is the well-to-do, robust, and husky scamps in railroad offices, banks, and business houses who make this their objective point for their summer vacations—men absolutely without conscience or honor when a woman's reputation is at stake and their lecherous desires are aflame. Whom they would destroy, they

first make drunk. This is not seen during the day or early evening, but late at night when the good and innocent are asleep. It is true, the authorities and the better class hotel keepers know and deplore this.

A gentle, sweet, and wholesome flirtation, under conditions which do not degrade, and which reveal only natures longing for something to love and respect, is never very harmful; but the debauch of Atlantic City is little short of promiscuous prostitution, because of its brazen and drunken character at night and its indecency in the water.

People claim to come here for rest and recreation. It requires months to get the alcohol out of the system and the evil longings out of the poisoned minds of many.

They never fully recover in mind or body after once becoming a "regular" at Atlantic City. They will be found tapering off, on the sly, at home.

The "worthy," innocent "new-comer" is taken in tow by an "old-timer" and is introduced. This professional introducer may be a young dentist from Philadelphia or a doctor from Baltimore, plying his smart advertising.

The woman is pretty, she has never exposed her limbs in public places, therefore hesitates to put on a bathing suit and kill forever that sacred feeling taught her as she had developed to womanhood, that it is vulgar to display one's charms promiscuously; nevertheless, under the "banter" and "sarcasm" of those who are leading her astray, she dons the short

skirt and exploits her pretty person for the greedy eyes of the hungry leeches awaiting to suck her sweet innocence. Her stockings will not stay up, how shocking at first! The balance is quick and easy. The first plunge over, the "private room and wine," here or elsewhere, soon do the work essential to make her a "regular." She may "sob her soul out" when she returns home and to a normal state of mind, but nine times out of ten she longs soon to return; the poison is in her system because of the freedom she enjoyed in the water with men. Her modesty was washed away.

Poor child, had the place caved in and mangled her beyond recognition she would have at least received the benefit of the doubt and gone to a respectable grave.

It is this kind of resort which seems to arouse the wrath of fate and nature, and at a given period it is made an object lesson. I prophesy a horrible holocaust will occur among these tinder boxes, which will sweep into eternity thousands of drunken souls without time even to put on their—bathing suits.

A word for the "chaperon," the "introducer"—any other place she would be called a procuress.

She is usually an "old-timer"—a degree lower than the "regular." You can tell her by her flaming cheeks, bleary eyes, and her loudly proclaiming her knowledge of the places which "keep open all night."

With a knowing wink she says to the new-comer,

"I'll get you to bed, honey;" and the little kitten meekly follows the "chaperon" into the devil dens and is taught how to have a "good time" and sleep it off the next morning.

It is all so vulgar and low, at first the *débutante* is much shocked; she has never been accustomed to it. "This is awful!" she murmurs—then the music begins, the wine flows, the lights get brighter, and she forgets.

"Pull yourself together and cut loose," whispers the "chaperon." "John will never know; have a jolly good time while you are about it. You only live once and you are a long time dead."

Then the wily serpent, to whom she has been introduced, begins to feel his way.

The introduction here is merely an excuse and pretense. The man may be, and usually is, a vile villain here for no other purpose but conquest. His only credentials are a free purse, a loud laugh, and an oily tongue not easily thickened by liquor.

Atlantic City has caused the ruin and downfall of more young wives and husbands, who were pure minded before visiting the place, than all the other public resorts in the United States combined.

The same may be said of it with regard to suicides and divorces. They do not occur here. They result later, as a fruit of the seeds of sin planted here.

I have been bad enough, but never bad enough to go to Atlantic City a second time. What I was shown there, behind the veneer, sickened me—disgusted me—made me better.

When I speak in a spirit of levity regarding my pranks, underneath it all I respected all those women whom I found pure and good by nature, with self-respect and a thought of justice for others.

It does not look bad to the people at Atlantic City. The appearance of half-nude men and women parading the streets, especially in the afternoon, has become so common they think nothing of it. So many pretty women lose their stockings while in the surf, it is like a "continuous polite vaudeville" to the sightseers. No vaudeville, however, would be permitted to run such a show for a single night. That is the curious thing.

CHAPTER IX

"RUBBER"

One need not necessarily be a "rubber" to hear the most startling conversations at such places as Atlantic City.

The following "scraps" were free for all:

At a prominent hotel were registered "Mrs. O'Grady, son, and daughter."

Well, it was the same old story. "Pat had carried the hod so long that when he died the whole family had to rest" on the snug fortune he left. He was a contractor in Philadelphia.

Mrs. O'Grady had let it get out that Mamie was just out of boarding-school, and "had sixty-five gowns." It was the talk of the hotel. Pink, green, yellow—in fact, every color in the prism were these many gowns with hats to match. All the dresses were fluffy and all the hats had long streamers flowing in the breeze behind. Mamie was as homely as a nest of young snipes, but the clang and glitter of the old lady's massive jewelry and Mamie's iridescent finery kept an army of young cubs at the girl's heels. Of course the piano suffered tortures, and incidentally every rational person about the

place was bored to the point of suicide and wished Mamie in—Paradise.

I wonder why some sane hotel man does not happen who can understand that four hundred and ninety of his guests are being annoyed by a few noisy cubs who imagine that they are furnishing the "vaudeville entertainment" for the hotel, and have some sensible rules about thumping the old piano, attempting to sing, and loud screaming and laughter at all hours of the day and night.

Here was a typical case. The attention this irresponsible young girl received turned her head, and also that of the mother a bit, with the result that the conduct of those about them was unbearable.

They confiscated the piano; they monopolized the tea-room and all of its tables during the hours when the other guests desired to indulge in a cup of tea; they congregated in the most conspicuous places on the porch, where they held a regular "war dance." In all the usual ways they made themselves conspicuously obnoxious. Who were they? The following bit of conversation may help some to identify them:

Mother (to Mrs. Finerty): "Yes, we had some trouble in getting our trunks in time for dinner."

Mamie: "Just think of it! Mother had to wear to dinner the same gown she had worn to dinner the evening before, just like a kitchen-maid. Wasn't that awful?"

It must have struck Mrs. Finerty as being ex-

tremely awful, for she gasped and looked as though she might faint.

The Barlmorough is a good hotel, exceptionally so. I think it goes without argument that it is the best in Atlantic City. The most perfect hotels have some small shortcomings, it is true, but neither the Asdorf-Waldoria nor the "New Willies" would permit the desecration of good hotel manners by the promiscuous thumping of "rag time" in the public rooms where people are reading, writing, or conversing.

The Barlmorough dining-room is a very pretty room indeed, but too much crowded to keep secrets. I could touch elbows with my pretty neighbors at my back, therefore my hearing would be bad indeed not to catch the following as it was read and laughed over by the two. The one who had received the letter was a quite vivacious blonde, dressed in black—very becoming to her. She had received this letter from her husband and was laughing and reading it to her table companion:

"Dear Girl:

"I am struggling along, trying to earn an honest dollar, in spite of the extremely hot weather. [The writer was in New York and the newspapers were commenting on the coolness of the weather there.]

"I thought I would surely have to go under yesterday. I felt so like a broiled lobster that I concluded to run down to Coney Island and cool off. I feel better this morning.

"I hope you are having a splendid time yourself, sweetheart. If you can't be good, be as good as you can; just so you don't die young.

"By the way, if this keeps up, I shall have to run out of town for a few days. I think I shall go up into the mountains.

"Be good and have a nice time. With love.

"Yours till the cows come home,

"SUNNY JIM."

The only comment the companion made was, "Huh! Why don't he run over here, if he has time to go to the mountains?"

"I'm sure I don't know," answered "Mrs. Sunny Jim," who was herself having a bully good time with a "friend" from New York.

I happened to witness one very pathetic case. A young Washington business man, a really fine fellow, brought his pretty young wife over to the Barlmorrough, together with a girl companion. He remained three days with them. During these days not to exceed three men took the liberty of making themselves friendly with the girls, and these seemed to be friends of the husband.

The wife seemed devoted to the husband, and he was, beyond a doubt, much in love with her. Her demure and girlish nature seemed to show that she was eminently respectable.

I was seated on the porch one morning, when the two girls passed along, closely followed by one of

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the "official introducers" of this resort, a dirty-fingered dentist.

I heard him say, without even looking at the girls, "Did he go?" With never an intimation that they knew he was near them, the young wife responded, "No, the chump couldn't tear himself away. He goes to-morrow at 2:15." The fellow turned on his heel and made report to another chap, who also seemed "on."

This was worth following and I rubbered the next day. Getting into one of those "hay wagons" which run between the depots and the hotels, I went with the bunch to the depot. The young wife kissed the husband good-by several times and stayed to watch the train pull out. She certainly was a sly little wretch. The moment they stepped outside the station they were transformed into two little fiends. One hour later, with the dirty-fingered dentist and another chap, they were cocked up in the drinking-room on the lower floor of the Barlmorough, and they did not leave this spot until a quarter to seven. A fifty-cent coin obtained for me the information that the girls averaged ten cocktails each in that sitting.

The same night they went on the lark of their lives, and every night thereafter were continuous rounds of dissipation. Another chap, however, took the dentist's place after the first day, undoubtedly by prearrangement.

In three weeks the young wife's feet were puffing up with dropsy. She had diabetes, and her face was

so swollen one could hardly recognize her as the same person.

Her companion, already half gone with consumption, looked as though death had about foreclosed his mortgage.

These are the things which the unobserving public does not see, but the wise ones are "on" and the tongue of gossip begins to wag.

The young and inexperienced woman is so enraptured by this position of freedom, in a place where no one seems to care what others are doing, she loses her wits and plunges headlong into dissipation and sin of the worst sort, which she is wholly unaccustomed to at home.

"Everything goes at Atlantic City."

When such women return home they are surprised to find that they are dropped by many good people whom they formerly knew.

They become indignant when some one suggests that possibly they had heard of indiscretions while at the seashore.

Gossip is more often just than otherwise, if it does rubber into other people's affairs. Public conduct is everybody's business.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



"She peeled like a prize-fighter."

CHAPTER X

MISS CLEVELAND

The jolt which came the nearest batting me out of the box was an unpremeditated case. Innocence and purity won out in this case.

Upon my return from Atlantic City to New York I settled down to have a period of meditation in my little four-room flat, which I had originally furnished myself, and had managed "to have and to hold" through all of the vicissitudes of an uncertain income. Of late I was getting these periodical "thinking sprees."

I had thought for three days,—a regular “mental jag,”—when one morning, as I sat nibbling my breakfast crust, and sipping my very black coffee, hand-made, who should walk in but Perry Miller.

“Hello, Chappie!” he said, and dragged a chair across my two-hundred-dollar rug, picked up the coffee pot and poured himself out my last drop of coffee, reached over to my cigar case and helped himself to my last cigar, lit it, and puffed the smoke into my face before I could even bid him welcome.

“What’s the matter with you, you crazy chump?” I asked as I fanned his garlicky breath out of my bosom.

“Now don’t be grumpy, I am going to put you on to something good,” he said good-naturedly, as he edged up close to me. “Do you remember I said to you some time ago that there was a very lovable little widow, living in Cleveland, Ohio, that I had my hooks out for?”

“Yes,” I did remember. He always had his hooks out for some “especially lovable widow.”

“Well, now, old chap, she is coming here. I want to read you her letter, then I want you to help me in this case. Don’t say a word till you listen to her letter.” With this he pulled a pretty note with “pink frills” and much “violet odor,” and began to read.

“Hold on, Perry,” I interrupted, “what about this charming woman down on Long Island I’ve heard you speak so well of?”

"Now, shinny on your own side," he replied impatiently, and read:

"My Dear Perry:

"At last I am able to come to New York. I am so elated, I really believe I could fly there, were it Thursday—that is the day we start. We, I mean by that, that I am the chaperon for a bully good girl who is coming with me—and I don't want you to fall in love with the 'bully good girl,' do you understand? She's a peach!

"Now, Perry, I have longed for this lark so long that longing has grown to be a habit. For Heaven's sake, get some good steady fellow to take care of the 'bully good girl.' She won't stand hitched. She is not yet bridlewise.

"Meet us at the N. Y. C. & H. R. R. R. depot at 5:30 on Friday evening, and I am

"Yours for life,

"PEGGY."

I must confess, that letter would have raised the dead. The widow was a "wild and wayward little scamp," but how about the "bully good one?" Maybe I was a sacrifice. She said the girl was a "peach." Well, there are some "spotted peaches." However, I would take chances.

I was interested, but I would not betray it.

"What do you want me to do?" I asked of Perry.

"Well, you see, this is Friday, and they will be here this evening. I will go to the depot, get them straightened out at their hotel, and then we will

start the ball with a dinner this evening, to get acquainted, see? This is all mine, old boy, won't cost you a farthing." With this he threw down my half-smoked Havana and lit another out of his own case. This is just how thoughtless and careless most people are.

"Very well, Perry, I will be the victim this time. Where shall we meet?" I said.

"I'll come here at seven o'clock for you. Many thanks, old chap. I'll do as much for you some time." With this he was out of the door like a shot.

I laughed at his impetuosity. He was ten years younger than I. He had my sympathy.

I thought no more of the matter till evening. Promptly at seven a rap came at my door, and ten minutes later we were at the Asdorf-Waldoria.

We went into the Turkish room, which was so dark I couldn't tell whether the girls were white or black. Introductions were enacted, and we were at once steered for the 33rd Street carriage entrance, where we all hustled into a four-wheeler and were whirled down to the "Café Martin."

I had tried my very best to get a peep at the girls, but, by Jove! they were so wrapped up and beveled I could only guess.

The veils must have been made of "gunny bags," for you absolutely could not see their features. There was no false pride about these good fellows; they were self-respecting creatures, notwithstanding they were on a questionable lark.

The "bully good girl" was covered from head

to heels with a dingy brown coat, and outwardly she looked like the devil.

I quaked, but occasionally I observed certain "bulgy curves" which even gave grace to the dingy brown outline.

At Martin's, Perry had wisely secured one of those beautiful little private rooms "for four only."

At last the crucial moment arrived. We were in the room.

Perry's "widow" removed her veil and wrap and was quite pretty; yes, "a real good looker."

The "bully good" stood fooling with her gloves for a moment, then raised her veil. My heart leaped to my mouth. Then off came her coat. My God! she peeled like a prize-fighter, the most gorgeous and perfect specimen of young womanhood I had ever beheld. Peaches and cream, pink and fresh as a bunch of apple blossoms; perfectly rounded off to make her every line ravishingly, tantalizingly beautiful.

Perry himself, I could see, was knocked clear off his balance.

"The 'bully good girl,' " said the widow, and she made a great salaam, with her own pretty arms wide-spread out, as she bowed low.

The more than beautiful creature was by no means embarrassed. She laughed a rippling laugh, which made Martin's bright lights turn green with envy, and returned the widow's salute with a graceful little squat, that made me want to grab her in my arms at once.

Perry only grinned. He knew I was in a bad way.

I was not at my best after this surprise. I had had a broad experience with men and women. It was said that no man's girl was safe to him when I came on the field.

But now, in the presence of a new species of woman, I felt like a fool. All my old lights went out. My whole past was a dim, dark, dismal dream.

Could it be possible this girl, lovely beyond all dreams and imagining, was just starting out into the great whirl? Did she long for it? Was this fair ship to be wrecked on the jagged reefs of the "red light" and "tenderloin" districts, or mayhap, Atlantic City, under the impression that this was the great sea of pleasure she had heard so much about? Not on your life! Not if this "Johnny" could prevent it.

The usual evening was spent, getting spicy as it reached the coffee and *liqueur*.

Perry and the widow had brazenly embraced and caressed each other, apparently oblivious of our presence. I had carefully watched the beauty, and at once saw she was a novice. She was as bright as the morning star, had a good wit and was prompt at *repartée*. As the wine warmed her up, she became more and more fascinating, until she was irresistible.

I kept my head. I had, for the first time in many years, felt a strong, honorable manhood take possession of me, determined to save this grand creature,

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yet let her get a perfect view and understanding of the delusive life led by so many people, *who think* they are having a "good time."

There was a comfortable divan in the corner of the room, draped up like a miniature Turkish smoker.

"Come over here, I want to tell you something," I said, and attempted to draw her toward the divan.

She looked appealingly at me and hesitated.

"Fear not," I whispered, "you never will have a safer friend than I am to-night."

Without further hesitation she came, cheerfully, and plumped her fine ripe person down by my mangy old carcass. My throat was full of "gulp-pep-peps," but I swallowed them. How ashamed I felt in the presence of this innocent young woman, just starting out in "life's rosy morn," her cheeks aglow, her eyes aflame, and her heart bumping the bouquet of violets off her magnificent bosom.

I will call her Miss Cleveland, because she now owns a good, big lump of both Cleveland real estate and her share of the population. When she made this flying trip to New York she owned half the hearts in Cleveland, but did not know it and cared less.

She was a robust, healthy, wholesome girl, just out of a course of education which perfected her as few women are educated. She had taken to it like a "Johnny takes to theatricals." Fortunately, she had also kept up an athletic course, to make her body as perfect as her mind.

I had her confidence. There was no fear in her heart as she cuddled up to me in quite a friendly fashion.

All women want to be caressed when they may be with perfect confidence and safety. Most of them are but overgrown children.

"What did you want to tell me?" she asked softly.

"Before I say what is uppermost in my mind, Miss Cleveland, I want to assure you that you have my deepest respect, and if it is my happy lot to see much of you while you are here, I want you to have confidence in me sufficient to ask me what you shall do when you are uncertain. I am told you are here for a 'good time.' You do not know the meaning of this, and this is my reason for sedate speech. I assure you I am not given to protecting young women, but your case is different.

"Although your chaperon is a lovely woman, and evidently a 'good fellow,' I observe how shocked you are at her actions this evening. What you see her doing is the beginning of a 'good time.' First, cocktails; second, wines; third, caresses; after that, the limit."

I paused for breath, for I had talked hurriedly. Her soft hand had crept into my own, and earnest eyes were searching my face.

"I like you and I trust you," she whispered; "go on, I want to hear more."

"Trust comes before love," I said, "but I am not vain enough to believe that a fair, innocent, beautiful woman, like you, could arouse such a sentiment

in her heart for an old reprobate like myself, therefore I can better apply my own sentiments to a good purpose in your case.

"You must not misunderstand me if I gush a bit in paying you well-merited compliments. I am not striving to win your affections, neither will I propose marriage to you. Were I fifteen years younger and worthy, I would go down on my knees to you as quickly as any man, for you are the most magnificent specimen of young womanhood it has ever been my pleasure to meet. All I ask of you is to let me be your friend and protector while you are in New York, and I will guarantee that you will return to your native city as pure and sweet as you are now."

What sounded most like a suppressed little sob came up from the dear bosom as she cuddled closer and tugged at one of her fingers till she succeeded in twisting a beautiful diamond engagement ring so I could see the sparkling jewel.

Then raising her form to an erect and strong position, she said:

"I have heard much of you. All that I ever heard intimated that you were a very bad, dangerous man, without much honor where a woman was concerned, but I believe in you. I believe you have been slandered. I trust you to the extent that to you alone I entrust my safe keeping while here in New York. I am not foolish, although unsophisticated. I know the underlying truth of what you say. My companion is known as one of the best women in Cleveland, yet I am no child. I know the meaning

of her actions here. She is a widow and a loving, passionate woman, and probably finds extreme pleasure in occasional relaxation from the conventional life a strictly respectable society woman must lead; but I do not believe she is bad—yet this does not now appeal to me. Look at this beautiful ring; it was placed upon my finger to seal a pledge of love between myself and one of the brightest and best young men in Cleveland. As long as I feel that love alive in my heart, all the 'red lights' in New York can not dim its lustre with their glare. You shall be my guardian angel and you may let me see that which you think I can view and retain my respectability and self-respect. Then I shall go back to Cleveland and settle down there as the wife of my first and, I hope, my last love.

"I detest this stuffy little room. Hereafter let's play in the open. We can do this without offending my companion. She and her lover can do as they please without us.

"Now do you think as much of me as you did?" and she heaved a great sigh, as if the burden was off her mind.

"If I deeply respected you before, I adore you now," I said, and the balance of the evening was spent in pleasant chat and making arrangements for the week's "bat."

We did spend a "hot" week, sure enough. Miss Cleveland saw the town, from the "Battery to Harlem," and went home satisfied. Never shall I forget the torture of that moment, in the same little

room where we first had an understanding, where the four of us were taking our farewell dinner together, when the charming creature stood up, in the presence of all, placed her magnificent arms caressingly about my neck, for the first and only time, and made this little speech:

"Let all the world condemn you, if it will, but I know there is one man in New York who is honorable to a woman, sometimes at least, and that is the man who I was told had no honor where a woman was concerned. Your actions toward me during the past week have won my lasting friendship and affection and you deserve a reward. Were I 'heart whole and fancy free' I could be satisfied for you to take me for life, as you have often said, laughingly, you would like to do. Yet this week has not dimmed the lustre of my first love. It has only caused it to shine the clearer and brighter. I have taken my first and last 'bat.' I thank you with all my heart for your kind and courteous treatment of me. I am your friend for life." With this she kissed me passionately.

The four of us mopped away the copious tears that followed this effusion. I wrote the following little verse on her handkerchief, for a keepsake.

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

Tinkle, tinkle, little feet,
Now I hear your rhythmic beat,
Looking for some safe retreat
Where some "lobster" you may eat.

Wibble, wabble, little walk,
Oh! if feet could only talk
Every time they made a squawk,
All our lines would then be chalk.

The next day she was gone.

A whole constellation passed out of my already dim solar system when this dear girl went away.

I never dared call her to mind again, although she urged me to come and see them in Cleveland. Her husband even joined her in the invitation.

This was one of the hard bumps of my evil career. I thought I never would recover from it.

Time seared the wound, but it took a long time to make me see women, in general, in the same light in which I had formerly viewed them.

I went abroad for a year, and I pledge my readers my word of honor I didn't make love to a woman during that time.

By Jove! it's a fact, the farther away I got the more I was in love with Miss Cleveland, until I reached Port Said. There my case assumed a form of "acute melancholia" and I seriously contemplated suicide. At last my manhood asserted itself. No *man* ever killed himself for a woman. Why, I'd doubtless be cremated and my ashes scattered to the four winds of the earth.

Great guns! if they were seeds and should sprout, what a crop of "scrubs" and "thistles" would grow up where they fell.



"I poured love into her little pink ears."

CHAPTER XI

JANE

I returned to America in midwinter, landing in Boston. As I hit the old sod I felt an electric shock, which told me I was treading on dangerous ground; but I found myself getting wise recently, and I felt strong for self-protection.

"It will be a 'hot touch' that will get me going as of old," I said to myself. But it came "like a thief in the night." It got three kinds of Greco-Roman holds on me—a "half Nelson," a "hammer lock,"

and the "strangle hold." I did not try to break them. I have always accused myself of being guilty of "lying down" in this bout, but who wouldn't under the disadvantages of my situation? I wasn't going to have my back broken by attempting the impossible.

She was only an "urchin," but, say! she was a "human humming-bird;" as pretty as a rosy-cheeked peach, as playful as a plump, happy kitten, and as gentle as a June zephyr.

Did she cuddle? Well, she did! She curled up into a soft little ball in the big chair, and as I poured love and stories of travel into her little pink ears she purred and mewed like a dear little kitten, frequently emphasizing her interest by pressing her soft hands on my own. (She developed into a healthy cat.)

Holy Gee! what a balm for the holes torn in my heart by Miss Cleveland. If any one had stepped up to me at that moment and asked me what State Cleveland was in, I couldn't have told him to have saved my soul from—West Baden.

That fussy, little old mother—bless her good soul! I wished she were my mother-in-law. She was blind, deaf and dumb, surely.

I composed and sang to Jane this little lullaby.

LULLABY

Go to sleep my darling baby,
I'm watching over thee;
Let your sleep be sweet and peaceful,
You are all the world to me.

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Angels guard you while you slumber,
Let your dreams be light and free;
You're my darling little baby,
And you're all the world to me.

Pretty hot pace, eh? She only snoozed long enough to hear the lullaby.

This all happened on the train coming from Boston. Ugh! but it was bitter cold. Love grows in leaps and bounds in a well-temperated car running at full speed. Mine expanded like the "magical rose bush" which I had seen instantaneously produced by the "Hindoo Mahatmas."

The atmosphere in which love germinates best is in a fast-flying railroad train, especially between Boston and New York.

Did you ever come so near to death that all of your sins swept before you, like an old-time "ninth ward political parade," to taunt you in your last moments, to shame you, in the light which best revealed your grossness and vulgarity? Well, neither did I, but I believe I have experienced the same sensation.

In the presence of this sweet, innocent girl, all of my previous escapades—and I do not deny them—came and stood about, looking at me; making faces at me; and tantalizing me, until I was almost crazy. There was some great mystery here. Why did I want to "have and to hold," yes, marry, this kitten at sight, when Miss Cleveland, the most perfect specimen I had ever seen, did not "grab" me in this way? She "grew on me" slowly—she

seemed away off—impossible. This little “cuddler” seemed close, right close up to me, and I wanted to keep her there.

The only explanation I could make to myself was that, one was big and strong, and capable of taking care of herself, while the other was only a sweet little blossom, which would fade at the slightest shock. I wanted to “tend the flower” and keep it always as “fragrant, innocent, and fresh” as it now appeared to be.

The “old spell” had come on. I was desperately and hopelessly in love with this little maid from Washington, D. C.

Jane was her name. What a lovely name! I dote on Janes! I was particularly “fierce” on this Jane.

She was a little “rolly-poly,” full of cute curves and dimples, just like a sweet, fat baby.

She had a half dozen kinds of fits when I told her she was “a patented process for the instantaneous conversion of sugar into lemon drops.” She was so sweet herself that everything else turned sour by comparison.

I was getting along bully till I got off the following piece of “foxy-grandpa” gallantry, then there was a bug crawling around in my lungs, trying to figure it out.

She had remarked that she stood no show with the older women of Washington.

“You do not know your powers,” I responded, with very great gush and enthusiasm. “Why,

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girlie, if all the other women in Washington were on the hook for bait; the one you think the most beautiful and attractive, the sinker; and I, a bulgy-eyed, hungry fish, should see you as the bob, floating serenely in the sunlight upon the surface of the water, why, I'd gallop my fins off, wear out the water, and jump clear through my gills to eat the bob."

This nearly threw the train off the track, but I felt certain I had made her mine for life, when she suddenly stopped laughing and said in the most provokingly demure manner, "It's awfully nice of you to say that, but perhaps it would be wiser for me not to exploit these powers too much."

This bit of philosophy opened my eyes to the fact that the little duck was wiser than I had given her credit for being. The doubt began to rankle in my bosom. I knew the old game was on again. If I didn't marry this girl I was in for another hard spell. "West Baden" and "California" stood up in front of me and laughed, and I said to myself, "Girlie, I'll either marry you or murder you, for I can't stand for another siege of the 'golly woggles.'"

What a foolish thing it is for the railroad to take the shortest cut from one point to another. The N. Y. H. & N. H. R. R. surely had a cold-blooded engineer to survey that line. His heart was as tough as an old rubber shoe.

It is the shortest railroad in the United States for the distance it covers. It seemed to me we

made the trip from Boston to New York in about thirty minutes. Jane and I got along furiously, though, while it lasted.

I used up a ream of telegraph blanks, making notes of all we were to do in the future.

• "Bats" in New York, "fun and frolic" in Washington, "letters," "cabs," "telegrams," "telephone code," "wig-wags," all were there.

"Now let's see, is there anything else?" she said, thinking furiously.

I took the pencil, placed the pad on the corner of the chair and wrote, "A quiet little wedding." One rosy flush, and the "bugle horn of freedom" pealed forth, "New York! New York! Out this way for New York!"

I had quietly felt my way and asked the "old lady" why they couldn't remain in New York that night and see something of the fun of the city by electric light.

She "shied" dangerously at this suggestion, saying: "Oh, no! really, that would be shockingly improper, on such a short acquaintance. You will be in Washington, be quite sure to look us up there."

Jane's liquid, calfy eyes settled it. "Why, yes," I responded, "I am frequently in Washington, must run over there in the next few days. Thank you for allowing me to see you there."

I was in Washington the second day thereafter. A building contractor, with all his outfit of derricks, could not have kept me away from Washing-

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ton. The night we arrived in New York I wrote and mailed to her these lines.

I AM THINKING OF YOU

Sweet are my thoughts, by day or by night,
When I'm thinking of you;
A voice whispers low,
A voice that I know,
When I am thinking of you.
"Think of me always as you think of me now,
With a love that is loyal and true,
By night and by day,
When you are away,
That's how I'm thinking of you."

Sweet are my dreams, in the stillness of night,
When I am dreaming of you;
A face sweet and fair
Seems to be there
When I am dreaming of you.
"Dream of me always as you dream of me now,"
Lips whisper to me;
"Sweet lips that I see
When I am dreaming of you."

But sweetest of all, by day or by night,
Is when you are close by my side.
Then I can hear
The voice that's so dear
Of the one to whom I confide.
"I love you always as I'm loving you now;
Whether far or near
You are always dear,
But dearest when close by my side."

At ten-thirty, the morning I arrived, "Germany," the impertinent telephone girl at the "New Willies," switched her chewing-gum and poked holes through me with her keen blue eyes as she said in her "hurdy-

gurdy" voice, "No. 4, please," and from this abbreviated reproduction of solitary confinement I made my first rendezvous with Jane. Sweet Jane! I sloop over every time I mention the name.

Great guns! You could float a war vessel in the tears of joy, vexation, anger, sorrow, and laughter I have spilled on her account. She kept me in hot water from the time I first saw the Washington Monument out of my sunny southern room in the "New Willies" till I quarreled with the clerk about the "yeller" kid he placed next my room. This was the only time another man tried to put his kid onto me. It kept me awake half the night, for several days.

The baby belonged to a prominent newspaper man, and before I got onto the fact that strenuous efforts were being made to choke it off for my benefit, I lost my temper and sent the following defy to the management:

I warn you now in terms of war
A "yeller kid" I much abhor.
Such a kid, whate'er its name,
Will squall its way to death or fame.
You've placed this kid against my door
To spoil my sleep for ever more.
Now, if this "yeller" gives a squawk,
I'll pack my trunk and take a walk.

I afterwards apologized to both papa and the manager, upon seeing the pretty rosy-cheeked baby.

Jane, bless her little soul, led me a merry chase. I would have married her, but I was afraid to.

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How sorry I am that I did not and take chances. I might have saved her.

She was the only one that stuck, the only one I never ceased to love.

The second time I came near proposing marriage to her was in the following lines:

WILL YOU LET ME CALL YOU QUEEN?

I am ruler of a kingdom,
Boundless is my realm;
With hosts of loyal subjects, good and true,
My ship of state is sailing
With a master at the helm.
Now all of these I gladly offer you.
My life is sad and lonely,
My heart with love is keen—
Will you take my kingdom
And let me call you queen?

I will be your boldest warrior
And fight your battles brave,
I will risk my life to hardships in your cause;
I will be your humblest courtier,
I will be your lowly slave,
And you may take my throne and make the laws;
I'll be the sweetest lover
The world has ever seen
And abdicate my sovereign rights
If I may call you queen.

All my loyal subjects
Join me in this plea,
They long to have you rule them as you please;
My wish is their pleasure
And they are true to me—
We will greet our little ruler on our knees.
You will be our richest jewel,
Our love be always keen
If you will come and rule my heart
And let me call you queen.

I was twenty-five years her senior, but young for my age. I waited for some years, hoping in vain that some fortuitous combination of opportune circumstances would remove the man she did marry, that I might have another try. O, had I never heard more of her!

The first time I called the dear kitten up by 'phone my heart beat so loudly it interfered with the whole 'phone system.

I had to wear a steel corset after that when I went to the 'phone, to keep my heart from galloping my lungs out.

Well, we got our line of battle arranged and the "dance was on."

She did certainly have about her the craziest bunch of little butterflies I ever saw in my wildest absinthestained fancies.

Pretty! why, when they all got together in a theatre box the balance of the audience looked like a "Hewitt Electrical display" in a store window.

Frequently, when they appeared in a bunch in a box some fool would yell, "Pull down the asbestos curtain!" This radiant effulgent aggregation of "all stars of the first magnitude" generally set the house afire.

Ofttimes the managers found it necessary to send a polite request for them to get off the box rails and give the "calcium light man" a show.

Well, I found myself right up against this whole bunch the first day I was in Washington, and I was "it"—as long as I lasted. They nearly killed me

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when I wrote the following lines on one of their pretty handkerchiefs.

IF SATAN SHOULD COME TO WASHINGTON

If Satan should come to Washington
And see this bunch of girls
He would pack his little trunk
And start for other worlds.
Hell is hot enough for him,
Wearing asbestos shoes—
Here he would find a hotter place
Than hell with all its flues.
The fuel here is the fluid sort,
While there it's common punk;
In hell it only boils the duck
While here he's boiling drunk.
In hell they cook him nice and done
And baste him well with oil,
While here they burn him to a crisp
And twist him in a coil.
Down there the ice man has a show,
Because the girls in hell
Never melt the ice man's tongs
And make the Devil yell.

The Washington men seemed to stand off and laugh. They were in on the deal in some mysterious way, but I never discovered how, where or when.

This particular bunch seemed to belong to the Navy crowd.

They were not bothered much by the "Johnnys," but if they kept up the constant and copious "swill" in which I saw them indulge, it was a "cinch" they would soon be bothered with the "Willies." They drove me "bug-house."

My first afternoon was a good specimen of what

kept them "rolly-poly," "rosy," and "rollicking," and incidentally kept Washington in an uproar.

"We went to the matinee," the girls and I. They seemed to own all the theatres, and bossed the employees about like "a friend of theirs might be an intimate friend of a friend of the management."

About the middle of the play they got thirsty, and writing a note to the manager, saying the show was "rotten," signed my name to it, without my knowledge, then had the unqualified nerve to send me to see that it reached him, after which I was to call up the Navy Yard. "Just ask if there is anything doing, and let us know what they say," listlessly murmured innocent little Jane; "they won't know who is calling and we will give them a surprise."

Fool that I was, they were weaving about me a net of circumstantial evidence to make me the laughing-stock of Washington. They could have had any man hung for murder without his leaving his seat.

Kind fate is very busy when she does not come to my rescue, however.

I did not call an usher, not I. I was too anxious to please the "bunch." I handed it right into the box-office myself, asking at the same time, "Will you please see that your manager gets this at once?" A mangy old dog, with a high collar and big glasses was standing back of the box man. He reached for the note as I asked if I might call up the Navy Yard with their 'phone. I was directed to the telephone-box over in the corner, and paying no further atten-

tion to the matter of the note, "called up the Navy Yard."

"Hello, exchange! Give me the Navy Yard, please. I see no book here, I presume you can get it for me."

"Hello."

"Well?"

"Hello! Drop in a nickel, please," came a mellow voice.

Then I began to adjust myself to a coop not larger than a good-sized mouse trap.

If I ever go to Congress my first bill will be to regulate the size of "telephone-boxes" and remove upper berths in "Pullman Sleeping Cars."

Three, five, ten minutes passed, and I had no response to my call, but I did hear an edifying lot of stuff, which should be preserved to future generations.

"Keep out there, will you?"

"Say, will you quit hanging your clothes on my line?"

"If I should put anything on your line I'd never see it again, you rubber," came back a reply.

"What's the matter, there? Hello, exchange, some one is always breaking in on our conversation."

"You lobster! Private line? why, no company would let you have a private line. You're looking for a livery stable."

I was really enjoying this, more than I had the show, but I was getting impatient myself, and began to throw things about.

"Did you get them?" presently came over my way.

"No, I did not," I answered savagely, having smelled the clash of battle. "Do I get some action for my investment? I want the Navy Yard or my money back."

"Well, why didn't you say so, without bringing a law suit? Drop in your nickel," was the exasperating reply.

I was now boiling mad.

"I did drop in a nickel, you impertinent thing!" I exclaimed, choking with indignation.

"I have no record here of your having done so, you'll have to drop in another."

"This is simply stealing money, that's all! I have no nickel to drop in; will a dime do?"

"Yes," was the calm reply, "you may hold the 'phone ten minutes for a dime."

"Hold on there," I yelled, "you are cheating me. I have just held the blame thing for twenty minutes for a nickel. Can't I hire a boy to hold it forty minutes for a dime?"

"Hello! Hello!" came a deep voice.

"Is this the Navy Yard?" I yelled.

The same "basso profundo" sang into my ear, "Naw, you lobster, this is the morgue."

"Well, this is a hurry call. Just hot-foot a dead-wagon up here to the Blank Theatre, will you?" With this I angrily jammed up the receiver and turned to crawl out of the box, when—wow! there were four pretty faces, laughing to beat the band.

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Jane handed me a loose receiver, saying, "Talk to the winds over the wireless. The Navy Yard may be located up in the sky somewhere." They had unblushingly given me the "razzle-dazzle" with a "fony 'phone," so I thought, and they themselves believed.

Jane at once saw how embarrassing the situation was to me, a stranger in the crowd, and she relented.



"Yes, I wrote the note; your play is rotten."

Patting me on the arm, she said coaxingly, "Too bad, wasn't it, but we were initiating you." I thought she was sorry for what her wicked friends had done, but I afterwards learned that she set up the whole job herself.

I tried to be jolly, and had just remarked, "Well, girls, the drinks are on me, say where," when the

ugly duffer whom I had seen take the note, in the box, stepped up to me and asked:

"Did you write this note?" This came near causing a tragedy. I always protect a woman and a lame horse. I looked at the note and saw at a glance that it was another joke perpetrated by the "bunch."

I looked at Jane. There was a look of horror, I thought, on her face. I did not hesitate, but said, "Yes, I wrote the note; the play is rotten."

The manager scrutinized me closely, then, instead of assaulting me, he stuck out his hand and said, "You'll do, the second round is on the girls," and went back into his den.

The girls had their heads together giggling, all talking at once, just as girls will do, don't you know—when "br-r-r-r-clang! br-r-r-r-clang!" and an ambulance stampeded the carriages in the front of the theatre and backed up to the curb facing the door.

"For God's sake! girls, look here!" I exclaimed, "cut it and run for your lives. That 'phone is a live one. When that chap called me a lobster I told him to send over a dead wagon, and, by Jove! there it is. Jump into these cabs quick. Meet me in the 'rubber room' at the 'New Willies.'"

I was some minutes getting a third cab, during which time I could hear a heated debate between the theatrical employee and the driver of the dead-wagon. As I was off I heard the theatre man say: "O, your trolley is off the wire. Chase yourself,

We bury our dead over here ourselves." Then I heard a sound like that made by a full bottle of "Buffalo Lithia" when the barman tries to hurry his job by turning the bottle upside down—"Gululp-pep-pep."

I never did know exactly what made this particular noise, but the next day I stepped cautiously up to the box-office to inquire about a fan left by one of the bunch, and I saw the aforesaid employee with one eye in deep mourning for the "dead man" the "morgue man" was looking for.

One day I had Jane and one of her friends in the "rubber room" at the "Willies" stuffing their little hides full of lobster salad. This was the only way I could get a day's rest, as after eating a ton of this indigestible feed they were usually laid up for a day.

We were suddenly disturbed by a visit from a wraith from—I don't know where. A wriggly sort of girl, with an unfinished giggle on her face, came prancing over to our table.

We were introduced, and she was invited to "sit in the game," but declined, saying in an excited murmur that she had to go up to the Capitol.

"What's doing?" asked Jane.

"Why, haven't you heard?" responded "Blinks"—this was the name by which they addressed her.

I didn't like her; she wouldn't look any one in the eye. I put her down as pretty bad.

Continuing, she said, "You must go up there and

see the six-toed Indian!" And with this she pranced out without ever saying what she came in for.

"Oh! let's all go up and see the curio," squealed Jane, and we quickly acquiesced.

In half an hour we were in the rotunda of the Capitol. An accommodating half dozen guides offered their services.

"Where is the Indian?" asked Jane.

"The Indian? What Indian?" asked the guide in open-mouthed wonder.

"Why, the Indian with the six toes," responded little Jane, equally surprised.

"The only real live Indians here, you will find over there in the House of Representatives," laughingly responded the guide.

"I'll bet a gourd full of nickels that 'Blinks' is stringing us," I ventured to remark. At this moment a messenger boy stepped up and asked us if we were looking for the "six-toed Indian."

Upon my answering in the affirmative, he said, "Ten cents apiece and I'll show him to you."

I promptly shelled out thirty cents and the boy led us across the rotunda to a large oil painting, entitled "The Baptism of Pocahontas," and placed his finger on the foot of one of the figures, and, sure enough, there were six toes on the foot.

If it has not subsequently been amputated, the extra toe will still be found growing on the left foot of one of the squatting figures in the left-hand corner of the picture.

All were silent with astonishment, but when the

joke of that funny-faced Blinks trickled through the lining membrane of our over-crowded skulls they had to call an ambulance for three.

We wended our way dolefully back to the "Willies," and there sat Blinks with three cripples, having a bully time; but she didn't come to our table.

We thought we were safe, but in about ten minutes the impertinent face of a messenger boy was stuck in at the door, then he sneaked over to "Blinks" and whispered something to her and it was all off. She did everything but turn a somersault, and she was funny enough without doing that.

I came to Washington to stay three days and get Jane to run off with me. I stayed three weeks and then tried to lose her. This is where I made a mistake. She was only having a rollicking good time and meant no harm; but at the end of three weeks I was seeing "green things" with "pink aigrettes" on them. In plain English, I was bordering on the "Willies," a real case of "bug-house," and I swear I hadn't taken a drop except with the bunch. This was their only crime. They turned their dear little "tomics" into swill-tubs. I used to write funny little things like this to my baby Jane when the weather was extremely bad.

Drizzle, drozzle, sizzle, sozzle,
Every leaf and twig a nozzle.
The sleet came down in blinding sheets
To freeze the trees and polish the streets,
To twist the spine and make you swear
And tangle your feet up in the air,

To trip you up, then throw you down,
To break your legs and crack your crown,
To frizzle your bangs and muss your hair,
And make you look like a grizzly bear.
Don't come down, but stay right there,
Come down to-morrow and go on a tear.

Jane and I split when she smoked her first cigarette in my presence. There were six of us together, four of the girls, one other man—I should not dignify him by that name, though—and myself. We were in No. 2 private dining-room at the Hotel G.

We had eaten a nice luncheon with plenty of "lush," and this with the heat of the room had fired up the girls' faces and made them look a little "bleary."

Just how this derelict butted in, I never knew. I do know the check came to me at the end of the game.

With coffee he drew out a cigarette case and passed it around. Each girl in the bunch, including Jane, who complimented me with a questioning look, took one.

It was a crucial moment. This evil-minded and depraved reprobate lit a wax match and passed it along.

Jane was last in line, because sitting next me. She hesitated, held the cigarette daintily between her dimpled fingers for a moment, then lit it and smoked it to a stump.

"You do not smoke; do you approve of ladies smoking?" asked Jane.

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"Ladies do not smoke," I responded.

"Oh, you provincial!"

"The angel!"

"Well, what do you think of that?" came in a chorus, and the bad man looked "wise" and "smart," and smiled.

It was that same old story, a stubborn lot of thoughtless girls, quick to follow a bad example, and one of those "human leeches" to show them the way.

I sat still and listened until they had exhausted their supply of uncomplimentary remarks about me.

Jane had not said a word, but seemed ready to burst into tears.

"Why do you not assault me, little girl?" I gently asked of her.

"You saw me smoke the cigarette, did you not?" was her accusing reply, and all caught the meaning. She was mortally offended at my first remark, "Ladies do not smoke."

All were quiet and I took advantage of the lull to get in my work.

"Ladies," I said, "will you permit me to tell you a little story in defense of my position in this matter? It is not a nice story, but teaches a good moral."

Some one said "Yes," and the others remained very quiet.

My cool, quiet manner frightened the "leech," who asked if he could be excused to go to the telephone while I was relating the story.

"No!" I responded emphatically. "This story is not long and I tell it for your especial benefit."

Now the girls were scared, but they kept quiet while I related the following true story.

"You heard me call you 'ladies,' notwithstanding my direct statement that 'ladies do not smoke.' I do not make any concession by saying you are ladies, for I know you are, and what you are doing now is not smoking, it is simply 'fooling with fire.' I have been your daily companion for several weeks and I have never seen you do it before, therefore I feel positive this is but a freak notion, born of the momentary desire to be 'spicy and smart.' Now for my story.

"A while ago I happened to be in Chicago. There was being held at the Auditorium some sort of religious convention. I was not attending this convention, I assure you, but by some peculiar fate I became one of a party of some dozen men, most of whom were clergymen, to go on a slumming tour to view Chicago's wickedness by electric light.

"I am not given to such tours—having a susceptible heart and seeing enough evil about me in the broad light of day without needing such stimulus."

"Oh! cut out the gush," slurringly remarked the human leech.

"I will in a very few minutes," I responded courteously, although I was boiling.

"Well, I reluctantly joined the party and we went the rounds.

"Now, ladies, you have known me long enough to feel certain that you have my deepest respect,

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therefore, for the sake of a touching and pathetic little story, much to the point, pardon the reference to those things which are not nice topics for conversation.

"At about two o'clock in the morning we visited a gorgeously appointed 'palace of sin.'

"All was revelry, and apparently all were happy and gay. We were shown through the 'Marie Antoinette' room, the 'throne room,' the 'Turkish room,' the 'Moorish room,' and several other equally grand apartments, in each of which were women, corresponding in nationality or some other feature to the room.

"By some freak notion the proprietress invited all—every 'girl' in the house—to come into the great ball-room and listen to a sermon. It was a lark for these poor sin-soaked creatures. This blasphemy did not frighten them.

"In rounding up, one girl was missing, and she was at last found hidden away in some obscure corner, and they drew her out amidst much hilarity. She was said to be 'the wickedest girl in the house.'

"She sat, demure and thoughtful, as the wine and cigarettes went around.

"Every woman took a cigarette but the stubborn one—and then the trouble started.

"The landlady told her bluntly, she should smoke or leave the house.

"She was the poor little wreck of a formerly beautiful girl, still a girl in age. Her face was painted,

her eyes were doctored, and she was 'fixed up' just like the others.

"In the midst of the argument a fatherly, white-bearded old man stepped to the side of the poor woman, took her hand, and in a friendly voice said, 'Will you tell these people why you hesitate to join these others willingly—you must have some reason?' He led her to the middle of the room. She was trembling like a leaf, and as she was thus made conspicuous she stared about in an embarrassed sort of way, paying no attention to the exclamations of surprise from her daily companions.

"'Why do you decline to smoke?' asked the clergyman.

"Suddenly, with a strong, cold, bitter voice she said, 'Yes, I will tell you why!'

"The landlady tried to stop her, threatened her, scolded her, and went to the point of taking hold of her, but the strong hand of the old man kept her away.

"'Madam,' he said, 'we are under police protection. With us are special newspaper correspondents. Now let this poor woman tell us her story.'

"The woman had become frightened and cowed at the conduct of the 'landlady,' and she hesitated.

"'Go on,' commanded the clergyman, 'you will be protected. Tell us what caused your downfall.'

"'A cigarette,' was the brief reply. Continuing, she said: 'I was a happy, innocent girl, living at Huntington, Indiana. I had the promise of a good contralto voice, and my father, by dint of denying

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himself and the balance of our family every luxury, managed to pay for a series of music lessons in Chicago.

“ ‘I progressed wonderfully for the first three months.

“ ‘I found I was being courted by a rather fast set of young people, but I was ambitious and did not feel drawn by the numerous temptations about me.

“ ‘In my native town was a splendid young man, just starting in business with his father, after having finished his education. We had been sweethearts from childhood.

“ ‘The Sunday before I left for Chicago he drove me out into the beautiful country, and over and over again we promised to be true and loyal to each other. Huntington was a pretty place and was large enough for me, no matter how grand a voice I might develop.

“ ‘Three months later, John came to Chicago to visit me. ‘ In the mean time I had acquired a taste for city life by the examples about me.

“ ‘A few of us had theatrical privileges, which gave us access to all the theatres at all times.

“ ‘Without noticing it, I was drawn into the whirlpool.

“ ‘It was not perceptible to me—so gradually, so insinuatingly did it take possession of me. I was a victim and did not know it.

“ ‘Well do I recall my first cocktail.

“ ‘Late suppers and wine followed the theatre.

“ ‘Afternoons in stuffy, private dining-rooms, at first with four, later with only two.

“ ‘I had been a good girl and knew no evil.

“ ‘John came. He was a gentle-natured, handsome fellow. I introduced him to a party of four, and we were all to take luncheon in a private dining-room in a prominent restaurant.

“ ‘It was a loud, gay party, and John was getting ready to enjoy himself, when he saw the cocktails come on. I knew his careful raising, and as I saw his look of surprise I pressed his foot with my own.

“ ‘I resisted as long as possible, but it was irresistible. “Come, John, let’s be good fellows with the rest,” and I raised my cocktail. He made that concession without a word of protest.

“ ‘Oh, if I could have stopped to think at that moment!

“ ‘The wine came on and again he looked appealingly at me. I made up my mind right then and there never to take another drink, and I believe I should have kept this resolve had it not been for one man in the party. He persuaded me to take my first drink, and taught me how to make an appetite for liquor. Still, I was strong enough to feel how I was degrading myself, and in the presence of that fine boy, healthy in mind and body, I felt ashamed, and made the resolution.

“ ‘Suddenly the tempter said, “Nellie, your friend from the country is not accustomed to our city ways. If you desire to cut out the wine, you will not offend us. We will not let any of it go to waste.”

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"I do not know why, but some devilish pride crept into my heart and poisoned my mind. I threw up my head, as I have seen many others do, and said contemptuously, "Huh! my country friend does not dictate what I do," and poor John nearly fell out of his chair. My cruel words cut my own heart like a knife.

"In all our lives he had never before been thus rudely snubbed by me, and he felt it keenly, yet he was manly enough to speak right up, "Well! I should say not. This little girl can hold her own with any of us," and he squeezed my arm affectionately.

"This came near making me ashamed, but it was the opening shot of one of those crazy battles so often fought by lovers, where neither means a word said, but the wounds are never healed. We spatting the balance of the evening—I generally savage and he apologetic.

"At last the end came—with the coffee. The scoundrel who first introduced me to vice, handed around a box of cigarettes. Previously I had never touched them. The very thought disgusted me. But in the presence of the man who held my heart, *that devilish, stubborn something, which has no name*, rose up within me. I took a cigarette, lit it, and smoked it, all the time looking at John, with that defiant stare which said, "What are you going to do about it?"

"To my surprise, John laughed and talked right along, but I noticed I could no longer find his

friendly foot. Had I there and then confessed my foolishness, all would probably have been well, but I waited too long. John asked to be excused and never returned.

“ ‘I received a note from him the next morning, bidding me forever good-by. Every line was a sob. The last clause in the letter ran :

“ ‘ ‘I may appear vain and prudish to your new-made friends, as they appear to me foolish, but I have always been taught that only abandoned women do those things which I saw you do last evening. You deliberately sacrificed your conscience to satisfy the frivolous whims of a dissipated crowd, knowing at the time that you were stabbing my very soul.

“ ‘ ‘I am still true and loyal to the memory of the sweet, wholesome girl that left Huntington a few months ago, but you cannot be pure in mind and not in body. I could have forgiven the drink, for that is indulged in so freely now that it is not so disgraceful and will generally stop its own course when people find out the truth. But, when you smoked the cigarette, I knew you were not the pure, innocent girl I wanted as my own for life. Your mind was tainted with a desire to do that which only the wicked are privileged to do unchallenged !”

“ ‘I pondered well the situation, and, to my horror, awakened to the truth—I was unfit to be John’s wife. He was hard, but just. I could not blame him. I compared the sweet lessons of my early

childhood with those I had learned here and I was lost.

“That night I went out with the same crowd and tried to drown my sorrows. When I recovered my senses I found I had been in Mercy Hospital for three weeks.

“In the mean time my poor old father had learned the state of affairs and had died with grief and shame—my father was a clergyman.’

“Revelry in that place of sin ceased for that night.

“The next morning a committee was appointed to take the girl from the place, and at nine o’clock drove there to see that she had no trouble in getting away. The house was quiet as death. Ordinarily this would have been attributed to the fact that the revels never ceased, as a rule, till four or five o’clock in the morning, and it was the household custom to sleep until twelve o’clock the next day.

“This was not the cause of the quiet this morning, for many half-clad, bleary creatures were standing around whispering. They seemed to huddle together for protection.

“When the committee entered, the sight of them created consternation, and there was a scampering. The landlady, with a scared look, came in and asked what they wanted.

“They stated the case briefly. They wanted to take the girl away without any notoriety.

“The landlady hesitated for a moment, then going to a small desk wrote a number on a piece of paper

and handed it to them, saying, 'Go to that number and you will find her.'

"Driving to the place designated, they were horror-stricken to see in big letters over the door, 'City Morgue.'

"After telling her story, she had shot herself.

"Now, my dear girls, you understand why my soul becomes water-soaked with tears when I see for the first time a pair of sweet rosy lips—lips made only to kiss and be kissed—with the vile and poisonous cigarette between them—not because of the poisonous nicotine, but because of the vile associations."

I arose and continued, addressing my remarks solely to the lecherous beast at my side:

"I promised to cut out the 'gush' and now I do. It is the contemptible reprobates of your ilk who poison the minds of innocent women and tempt them to go beyond the legitimate lines of fun and frolic. You can see no purity in the laughter of life. You, in your coarse, vulgar, perverted mind, imagine you are smart when you brazenly set bad examples to susceptible young minds and thus betray your own lax nature by abusing the sweet and innocent creatures who, believing themselves safe under your protection, in their abnormal excitement, go beyond the safe limit.

"It is then your devilish nature begins to assert itself. Your every glance is an insinuation and an insult. You know how weak an inebriated woman is, and that is when you outrage and pollute her—at

the very time when she depends most upon the honor of a gentleman to protect her.

"Your clammy hands are always seeking some new violation of all that is decent and good in the association of men and women.

"Your ever-ready suggestion to drink; your seductive intimation of a 'good time;' your ever-ready cigarette case; your impudent lolling around over women; your vulgar stories; every glance, every act, every word of yours is an insult to a self-respecting woman.

"Women lose self-control fast enough without the aid of such despicable creatures as you."

I was so thoroughly angry and wrought up, I was sorry I could not boot this cur out; but my only charge this day was sweet Jane.

That little dear sat with her hands over her face, and to my pain I saw tears trickling through her fingers. I placed my head close to her own and she whispered, "Let's go."

We quietly put on our wraps and left the others sitting there.

Getting into a cab, we drove to Jane's home, with scarcely a word being spoken.

As I bade her good-by she said, "Please do not call again."

I gulped back the sob that was choking me and climbed back into my cab.

The next morning I paid my hotel bill, bought a ticket for New York, and just before starting I

sent to dear little Jane a large bunch of American beauties, and this little note:

“Good-by, my dear little chum, think of me kindly once in a while. I know you will always be as sweet and fragrant as these beautiful roses.

“I have within my heart an abiding love for pure womanhood, therefore I must often place myself in the position of a prude and provincial. I willingly make the sacrifice if I can thereby save one little fluttering soul from the hellish devils lying in wait for it.”

I yet had time to eat a bite of lunch before going. How I did hope and yearn for some little word from Jane, if only “good-by.” It would have been so sweet just then. A page did pass through the dining-room with the usual “Mr. Gl-ul-up,” but I could recognize no resemblance to my own name, therefore Jane’s telephone message failed to reach me.

The day I sailed from New York I expressed more flowers to her with the following lines:

“One fond hope of love assuring,
One sweet hour of love alluring.
The hour is passed,
The hope is dashed,
A sob, a sigh,
A sad good-by,
A conscious sorrow past enduring.”



A human pickle.

CHAPTER XII

A HUMAN PICKLE

While in Washington I discovered a new "genus pickeolus," which could never be mistaken for a peach. It was the vile creature who gave Jane the cigarette, a degenerate of the worst kind.

The above term is not technically correct. This particular pickle can lay no claim to variety. He is so distinctly all by himself it is not difficult to classify him. It is to be hoped that a kind, discriminating and protecting Providence has made "it" a hybrid.

In appearance it is a plain, "mushy," "mouldy,"

"spongy," "rotten" pickle, cast out from amidst some package of the "fifty-seven varieties of better human pickles" to prevent his contaminating the whole cask.

A "bald-headed, apoplectic-faced, slobbery, noodle-brained, addle-pated ass, a modern Caliban." He is "Jack the hand juggler."

Always impecunious and eking out a livelihood by devious petty devices and schemes, unknown even to his most intimate associates; usually, though, he has some simple sinecure position in some of the departments. Add to this the "grub" he "cadges," and he manages to exist. To all outward appearances he is "lingering in the lap of luxurious ease," notwithstanding he is always boring the life out of those with whom he comes in contact with his constant reference to his poverty. The first instinct of a gentleman is to avoid such references.

A whining Miss Nancy man is the missing link—between man and the ass. Fortunately only one or two are permitted to live in each social community.

This particular specimen, which I had a good opportunity to study, was undoubtedly the most lascivious wretch it was ever my fate to meet. A most disgusting, unmanly man. A hand shaker, holding the hand, rolling it about and squeezing it in the most disgusting manner. There are others, too, who do this.

He attempted to fondle each and every woman he met at every possible opportunity.

In the public places he was invariably reaching

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under the table to seek the woman's hand, or any other part of her anatomy he could insult without being arrested. He expected others to see him. He gloated in his own perverted, depraved nature and practices.

Why people permit such a beast to remain in the community is a mystery.

He was absolutely devoid of every sense of honor and shame in the presence of women. The word "respect" had no place in his "pedantic vocabulary."

Either he knew the Washington women to be as vile and bad as himself, or he most egregiously slandered them, for he never introduced a man to a woman that he did not whisper, "She's all right, go after her," which at once tainted the woman as legitimate prey for any villain he might introduce.

He was crazy to introduce people, and was indiscriminate in these introductions, thereby disgusting, and losing the respect of, the better class of people with whom he intrusively came in contact.

He never asked the privilege of presenting any one, but "dragged" them together. Had he been decent enough to be a farmer he would have yoked together an ox and an ass without ever knowing the difference.

He did so many things which marked him as an imbecile and degenerate that his dangerous practice of introducing every woman as wicked, and every man as a "major" or a "colonel," or by some other euphonious title, could be put down to a naturally

pervverted and depraved mind; yet the fact that he was quite aware that this practice was tainting many a good woman, probably for life, gave it quite a sane aspect.

White or black, mistress or maid, every woman looked alike to him.

He was foolish enough and vain enough to believe that all men held the same views regarding women that he himself held.

"Gentleman" or "cad," to every man he would introduce a woman he would at once taint her character, believing in his shallow mind he was by this despicable means gaining the friendship of the man, caring absolutely nothing for the reputation of the woman.

Had it been possible for him to drop into lucid intervals he would have seen, in most cases, the look of utter disgust with which sensible men regarded him. He was so wholly unprincipled, both men and women feared to offend him.

He had a way of "butting in" which is irresistible. In some mysterious manner he butted into one of the exclusive clubs of Washington, which was most unfortunate, for it opened to him many doors which would otherwise be slammed in his face. He borrowed the entrance fees from a poor widow, with whom he was boarding.

He printed the name of the club on his cards and began to appear in public places and be seen with reputable people, and those who did not know his

peculiarities allowed him to "get in," and no one apparently cares to soil his feet by kicking him out.

He could, to gain a point or advantage, be polished in his manners, but he soon dropped the polish for his utterly disgusting self to shine forth in vulgar virulence.

There are no women quite so bad as ultra-bad men, but under the tutelage of such a despicable creature as this they approach dangerously near the limit.

"Birds of a feather flock together." The lecherous man, looking for a bad class of women, need only follow the slimy trail of this unnatural insect.

Some day he will find him butted into a bunch of real good-looking women, well-dressed, young and pretty. They are the beginners. They do not know. Later, if he will drop into the private rooms of the semi-respectable restaurants, there he will find, somewhere, this "Jack the pincher," with quite a different class, bleary-eyes, parched faces, spoiled by drink—yet some of these women may be seen at receptions in some of the best houses in Washington. These are the old toughs who have "gone the pace." They are the procuresses of society. They cannot tell their vulgar stories and get "loaded" in the high-class places, therefore they seek those less conspicuous. Here "Jack the pincher" is welcome. He lolls, he revels, he soaks his soul in vulgarity.

He here learns of all the "new ones" ready to

"come out," and later he helps to "introduce" them—to the "Willies."

When you see two nice, clean, sweet girls in a prominent restaurant with this "slobbery" thing, just keep tab, and you will find from three to six introductions occur before they leave. They, poor little innocents, believe they are being launched properly into that "private-room" set which has such a "jolly good time." They soon dissipate their fresh, innocent beauty by drink, then the next crop comes on, but they are "private roomers," with puffy faces and painted cheeks.

Good women know bad men, and if by accident they are introduced to them, they very promptly give them to understand their absence is more to be desired than their obnoxious presence. No good woman is afraid to give a bad man "the stony stare."

Bad women also know bad men and seek their company. It is but fair to say, though, women are just as bad as men make them. Were there no bad men, there would be no bad women.

Such human derelicts as this "Jack the pincher" start the new ones. They cannot conceal their vile, wicked natures, and when a woman is seen the second time with one of this kind she has no excuse but that she wants to "break in," or, what is a better term, "break out."

When that woman is asked why she does not cut the derelict her answer is, "He is so nice to me, I can't be rude to him." Nine times out of ten she will sob her soul out that she did not take an axe

and "cut him," before she gets through with him. These "new ones" need not flare up and become indignant when it becomes apparent that people are "looking" and "whispering." They are the targets of these "snap-shots" of gossip. The men with them thrive on notoriety and cannot resent it for them. They would not if they could. Little by little the undermining of morals and body blunts the conscience till they too look upon notoriety with lenient eyes and seek it as a solace for loss of personal worth and attractiveness.

It is the sudden awakening which some remorseful moment brings that reveals the awful truth—innocence is gone forever. The consciousness of purity is a safeguard against a multitude of dangers; with this swept away, there is no hope.

It is then the woman "sobs her soul out" and curses the conditions which first introduced her to the "wicked set."

Do men ever feel remorse? Not men like the poisonous brute who holds on to your hand, rolling it about in his own, in his vulgar, insinuating fashion. These are monomaniacs and monstrosities, therefore free from remorse.

It is a question whether the remorse of any man amounts to much. He has little to lose—the woman loses all.

The "rotten pickle's" whole life has been embittered by his own vile acts. Try as he will, he can never conjure up a sweet and wholesome thought or sentiment for others. Licentiousness is the basis

of his mental gymnastics, and the sole theme of his thought by day and his dream by night.

He has no respect for himself, nor has he any for others. He seems determined to prevent, if possible, any one having respect for another.

His special assault is upon susceptible young women.

His social function is "steerer."

The "Jack the ripper," or "human cuttlefish," mentioned later, is a great, big, coarse, lumbering lubber, without pretense of refinement or any other manly qualification to make him really attractive. He fights like a battle-ship, therefore his victims may avoid him when they fear an assault.

But this other variety of human pest, while apparently an "ass" and a "cad," works by that most dangerous of all methods—insinuation, innuendo, and stealth.

They both, however, take undue advantage of women under the influence of liquor, and put them in that condition for such purpose.

The one is selfish, working for his own beastly ends; the other is an "introducer," and having no sense of manhood in himself, he cannot understand that manly men never require the services of such a go-between.

Some time in his life nearly every man gets his heart in a "snarl" under "delicate" circumstances; but few men make a business of it, or parade it about the public places, boasting of it, and bandying the name of the woman who trusted him.

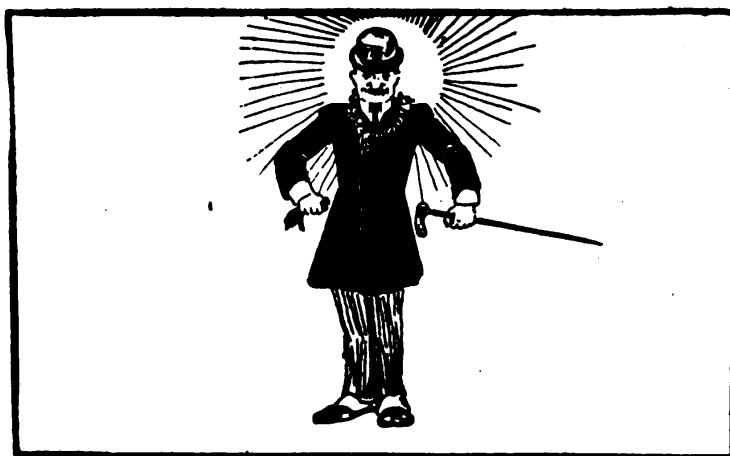
This is not pleasing—let us “cut it out.” It robs the dear little flirtations of life of their sweet savor, and mingles the pure love of clean hearts too closely with the ugly passions of the human monsters.

All men are bad enough, but some are in a class by themselves. They are the “lepers” of society. Usually their skins betray their leprous nature by some abnormal condition. Society would do well to ostracize such men as these—yet, strange to say, society is no respecter of persons if the other credentials are all right. A scrofulous “lion” is socially (?) (whatever that means) adored if he can start himself in that ulterior route which carries him “to the best houses,” while rosy, healthy, wholesome men, sound in both mind and body, beat around the outskirts of “good society.”

It is in the power of men to make women good or bad, and usually, early in the game, the woman longs for some manly man to reach her a saving hand, to rescue her, as she feels herself sinking deeper in the quagmire of dissipation—as she is pushed along by the sheer force of bad example set by the “slobbering hand roller.”

Girls, hold your fair skins sacred against the touch of that poisonous vampire with always “wet lips and eager hands.”

Some day some real respectable women will band together and put a ban upon all men whose outward appearance bespeaks bad blood and bad morals.



The human cuttlefish.

CHAPTER XIII

THE HUMAN CUTTLEFISH

There is another type to receive the lash. I have briefly alluded to him before.

I have in my own semi-dissipated life encountered men of every class and calling capable of stirring in the human bosom sentiments of love and murder.

Unlike disgusting "Jack the hand juggler" is "Jack the ripper."

The one is the loafer, lolling about where women may be constantly before his eyes. His female

associates are "lushers," while the other Jack is seldom seen but always "busy." His particular class is composed of "gushers"—that hysterical class of women with no set standard of worth or merit, but wafted about by the public utterances of a few "putty-headed" so-called "society leaders."

The particular type of "Jack the ripper" which I saw in Washington was a great big, hulking lobster, looking for all the world like the boss of a Wisconsin lumber camp.

He was too ugly to be called a "hippopotamus," and too handsome to be called a "cuttlefish."

His "handsome" face was a cross between a "Hamburger steak" and the outside of a "Lynn Haven oyster shell."

It grew on him! He couldn't help it! But if I were Jack I would have it amputated, so I wouldn't have to look my ugly self in the face.

The history of this case is pathetic in the extreme.

The "gushers" in Washington are just like they are elsewhere, and this lecture will apply to all alike—for there are other "Jacks."

If their "putty-pated" leader happens to hang the "family wash" in the front yard, a similar "flutter" of soiled linen is at once seen all along the line.

Well, "Jack Swoggles" came shambling into Washington and some facetious person publicly called him "Baron." If Jack had been a gentleman he would have knocked the officious friend's "top piece" off, for all "American barons" are cads; but

Jack, being from the lumber camps, of course was not expected to know much about society.

In a little while it got to the Washington colony of female gushers—which we will abbreviate to the “W. G. C.’s,” which, in full, means “Washington Gusher Club”—that that horrid thing they had seen slopping about town was a real live baron. The ugly carcass he wore like a suit of rusty armor was only a disguise. Underneath it all he was lily white (apologies to the lily).

Every “Gusher Club” has a “gurgler.” “What do you think!” gurgled the gurgler, “Jack Swoggles is a baron!” (In a chorus) “Oo! oo! oo! oo!” They’re “off in a bunch” and Jack is “in the swim” without a life preserver.

Occasionally we run across women who, by some freak of nature, have retained the independent, womanly spirit of our ancestors, even in the midst of such mockery as modern “smart” society. These women follow the dictates of common sense, notwithstanding their views often run counter to the dictates of the “putty-heads.” But their intrinsic worth shines so brightly above the tarnished tinsel and veneer of society, their light is not dimmed and they become a sort of counter-balance to hold down the “gurglers.”

Her “brutal frankness” is sometimes very wholesome. What she says is believed because she is too sane to tell a lie.

Such an iconoclast was seated, with several of the gushers, in the “rubber room” at the “New Willies”

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when "cuttlefish Jack" came ambling in, as though rolling a barrel in front of him.

Pardon the sudden digression, but did you ever see "The Wizard of Oz?" Do you remember that excruciatingly funny scarecrow character? Well, he will lose his job if his manager ever discovers "Jack the human cuttlefish."

As a matter of speculation, I offer the "human cuttlefish" \$500 a week to impersonate "Jack the



"I don't want that ugly thing over here."

ripper" and walk across the stage twice at each performance for six nights and two matinees. I will bill him by the high-sounding title "ARCHITENTHIS PRINCEPS VERRILL," in order that people may not know that he is just a plain "human squid." The show must open in Washington, D. C., if this offer is accepted.

There was a "halo" around the hulking, skulking

person of the "giant squid" as he entered the "rubber room" that day. The gushers supposed it was the distinctive mark of superiority with which the "W. G. Club" stamped its borrowed idols; but, girls, it was nothing in the world but that phosphorescent effusion from his rum-soaked hide, which hovers about musty and swampy places. His was a true "jack-o'-lantern." The more classical term is "ignis fatuus," which practically means "fool's fire." (Don't fool with fire.)

Look in the standard encyclopedias and you will find this definition for the "Jack-o'-lantern" or "Ignis fatuus."

"A luminous appearance seen in marshy places hovering over stagnant places and church yards.

"It generally appears a little after sunset as a pale bluish colored flame [Jack is always blue until he gets a drink]; sometimes it remains in view all night [when playing poker]. At other times, it disappears and reappears at half-hour intervals [when at the theatre].

"It is a phosphureted hydrogen gas, generated by decaying animal matter [Jack is poisonously decayed].

"It is supposed to be due to evil spirits, attempting to lure human beings to their destruction." [Jack is the leader of these evil spirits and is always leading some one astray.]

There is a remarkable resemblance between this "will-o'-the-wisp" and certain human ghouls who

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infest social places to lure innocent women to their destruction.

From either point of view Jack's halo was legitimate. It was a "freak of nature" and its name need not be changed. It was due to the same basic conditions.

Many fine, handsome, clean-cut men entered before Jack came in, but none of the gushers seemed to notice them. The gushers do not flirt. The "lushers" do. But when the "human cuttlefish" lumbered in the "gurgler" nearly choked to death.

"Oh, there's Jack Swoggles! Isn't he grand?" The little hussy knew he was to come, and had purposely taken a position so she might see him first and say something amazing before the others could get in on the "greet."

Many strangers gasped that day when they heard that expression come out of the mouth of a very respectable-looking young woman, and then saw the ugly hulk about whom it was said.

The others were ready, cocked and primed to go off, when the "brutally sensible" woman blurted out: "I don't want that thing over here to spoil my appetite. I am hungry and in here for a good luncheon, not a 'halibut steak.'"

This was a shockingly sensible "jerk down" for the charming "human cuttlefish" worshipers; but the comparison was so obviously truthful it did really jerk some sense of shame into the young women and brought their shallow, fickle minds into a state of temporary lucidity.

The "human cuttlefish" made a "side-wheeler" motion toward the bunch, but the sudden and conspicuous duck of the heads warned him to move on. The "brutally frank" woman was the wife of a prominent physician. There was a bunching of heads for a few moments, then they all raised their eyes and noses at once and looked in the direction of the "cuttlefish."

"The brute!" ejaculated one. "I always suspected as much," muttered another. "He said he ruined his complexion hunting in Africa," put in one gurgler.

"He must have found the game he was hunting for," said another. "I suppose those scars on him are where he was shot in Africa. The same shot must have carried off his front hair, too."

"Well, we have another name for it in this country," said the doctor's wife; but, never mind, cut it out. It is too disgusting to talk about here, but you girls can think about it profitably, and let me say something else to you. You are bad enough now, but if I ever see one of you curled up there in the dark hall with that "boa constrictor licking you," I want you to keep your hands off my door knob. I have some regard for decency." And the doctor's wife furiously fell to eating lobster "à la Newburg."

This "brutal frankness" dissipated all the halo about "Happy Jack's" angular carcass and put some of the secret schemes of the "human cuttlefish" out

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of joint. It took much of the romance and glamour from his shuffling person.

But he is still very much in the game.

Some day some fool husband will be plebeian enough to stroll into the dark places of the hotel corridor, in Washington or Baltimore, where "Baron" Jack Swoggles is coiled up with a woman, with bulgy eyes and flaming cheeks, and he won't do a thing to "Happy Jack" but take a "pot-shot" at him with a good-sized gourd full of slugs, and it will take Jack's collection of champagne corks to plug up the holes in his ugly hide. Then Washington will be like every other ungrateful place and say, "Why, what else could you expect? He deserved it, the depraved wretch." Meaning that he should not have allowed himself to be found out. But Jack had to advertise himself some way.

After the "cuttlefish" dies or crawls out of the "Providence Hospital" he will quietly sneak, and Washington will resume its normal state. Some other monstrosity will soon bob up in front of the "putty-head's telescope, for the "W. G. C.'s" to fall down and worship, but the "family washing" will remain in the back yard for some time after Jack's downfall. Many women will be ashamed to look decent men in the face.

Every animal on the "merry-go-round" looks alike to this class of women, until they fall off the "lion" and break a leg, then they are shy about riding on the lion again. They shun that beast.

It is said of Jack's ugliness that when he first

came in from the lumber camp and saw himself full length in the mirror, he nearly scared himself to death. The barber always turned the chair so Jack could not look into the mirror.

After the "putty-head" passed on him, he was a "raging beauty." He apologized to his "armor plate," put mirrors all around his room, and slept



"Drummers will curse the day that Jack died."

with the electric lights burning. He stood by the hour parting his hair down the back of his head. He had little in front to part. It had been shot off in Africa.

Ages hence, "Happy Jack's" hide will be hanging in the freak department of a leather factory. Some will mistake it for a "hog skin," suitable for making bass drums. Then, for several generations, husky drummers will swear because they must wield pig-iron drum-sticks, so the knobs may not be worn off—and the drummers will curse the day Jack died.

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Who said "iconoclast," "sour grapes," or some such thing? You are mistaken. I am trying to get the pretty, young things to take their goggles off and see something with their own dear eyes, instead of through the bleary eyes of some old, wine-soaked wretch they have been taught to believe the "society leader," and quit making such fools of themselves. Cut out the "go-betweens," girls and boys, and try it independent for a while, but keep in the open all the time.

The case of this Jack Swoggles is a typical one. He is only one of many. By some freak accident he was talked about by some of the so-called leaders, and at once the flocks of "gushers" infesting all communities began to hang "garlands of roses" about his "mangy neck." It became the fad to speak in "gurgles" about the "Baron," notwithstanding he can hardly afford to shave once a day, with shaving soap at two cents the piece.

He may be found in dark places coiled about a weak woman, with "bulging eyes," "flaming cheeks," and "hanging jaw," listening to his low, vulgar talk. What a pity women cannot understand how easy it is for them to degrade themselves in the eyes of really good people by being seen with those whom they know must be questionable characters, simply because they cannot resist the hypnotic "glamour" cast about such men by some accidental and often wholly unintentional notoriety.

They wonder why men, formerly so courteous and careful with them, should suddenly assume a

familiarity which they had never dared express before. They are not surprised at the same familiarity from the "social fad." They rather court it as a favor.

Dear girls, you might as well have the mutton as to have only the wool. It is because they are giving you due credit for your freak associations. To be seen in familiar conversation with some men is equivalent to the woman's admitting she is herself a questionable character. Now, take your choice and abide by it. Use the weak judgment of others and brand your good name by being seen with such men as "the human cuttlefish" and the "rotten pickle," or have some respect for the opinions of the really good fellows, who respect you, and cut the "curios."

If you will be bad, don't parade it. Most human beings are more or less bad, but they do not preach it from the house-tops.

The woman who goes to the limit on the sly is a saint compared to the wild-eyed, crazy creatures who act fools in public and get credit for the limit, whether they take it or not. It isn't what you do that hurts, it's how you do it. (Read Blackstone's Commentaries on English law.)

They doubtless believe it smart, but it is a simple manifestation of their wholly imbecile natures, and they come and go and the world never misses them. They are neither true to themselves nor to others.

Girls, listen to a little wholesome advice. Don't take a fellow on simply because, in outward appearance, he seems to be a fad. He may be a "cuttlefish"

or a "cad,"—they both belong to the same class,—and, again, he may be a lascivious wretch who, under cover of a smile, a dress suit and a bottle of wine, seeks to plunge you into eternal shame.

Weigh well the man before you entrust to him your good reputation. Make him take you in the open. There you are to a certain degree safe. This does not always insure the safety of your reputation, but it at least gives you the benefit of the doubt. Better leave alone men who have the least taint about them liable to smirch you. Of course this narrows your field, but it makes life sweeter and better, and removes that horrible temptation to be bad—the influence of secret places, the "private rooms," the only place where a man has the right to insult you, mind and body, on the ground that you were sober when you went there with him and should have known the true purpose of the private room.

Now, a word for "Johnny."

The old-time "Johnny" is a thing of the past. He was seldom a rich man. If he had a fortune early in life, he spent it.

It made no difference whether he was pushing his "roll" down into his pocket with a "hydraulic ram" or cautiously fishing it out of his vest pocket in small bits of silver; he was always the same gentle, debonair, honorable man—hated by most men, but loved by those who knew him best and especially loved by most women.

His stony stare and soldierly bearing were well-worn disguises, states of "self-imposed hypnosis." He never wasted energy on anything but the thing he loved. In secret he laid aside the "frozen face" and was a thing of extraordinary animation and joy.

"Johnny" had one trait worthy of embalming. He never got a woman drunk and imposed upon her. He and his inamorata would go on tremendous bats together, but not until they knew where the winding path would lead. "Johnny's" first talk was sober and the woman held her wits about her.

The old time "Johnny" was a man, and not a "human cuttlefish" nor "boa constrictor."

The "Johnnys" have given way to the "Willies." The former were men, the latter states of being, or conditions of semi-imbecility brought on by men and women trying to find a definition for the term a "good time."

If the "human tanks" hold out long enough they will run the gamut of the solar spectrum in putting feathers on the aggregation of "snakes and lizards" they are collecting with the aid of such poisonous decoctions as the "fuzzy wuzzy" and the "Gibbs cocktail."

AN ODE TO THE GIBBS COCKTAIL

Twinkle, twinkle, little drink,
How I wonder what you think
When I drink you with a blink.

Wibble, wabble, little drunk,
This is what the cocktail thunk
When I drank him with a blunk.

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How I wonder what you are
When I get you from the bar—
Oh! you give me such a jar.

This is what the cocktail said
As it monkeyed with my head,
"I'll put 'oo in 'oo 'itty bed."

The sentiment in these lines gives a very good idea of the purpose of these "knock-out-drops" called cocktails.

It seems strange that the Navy Department at Washington continues to waste money experimenting on high explosives when the "Gibbs cocktail" is known to kill from Washington to Baltimore. Perhaps it is because the latter is only intended to kill morals in women, while the former is meant to kill men and blow up battle-ships. Mr. Gibbs, the alleged inventor of this drink, is himself a well-known "ogler" of Washington, who will sooner or later earn a monument in the "oglers' last resting-place."

I have said enough to convey the moral and purpose of this book, and have served it raw in order to impress the lessons.

Girls, sober love is as sweet and natural as the fragrant blossoms which come in the spring time. Drunken love is as desolating as the blasts of winter, which scatter the leaves and drive the sap from the tree—as do the drunken revelries of Atlantic City scatter the wits and dry up the marrow in the bones.

You have all had your fling. Think it over; Think it over! If you are wholly bad to the core,

it will break out again and kill, first your soul, then your beauty, and at last your corrupt body will be set up at the end of your mental shooting-gallery for your regrets to throw base-balls at, at 'steen cents a throw. In that day you will wish you had never been born.

But it will be too late. You have punched holes in your sweet conscience so big it will not cover up your memory. That which you can never recover—self-respect—will have fled forever, and in its stead you will be haunted by the “old bleary-eyed hag” who sits laughing at you from the mirror. The “tow-path” only runs one way, girls, and has few resting-places. Bless you, I wish you would all keep sober and only love respectable men in the old-fashioned way, when men delighted in “looking” at you in the open, not “feeling” of you in private drinking-rooms.

I am well aware that this book will receive unmerciful drubbing at the hands and tongues of those who are truly bad. They will say, “vulgar!” “bad!” “disgusting!” Let us take away the sting of the criticisms by admitting it to be all these. Suppose we should leave out all of them, where would be the sting—where would be the truth we wish to convey? None will dare to say that all we have written is not true. It is the “vile,” the “vulgar,” the “bad,” and the “disgusting” which we portray to make the book effective. There are many, very many, who will see themselves in a new light when

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they see their conduct as others see it, and will fall down and thank the old-time "Johnny" for telling them the truth in time.

The truly bad are bad because they know what it means, and because they want to be, therefore nothing can shame them.

This book will sting and anger them because it points out the way to brand them in the forehead for what they are.

A word for the foreign diplomats in Washington. They are not as bad as they are painted, by any means. It is true they have among them some very bad, unprincipled men, but even they, as a rule, are not vulgar in public. They only "fuss up" their "mustaches" and think they look killingly pretty. They are promptly recalled when their conduct in public is half as bad as that of the bad American.

If the diplomats look upon our women as common prey it is because they come here and find American men utterly depraved in their opinions of all women. They find the men of the best clubs ever ready to smirch the name and reputation of our best women, thereupon they start out with the belief that there are few, if any, good women in America.

There is one institution in Washington which should be suppressed by law—the afternoon tea where they have everything but tea. "Fish-house punch" is about the simplest thing they have. The women go home from a round of these "afternoons" as full as a bale of cotton.

Let down the asbestos curtain, girls, and let's all join in to put out the fire before it consumes all that is sweet and good in us.

THE SPORTING CLERGYMAN

It was at Shepherd's, in Cairo, Egypt, that I met John Miller.

On short acquaintance I concluded that a better and more honorable man than he never lived.

To know a man one must study him in his adversity, his griefs, his sorrows and hardships. These bring out the traits of true manhood and worth.

John Miller was, in my opinion, struggling with some deep sorrow, some hidden grief which was gnawing out his vitals.

His story, when I heard it, was not only extremely pathetic, but it came within an ace of being my finish. Just why, the story itself will explain.

It was a peculiar case of love. He had surrendered his heart and affection for the first time late in life, which made my affairs, when compared to his, as a gourd vine to the winding stair up Washington Monument.

He had been caught by an unworthy woman. It tore my own heart to have to admit the awful truth.

Was he repining and wasting away? Not he! He was cursing everything wearing petticoats.

The sight of a pretty woman to him was like throwing a handful of salt in a fire. He truly hated and despised them.

Notwithstanding this, his poor heart was sore beyond recovery, and underneath his savage exterior was a sorrowful memory of a sweet face and a love once his guiding hope.

We met first in a museum. I was looking at a ponderous sarcophagus of black marble, within which rested the mummified remains of a once famous princess of Egypt.

At my elbow I heard a cold, hard chuckle. Upon looking up in surprise I beheld a handsome stranger, also gazing at the mummy.

On his strong, fine, travel-bronzed face was a sarcastic sneer, as he remarked:

"Once, no doubt, she was an entrancer of men. Possibly she was then beautiful, with a fine, plump form, and soulful eyes, but she certainly would not take first prize in a beauty show now.

"They all come to this too soon.

"I'll venture to say, in her time, she broke the hearts of a hundred men and was not wholly true to one."

With this he slapped her face savagely. Suddenly his whole aspect changed, a look of gentle sorrow came over his face and he affectionately patted the cheek which he had a moment before chastised. I observed him place his hand over the eyes as he murmured softly:

"Forgive me, princess, perhaps I am wrong. Women in your time surely could not have been so wicked as they are to-day. To-day every human heart is a sarcophagus in which lies the mummy of

a past love. None are true! None are true!—to themselves nor to others.”

He had lost sight of his surroundings, wholly ignoring my presence.

His was like the soliloquy of Hamlet. He pressed his hand to his breast and passed on.

I followed him closely for a few minutes to get a good look at him. There was something about him to interest and attract one.

He looked to be about forty years of age, yet his heavy suit of hair was beautifully tinged with gray.

His figure was strong, erect, and well groomed. His face was ruddy and healthful, while about his keen blue eyes lurked the lines of suppressed good nature and even merriment.

Yet, with it all, the face was hard,—artificially hard, prematurely frozen,—without marring its beauty or destroying its intrinsic worth.

I concluded the man had a past which did not concern me; therefore, I dropped him from my immediate thoughts.

It was not so easy, however, for me wholly to forget this interesting stranger. He had made a peculiarly lasting impression upon my mind and for two days my thoughts reverted to his strange conduct at the bier of the harmless old princess.

It was early morn at Shepherd's. I was standing at the rail of the veranda watching the multitude preparing to start on the duties of the day.

The street scene was truly dazzling, crowds of quaintly costumed Arabs, Bedouins, Syrians, Turks

and Egyptians paraded past. Street fakirs and itinerants solicited on every hand.

Loud-talking American tourists, angry Englishmen, and excited French travelers all jabbered and gesticulated at one time.

One soon forgets everything at Shepherd's, excepting the inevitable *table d'hôte* and the constant and meaningless hum and chatter of a multitude of human voices. These are the same in every great "American-plan hotel." They become boresome, tiresome, and monotonous.

As I stood, thinking what a truly monotonous thing life gets to be, John Miller, with his *frappé* face and friendly eyes, passed by me.

There was an air of stolid self-reliance about him, a satisfied composure which clearly betrayed travel and worldly experience. He was a well-balanced, thinking man, well able to take care of himself. Notwithstanding, a close scrutiny of the face revealed a lurking sorrow, something teasing the soul and gnawing the heart.

He evidently wanted to be left alone—his manner said so, plainly. As I myself had long ago reached that point where the whole human race seemed a mistake and a bore, I could sympathize with him, yet I did want to know him. He interested me immensely, notwithstanding my chronic dislike for men.

Feeling certain that he would not make advances to me, I decided to introduce myself and take chances of a rebuff.

I walked leisurely in the direction he had taken but found he had escaped me.

Strolling into the beautiful garden in the rear of the hotel, I found the object of my pursuit seated, with his elbows upon his knees and his chin resting in his hands, looking away off into space.

Taking a position near him in a manner not to attract his attention, I sat watching his every movement.

His face had softened, a wistful retrospection had driven out the hard lines, and in their stead was a soft, gentle, kind expression—his real face had escaped for a few moments.

I knew he was gazing into the sunny, rosy past. It would be sacrilegious to break into his reverie; perhaps a dream of exquisite moments, spent in secret commune with the one he had most loved. He was nourishing his soul on sweet memories of the past.

Have we not all indulged our souls thus? Sometimes reviewing childhood's happy days, when we knew no evil; but more often to dream over again sweet loves, the perfumes of which still linger in memory to make the heart throb with the same old joy, and the soul rejoice again in the exquisite sentiments of courtships and the rapturous passions of conquests of the heart.

The periods before we had experienced our first cruel wound of deception, and hated betrayal.

Then, in our bitter awakening, we curse all those things which have come between us and the beautiful and good. We revile those who cruelly deceived

us or betrayed our most generous love and friendship.

Our old regrets again assert themselves; the old gnawing at the heart is felt more keenly and we sink back into the gloom and despair of a chronic sorrow which death alone can heal.

It is only too true, we are often the authors of our own troubles, but seldom of our deeper sorrows.

I indulged these doleful thoughts as I contemplated John Miller for half an hour. His face was truly a study.

At first it was soft and calm; a kind, gentle smile occasionally fluttered about the good mouth and crowfooted the corners of his friendly, twinkling eyes only to be dissipated by a look first of horror, then of settled scorn and hatred.

His was an extreme case.

His mouth now drooped at the corners, with lips compressed. The lower lip curled outward; the jaws were hardset and a frown wrinkled the usually smooth brow.

He had a receptive mind and soon began to show signs of irritation under my searching mental analysis of him, although I was certain he had not seen me.

Suddenly turning toward me he half scowled, but upon recognizing me he smiled, arose and extended his hand to me as he said:

"I was thinking of the princess. You were watching me; I felt your presence, although I did not see you."

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We soon became fast friends and quite confidential. We spent some weeks prowling about Cairo, Assuan, and Karnak.

We made the acquaintance of many Egyptian princesses, all "dead ones."

He passed the usual contemptuous jokes upon them, slapped their cheeks and then apologized. I noticed that he invariably placed his hand over their eyes and turned his face away with a shudder, then he would sulk for an hour or so.

Following his despondent moods he was kind and gentle, scarcely speaking above a whisper.

One day we found a particularly hideous old mummy that seemed to unduly arouse his ire. He cursed her roundly, and with a bitter laugh exclaimed:

"I'll wager a pretty penny if you were sent to the National Museum at Washington, D. C., you would soon be prowling about Alexandria, Georgetown, and Baltimore, up to your old game of smashing hearts.

"Wouldn't she attract attention in a *décolleté* gown guzzling cocktails in the palm room of the New Willies?"

We had not indulged in personalities, not even knowing, up to this time, where either called his abiding place, had he one, therefore when he openly accused the old princess of hankering after the slum places about Washington I was electrified.

"Are you from Washington?" I asked.

"I hope I am, safely from there," was his laconic reply.

We looked each other in the eye hesitatingly, then we both laughed; we seemed loath to open up old wounds and we understood each other, but the mention of Washington bothered both alike. It was an awfully sore subject.

"Have you been much in Washington?" he at last ventured.

"More than is good for my peace of mind," I answered. Again we laughed and grew seriously silent; both of us were thinking of rosy hours in the Capital City. Then he patted the old mummy princess on the cheek and said:

"Forgive me, old lady, you could not possibly have been as bad four thousand years ago as the average society woman of to-day. All the accumulated badness of the time between your period and to-day has manifested itself in the idle women of Washington, D. C."

Then, turning to me, he continued:

"We will, ere long, go each his separate way. At an opportune time we will talk about Washington—how I detest the name—but not now, not now."

The lips were compressed, the old, cold, hard lines again came back into his face, and the hated scowl was present.

I did not care to insist upon knowing more at this time. He was angry and I was dolefully sad.

Great guns! His was no smiling matter. He must have been a mental giant to bear up under his

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burden, for he had surrendered his first love late in life, and in a way to make certain that his whole future would be embittered permanently thereby.

He was worthy a faithful, loyal love, this man. I had searched his innermost nature, and beneath the stolid exterior was a beautiful character which would have unfolded like a new-blown rose under the influence of true affection.

He was charitable to a fault. He especially loved animals. He daily carried crackers and bread from the dining table to crumble and feed to the pigeons and sparrows in the hotel gardens where he went each day to meditate.

When they were about, he always had his arms over the necks of the rusty little donkeys, petting them. His blouse pockets were usually bulging with sweet morsels for these overworked and underfed little beasts.

He never rode upon their backs, and was continually at war with the "dragomans" and Arab boys for abusing them.

One day, seeing a big, raw-boned Englishman, whose feet almost dragged in the sand, belaboring the little donkey which he bestrode, Miller deliberately took him by the shoulders and pulled him from the beast.

"Strike that poor beast again and I will thrash you as you deserve!" he exclaimed, and sent the boy along with the donkey. "You are big and strong enough to walk and let the fatigued little beast ride on your back a while."

The Englishman was so surprised he could not get his wits together in time to vent his anger before we had left him, standing in the broiling sand; but the next day, at Shepherd's, he "got in on the freight" and blustered about some, but Miller coolly laughed in his face.

He tipped every little beggar and patronized every fakir, "because," he said, "they are the 'real things.'"

But John Miller was no angel. He was quick to anger and upon such occasions was a very savage. His whole exterior fairly bristled with hatred.

One had to admire the intensity of his passions and the earnestness of his purposes.

He was a living example of "a good lover and a bad hater." He was dangerous as either. Deceitful women, as a rule, do not fear strong, manly men, because they know them to be above deceit and that they will not retaliate upon them for disloyalty and betrayal of confidence. Miller was this sort of man where women were concerned, but woe to the man who betrayed him.

In a few days we would separate, perhaps never to meet again. I liked him immensely, and he seemed to have a similar sentiment for me.

Our brief friendship had done much to relax the tension which was breaking both of us.

His grief was fresh, mine was of years' standing; therefore to him was due the more immediate consideration and sympathy.

We both knew that our separation would bring

back the old remorse and gloom, the gnawing pain about the heart and the awful regret, yet our paths necessarily lay in opposite ways.

The three days directly preceding our separation we spent lounging about, gradually leading up to the supreme moment when we should unburden our souls to each other.

We probably never should have confided in each other to this extent had it not been for his casual remarks about the wickedness of Washington.

My readers know all of my woes, therefore the balance of this chapter will be devoted to relating the trials and tribulations of John Miller, "the sporting clergyman," and will culminate in another siege in the hospital for poor "Johnny."

I am now in search of a comfortable "Old Johnnys' Home," where I may lay down the burden and dream over the old life once more, leaving out the errors and mistakes and enjoying, in a way, the bright spots, ere the marble man comes around to solicit the sale of a "signboard to eternity."

The story told to me by "the sporting clergyman" was the end.

"I was not surprised," he began, "that you came away from Washington with a hole in your heart and a bad spot on your liver. Every impressionable man doubtless has the same experiences there.

"Love in Washington begins and ends with the sessions of Congress, even the love of the young bride for her husband. He is extremely fortunate if the wife's love and respect endures through one

whole administration. It would be a wise law which would divorce wives when the duties of office call the husbands away for long periods, leaving the wives.

"I believe I underestimate the truth and facts when I say that fully one-third of the idle women of Washington are untrue to their husbands—in fact, a very large proportion of them are quite promiscuous, and change the object of their love each season. This does not mean the so-called 'smart set,' which is a polite name for the ultra-wild class.

"If any interested person doubts this statement, I have an elaborate system of notes, statistics, names, dates, and places which I have accumulated by direct contact with these conditions, to convince the most skeptical optimist.

"I warn Washington now—if she does not check the tendency to dissipation and wickedness on the part of her women, the city will be, in a little while, the wickedest place in the world.

"The class of which I speak does not include the masses, I especially refer to the 'semi-smart set,' composed exclusively of pretty and attractive young married women whose husbands are closely confined to office or away from Washington on official duties.

"They are seen in twos and threes in all the well-known public places, and may be spotted at once by the presence of numerous uncouth, lascivious, bad-looking young men, the army and navy refuse, and by their copious indulgence in the worst forms of intoxicants.

"It is one of the curious things that these smart-looking women waste all their time on a lot of irresponsible cubs who half the time cannot pay for their own drinks.

"Many of them are young army officers who have been dishonorably discharged, others are loafers about the Capitol, of the worst type.

"These women are not 'grafters' or blackmailers; they are simply 'lushers' and all that this implies.

"They begin their revels in respectable places and end them in the worst dens in Washington, but always 'beat their husbands home by a neck.'

"I never intrude my troubles upon others, because I know that most people have troubles of their own; but I like you as I have seldom liked a man, therefore am willing to make a fair exchange of stories.

"We seem to have griefs in common and to hold similar opinions regarding the great social problems.

"I will not prolong the story, for you are more or less familiar with the social conditions surrounding it.

"You express surprise when I insist that I am just past the half-century mark. I attribute my well-preserved condition to a careful mode of life and not having loved ardently till my forty-ninth year.

"I am too well fortified physically from long habit for disappointment to affect my sleep or my appetite, but, my dear boy, my first real experience

has done much to undermine my habitual good nature and my moral stamina.

"I have lost my own self-esteem in a degree to feel that I will never again recover it.

"I presume that every man, at some period of his life, if he is a normal being, truly loves a woman, and doubtless all men, regardless of age, are subject to the same risks in making a frank and honest surrender of the heart; but young men naturally recover more quickly from the shock of disappointment.

"Men love more ardently than women, and are wounded more deeply by deception and disloyalty on the part of the object of their true affections.

"My early training and experience made me a skeptic regarding the virtue and stability of women generally. I have never been prone to wasting a strong sentiment upon them.

"I saw a tendency toward lax morals in our whole social fabric. This, coupled with rapid change of location by travel, preserved me from heart-entangling alliances, but I struck my 'Waterloo,' at last, in Washington.

"You will pardon me for referring to a part of my early life, but you will better appreciate my story by knowing of it.

"My father was a clergyman in one of the suburban villages of Chicago.

"Being an early settler and quite an astute man, he early purchased large tracts of land which rapidly appreciated in value, making him a wealthy

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and influential citizen, yet he never abandoned his calling as clergyman.

"He desired me to take his place as a clergyman, therefore my whole educational course was shaped with this end in view.

"I was his only son and I did have an abiding love and respect for him. Yet I could not, in the depth of my heart, reconcile myself to the thought of dedicating my life to the monotony of the church. Moreover, I could not agree with the political and commercial tendencies of the church.

"However, at his earnest solicitation I prepared myself for the clergy.

"I delivered my first and last sermon on the first Sunday after my return home from college.

"My father was advanced in age, and the excitement and excess of sentiment of the occasion was more than his weak heart would stand. He dropped dead at my side in the pulpit.

"This calamity, my first great sorrow, gave me a stronger dislike for the church. It did not seem just that my father, who had presided over it for thirty years, should be thus suddenly taken away.

"This circumstance left me alone, my mother having died many years previous.

"I was well equipped, however, to cope with the world, being well educated and having an assured income, much larger than was necessary for my personal needs. I developed no tendency toward extravagance, neither was I a money lover or hoarder.

"After a good long meditation I laid out a line of semi-philanthropic work and social research, and this carried me into the slums of Chicago frequently.

"To my utter disgust I found I was getting a notoriety which I had not calculated upon.

"I became known throughout the city of Chicago as 'the sporting clergyman.'

"A 'reformer' was just beginning to be looked upon as a low order of being, because the people were ashamed to have their crimes revealed.

"My natural tendency was toward doing good unto others, but I could not follow the bent at any such sacrifice of dignified self-respect; therefore, I changed my plans, put my affairs in proper shape, and for many years I have traveled the world over.

"I have amassed a curious collection of social statistics and accumulated a heterogeneous international acquaintance of a semi-diplomatic character, quite grotesque.

"I have done some very confidential diplomatic service for nearly every nation in Europe, and have enjoyed it, because it has helped to give me an understanding of every stratum of the world's social fabric, as well as stimulating excitement.

"It was in the ——— Club, in London, that I was introduced to United States Senator D—. Our conversation drifted to matters which induced me to refer to my peculiar lines, in which he seemed deeply interested.

"He said: 'You are an American, why can you not devote some of your time over there? My dear

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man, Washington offers opportunities which you can find in no city in Europe.

“ ‘The fixed idle element in Washington is going into an ulterior current of immorality which threatens to make it the wickedest city in the world.

“ ‘I fear, in time, if there is not some strong influence to check it, we will have a dangerous condition developed there.

“ ‘So many inexperienced and unworldly men come there from the Western States, in the drift of politics, that it is a great temptation for criminals to take advantage of their unsophisticated nature, notwithstanding the strict laws of the District. Crime, like love, always finds a way.

“ ‘The tendency now is toward female sharpers. So many women are brought there and temporarily put in office, to soon find themselves out of employment, and adrift; it is natural for the smarter ones to turn, first to lax morals, then to refined methods of crime.

“ ‘Washington is full of them, although you seldom hear of such things there, owing to the care with which publicity of such things is guarded against.

“ ‘The idle rich are also coming to Washington in flocks for the winter season. You can interest many of them in any secret reforms you wish to exploit.’

“ ‘I was tired of prowling about Europe and this advice struck home. I lost no time in going to America.

"Many changes had taken place in Washington.

"There was much discussion about making it the most beautiful city in the world and there is little reason why this object may not easily be realized. The foundation is there and the nation rich and willing.

"It was with much satisfaction I took my first view of my future field.

"I soon learned that this superficial view only revealed the satin skin of a sleeping tigress.

"There was, beneath this calm, peaceful, verdant exterior, an undercurrent of wickedness unique in its perfection.

"Upon entering upon a new field I cautiously feel my way and lay careful lines for safety, for mine is a treacherous and dangerous work.

"I especially select my aids with care.

"Having no particular social ambition I find it often safe and profitable to plunge into the swim with people whom we ordinarily do not care to introduce to our best society friends.

"I met, in the New Willies Hotel, in Washington, Count D——, a clever little Italian scamp whom I helped out of many scrapes in European capitals. He had really been transported to the United States to save the family name from utter disgrace.

"He knew every crook and turn of the smart ways of Washington.

"Count D—— introduced me to a lascivious wretch, one Captain Crooks, undoubtedly the most

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consummately wicked man I have ever met. While I detested his very presence, I could use him to a good end, therefore I tolerated him.

"He was of that type of men so vain and self-conceited that nothing but a good hard kick can bring them to a realization that others do not hold the same high opinion of them.

"He was a social outcast, still holding on to the frayed edges of a once fictitious reputation.

"He was, by accident and sufferance, a member of one of the exclusive clubs of Washington.

"He had a forced acquaintance with Army, Navy, and Diplomatic circles, which made his usefulness more pronounced, for he knew all that was going on under the cloak and protection of these irresponsible classes, and that means most of the wickedness of Washington. The young army officers are allowed greater liberties than even the President of the United States, though their escapades are promptly suppressed.

"I soon found him to be a 'grafter' and an 'introducer,' and put a prompt stay on these proclivities so far as I was concerned.

"I did not care to meet other of his 'society friends' than those I might myself select.

"I also limited his 'graft' to an occasional 'square meal,' for he was always extremely hungry.

"I cannot help referring to the curious habit he had of cracking the bones of a bird or chicken with his teeth, like a dog, and picking and sucking them in the most disgusting manner.

"I could not learn just how he made his living, which was promising.

"I never discuss women with men, nor will I associate with a man who habitually stares at or comments upon women in public places.

"There were few persons in the Willies Palm Room the first time Captain Crooks joined me there at luncheon.

"Nothing of interest had occurred and we were lingering over our coffee.

"Two women paused at the entrance of the café till the waiter directed them to a table near our own.

"One was quite pretty, with natural rosy complexion and large blue eyes.

"The other was a dark woman, dressed in black and well veiled.

"They were the people one would expect to see come into a respectable public place.

"They looked proper and respectable.

"I would have paid no further attention to them had not the Captain bowed to them, which caused me to take a second look.

"As my gaze rested for a moment on the dark one she raised her veil and I at once recognized her as a notorious dancer from the *Moulin Rouge* in Paris.

" 'Would you like to meet the ladies?' asked my companion cautiously.

" 'No,' I responded, 'not now, I thank you; at some other time, perhaps.'

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"I had hardly completed the sentence when there appeared in the doorway a figure which would be conspicuous anywhere. One necessarily had to stare at her.

"She was a petite, child-like woman, with the prettiest, sweetest baby face, looking for all the world like a big French doll.

"She was exquisitely gowned and her rosy face bespoke a store of suppressed merriment.

"She hesitated for a moment to look about for some one, and when she espied the two who had previously entered a cute smile elevated the corners of her pretty mouth. Her white teeth glistened for a moment and her eyes danced. Then my heart sunk within me—she went directly and seated herself with them.

"Could it be possible that this innocent, child-like woman was bad? Yet, there she was, with one whom I knew to be of the vilest class of bad French women.

"Impossible, this woman had intruded herself upon good people. I shall make it my duty to put them on their guard.

"My mind was quickly made up.

"If this little dolly is bad she is yet in the formative period; she can be reformed.

"If she is not bad she may be warned and saved.

"My work would begin right there and then.

"‘I shouldn’t mind meeting the little one who just entered,’ I ventured; ‘who are they?’

" 'Well, they are not the cream of society, by any means, but you need not be ashamed to be seen in public with them. They are married women, with the exception of the French widow, the one in black,' said the Captain.

"Then continuing, he related that the French widow was the secret go-between who introduced smart young married women to the attachés of the foreign embassies and arranged ways by which they could get together without risk.

"It made me shudder.

" 'The one that came in with her is the wife of a Democratic politician. She has some little social standing, requiring her to be very sly. In fact, she is too conservative for a woman with her ambitions.

" 'Her pretty face and spicy wit make her quite popular with a certain smart set.

" 'The little one is the wife of a prominent young Washington man and is not as innocent as she looks. She is utterly reckless of her reputation. It is whispered about that she is secretly in love with an under-secretary of one of the foreign legations, and is scandalously frank in her actions.'

"I gasped at this statement. I could not believe it. Yet there she was with this bad French woman.

"Men have been killed for smaller crimes than that being committed by this loquacious Captain. He made no pretense of confidence, but spoke as though what he was saying was 'official.'

"Had I not known the character of the French woman I should have called him down.

"But I was interested and was not yet ready to quarrel with the precious scamp.

"The Captain, for whom I now had an utter dislike, arose and stepped over to the table where the women were seated.

"After a few minutes' conversation he motioned for me to come also.

"I was introduced, and at the invitation of the French woman we seated ourselves with them, and while we took our liqueur they took cocktails.

"We spent an hour there with them and I had a very good opportunity to study them superficially.

"The widow and the Captain indulged in some questionable repartee and I was pleased to note that neither of the others seemed to appreciate that sort of wit.

"The politician's wife was cautious, and I must confess that I never did get any direct evidence that she was other than a respectable woman; but later she took extreme offense when I told her I knew the French widow to be a very low type of woman.

"I necessarily had to believe after that that she was bad on the sly—she continued to associate with the widow.

"The little one, whom they called Edna, while not talkative, was quite busy with eyes and ears. She was much wiser than she appeared to be.

"When she did say anything she pursed up her pretty mouth and talked the most fetching 'baby-talk.' She was extremely pretty.

"She wore a becoming hat surrounded with a reef of pink roses. When she shook her head these roses seemed to dance a regular fairy dance and her eyes played hide-and-seek with the petals which peeped over the edge. She seemed wrapped in a bundle of merriment, which seemed liable to explode and blow us all to pieces at any moment.

"I found myself liking her immensely. She seemed but a happy, fearless child, thoroughly in love with the world, and ever ready to dart off on a mischievous lark.

"Beneath this innocent mask she was a veritable fiend incarnate; setting a pace for the whole bad set which few dared follow. Before I left that day I was pained to see her steal two of the pretty little liqueur glasses and conceal them in her hand-bag.

"We separated without any special engagement to meet again. I had no desire to meet the others, and I felt certain I could find the little one almost daily in the smart places.

"The following day, early in the afternoon, I had a most surprising shock in the form of a note from 'Edna.'

"While it was quite 'diplomatic,' between the lines it was a polite invitation to join her in the Palm Room.

"This indiscretion could be construed in two ways—either she was an inexperienced girl-wife who did not know how seriously this reflected upon her character, or else she was ultra-bad and took me for a victim. I was not prepared to admit the

latter, therefore gave her the benefit of the doubt.

"I went to the Palm Room and was cordially greeted by two rosy faces. The French widow was not there.

"I felt free in the absence of the bad element and before we separated that day we had formed a definite plan for the future.

"They lunched with me the following day.

"Upon this third occasion I was introduced to a new member of their circle, a Mrs. H——.

"She made no attempt to conceal her character. She was an 'old-timer,' but still in 'good standing.'

"It became apparent to me they desired to initiate me into their vices, and I became a willing candidate, for the good of my cause.

"Edna excused herself and in a few minutes returned with the disgusting Captain. The other rosy one claimed she had an engagement and left us.

"The play was so palpable I could hardly refrain from laughing.

"Either 'rosy' was very busy that day and entered the game to give Mrs. H—— a show, or she was afraid of the company; anyway, in a few minutes the Captain proposed that we go to the B——, on Fifteenth Street, where we could get a private room.

"We did go to that vile place and they all seemed to be much at home.

"The ugly truth was rapidly unfolded—the women were bad.

"I was more and more disgusted as I got deeper and deeper into the ruck.

"Edna apparently did take more than a liking for me and I thought it time to begin work upon her better self that I might draw her away from the awful chasm over which she was bending.

"We had begun to get off alone together, and this not only pleased her, but gave me my best opportunity.

"It commenced to dawn upon me that I was poaching upon forbidden ground to an unpardonable extent. I was meeting a married woman in secret places without ever questioning myself as to the dishonorable and unmanly aspect of the thing.

"I have always prided myself on my honor and justness, therefore I now began to feel ashamed. Then Edna's story of how cruel and neglectful her husband was would come up, and I too willingly forgave myself—was I not saving the little woman from perdition?

"What a fool a man becomes when he begins to love! I did not know how to act; I had gone too far. Instead of saving her, I was losing myself.

"This woman was the most remarkable person I ever met—she was a perfect double. One side of her was as black as night—that side I hated; the other was pure, innocent, sunshine—that side I loved desperately and hopelessly.

"I struggled to draw the innocent child out of the bad, desperate woman, and at last I thought I

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had succeeded. It required five months for me to perform this miracle—truly she was a past master at deceiving.

“Women are most cruel to each other. During these months of dissipation in a good cause I met the whole outfit. It was the most vicious lot I had ever known.

“While they were extremely jealous of each other, they held together for common protection.

“Edna would not tolerate, for one moment, any encroachment upon her grounds. I had been wholly adopted by her and I truly believed that she loved me in a selfish, jealous sort of way.

“One day I, by the merest accident, met a certain member of the wicked lot and she requested to have a talk with me.

“She told me what a fool I was and how important it was for me to cut out the sentiment which every one knew I was fostering for Edna; that she had not been loyal to me for a single day. She was never loyal to any one, not even herself; that each day she met another man before coming to me. She had a dozen lovers; she had been in correspondence with a Baltimore man for two years and he frequently came over to Washington to see her. He had been here at least four times during the preceding two months. She received her mail from this and other men in the care of a bosom friend.

“She told me that only a short time previously an awful scandal had been narrowly averted. She had been in the habit of sneaking to the Army Barracks

to see a young officer, one Captain W——, a dissolute, drunken fellow, and the worst possible things occurred there.

"He was one of the men whom she frequently met while I was waiting elsewhere for her to come.

"She told me so much I could only gasp, but I was compelled to believe.

"It was a peculiar fact that, although I had seen her each day for months, I knew she was invariably from half an hour to an hour and a half late; but she had always given plausible excuses, and I was blind because I did not want to see.

"This aroused in me a demon of jealousy which soon developed into an utter hatred for the bad nature in Edna. But too late! too late! Within that accursed shell of clay there dwelt a struggling soul so sweet, so good, that to gain glimpses of it I clung to the ugly, vulgar creature.

"'Twas when we were away from the odor of liquor-soaked things that the ulterior Edna shone forth in all her pristine brilliancy—*all the world loved the child Edna.*

"Knowing that the soul was set free when not surrounded by the vulgar sensations which had seduced her away from all that was pure and good, as springtime came I took her into the beautiful country, where we first watched the swelling buds burst into leaf; then we waited for the blossoms to come. And how we did enjoy the first wee bit of a ripe strawberry which we had watched develop from the first bud.

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"Oh! those exquisite hours in the country with the innocent baby Edna.

"We took long drives through Rock Creek Park. We spent delightful hours in secluded nooks in the Zoological Gardens.

"We took our luncheon at 'Villa Flora' or 'Cabin John Bridge.'

"We drove up the picturesque Potomac to Chain Bridge, crossing over into Virginia for a ramble in the hills.

"These were delicious hours which I can never forget, because then the good Edna was my companion.

"Occasionally I noticed she would come to me with her breath tainted with liquor and her cheeks aflame.

"I questioned her savagely and these occasions began to develop quarrels. I knew what she was doing, but I could not bring myself to spy upon her.

"However, as she began to show signs of tiring of the country trips, she became more and more derelict.

"At last I made up my mind to watch her. What I discovered so enraged me that it was with the greatest difficulty I restrained a desire to do something desperate.

"All these women were playing the same game—about twenty in all, that I knew of.

"One painted-cheeked little friend of Edna's had

three lovers—one in New York, another an old retired army officer, and the third a prominent young official in one of the departments.

"The wife of this same official was herself one of the bunch.

"But why bore you with all this? I will come to the pith of my story. It is worth studying from a psychological point of view.

"I suddenly grew to absolutely hate the ugly, dissipated Edna. I made an appointment with her, and went over the ground, telling her how hard I had struggled to redeem her good self; almost submerging my own better self in the attempt.

"She cursed me, using the vilest language I ever heard used by a woman. This shock at once brought me to my full senses.

"We separated and I was pleased to find that I no longer felt the doubtful pain. I knew she was past redemption.

"She declined to speak to me again.

"She frequented the places where she knew she could see me, and brought with her the lowest and most vulgar loafers I have ever seen in a respectable place.

"She chose as her friend on these occasions a young unmarried woman who had a scrawny lot always tagging after her.

"One had a harelip. It was said she was engaged to this one.

"One was a sneak-thief and hotel beat who had been dishonorably discharged from the Army.

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"One was a criminal who had been sent to an insane asylum to escape the penitentiary, for outraging a child in another city.

"During the time that I believed I had captured and redeemed the inner Edna, the good Edna, I noticed, for the first time, when her face was close to my own, listening eagerly to something interesting, there would appear a sweet, innocent expression most beautiful to behold. Her eyes would look upward and the sweet mouth would turn up at the corners in a fixed and angelic smile.

"This is all I learned to love permanently of Edna. I did not approve of her baby-talk, because she used it in her revelries and seldom used it when sober.

"I spent another three weeks making a general study of this outfit.

"I employed a smart, keen detective to help me. It was evident that liquor was the beginning, and bad, lascivious men the ending of all their revels.

"It was useless for me to remain there under the circumstances. I went to Chicago on a brief visit. It was midsummer and upon going East I went to Atlantic City—what a vile, wicked place it is, to be sure.

"I was disappointed to find there Edna and her unmarried girl friend, their hourly companions being the 'harelip' and another man of the same stripe. They were going the limit.

"Having some matters to close in Washington,

I hurried there, and from thence went to Denver, gradually drifting down into California as winter approached.

"I had wholly forgotten my experience in Washington and felt no regret or remorse at having lost out on Edna. It was one of my experiences.

"That I had ever thought I was permanently in love with her was an absurd proposition.

"I was certainly not grieving over it.

"Now I am going to tell you probably the most remarkable thing you ever heard.

"When my father died I lost faith in the efficacy of prayer and ceased to pray. But so earnest did I desire to save this Edna, notwithstanding her utterly stubborn determination to ruin herself and all about her, the night I left Washington I knelt down and prayed, asking a just God in heaven to exert a power stronger than my weak influence to snatch this soul from the paths which lead to perdition.

"I never thought more of this prayer after I started westward.

"As winter advanced I started east. Some power drew me to Washington. I have cursed that power daily since.

"I was seated again in the Palm Room, alone this time.

"I could not prevent my mind from dwelling upon the past.

"There seemed to be a familiar perfume about the place, reminding me of those former days.

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"There were only two or three persons in the room besides myself.

"I saw at the door a little old lady with white hair. She spoke to the waiter, who nodded and pointed to a secluded table, and she disappeared.

"In a moment she appeared again, leading by the arm a childish figure.

"My heart leaped into my throat! I could not be mistaken. The face was veiled. I was hypnotized and stared at them till they were seated.

"The veiled face was toward me.

"The elderly woman tenderly raised and arranged the veil above the white, beautiful baby face.

"My God! My soul weeps as I recall that awful moment. It was Edna.

"She was blind! Fixed upon her face permanently and forever was that sweet smile which alone I revered.

"I was frantic, I knew not what to do. I could tell, by the close resemblance, it was her mother with her, but I had never met her.

"I dared not make myself known because I did not know the circumstances and conditions surrounding the case. I did not know what effect it might have upon Edna.

"I could not endure the sight, but rushed out of the café.

"Again and again I returned and gazed at the fair and truly beautiful face.

"My prayer had been answered. The old wicked

Edna had been forever submerged in the awful calamity and her pure soul shone forth in her face as clear as the midday sun.

"The eyes were as clear and gentle as ever, causing no disfigurement; but the light was gone forever, and with it came grateful forgetfulness. She remembered nothing of the past. Her mind was a blank.

"Now I knew it was the soul I had loved. I abhor the touch of human flesh soaked with liquor. So repulsive is it to me that I refuse to take the hand of an intoxicated person.

"I had experienced that feeling of repulsion for Edna upon finding what an habitual drunkard she was.

"And now I found I had that same aversion to her person; I could not have taken her hand without a shudder.

"It was that face, with its angelic, child-like smile, which never for a moment left it, that transfixed me.

"I cannot efface it from my memory.

"Flee as I will, it is ever there haunting me, night and day, in my waking hours and in my dreams.

"It is driving me crazy.

"With it I have a fear that I am being punished for that which I had done—retribution, perhaps, for having ignored the rights of Edna's husband.

"But I never harmed her. All that I had done was in the endeavor to save her from herself.

"Our only quarrels were due to my begging and pleading with her to give up her evil companions. This she would not do, even lying about it to appease me.

"The facts were brief.

"Edna's last escapade at Atlantic City had caused a separation between herself and husband, but no divorce followed.

"Her poor old father died, doubtless of a broken heart.

"Her dear little mother was her faithful friend. All others had fled from her.

"Upon returning home from her debauch at the infernal seaside resort she became very ill with brain fever.

"For seven weeks she hovered between life and death.

"Her body recovered, but the light never returned—she was hopelessly and forever blind."

As John Miller spoke these despairing words he burst into tears and I myself could no longer restrain the scalding, scorching drops. *In Edna I had early recognized my own sweet little Jane.*

She had gone wrong in the worst possible way.

I did not tell my story.

The next morning we separated, each to go his way, in search of forgiveness, forgetfulness, and peace. Will either ever find them this side the grave?

[FROM THE WASHINGTON CORNER OF THE EVENING NEWS.]

"The other evening a conversation which occurred in the Palm Room of the New Willies, in Washington, was caught by our reporter and it is well worth repeating:

"A young broker and a New York business man were in the café when three other persons entered.

" 'By Jove! Billy, that's a sweet-faced little woman just coming in leading the old lady. Who is she? Just see that angelic smile upon her face. It is truly the most expressive thing I ever saw.'

" 'Well, my boy,' replied the broker, 'that is perhaps the saddest case that will ever cast a gloom over Washington. She is not leading the old lady; the latter is her mother and is leading her. She is blind and her mind is that of a sweet, simple child.

" 'The story is too long to relate now.

" 'Briefly, she was once the life of this place, but her set became so wicked that it bid fair to reflect permanently upon the moral character of the Capital.

" 'What occurred to this little woman brought a close to the "reign of terror," as it was called.

" 'Four of her boon companions were divorced from their husbands.

" 'Two murders resulted from their escapades with men.

" 'But this is the saddest case of all.

" 'Her present condition was the result of brain fever, which followed a terrible debauch.

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" 'No one seems to know just what to think or do about the case.

" 'The harder-hearted ones say she deliberately destroyed herself and all those who loved her best; she deceived her dear old parents; she betrayed her husband and destroyed the peace of mind of a dozen men—therefore deserves her present fate.

" 'The poor child knows nothing of all this, and I hold that that pathetic face stands as a rebuke to all of Washington for permitting conditions to exist which lure young and irresponsible people to their ruin.

" 'As long as the private drinking-rooms exist, just that long will "social evil" thrive here.'

" 'But who is the quaint old chap with the "carrara hair," who accompanies them?' asked the New Yorker.

" 'He is a mystery,' answered the broker.

" 'It is said that years ago he came here from New York and cut a swath with a very fast set of young society girls.

" 'Jane, that is the young woman's name, was one of them, and unmarried.

" 'There was quite a love match on between these two, but it ended in a lovers' quarrel and they separated.

" 'The story goes that he was traveling abroad when he heard of Jane's sad plight and at once came here.

" 'In order that he might be ever near to protect her he adopted her as his daughter.

“ ‘It is said that he is the only one, excepting the mother, that Jane knows or has any recollection of knowing.

“ ‘With these two she can talk quite rationally, but never speaks a word to any one else.’

“ ‘Who and what is he?’

“ ‘Well, all I know is, he is an “old-time New York Johnny.” ’ ”