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SOME PERSONALITIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE NEW WORD

SOME PERSONALITIES

By 20/1631

"I will not be grieved because men do not know me; I will be grieved because I do not know men."—CONFUCIUS.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1921

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1823

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SOME PERSONALITIES

I

Advertisement.

“WILL you send me, please, some material which the — Company can use for their publicity work for your book. They are planning to take you up seriously, and I am sure you will agree that anything we can do to facilitate their efforts will be worth doing. They would like to have some snapshots of you. . . . Also some biographical matter about your career, with any anecdotes, etc., which seem to you likely to furnish good press notes. They will be most appreciative of any help which you can give them in this regard.”

Letter from the American Literary Agent.

Yet blame me less than my environment,
The shell we slaves of time drag with us ever,
Through which our souls like things immured in glass
Become distorted; and we peer and strain,
But find the hidden spiritual feature never;
A fateful screen that friendship cannot pass,
And love beats his soft wings against in vain.

The Butterfly.

II

I THINK I understand your letter. If you have read my "Sayings of Confucius" you must have been struck by the parallel between his case and mine. You will remember how the people of the village where he lived complained to his disciples—"This Master of yours is very learned, and yet he never does anything to make himself celebrated." And when the disciples hurried to Confucius with the reproach, as is the nature of disciples, you know how he answered—"What must I do? Shall I take up archery, or shall I take up charioteering? I will take up charioteering."

I gather that is pretty much how you feel about me. You don't go into detail. You don't say whether you think I ought to take up flying, or to take up boxing, but I expect it is boxing. I suppose if I could hire Carpentier to knock me down in the presence of 20,000 spectators my book would sell as well as one by Charlie Chaplin or Mrs. Asquith. The difficulty I see is that Carpentier's charge for assaulting me would run into half a million dollars; and you know yourself that is more than Moses received for the Pentateuch. To be worth it I should have to be a Gene Stratton Porter or an Ethel M. Dell.

However, you don't actually mention flying, or boxing. Your point seems to be that it doesn't matter what a book is like, but only what the author is like. Your people will not look into the Book of Hope unless it has a picture of the writer blowing bubbles on the cover. The — Company cannot sell my book by saying that I discovered the north pole of truth;

they want me to send them a kinematic film showing me in the act of discovering it, seated in a sledge, in a fur cap, surrounded by icebergs and walruses and woolly dogs.

I hope I get you, so far. I want to be fair to you, because I can see you are a friend. I like you for being so sincere. I can tell that you would have written just the same letter to the late Herbert Spencer, if he had employed you to sell the "Synthetic Philosophy." You would have given advice like this to Darwin about his "Origin of Species," and maybe asked him to let you have some good dog stories, suitable for publication in a family magazine. You would have told Carlyle that "Sartor Resartus" would never have a real boom unless he furnished you with a few intimate revelations about his domestic life. You would have written in the same way to Bacon about his "Novum Organum." And if you had been disposing of the American copyright of "Hamlet" you would have wanted Shakespeare to send you some newsy paragraphs about Lord William Herbert and the Dark Lady, for insertion in the social gossip columns of the evening papers. I know this, because they are the writers with whom the reviewers generally seem to class me, and most of them were slow sellers, evidently for want of the right kind of publicity work.

I don't want to suggest that your advice is not sound; on the contrary, it is the advice of a great man. My friend Bernard Shaw has put it that the man who believes he has a message ought not to shrink from beating a drum in front of his booth. The trouble is that it isn't easy to beat louder than Billy Sunday and Buffalo Bill, and unless you do, you won't get their crowd. Then again, it occurs to me that something depends on the kind of message you have. It seems to me there is just a chance that, if the man who has found a pearl of great price tries to vend it by the arts of the cheapjack he may drive the

real pearl merchants away, and draw the mob in search of cheap imitations, with disastrous results. I seem to have read somewhere that it is not sound policy to cast pearls before those greedy for less spiritual fare. On this head I could give you some remarkable experiences of my own, if I were sure they would make good press notes. I have a misgiving that no press notes in your power or mine to fabricate would make my serious works acceptable to the public that ran after the late Professor Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and the "New Theology" of the Reverend R. J. Campbell.

All the same I am anxious to take your advice, because I recognise that it is practical advice, and that is something I am not used to having from my friends. You are not like the well-meaning people who have been urging me any time these forty years to leave off being what the Creator made me, and be Marie Corelli or G. R. Sims, or H. G. Wells, or Nat Gould, or anyone else who seemed to them to be doing well in the literary business. And, mind you, they all believe that I could do so if I chose. All my friends seem quite sure that I have only to make up my mind in order to change myself into any one of a score of deciduous writers, like the jinns who assume all kinds of different shapes in the "Arabian Nights." They know that is so, and they are sometimes very cross with me, in a loving way, because my infernal pride and obstinacy make me persist in retaining my original shape. There was my friend, R. D. Blumenfeld, of the *Daily Express*, for instance. When an author of dull books for boys, named Henty, vanished from the scene, he pointed out that there was an excellent chance for me as his successor. On that occasion I was quite meek, I consulted Andrew Melrose, the director of the Sunday School Union, and he gave me every encouragement. He explained that I should have to write three books every year, for which I should receive £70 each, and in

course of time, if they proved popular with parents, I might hope to make a living. Unfortunately I am physically incapable of turning out three dull volumes a year recording the improbable experiences of impossible boys in various climes and ages of the world, with a sound moral suited to the taste of the respectable British parent: the mere attempt would drive me mad. I once devised a story for boys; it was called "The Seven Scouts," and it took the form of an allegorical fairy tale in the spirit of the "Pilgrim's Progress"; but it cost me some months to construct the plot to my satisfaction, and even if I ever found time to finish it I doubt if any publisher would give me £7 for it.

Now you are not a bit like that. You see clearly enough that I not really unwilling to have people read my books. You even flatter me with the suggestion that the only difference between me and my prosperous contemporaries is one of advertisement; and you want to help me. You understand the reading public, which of course I don't pretend to do, and therefore I can place myself in your hands with confidence.

Meanwhile I want you to see how I am handicapped. I just don't know what I had better send you. It is not easy for me to write anything but the bare truth. You see when I first began to write I had no one to give me good advice about style. They didn't teach English in my school, only Latin and Greek. I wanted to learn English grammar, but the head master wouldn't hear of it. He dragged me out of the English grammar class by the scruff of my neck, and taught me Greek grammar instead. I grew up ignorant that there was such a thing as literary style. My only models were Euclid and Dante. I laid down for myself two simple rules: Be clear what you want to say, and then say it clearly. After writing on these principles all my life I find it hard now to write otherwise. This is why I find it so difficult to

imitate Nat Gould and Marie Corelli and H. G. Wells and G. R. Sims. It isn't that I don't want to imitate them; I want to very much; but I lack the skill. I am not a literary artist. But you can see for yourself this sort of confession will never do for publicity work. Even the — Company had better not be told this. It might choke them off, and they might drop my book at the last moment, and you would have had all your trouble for nothing.

So what I suggest is that you should edit my anecdotes. I want you to let me write to you in my own free-spoken way, as to a good friend, telling you everything, and then you can pick out whatever you consider is likely to help me with the public, and promote the sale of my book.

I take it that what you have to do is to represent me to your people as a popular and successful author in the same class with G. R. Sims and Marie Corelli and Nat Gould and H. G. Wells, and those other great writers, and it strikes me that it might go a long way if you were to hold me out as a friend of theirs, in the habit of familiar association with them, and thus profiting by their inspiration.

For instance, you could mention that Nat Gould once came to breakfast with me, when I had a house at Torquay, and that I had to hurry my Persian cat out of the room, because cats made him feel queer. I feel sure the cat would make a good press note. I think it was Nat Gould, but if not, it was some one of that sort. If you don't care to risk it you had better write to Frederick Harrison, of the Haymarket Theatre, London, and make sure. It was he who brought Nat Gould—if it was Nat Gould—to see me. They had come to Torquay together on a yacht. He may have forgotten me by this time, but he is likely to remember the cat.

I don't think I ever met G. R. Sims, but you might say

I had—there is nothing libellous in that—and let him contradict it. That will be a good advertisement for both of us, and it ought to sell some copies of my book and some bottles of his hairwash.

I suggest you should describe me as a disciple of H. G. Wells. His friends have recently advertised him as the world's greatest writer, and the — Company might advertise me as the next greatest. I really have read some of his books. And I have had letters from him. I was Liberal candidate for the Newark Division at the time, 1905, and he complained to me because the Liberal Party was so slow to remodel its programme in accordance with his teaching. He had been writing in favour of disarmament, with a description of German and French soldiers throwing down their arms when they met on the battle-field, and refusing to fight each other. It was a beautiful prophecy, though it didn't come true; and he afterwards wrote another urging the civilian population to fall upon any German soldiers who should land in Essex, near his home, and tear them to pieces; and another after that, announcing that there would never be another war after the great war, and that hasn't come true, either. None of his prophecies ever come true, but I notice that doesn't make any difference to the public, and they all sell equally well. The trouble with my prophecies is that they always come true, and so the public cannot bear me. It is for you to say, but I should think as a matter of business you had better claim that I am the world's falsest prophet. The old prejudice against Cassandra dies hard.

It is curious that even financiers don't like true prophecies, even when their money is at stake. I remember one asking me beforehand whether I thought there would be a war between Russia and Japan. I told him there would certainly be one at once and I told him why, and I told him the Russians would be beaten. If he

acted on my opinion he must have made money. You would have thought after that he would have come to me again for my advice, especially as I charged nothing for it. But he never did. I don't remember ever buying a stock that did not rise in the market soon afterwards; and it is probable that any financier who trusted me would make millions. But they would all rather lose money under the guidance of some one like H. G. Wells. People are built that way, and that is why I don't want you to let it be known that I have any common sense and judgment. A suggestion that I was infallible would ruin me. If you can hint that I am a raving maniac I am confident there will be a rush for my book.

For the same reason I want you to pretend that I advocated the views of H. G. Wells in the Newark Division. I didn't, because I had had a letter some years before, from the German historian Mommsen telling me plainly that Germany and England must have a trial of strength as a necessary preliminary to any mutual understanding. And from other information I feared that Mommsen was a more reliable guide than H. G. Wells. Again my teacher had just written what appeared to be a prophecy in favour of bigamy, but I was doubtful whether that would gain me votes among the villagers, most of them Wesleyans, whom I was addressing night after night. But these are the things I don't want the Company to use in their publicity work. I have to tell them to you in confidence, so that you may see how awkwardly I am fixed. I hate lying myself, but I want you to lie boldly on my behalf. Besides, I am a disciple of H. G. Wells at heart. I am as much in favour of disarmament as he is, provided you can get the other people to disarm too. And I have no fanatical objection to bigamy as long as it is not made compulsory. The worst of reformers like H. G. Wells is that they generally do want their reforms to be made compulsory.

Between ourselves, H. G. Wells is also a disciple of mine, if I may judge from certain expressions which have crept into his recent works ; but it will never do for you to say that. It would damage him with his public without helping me with mine.

I should like you also to invert the facts discreetly as regards myself and Marie Corelli, because I am fond of her, though I am afraid my affection is not returned. The facts are that I once published a novel the leading idea in which is that a King turns Socialist, and falls in love with the Socialist leader's sweetheart ; and that Marie Corelli afterwards published a novel with a similar idea. Therefore my suggestion is that you should convey to the public that her story came out first, and that mine was inspired by it. If you could get people to look on me as a successful imitator of Marie Corelli it would make my fortune, and the — Company would find it worth their while to bring out a new edition of that novel.

Only you must word your press note on this point carefully, so as not to hurt her feelings, and above all to afford no opening for litigation. I may tell you that I have letters from her, extending to pages of foolscap paper, with the word "private" carefully repeated at the top of every page, so that she evidently foresaw I should one day be tempted to make an improper use of them. Not even to you can I hint what the letters were about ; that is a secret which I reserve for the Day of Judgment ; but in the meanwhile you will understand how anxious I am to prove myself worthy of so much confidence.

However, there can be no harm in your mentioning that I once went to tea with her. She received me in the Grand Hotel, in the very suite of rooms described in her "Sorrows of Satan," so I was informed by a reverent courtier. Surely that is the stuff of which good press notes are made ? I learned, notwithstanding, that

she was about to migrate to still more sumptuous quarters. In spite of the impressive environment I found her a charming, unaffected, bright-haired, little fairy, with whom I should have thought it impossible for any one to quarrel. It was at the time when she was resisting Carnegie's proposal to pull down an old cottage in Stratford in order to put up one of his insidious Free Libraries—some time I must tell you my own experiences of Carnegie. Marie Corelli told me a gruesome tale of a project on the part of a clerical personage to disturb Shakespeare's bones, in defiance of the memorable curse, a project only baffled by her vigilance. She said—"I am like a little dog watching over Shakespeare's grave."

Our acquaintance did not end there. I was in the smoking-room of the House of Commons a few days afterwards when Sir James Yoxall hurried in to tell me that Marie Corelli's barrister and solicitor had come to the House in search of me. Trembling in every limb I left my dismayed friends and went forth to interview the formidable pair. I was greatly relieved to find that their errand was amicable on this occasion. It appeared that their illustrious client was issuing a writ against Carnegie on the subject of the cottage, and that while generously ready to defray all the costs of the proceedings she wished the writ to be issued in the names of various representative men, who could not be suspected of personal motives. The Earl of Warwick had consented to appear as one of the plaintiffs, in his capacity as a Warwickshire magnate; Sir Sidney Lee or some other Shakespearean scholar was to represent the deceased bard; and I was invited to stand sponsor for English Literature. Needless to say, I gave a joyful consent; but I had no luck. Carnegie meanly backed down, and I lost what I think you will agree would have been an ideal advertisement for a

12 DISCREDITABLE REMINISCENCES

struggling man. Just see if you can't work that up into a catchy press note.

The sequel was distressing. Within a few weeks or months there descended on my innocent head, like a bolt from the blue, a letter from Marie Corelli's solicitor drawing my attention to the fact that a person I had never heard of had stated, in a Stratford paper of whose existence I was equally ignorant, that Marie Corelli herself was ambitious of presenting a Free Library to Stratford, and warning me that he, the solicitor, was instructed to take proceedings against any and every human being who should repeat the infamous aspersion. It was in vain that I wrote back disavowing any such hostile design. From that hour Marie Corelli has dropped me like a stone.

Now you see the task in front of you, and perhaps you begin to grasp the secret of my inability to help the —— Company as they deserve. I have had plenty of curious experiences, and some sensational ones, in the course of my life, but they have almost all been discreditable, or at least unfortunate. I have met Mrs. Asquith herself, but the meeting was not one which either of us can recall with pleasure. Crowned heads have wanted to meet me, but they were always men whom I didn't care to know. I could have been a friend to Wilhelm II, but he was offended by some comic stories I wrote about him in a magazine. Great men should have a sense of humour, I think, like Confucius. Queen Victoria never liked me after I had once chaffed her. Dear old Edward VII was more friendly in private, but he let me down badly in public, as you shall hear in due course. Gladstone and Lloyd George and Venizelos are the only Prime Ministers of any standing who have shown me much civility, and I have not been offered more than two orders of knighthood. On the other hand my visiting

list has included a Patriarch and any number of archbishops, but as you are mostly Dissenters in America you may not think any more of me for that. I am willing to tell you everything, you see, but I do hope you will be careful in dishing it up for your people. My friend Charles F. Higham, M.P., is a successful advertisement expert, and you might do worse than consult him. He once tried to sell me a paper, but the deal did not come off, as I had no money, and he had no paper.

What I am most afraid about is the law of libel. I have four times been threatened with actions for libel. They have never issued a writ against me, because I am a barrister and I know exactly how far I can go, but publishers are nervous men, and few of them are sporting enough to welcome a really fine advertisement on such lines. So I advise you to be careful, above all in what you say about Marie Corelli.

And, after all, don't you think the public may be getting a little tired by this time of press notes turned out to pattern, of the monotonous appreciations of mediocrity, and the endless autobiographies of the self-important? Don't you think it just possible that they might be glad of a change? It might refresh them to read a story of failure, for once. I have come across some lives of men who were anything but fortunate in their own day, which yet have proved interesting to posterity. You know better than I how these notes will fare with the present generation of readers, but they have not the last word.

Through what dread ordeal below
Must the banished hero go
We on earth shall never know—
 Vanished from our eyes ;
What three-headed Dog awaits
By the everlasting Gates,
What high Judge his doom debates,
 In what Balance tries.

This we know, he doth not rest ;
As a workman, not a guest,
Follows his unending quest—
 Life and Strife are one.
Toils on other toils arise,
Past the Bull the Lion lies,
There the Bowman's arrow flies,
 Burns the Scorpion.

Hymn to Amen.

III

THE House in which I was born was as old as Time, and it was haunted by the ghosts of many generations. These are they who are named *Les Revenants*—They Who Come Again. I have never seen the mysterious Companions who share with me this dusty Tenement, have never heard their footfalls in the darkness, but yet I know they are beside me night and day; they whisper strange communications in my ear, and with their unseen fingers beckon and guide me whither they will that I should go.

You don't say whether the —— Company would like to hear about my ancestors. A friend in the College of Heralds, who was officially styled "Port-cullis," I believe, once wanted to provide me with a most gratifying pedigree showing my descent from the ancient kings of Wales; and they can have that if they care to pay for it. But Welsh pedigrees are not light reading; I expect you have heard of one in which there was an entry half-way down—"About this time the world was created"; so perhaps they would rather take my word for it. I am not sure, indeed, that it would help me to be known as a royal personage. I have noticed that crowned heads don't always sell as well as some of their own subjects; even the "Leaves" from one monarch's diary of her life in the Highlands haven't yet got into a sevenpenny series. I fancy the public would be more interested to hear that I get my clothes from a royal tailor—I can send you one of his billheads if you like, adorned by the arms of

CELESTIAL PEDIGREE

the sovereigns of Europe and one in Japan. You use your discretion in the matter.

The strange thing is that I have a real pedigree, longer than was ever yet drawn up by any genealogist, and one in which the creation of the world actually is an episode; and yet neither can I send it to you, nor could you use it if I did. It lies among my papers, perhaps destined never to see the light. I am confessing this to you as a crime; I have discovered the origin of life. Others have carried the pedigree of man back to the microscopic cell that crawls on the sea floor, but I have carried it up to a celestial source; as it is written in mystic Orphic spells upon the golden tablets buried in graves of Greece and Italy more than two thousand years ago. They lie to-day, those golden passports of the dead, in the great Museum; and these are the words to be pronounced by the Blessed when he comes before the Divine Rulers of the Shadowland:

“Say . . . I am a child of earth and of starry heaven,
But my birth is from heaven.”

The dreams and guesses of the truth-seekers of old often seem to anticipate the science of the present, yet never, I think, more literally than here.

The revelation came to me almost as fortuitously as Newton's came to him. I am sorry on your account that it wasn't heralded by a falling apple, though I don't mind telling you I had long had a presentiment that I was on the verge of discovering one of those natural secrets whose very simplicity puts them within the reach of every unfettered mind. But I was looking in the opposite direction. In fact I was engaged in drawing up a prophecy, the “Horoscope of Man,” but being a true prophet whose vision of the future rises out of his understanding of the past and

present, I had to begin by trying to see men aright in their relation to the universe. And having, thus perceived their cosmic differentiation from things "rolled round on earth's diurnal course with rocks and stones and trees," I made the note—"Men are little moons." And no sooner had the words escaped my pen than I stopped dead, overwhelmed by their significance. . . . Even now I can hardly believe that the corollary will be less plain to you than it was to myself.

I had read, of course, almost everything there was to read on the subject of what Darwin rashly termed the supreme problem of science. I had heard of Kelvin's far-fetched theory of life germs borne hither by meteoric stones from some unspecified home in space. I had studied Arrhenius's fantastic calculations of the capacity of light waves to ferry these infinitesimal passengers across the stellar abyss. I had followed the vain attempts of biologists to create life in their laboratories, and the equally vain search of others for a magical substance to be named "living matter." And I had perceived the fallacy that underlay all the speculations of these blind guides, too unintelligent to discern that life, like the whirlpool which it most resembles, ought to be studied as a phenomenon of motion, rather than as a form of matter. Now at last the clue was put into my hand, and I could look up to the heavens for the bright beginning of the secular history of man.

It may be that this will strike you as the material for a rather memorable press note. I thought so myself eight years ago, in the first flush of the revelation. I even offered it to the press. I drew up an outline of the theory, not in my natural language, but in the tedious technical terms demanded by the dull intelligence of the vulgar, and especially the

academic vulgar, and sent it Lord Northcliffe. But though Lord Northcliffe is a friend of mine (and of course a friend of truth), he is a greater friend of etiquette, and it is not etiquette for the poet to teach the professor, as Goethe found before me. The theory of Copernicus went unnoticed for a hundred years till it was taken up by Galileo. The nebular hypothesis was ignored as long as it was merely Kant's, and only accepted when it was fathered by Laplace.

I tried another friend of some standing in Fleet Street, who had faith in me, but confessed with contrition that the public had too much reason to put no faith in him. His paper, the *Daily Chronicle*, had recently committed itself to the whole-hearted support of a specialist in the creation of life, a professor of biology who claimed to have successfully imitated Omnipotence; and it turned out that this respectable authority had been hoaxed by some of his pupils, who had introduced germs into his preparations on the sly. So that avenue was closed for the time being. Since then the *English Review* has made itself the mouthpiece of similar claims by a similar authority, and Lord Northcliffe's organ has freely ventilated the confident, but unfulfilled, predictions of rival authorities on the subject of "living matter." Thus you see the standpoint of the press is much the same as yours and the — Company's. It is not the theory that matters, but the theorist. No speculation is too insane to gain a hearing if it comes from the straitened forehead of the specialist, and none can be sane enough that comes from the seer.

Meanwhile you must be feeling thankful that I have not sent you my paper to be used by the Company in their publicity work. You know your press would never dare to publish it before it had received a European imprimatur. You are too honest in America.

Perhaps by this time you begin to see what you are up against. It isn't that I can't send you personal anecdotes ; my life has been only too full of incident ; but they all lack probability. You had much better engage some novelist who thoroughly understands the Anglo-Saxon public to fake a few suitable anecdotes about me. You might try Sir Hall Caine. I had the honour of being presented to him once, when he was only a plain Mister, and he told me with courtly grace that he was very pleased to meet me. I could not presume to return the compliment, so I thanked him modestly, and passed on. It was at a dinner of what my friends G. B. Burgin and Douglas Sladen humorously styled the New Vagabonds Club ; and of course we were all bent on showing that we were intensely respectable, with nothing of the vagabond about us. I recollect that Hall Caine himself preached us an improving sermon, and Flora Annie Steele made an eloquent appeal to us to be pure.

I had previously taken the chair at a dinner of the club at which George Grossmith was the guest of the evening. According to the *Daily News* I am one of the best after-dinner speakers in London, and on this occasion I had taken some pains with my speech, with the result that poor Grossmith, who had to follow me, found himself rather at a disadvantage, and didn't quite like it. He was weak enough to ask me if I prepared my speeches, and I naturally answered no, that I just said whatever came into my head. I next met him at Torquay, where he had come down to give one of his amusing entertainments. I went to look him up at his hotel afterwards, and found him lying in a state of exhaustion on the sofa ; but before I had been in the room five minutes he was at the piano, going through his repertoire, and recounting his triumphs at the Savoy. He told me he did not attempt to sing

his words in the Gilbert and Sullivan operas; he merely spoke them. His favourite part was the Lord High Executioner in the "Mikado." "It was only a small part really, but look how I made it stand out," he said. I asked him to breakfast for the next day, and he accepted, but then came the fatal question. Did I know Lady MacSomething? This person was the widow of a City knight, who had risen by long residence to the position of the leader of society in Torquay, and not to know her was to be one of the unknown. It was quite useless to know earls and baronets and such small deer; you stood or fell by Lady MacSomething. Grossmith was dining with her ladyship that night, so I dared not tell a lie. The next morning I received a missive marked *Immediate*.

"DEAR——

"At the very last moment I have been detained and cannot get up to you; moreover I must go by the next train to Plymouth—2.50. I am so disappointed.

"In haste,

"Yours faithfully,

"GEO. GROSSMITH."

Perhaps I was too much of a vagabond for him.

I can't ask you to conceal my descent from Shakespeare and the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, because I have already drawn this family skeleton from its cupboard in the columns of the *New Age*. I am not altogether ashamed of it. I never met any duke who seemed ashamed of his descent from Charles II and one of his fair ladies, and I consider a scandal that dates from the time of Queen Elizabeth ought to be as creditable as a family ghost. It is singular that an episode in the life of my distinguished ancestor which attracted the notice of Malone, and was investigated by the author of the hymn "Abide with Me" should be so little known to the

common biographers. Sir Sidney Lee ought to be above jealousy.

Malone mentioned that Shakespeare had been a visitor at Scethrog, an old home of my ancestors the Vaughans, in Breconshire, and conjectured that he had there picked up the name of Puck, the Welsh *pwcca*. Shakespeare himself clearly regarded the name as one requiring explanation to an English audience, and he gives Robin Goodfellow as its equivalent. Lyte followed up Malone's hint, when he was engaged on a life of Henry Vaughan the Silurist, and made a pilgrimage to Scethrog. There, in the nineteenth century he found a local tradition still surviving that a famous bard had once stayed at the family seat, and that his favourite walk was in a glen called *Cwm Pwcca*—Puck's Hollow. So far there seems no room for cavil. Now Shakespeare was not the kind of man to bury himself for any length of time in a lonely spot like Scethrog unless it held some other attraction than the scenery, and his visit was followed by the appearance of a poet and a mystic in the family in the next generation, the Silurist and his brother Thomas. That my erring ancestress was a dark lady follows from her being a Welshwoman; and the close connection between the Vaughans and Herberts, a branch of whom were settled in the adjacent shire of Monmouth, pretty well ensured some acquaintance between her and Shakespeare's youthful friend, Mr. W. H. Lord Southampton, the Herberts and the Vaughans were all related by marriage, and Shakespeare was evidently on intimate terms with the whole family group.

Had I the pen of a Mary Johnston or a Baroness Orczy I could weave a romance not wanting in verisimilitude. The leading character might be young Southampton, who cannot be brought to make the marriage which his friends have planned for him. Shakespeare, whose own experience has taught him caution, discreetly indicates

his sympathy with the stubborn bachelor by dedicating to him "Venus and Adonis." Then the family get hold of Shakespeare, and he is persuaded to write sonnets to his friend urging him to matrimony. The plea proves successful in the end, and naturally the poet is commissioned to write the wedding masque. "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is that masque, as appears from its entire character, and especially from the concluding scene, and Southampton's famous gift of £1,000 is the author's princely fee.

No fee was ever better earned. Shakespeare has pointed the merit of his own performance by his burlesque of the clumsy masques produced on similar occasions. Its highest merit, however, in the eyes of those for whom it was written, is in the artfulness of its apology. For the bride has been well aware of the bridegroom's reluctance, and it is desirable to soothe her mortified feelings, and at the same time to assure her that she is truly loved at last. Hence the theme of the masque is love's strange aberrations; beauty is mocked and disdained; devoted lovers turn from one another, and the fairy queen becomes enamoured of an ass; the moral of it all being summed up in the affirmation—"The course of true love never did run smooth."

There is another rock ahead which has caused anxiety. It was the theory of Queen Elizabeth that every young and handsome nobleman about her Court ought to be content to live in perpetual celibacy for her sake. Her wrath was to be deprecated, therefore, and the poet does so in the most exquisite tribute ever paid to a virago, ingeniously prefaced by a reminder that it is better for young noblemen to marry in their own sphere, than to fall victims to the fascination of Mary, Queen of Scots. This well aimed shaft unfortunately failed like Cupid's and the bridegroom had to do penance in the Tower.

The spirit of Shakespeare never soared more freely and joyously than in this holiday task, written under the inspiration of the only woman he ever loved. My beautiful ancestress is also entitled to the credit of his manifest affection for Wales and the Welsh. Indeed, he has introduced one of our ancestors by name in the roll of those who fell at Agincourt—"Davy Gam, esquire." He does not seem to have heard of the tradition that David was knighted as he lay dying on the field. My friend, Llewellyn Williams, K.C., has made this picturesque scoundrel, who committed an atrocious murder, the hero of a charming ballad. He is generally supposed to be the original of Fluellen. As he was an enemy of Owen Glendower, who long held him in prison, it is easy to understand how Shakespeare was induced to do such scant justice to the more famous Welshman. The influence of the Vaughans is perceptible again in the character of Falstaff. According to the "Dictionary of National Biography" Sir John Oldcastle was arrested on the Welsh border by a member of the family, and they must naturally have taken an unfavourable view of the Lollard chief. On this score Shakespeare himself was obliged to eat the leek.

I feel I am on more dangerous ground when I come to what the *Athenæum* speaks of as my "Shakespearean tendencies." When I published my first book of poems the late Watts-Dunton, who specialised in sonnets, was quick to point out the Shakespearean character of mine, going so far as to say that the Shakespearean form seemed inevitable for me even when I appeared trying to escape it. The same criticism applies to my blank verse. The blank verse of most other poets is blank in the most literal sense; it consists of a series of unrhymed lines. Even Milton does not rise above a stately march. Only in the hands of Shakespeare and myself does the verse really dance.

Now you must see that is just what you cannot say in a press note. No self-respecting paper would insert it. What you want to say is that I am an automatic writer and that my poems are dictated to me by Shakespeare's ghost in the coarse Spiritualist sense. The Spiritualists have never yet succeeded in extracting anything from any spirit of eminence at all worthy of its reputation, so they ought to jump at a chance like this. Drop a line to Sir Conan Doyle, or, if you think he may be jealous of me as a rival author, try Lord Northcliffe. He knows something about publicity.

Most of my other ancestors were merely honest men about whom the less said the better. I should not like it known that one of my grandfathers kept a shop, and lived over it, as his forefathers had done from the time of Charles I, though the oldest billheads only date from Anne. If he had converted himself into a limited company like Sir Thomas Lipton, I need not have blushed for him. Yet, stay—he owned three small craft which plied between Southampton and the Isle of Wight, so you can write him down a shipowner, and save my honour. I owe to him my inability to advertise, for when he died his family were surprised to see his funeral attended by numbers of the poor to whom he had shown secret charity.

My other grandfather was a schoolmaster in Portsmouth, and it was among the cherished traditions of my childhood that a half-mythical ancestor, one Sir Thomas Allen, lay buried in Portsmouth churchyard. Long afterwards I found this personage mentioned, in anything but flattering terms, in the diary of Samuel Pepys. He was an admiral by profession, and his descendants seem to have quartered themselves on their grateful country ever since, clinging to Portsmouth Dockyard like a minor species of the barnacle genus. You may be able

to make something of the admiral by judicious editing, but I don't vouch for him.

I was nearly forgetting a really creditable great grandfather named Jackson, who opened a bank in Sunderland, and rode in state through the town in a carriage drawn by six white horses. I wish I could send you a snapshot of the glorious spectacle, but photography had not then been invented. You might get some of the film people to reproduce it, if it didn't cost too much. I feel we ought to make something of the six white horses, felling the walruses and woolly dogs. It should interest one large section of your people to know that this ancestor was a friend of Clarkson and Wilberforce. His town house was hard by London Bridge, and my grandmother used to be taken on the river there—they called it "taking oars"—on summer evenings in the reign of George III. One friend of her childhood was Legh Richmond, whose "Annals of the Poor" were long prized in evangelical circles. Thackeray enviously sneers at them in "Vanity Fair," when he alludes to "The Washer-women of Finchley Common." So you see I have some literary traditions.

But it is about time for me to be born.

Long ago did I pray that I might keep my child's heart,
and blood-red Gods said Yea. .
With cruel hands they gave
Hope that will not rust,
Longing that doth not age. . . .

The Earthmen deem they are making war, but there is
only one war ;
It is the war in my heart forever,
For whose sake the whole universe is in pain.

Richmond Green.

IV

I THINK in fairness you ought to make it clear that my arrival on your planet wasn't altogether my fault. My desire was to be born on a neighbouring sphere, where there are no taboos of love and laughter, but I missed my way, whether, as it is written in the Golden Passport—

“Whether it be that the Fates cast me down, or the
Gods Immortal
With star-flung thunderbolt.”

It did not take me very many years to realise that I was a changeling. At ten or thereabouts I seriously suspected that I was not the true child of my guardians, but the offspring of a prince, who had been put out to nurse for some mysterious reason, like the hero of a fairy tale.

I hope I haven't frightened you. In a chatty communication like this my suppressed complexes are bound to come to the surface now and then. I trust you to blue-pencil them every time.

I was unlucky enough to land in England, in the city of Helstonleigh, so called by the inspired authoress of “East Lynne,” and if you have read her faithful chronicles of the Victorian age, you ought not to need telling what kind of welcome awaited me. My right to the throne of course was not acknowledged. On the contrary, I found myself, to our mutual discomfort, the subject of an intensely respectable monarch, whose dynasty was distinguished by its disapproval of genius, and who held in almost equal odium Darwin, Dickens, Carlyle and Gladstone, men whose worst qualities I was fated to combine.

You will see from this that the misunderstanding between me and the public didn't begin with me. My disposition is that of a peacemaker, but it takes two to make a peace, as President Wilson found. My earliest recorded utterance is—"Leave Allen 'lone!" The trouble is that the Earthmen never do leave us alone. I have not found much difference between dynasties and democracies in this respect. Their attitude towards angels is consistently like that of the boy who was found stoning the toad, with the objurgation—"I'll larn ye to be a toad." However, the — Company have kindly undertaken at last to persuade the people of America that I am a good Earthman, and I wish them all success.

Like Edmund Gosse, C.B., I am a Plymouth Brother. The only difference between us is that he is a Strict Brother and I am an Open one, so that I hope he will be saved, while he can cherish no such charitable illusion about me. It is true that the Brethren have excommunicated me, because I held erroneous views on the subject of the Little Horn in Daniel, and the Beast in Revelation, but we are still one at heart. When I stood for the Cardiff Town Council once upon a time I issued a rather unconventional address (in which I approached the electors as "Worms"), and in it I proposed that we should sink our differences about the Beast, and unite on the common ground of the Scarlet Woman. My canvassers were both gratified and amazed to find that all the Brethren in the ward were going to vote for me, although it is against their principles to take part in elections, and they had never done so before in their lives.

I must tell you another story about that election, but only on the understanding that it goes no further. My opponent was a popular brewer, so popular that the party organisation had failed to find a candidate against

him. Within a few hours of my intimation that I intended to come out the minister of the United Methodists, or some such body, waited on me with a proposition worthy of a more venerable church. He said, with the utmost earnestness :

“I have just heard that you are willing to oppose Mr. Brain. Now we teetotallers in the ward have been feeling very greatly distressed at the idea of a brewer having a walk-over, and we have been praying about it night after night. And now what I want to do is this : I want to call a special prayer-meeting for to-night, before your intention is known, to make a final appeal for a candidate ; and I want you to walk in, in the midst of our prayers, and announce that you are going to stand !”

It was an admirable suggestion. If he had proposed that I should descend through the skylight in a white robe, it would have been perfect. But my modesty would not let me consent.

I am sorry to say that I also resemble Mr. Gosse in having been guilty of irreverence in the sacred atmosphere of the Brethren's meetings. On one occasion, I have been told, the Brethren were holding a particularly solemn conference, after the regular service, for the condemnation of an unfortunate servant girl, who had fallen into sin, like the woman taken in adultery. In the midst of their very painful deliberations they were horrified to hear a shriek of exultant laughter coming from a corner of the Room. My mother had left me there to wait for her, and I had succeeded in wriggling through the back of the seat. Of course it was this feat which had tickled my sense of humour, and not anything in the proceedings, which I was far too young to understand. Still, I have sometimes wondered since—but I had better say no more.

My earliest recollection goes back to a problem in

metaphysics. The sarcastic Fates assigned a bank house as my first lodging; and I was long under the impression that the sole function of the bank was to provide small change, like the financiers in the Temple. The office was swept out of an evening by a friend of mine named Mary Ashton, and on one occasion she informed me that a pot used for damping the letter book belonged to the bank. I argued with her that a mere building, or else an incorporeal abstraction, couldn't possibly own anything, and pressed her to name some personal possessor such as the manager or cashier; but she couldn't, and like the little girl in Wordsworth's "We are Seven," persisted in the unsatisfactory assertion—"It is the bank's."

Perhaps it may do me good to mention that as a child I had a morbid horror of Satan; a portrait of him in the Child's Bible threw me into a hysterical fit, and had to be pasted over. It was a strange beginning for a life-long friendship. When at the age of thirteen I read his true sentiments in Byron's "Cain" I thought him the most sensible person I had yet come across. That, of course, is between ourselves; Marie Corelli will understand my feelings.

On the other hand you cannot give too much publicity to the fact that at the age of six I saved up my money to procure a copy of the Bible. My motive, I admit, was historical interest; I wanted to enlarge my knowledge of David and the Philistines; but my guardians didn't suspect this, and neither will the public if you use any tact. A proud mother, who already destined me to be a missionary, took me to the Bible Society's depot, in a tailor's shop, and I paid eighteenpence for the first volume I bought for myself. The second, I believe, was Shakespeare, whose works were not included in the home library. The censorship was rather strict in those first years. A book of fairy tales

given me by a worldly friend was promptly sequestered. I was brought up on works like "Line upon Line" and "Precept upon Precept" and such fiction as "Jessica's First Prayer." My lighter reading was provided by a series called Aunt Louisa's London Toy-books, whose authoress trusted to her bindings for immortality.

It is only fair to the — Company to confess that I had grosser aspirations. There stood in the window of what was known as "the entempted shop" the figure of a Punch in pink sugar, flanked by two giant pigs in white. I can still see their curly tails. My wildest dream hardly embraced that glorious Punch, but a carnally-minded sister and myself were agreed that the possession of one of those sugar pigs would spell perfect happiness. It was never ours. This was my first great disappointment in life. There were others to come.

Heaven lay about me in my infancy whenever I visited my ancestral Isle of Wight. I have published my memories of it in tragic verse and in comic prose, and I wish I could tell you that I was not without honour in my own island, like Sir Hall Caine. But both works have been ill received by the Islanders, and are omitted from the catalogue of its local literature in a recent guide. The only likely press note I can think of in connection with my youthful visits has already appeared in Plutarch's "Lives," in a variant with Alcibiades as the hero. I had fallen in love with a maiden of six or seven summers, who was somewhat coy, and I was struggling to snatch a kiss from her in the road before my grandmother's house when a sporting captain came along in his dogcart. My terrified relations saw me raise a commanding hand, and bid him draw up till I had achieved my purpose, which he was too much of a gentleman to mind doing. It is for you to say whether

this anecdote will do me harm in America. It shall be the only one of the kind.

With characteristic levity the Fates uprooted me at the age of seven, and transplanted me from Helstonleigh to the Five Towns, which I didn't find in the least like Arnold Bennett's books. All the inhabitants were Wesleyans, and as there was no Room in my particular town I became a Wesleyan too. My town was dignified by the residence of the American Consul—surely this should please the — Company—who lived with Babylonian extravagance in a hotel opposite the bank. His wife gave me a russia leather writing-case; thus early did your great country recognise my vocation.

The natives of the Five Towns were less friendly. I was walking by myself in the street one day when a band of young potters came up behind and threw stones at me. Doubtless they didn't know I was a member of the Labour Party, and were offended by my fine clothes. It was a new light on human nature to me, and I was too heart-broken to retaliate. I can't swear that Arnold Bennett was one of my assailants, but I suggest it will make better copy if you say so.

Either his influence or Shakespeare's must be held responsible for my becoming a dramatist at the age of nine. As I have observed elsewhere, this was a strange phenomenon in a household where the theatre was regarded as the open ante-chamber of hell, and the word Pit was spelt with a capital letter for the sake of a terrible double entendre. The mischief began with some irreligious friend, probably an Anglican, giving me a toy shadow-show, in which cardboard figures performed dialogues of excruciating dullness. The censorship was a little relaxed by this time, and the book of fairy tales was no longer on the Index. In partnership with a sister of Anglican tendencies I now constructed a theatre, with dolls and tin soldiers and dressed-up

ninepins as the actors, and produced extemporaneous melodramas in the true Elizabethan vein. There was no nonsense about scenery, and the hands of the stage manager were plainly visible to the spectator, guiding the motions of the puppets; albeit modern sensational effects were not wanting. The most popular I can recollect was the burning of a witch, impersonated by a black penwiper with a head of red sealing wax, whose doom was mercifully hastened with the aid of methylated spirits, like the Protestant martyrs with gunpowder. This tragedy ran till there was no more witch left to burn.

It was several years before I took to writing plays. I began with a comedy in blank verse of which I only recall two lines on account of the obvious criticism to which they exposed the author:

“I use not words but deeds to argue with
Base, fawning, treacherous villains such as thou.”

About this time a wicked aunt took me to see a scarcely disguised pantomime, though it pretended to be something more improving, at the Polytechnic. The ice was broken, I miched from school to go and see Irving, in one of my ancestor's plays at the Lyceum, and also saw the Vokes Family in a nautical farce at the Westminster Aquarium. As the result of both experiences I wrote a nautical farce and offered it to Irving, which shows why I have not become a successful literary agent like you. The farce was slightly Rabelaisian, the hero suffering qualms of *mal de mer* and calling at dramatic moments for a basin. Irving did not produce it.

I went on writing poetical comedies till some friends at Cardiff asked me to furnish them with a comedietta to be performed at a Unitarian bazaar. I gave them parts that fitted them like gloves to their extreme annoyance.

They were doing a Sidney Grundy comedietta called "Dearest Mamma" as well, and as I knew I was a better playwright than Grundy I insisted on my piece coming after his. I scored off him rather heavily, as my friends had to admit, and their triumph as actors consoled them for the libel on them as individuals.

About this time the play of "Lady Windermere's Fan" made some sensation. I thought it a poor imitation of Sheridan's masterpiece, and I set to work on a comedy which I christened with too much propriety "A Flash in the Pan." A few years later a dramatic agent sold it to the Kendals, of all people in the world. It contained no part worthy of Mrs. Kendal, as she was careful to point out to me, her only good scene being one in which she proposed, as a New Woman, to a hesitating bachelor who wasn't even Mr. Kendal. His part was all right, but of course the public didn't want to see him; neither did their public want to hear wit. They played it in the provinces for some years, changing the title to something more suited to provincial taste, but they never ventured to bring it to London. It was produced first in Dublin, and as I have some claims to be a Dublin man, the Kendals had the mortifying experience of playing second fiddle on the occasion. I regretted this as much as they seemed to do, especially as Mrs. Kendal informed me that their production of my play would be the making of me—she was as confident about this as the — Company. The moment the curtain went down on the first night the audience started a cry of "Author" before giving the actors the call to which they were entitled in courtesy. When I got round to the stage the unfairly treated Kendals marshalled me between them, behind the curtain, and then sent it up, as it were, for our joint benefit. The audience marked their sense of this manoeuvre so distinctly that Mrs. Kendal made a graceful atonement by joining in the clapping with

her own fair hands. I naturally declined to speak under such conditions, and I was leaving the theatre when Kendal ran after me, and begged me to come back, as the audience refused to disperse without hearing me. This time I was allowed to go before the curtain unchaperoned.

Notwithstanding this slight hitch Mrs. Kendal was good enough to offer me a place in their company, with a view to my learning stage-craft, and incidentally qualifying myself to write a play with a part for her in it. I was prevented from accepting the offer by a sonnet of my ancestor's expressing remorse for his own theatrical career, though of course I didn't tell her so. I had the highest admiration for her acting. Norman McKinnel once told me he had learnt more from her than anyone else, and even I learned a little, especially when she was off the stage. However, I never succeeded in writing a part for her. I outlined one play with a part in it which I confessed might be more suited for Mrs. St. John Wood. She rebuked me impressively; "It is no use to offer me a part like that; I can't be vulgar." That was her limitation as an actress. I often thought I could have written a rather successful comedy under the title—"A Part for Mrs. Kendal."

My next experiment was a farce which I called "Private Inquiry." My dramatic agent parted with the type-script to a high-born youth who had been mixed up with the production of "The Sorrows of Satan," and who undertook to form a syndicate to bring out my play. He explained to me that his fashionable friends would put up the money readily if they believed he was joint-author of the piece, and I was persuaded to let him make a few alterations in it accordingly. He then disappeared, and my agent could neither trace him nor recover the copy. Some years afterwards I was outlining the plot to an actor when he startled me by saying that the play had been produced with great success

under the name of "Facing the Music." By this time the run of the piece was over, and its nominal author, who was most likely quite ignorant of my connection with it, was dead. I am still looking for my high-born collaborator. I regard his modest self-effacement as the supreme misfortune of my career. I want him to come back and be my dramatic agent. If he will only borrow a few more plays from me, and get them produced with the same success, it may occur to some London manager to give me a trial.

I wrote another comedy at the same time which I afterwards published as a novel called "Slaves of Society." The moment it appeared letters poured in upon me asking for the dramatic rights. A lady in Chicago wrote to assure me that a sparkling comedy positively gleamed from the pages of my book. The manager of a touring company actually bought an option on the play. He was candid enough to confess that he and his partner had dramatised my work with the intention of stealing it, but they found themselves unable to dispense with my dialogue. I let him have my own version, which he preferred to his own; however, he failed to raise the capital for a production. This play was among the final three in a competition promoted by the Playgoers' Club. Frederick Harrison wanted to produce it, but the chief part was not suited to Cyril Maude. Such are the pitfalls of the playwright.

More recently, in 1913, I thought it possible to force the barriers with a burlesque of "Looking Backward," and similar Socialist prophecies, and I asked Bernard Shaw to let me introduce him on the stage under his own name. He very courageously consented. I went to lunch with him first in his flat in the Adelphi expecting to find it rather a Barmecide repast, but he most generously indulged me with meat and wine. I wish my other teetotal and vegetarian friends were equally

tolerant. "Paradise Found," as I named this satire, depicts Bernard Shaw awakening from a magical sleep of centuries to find himself in the midst of a Bolshevik millennium, which he immediately sets to work to abolish. I wrote it under the friendly supervision of William Archer, who was confident that it would prove a popular success. Needless to say it has not appeared, except in book form in America. Needless to say, either, that it has already ceased to be much of a burlesque, most of its predictions having been fulfilled already, as I foretold would be the case in a preface to the American volume. And needless, furthermore, to say that the propertied classes, who shiver at the word Socialism, would rather lose their money and their lives in a Bolshevik revolution, than be saved by sanity and humour.

I applied at the same time to Lord Northcliffe for permission to introduce a burnt file of the *Daily Mail* on the stage, as the sole surviving relic of the literature of the Capitalist Age. His response was rather unlike the popular idea of him:—

"DEAR MR.—

"By all means make any use you like of the *Daily Mail* in your satire. When it is ready, will you let us have a copy, so that we can use it ?

"Your address—6, Pump Court—touched me greatly, for, as a young reporter, I lived there, on the third floor, during a very struggling part of my career, when I was wooing that stony-hearted mistress, Fleet Street.

"Yours sincerely,

"NORTHCLIFFE."

My only other dramatic work worth mentioning was a Shakespearean tragedy which occupied me at intervals for twenty years, till I had the good sense to burn it. If Shakespeare were alive to-day he would have too much sense to write "Hamlet." He would be making a fortune in the film business.

No love is barren. The night we loved
In the splendour of secrecy our kiss begot
A spirit child on that spirit planet
That swims beside ours,
Silent in a sea unexplored,
The cradle of God.

Chastity.

V

IN the eleventh year of an evil life I was sentenced to twelve months in a reformatory kept by a great aunt at Southsea. She was a Strict Sister, and her Edmund-Gosse-like principles were displayed in a pictorial Time Chart which began with the creation of the world in the year 4004 B.C., and ended with its destruction at no very distant date ahead. The author of the Time Chart mercifully veiled from us the precise moment of the catastrophe. Another family connection, the manager of an insurance office in the City of London, was more business-like. He had mastered the secret of the Great Pyramid, and he announced boldly in a pamphlet that the awful consummation was due in two years' time; but as he followed up its publication by taking a house on a seven years' lease I have always classed him as a prophet with H. G. Wells rather than Jeremiah. By the way, if it has ever struck you that the one prophet whose genuine and literal predictions are known to have been literally fulfilled is the most unpopular, down to this day, I hope you won't draw the attention of the — Company to the fact. It might discourage them.

Now I am coming to a satisfactory press note with money in it. Among my fellow convicts in the reformatory was a cousin, who fell long since on a Samoan island with a bullet through his heart. In the Navy he was known as Angel Freeman, but in those days we called him Hope; however I don't expect you to take much interest in him. The point is that he entered the *Britannia* training ship at the same time as his

future Majesty King George V. Being the head boy of his year in the Naval College, moreover, he was appointed the official chum of the prince and his elder brother, the late Duke of Clarence, being told off to sit by them at meals and generally show them the way about. According to him his royal friends didn't know the names of the joints at the table, when they first came on board, and they had never seen a herring. One respectfully imagines they had been nourished on fairy food, unknown to humbler mortals; but I repeat these allegations subject to correction by my gracious Sovereign. On other points my cousin's report was favourable to His Majesty. When the two brothers were first sent aloft poor Prince Eddie went up through the "lubber's hole," but George took the giddier outside route, as a seaman should. They both became rather attached to Hope, and wanted him to stay with them in the holidays; but reasons of State prevented this. The poor boy was so worried by inquisitiveness about his exalted friends that he turned crusty at last, and refused to speak of them. Still, he confided some things to me—which I am not going to confide to the — Company.

I fear personal anecdotes about myself will fall rather flat after that. But have patience—we shall find ourselves in good company again later on. America shall be satisfied, even if I do have to violate a few royal confidences.

On my release from the reformatory I entered the Great Yarmouth Grammar School, the Fates having relented for a short breathing-space, and transferred me from the haunts of Arnold Bennett to those of David Copperfield. I entered the school before I was quite twelve, and I was first in every examination in every subject for a year, ascending from the first form to the head of the Upper Third. My second year saw

me almost at the top of the Lower Fifth, and I might have found myself in the Sixth at fourteen had not the Fates changed their minds again. I am telling you this that you may see how unlucky I was in not having landed in China. In the Celestial realm I should not have had to pass most of my life as one of the unemployed. My guardians, my schoolmasters, my native town, would all have had an interest in my career, and by this time I should have been a mandarin with a red button, if not a peacock's feather and a yellow jacket.

Honesty compels me to add that I deserved no credit for these academic feats. My memory made learning so easy that I passed a year in the school without knowing that we were supposed to prepare for the weekly repetition before the head master, and I remember being much embarrassed when he once wound up a reproof of some slower boy by pointing to me as an example of industry. I had to do a little work in one form because they were running over a book of Virgil which the rest of them had done already the term before; and I now think I should have been justified in the circumstances in consulting Dryden's translation, which was within my reach; but I didn't think so then. I was able to drop French preparation altogether, because I was so easily head of the school in that subject, except for the Sixth Form, whose dignity did not permit a junior to compete with them. It was much the same when I was reading for the Bar in after years. Although what schoolmasters would call my education was broken off at thirteen, I matriculated in the Royal University of Ireland without a serious effort, and I took the highest prizes of both the Irish and the English Bars (which only the late Lord Justice Cherry had done before) without any coaching, and with half the reading done by some of my

competitors, many of them scholarship-winners from Oxford and Cambridge. My Latin studies had suffered an interregnum of ten years, yet I found myself able to translate the Digest without trouble.

The moral of these curious facts seems to be that memory is not the asset that the Pelman Institute pretends. I felt this at the time, and told my friends, with too clear a prevision, that I looked upon my scholarships as ill omens for my future as a practising barrister. Macaulay found the same. He started in life with influential friends, education did all it could for him, his first article brought him into fame, and he never wrote one line above the heads of his public, and yet he confessed when he was over thirty that he had never made more than two hundred a year by his pen. My memory is less mechanical than his, being more retentive of facts and principles than words; thus I doubt if I could repeat one sentence out of Gibbon, though I have read him through half a dozen times; whereas I could shut my eyes and dictate a popular History of the World. It may interest the — Company to know that I wrote my history of religion almost impromptu, and then handed it over to a professional research-worker to provide the references. He failed to find confirmation for one of my statements, and was unwise enough to dispute its accuracy. The information lay *perdu* in a work on the Sea of Aral.

It can hardly interest anybody to know that I have one short-sighted eye and one long-sighted, but it was a sad handicap for me in the school games. As I was unconsciously using one eye to read with and the other to run about with, the defect went undiscovered till long afterwards, and no allowances were made for it. When I did take to glasses I made the unexpected discovery that I was a natural shot. I hit the bull's eye the first time I ever let off a rifle. Shooting did not interest

me, and I never practised it, but whenever I did chance to take up a fire-arm something of the sort always happened. I should have won a Waterbury watch at the People's Palace by hitting the bull's eye seven times running if my companions hadn't flustered me at the seventh shot by telling me we should lose our train. I haven't forgiven them to this day. One of them became a Professor of Roman Law in the University of Melbourne, and if these lines meet his eye, I hope he will apologise. A more tragic incident occurred one evening when I was with a sporting friend at Monmouth who had a rifle fitted with a Morris tube. With this I had just shot a flying bat, but as he didn't discover the corpse till the next morning we neither of us suspected the deadliness of my aim.

Then a cat appeared at the far end of the field, coming after my friend's prize chickens, and I fired in its direction meaning merely to frighten it, as I am fond of cats. The poor thing leapt into the air, and fell dead in its tracks. It turned out to be the favourite cat of an old lady who had offered to pay my friend for the loss of his chickens on condition that its life was spared. We daren't let her know of its decease, so we tied a brick to it and secretly cast it into the river Monnow. Its afflicted owner wrote heart-breaking letters to my friend to inquire into its fate, saying she would rather know it was no more than think of its having forsaken her of its own accord.

A more sensational story attaches to my skill with the revolver. I bought one when I went out to the Greco-Turkish war, and won a prize on the way by hitting a floating bottle. While on the march through Turkey with an English officer and a Greek corporal some scepticism was expressed as to my mastery of the weapon, and I pointed to a small white scab on a tree ahead, and fired at it. The bark remained

unscarred, and my companions believed I had missed the tree, but when they got up to it they found the bullet embedded in the centre of the scab. A few days afterwards a Polish captain came to me at midnight to warn me that the corporal, who was acting as my interpreter, was laying plans for my assassination. He had seen me cash some cheques, and absurdly imagined that they were a species of bank notes. Accordingly he had been boasting that my recklessness was certain to result in my being killed in the next action, in which case he should become rich by the possession of my cheque-book. According to my Polish informant the man was a scoundrel, who intended to shoot me from behind, and was preparing the minds of his comrades beforehand. As this information was confirmed by my Greek friends, I dismissed the corporal the next morning. He was inclined to bluster, till I put my hand to my revolver, and said—"You have seen me use this revolver; the next time I meet you I shall shoot you first and ask you your business afterwards." He fled for his life, and went through the army telling everyone I had threatened to murder him. You can tell the — Company that I did so, if you think it good business. There is no extradition with Greece.

My military propensities as a boy ran a race with my theatrical ones. Except once, to amuse a foolish uncle, I didn't set up my tin soldiers and knock them down with peas; I marched them through all the battles in Napier's "Peninsular War," with Waterloo to follow; thus I was not taken at a disadvantage when I was invited to catechise a class in a Turkish military school. My ambition was so pronounced that a great-uncle, who combined the vocation of a military coach with that of a rector in the Church of England, was actually approached on the subject. He replied, of course, that I was not rich enough to serve my country.

But for the same drawback I might have taken my cousin's place as chum in ordinary to my future Sovereign. I was almost as fond of boats as I was of soldiers, and one episode of those days makes me think I should have got on pretty well with Nelson. There was a snowball fight in the playground of the Grammar School between the boarders and the day-boys. The enemy made a sudden charge, and my side ran away; but I *couldn't* run away. I can see myself now, a very small boy for my age, standing alone to await the onset of fifty boarders headed by the entire Sixth Form. The absurdity of the situation saved me. A kindly Norwegian giant of six feet high, named Baumgartner, was the first to reach me, and he remonstrated with me on my inconsiderate behaviour, explaining that the rules required me to retreat with the rest of my army. I was allowed to retire with the honours of war. That is not the only time my army has run away, leaving me alone, but I have not met many Baumgartners.

My nautical tastes afterwards led me into a series of shipwrecks brought on me by my incompetence as a yachting man. I wrote an account of them once in the official organ of the officers of the Mercantile Marine, and it gave me great pleasure to think of its expert readers gritting their teeth over the article. One narrow escape was at Salcombe in Devon. I had arrived off the bar in a yacht which drew nine feet six, and the Nautical Almanac assured me that there were ten feet of water on the bar at that precise moment. But other yachts about the same size as mine were waiting about outside, and my skipper, who was a married man with a family, implored me to follow their prudent example. He was a steward off a Baltic steamer, whom I had chosen for his ignorance, as I like to enjoy myself at sea, and I naturally paid no heed to his prayers. Relying blindly on the

Nautical Almanac, I took the tiller and steered fearlessly over the bar, on which we bumped heavily in crossing. Arrived in the Salcombe River, we were boarded by a Customs officer, and I asked him if the Almanac was right in stating that there was ten feet of water on the bar. "Yes," he said, "but there's a two-foot wave!" The land-lubber may guess that this meant that the depth varied from moment to moment, and we had been caught in the hollow of the wave.

I had a much narrower squeak on the Pole Sand off Exmouth, where several people have been drowned. It was again a case of having to wait off the bar of the river. This time I decided to go ashore in a sailing dinghy. No sooner had I put off from the yacht than I realised that the sea was running too high for comfort, and instead of making for the fairway up the Exe, I decided to try an inner channel that I knew of between the Pole Sand and a grass-covered spit called the Warren with which it makes an angle. I was embayed in the angle, running before the wind, before I discovered that the channel was not yet practicable. The waves were fiercely breaking where it should have been, and I was being driven right among the breakers. An attempt to beat out again nearly resulted in the boat being capsized, and I quite made up my mind that my voyaging was over. My skipper, watching from the yacht, formed the same opinion. A following wave pooped the dinghy and dashed it on the Sand. I sprang out, and found firm footing, hauled up the drop-keel, lowered the sail, dragged the boat out of the breakers, across the submerged Sand into the smooth water of the river on the other side, baled her out, hoisted the lug again, and sailed merrily up to the landing-stage of the yacht club, where I was just in time for a rubber. The poor skipper remained outside all night burning blue lights, I suppose to guide my spirit on the way to its bourne.

In spite of these little errors in seamanship, I rose to the high rank of Vice-Commodore of a Corinthian sailing club, besides being on the Sailing Committee of the Royal Torbay Yacht Club. I was acting as flag-officer one day for the Corinthians, when a competitor in a race for sailing dinghies rounded a mark-boat so closely that the end of the flag flapped against his shoulder. I promptly disqualified him for fouling the mark-boat. The victim was furious, but as he was an extremely quarrelsome man, who was for ever lodging objections against everybody else, the decision gave a good deal of quiet satisfaction. The rest of my nautical reminiscences, are they not, written in the "Log of the Folly" ?

My excuse for dragging them in here is that they led to my appearance for the first, and probably the last, time in the Fashionable Intelligence of the *Morning Post*. Let the — Company beat that if they can. I must explain that the first yacht I was deluded into buying had a bad reputation all round the coast, being offensively described as a candle-box. The first time I entered her for a race the handicappers gave her an allowance of three-quarters of an hour. However, as she was the first boat to round the final mark perhaps they were really allowing for the deficiencies of the helmsman. Anyhow I won my first and only prize on that occasion. But I am digressing again. My friend the late Judge Woodfall, who was then living at Torquay, rashly accepted an invitation to come with me in this craft to the Cowes Regatta. He had no sooner done so than he was warned by all his other friends that he would never see Cowes, or Torquay again, as we should certainly go down off Portland Bill. Much to his credit he persisted in coming, and if he turned a little pale as we passed through the Portland Race, that only adds to his heroism. When we arrived in the Roads he insisted that I should despatch the news to the

Torquay Directory. The *Morning Post* condescended to lift the item, and I was promptly favoured with a letter from a press agent in Bond Street, offering to procure the insertion of similar paragraphs from time to time for a moderate fee. I didn't close with the offer myself but I will look up his address and let the — Company have it.

As an occasional contributor to other columns of one of the most independent journals in Great Britain, I feel it my duty to advise them not to pay him in advance.

I was going to tell you that my favourite study as a boy, beside poetry, strategy and navigation, was chemistry. They didn't teach anything so common in the Grammar School, but my inseparable friend, Freddy Johnson, received a chemical cabinet as a birthday present, and this led to our setting up a joint laboratory. My first experiment was in the art of making fireworks, and I was on the high road to the discovery of gunpowder when I realised that some one had been before me. I expect Freddy was thankful for a respite from our military manœuvres in which it was his monotonous rôle to command the defeated army every time. He must have been the most amiable boy who ever lived. I continued the study of chemistry for years after he and I had parted, making a pneumatic-trough, and manufacturing gases. I was disappointed in never bringing off a real explosion, though I tried my best. Providence evidently had other views for me than an end by water or by fire.

In my fourteenth year I took up my abode in the London suburb of Camberwell. This was the home of Browning and Ruskin, but they both left before I arrived. It is a pity that literary men don't get on better together. Still, it wasn't so bad as if they had thrown stones.

Immediately on my arrival in London I did the most desperate deed of my career. I went up to London Bridge and took a walk through Wapping. I was fully persuaded that the population were murderers to a man, and every time I heard footsteps behind me a delicious thrill of terror ran down my spine. The worst of it is that one doesn't get a medal for this kind of thing, as my comrade, Captain —, remarked to me when a batch of Greek medical students were popping off their Government revolvers all round us on the steamer that was taking us to the front.

My second expedition was to Paternoster Row to obtain a copy of my ancestor's dramatic works. I went into the house of Messrs. Frederick Warne & Co., and bought a copy over the counter, to their unconcealed astonishment. They took advantage of my ignorance to charge me the gross price—or perhaps they believed me to be a bookseller's spy. I opened the volume in the tram on the way back, with the result that I was carried miles past my destination, and lost my dinner.

I now seceded from the Wesleyans, and returned to the true fold, attending a meeting of the Brethren held in a chapel in Beresford Street, Walworth, which I believe has now become a picture-house. It was presided over by the venerable William Lincoln, whom I look upon as the only honest man I have ever met. He had resigned a good living in the Established Church, on discovering the unlawfulness of infant baptism. While I sat under him he made the further discovery that the text—"Go forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles," applied to contributions to his own support by the unconverted. Accordingly he ordered a collecting-box for that purpose in the entrance to the chapel to be boarded over every Sunday evening, when sinners were present. A lady was seen one night vainly trying to

insert half a sovereign in the crevices. Very likely she may have been saved, but he took no chances. He ruled the meeting with an iron hand. One morning two of the Brethren were unfortunate enough to rise at the same moment ; and sat down together in some confusion. The good man's comment must have made them wish they had kept their seats. "When two dear brethren rise at the same time," was his unanswerable reasoning, "both *cannot* have been moved by the Holy Spirit. One of them *must* be wrong—probably both !" My own relations were a good deal terrified one morning by his references to the presence of a Hanoverian halfpenny in his box. I collected foreign coins.

It doesn't seem to have occurred to any one interested that I could have easily gained a valuable scholarship in a school of standing, with a university career to follow. I was handed over for the next two years to schoolmasters who knew less than I did. One of them, who was himself innocent of Latin, was rather astonished to find me turning one of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into English verse to fill up the preparation hours. Being allowed to choose my own subject for a prize essay I took "Foreign Politics," and sketched out the policy of the leading European Powers. My form master read the essay to the form, to their natural indignation, and I was assaulted in consequence. I also incurred a temporary unpopularity by my first appearance as a public speaker at the age of fourteen. The boys themselves had invited me to address them in the playground during the break, and I was pleading in favour of a Republic for these islands, when the head master came on the scene, and made inquiries. One of the boys, no doubt a young Conservative, was mean enough to tell him I had described Queen Victoria as a "painted puppet," whereupon he cut short the break, and sent us back to work. They seemed to think this was my fault.

I redeemed my reputation soon afterwards by procuring them a holiday to see the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, which I did by drawing up a petition in verse. The head-master, anticipating the object, first refused the petition in advance, but when it was put into his hand the poetry overcame him, and he honourably surrendered.

The strained relations between Queen Victoria and myself didn't end with my schooldays, unfortunately. I was afterwards guilty of writing a playful supplement to her published volume, in a Cardiff paper, for which my friend the Head Constable told me he was momentarily expecting a warrant to arrest me on a charge of high treason. I tried to atone for this crime by making her the heroine of a charming Jubilee novel, which was translated, and ran as a serial in a French magazine entitled *La Revue Pour Les Jeunes Filles*. (I can't think why you haven't brought this out in America. It has even gone into Greek.) The final episode in this unhappy misunderstanding was a short story called the "Theft of the Koh-i-Noor," which my friend Jerome K. Jerome published serially in *To-Day*. He engaged an artist on the staff of the Lord Chamberlain to illustrate it. The unlucky artist chose for his first full page illustration the incident of Her Majesty taking off the historic jewel before her mirror, so that the loyal public were gratified with a view of their gracious Sovereign in the act of preparing to retire for the night. The artist was instantly dismissed by the Lord Chamberlain. As usual with my wildest fiction, the readers firmly believed that every word was true; the assistant editor himself asked me how I had acquired my wonderful knowledge of the interior of Buckingham Palace. Poor Sir Henry Ponsonby, who figured in the story, fell ill just as it was coming out, and his family complained to Jerome. The last instalment was to appear

that week, and we artfully concocted an apologetic paragraph, pretending that the story was being cut short in consideration of the state of Sir Henry's health. This gave entire satisfaction.

I afterwards met Miss Vera Ponsonby at my dear old friend's, Lady Fanny FitzWygram's, and she seemed to cherish no malice on account of the past. We were partners at bridge, and I delighted her by a lead which enabled her to win the last two tricks herself, with the game and rubber. "A beautiful card!" she exclaimed with enthusiasm. She wrote to Lady Fanny the next day to thank her for such an enjoyable evening. So you see I am not so black as I have been painted. One of our opponents, by the way, was the present Earl of Reading, whom I think you know in America. Bridge was not his game at that period, and he was quite a child in our hands. If he has improved since he owes something to my tuition, as I am sure he would be the first to acknowledge.

Other bridge pupils of mine have been Lord Halsbury and Sir Frederick Lugard, both of whom played their first game under my friendly supervision. I wish we had played for higher stakes. The aged Lord Chancellor, as he was at that time, proved a very lively scholar. When I drew a magic sign on the table to bring good luck, he promptly drew another, and said his demon should fight mine.

But you must be careful how you say anything about card-playing in your notes. Perhaps it will be safer to say I taught them golf.

Neither must you repeat what follows. I have already told you that I was excommunicated for heresy, and the bolt fell when I was fifteen. I brought it on myself by confiding to a cousin that Buddha and Muhammad were deserving of respect. Being a girl she gave me away, and a great uncle was deputed by the

family to take me for a walk and tell me fearsome stories of the deathbeds of Voltaire and Paine. It was years before I lived down my dreadful blasphemies. I was once turned away from my grandmother's door for having come to see her on the Sabbath without having previously attended the Brethren's Room.

I was reminded of these boyish experiences at Swinburne's funeral. Being in Shanklin at the time I walked over to it, little expecting to find myself the only writer there. As soon as the coffin reached the grave-side, in the charge of Mrs. Watts-Dunton, whose husband was too ill to be present, a clergyman stepped forward in full canonicals and began to read the Anglican burial service. Mrs. Watts-Dunton protested aloud and moved away from the grave, and I respectfully accompanied her. It was stated afterwards that the poet's family had obtained permission for their clergyman to attend and say something, and having only a woman to deal with they apparently decided to improve the occasion. A hundred years before they would have refused Swinburne burial in consecrated ground; now they forced an orthodox funeral on him against his known desire. One of them afterwards published a book in which she assured the public that there never had been the slightest misunderstanding between him and his family. It is a pity that such people have never read the Gospel on the subject of mothers and brethren.

I made me once a ship—
A fair and fragile ship,
I fashioned it with pains :
Its planks were hopes and fears,
Its ribs were caulked with tears,
Its keel was laid in murdered love's remains.

I strung the shrouds in tune—
A wild æolian tune ;
I filled the sails with sighs ;
I launched it like a crime
Upon the tide of time,
With lurking dread and woe-begot surmise.

* * * * *
I know not on what sea—
What tempest trodden sea,
It drifts to meet its doom :
What pitying angel eyes
Beholds it from the skies,
What last farewell is breathed beyond the gloom.
The Argosy.

VI

As I have never willingly written anything except poetry I consider I am entitled now to tell you some of my misfortunes as a poet. I expect you'll hate hearing them, but you should be thankful it is no worse. You have been a poet yourself, you know. It may relieve your mind to learn that my poems have gone down well in Chicago, in the pages of *Poetry*, under the sympathetic editorship of my friend Harriet Monroe. Outside that city no one suspects that I am a poet. When I embedded a few lines in *The New Word* the printer wanted to frame them in inverted commas, and the reviewers treated them as quotations. I wonder who but Shakespeare they thought responsible for this?

“ From grass-grown hills,
Their ancient and forgotten burial-places,
Draw forth the dragon hoard of gold and gems.”

Similarly when I smuggled some blank verse not long ago into the *English Review*, by sending it anonymously through my solicitor, a publisher in Portland, Maine, wrote to ask the unknown author for a volume. Austin Harrison himself thought he had discovered a new poet in my solicitor, and asked him for further contributions. When I send him anything in my own name I generally have to employ a solicitor to recover the MS. Perhaps these personal anecdotes may suggest to you that if the — Company really want to sell my book they had better put my solicitor's name to it instead of mine. If he is a Writer to the Signet, I should think you would be quite safe in passing him off in America as a Cabinet

Minister. It sounds just like Lord Privy Seal. My old friend Lloyd George is a solicitor, too—perhaps it would be still better to use his name. Never mind my feelings; get there somehow.

My earliest verses, written at nine or ten, dealt with the Rainbow, but I date the first visit of the Muse from one night when I got out of my bed fired with this stirring stanza:—

“My pen I’ve taken up,
My banner I’ve unfurled,
And I will write, and I will fight
For fame from all the world.”

You perceive that the hymn-book was the prime source of my metrical technique. Dr. Watts was a severe model. He never sacrifices sense to sound, and seldom strays into *vers libre*. My poetical library as a child further included Pope’s Homer, “Paradise Lost” and Dryden’s Virgil. I also knew Macaulay’s “Lays” by heart, but I always drew the line at Scott.

My efforts to gain the ear of the public were so uniformly unsuccessful that I soon gave up the attempt. Let me record a gratifying exception in the case of the *Islington Gazette*, which complimented an ode read to a literary society when I was seventeen by foretelling that I should one day be a valued contributor to my country’s literature. The prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, but it cheered me for many a long year, and I have often wished to meet my unknown critic.

At the same age, after a brief and unpromising experience of the City of London, I was formally apprenticed as a poet. The other party to the indenture was one of those philanthropists who advertise their mission to bestow fame and fortune on the amateur author. He did this by means of a magazine conducted

on the novel and not unprofitable system of the contributors paying for the insertion of their writings, instead of being paid. He also drew fees for the revision of poems submitted to him for the purpose; and this came to be my department, as poetry was not in his line. He was completely puzzled by a Pindaric ode I had written in imitation of "Alexander's Feast," and asked for an assurance that it was fit for publication in the magazine. His wife was supposed to be the editor, but she was too much absorbed in her own poetical compositions, which she used to leave lying about in the hope that I should read them. He was equally ignorant of shorthand, in which he had bound himself to make me proficient. He had a friend who offered to teach me a weird system of his own, which no one else understood, but as I already had a fair acquaintance with Pitman's I declined to profit by his instructions. My principal suffered from financial embarrassments like Mr. Micawber, and had to migrate with his furniture on the eve of rent day soon after I had joined the household. How such a character could have imposed on a bank manager has always been a mystery to me. I made up my mind to break my indentures at the end of a few months. When I was going he threatened to have me brought back in charge of two policemen. I asked him if one wouldn't be enough.

My sonnets were mostly written at Pembroke by way of preparation for a Civil Service examination. I must be permitted to record with pride that a ballad on Pembroke Castle, which I contributed to the local press, had the honour of being cut out and pasted in the lid of her trunk by a Welsh servant girl in a neighbour's household. That is real popularity.

My next contribution, made to an undergraduate review in Trinity College, Dublin, where I was attending law lectures, brought me into touch with W. B. Yeats.

who was beginning to make his reputation in its pages. He was then dabbling in Theosophy and psychical research, and we planned one night to try and get into telepathic communication across Dublin at a certain hour. The experiment failed, possibly because we had forgotten to arrange which was to be the transmitter and which the receiver of the message, and, being poets, were both trying to act in the former capacity. Our thought waves must have collided half-way.

Having won a couple of scholarships within three weeks of each other, I indulged in the extravagance of publishing my "Songs in Ziklag." You may have seen the "International Anthem," as it was quoted in the New York Press. Another poem, the "Carnival of Blood," reads rather like a prophecy now. I have told you what Watts-Dunton said about the sonnets; no one else took any notice of the book except the late W. T. Stead, whose journalistic *flair* enabled him to point out that its faults were those natural in an Irishman. Literary criticism is an art I have never practised myself. After reading Poe's "Life" I resolved that I would never attack a brother author, and I have only twice permitted myself political criticisms of political partisans.

To the best of my recollection seventeen copies were sold of "Songs in Ziklag." I recently saw a pile of them on the floor of a second-hand bookseller in Charing Cross Road, if you think that will encourage the — Company. Better late than never.

I was vain enough to send a copy to the eminent Edward Dowden, who, in addition to being Professor of Poetry in Trinity College, was himself the author of much indifferent verse, and a biographer of Shakespeare and Shelley. In all three capacities he naturally had the strongest antipathy to any poets within his radius. When my friend Edwin Hamilton gained the university prize with a comic drama, the professor cut down the

amount by one half, to punish him for having imitated Aristophanes instead of Æschylus. This is, I believe, the only Dublin prize poem that has ever been read by the public. When, on his own retirement from the chair, it was proposed to appoint Yeats as his successor, he "rose from the grave," as my friend Ezra Pound puts it, to prevent such a breach with academic tradition. His acknowledgment of my book was an exhortation to adhere to academic models, advice which did me infinite harm.

I was already engaged on another poem which I was too wise to offer to a publisher. I printed it for private circulation in 1890, but it didn't circulate even privately. By a coincidence not without parallel I had attacked the problem that Nietzsche was solving on very different lines nearly at the same time. His vision of the Overman was almost equally ignored in his lifetime, though it has since received the tribute of millions of lives and countless millions of money. Do you believe the faith of humanity in that idol has yet been shaken? Do you believe the ——— Company could now sell more than seventeen copies of a true prophecy concerning the SON OF MAN? Not unless I take up archery or chariot-eering. Not without walruses or woolly dogs.

When my friends aren't advising me to imitate Nat Gould and H. G. Wells and G. R. Sims and Marie Corelli it is their playful habit to urge me to write according to my inspiration. I was spiteful enough to take them at their word in "A Day's Tragedy," a poem which occupied me three years in the intervals of my activity as a barrister on the South Wales Circuit, a journalist, and a Labour politician. This was another work born out of due time, before any self-respecting poet had stooped to find poetry in the things of every day. It told the story of a trial in a modern assize court, and was full of allusions to such unpoetical topics as a railway train,

a race, a golf course and even a bank. The very shop windows were described, down to the hats in a milliner's:

“ In the bright plumage drest
Of birds that died by Indian bows
On coral archipelagos.”

One reviewer was especially indignant over the reference to a telegram as the russet envelope of fate. When my name had come before the public as a writer of fiction a publisher's manager named Oswald Crawford was venturesome enough to print this. Like your Company, he was kind enough to promise me “poetic fame.” He seized a good opportunity to rush it out when the report reached London that I had been killed in the Greco-Turkish war. It was a pity that the report was not confirmed; however, you will agree that it was an excellent press note. Three of the London dailies bestowed a column on the book, as the strange freak of a novelist, and a score or so of copies were disposed of. I bought the rest back from the publisher as waste paper, and they lie mouldering in a cellar somewhere in Kensington, unless the cellar's owner has been fortunate enough to find some one to take them away. I think this should justify you in describing me as a follower of John Masefield.

I don't want you to think I write unpopular poetry on purpose. Of course my friends think so; but it is a delusion. Sometimes I wish the public could bear me. I remember walking home one morning as the sun was rising over the Green Park, and wishing rather earnestly that I could write something that would make me better friends with the Earthmen. I went to bed, and woke up with “Goldenhair and Curlyhead.” I spent that day in turning it over in my heart, and the next in writing it; and when it was finished I believed that it would make my peace with humanity at last.

For two years I offered it to publishers and editors in vain. Then a literary agent got it into the Christmas number of *Harmsworth's Magazine*—the only time Lord Northcliffe's editors have favoured me. It attracted no attention. My agent next induced a publisher to issue it as a Christmas gift-book. He had it beautifully illustrated by Harold Copping, bound it in gloomy covers, and offered it to the trade a month after they had filled their season's orders. He had never published a Christmas book before. My agent told me that his own little girl slept with the book under her pillow. He said to me with real tears in his eyes—"That was your masterpiece, and I killed it." Mrs. Kendal subsequently applied to me for a poem for recitation, and I sent her a copy. She received it graciously, informing me that she had raised G. R. Sims from obscurity by her recitation of one of his works, and was now about to do the same generous office for me. She proceeded to recite my poem all over the country, describing it in the programme as a "new poem," without an author's name. I asked her for an explanation of this treatment, and I am still waiting for her reply. When she recited it in St. James's Hall the *Daily Telegraph* paid a gushing tribute to it as a new poem from the pen of Hans Andersen. I wrote to the editor to claim my property, reminding him that the Danish poet had been dead for twenty years, and I am still waiting for him to make the correction.

That is how the Earthmen received my little olive-leaf. I wonder if you will have the curiosity to read it?

GOLDENHAIR AND CURLYHEAD.

Two little wheels that never rest ;
 Two little squirrels in a nest,
 That scamper round, they know not why ;
 Two little scholars from the sky,
 That learn our stupid ways instead,
 Were Goldenhair and Curlyhead.
 A tiny maid was Goldenhair
 With eyes as blue as chinaware ;
 A baby boy was Curlyhead,
 No turkey-cock had cheeks so red.
 A dear old home beside the sea
 All day they filled with noise and glee ;
 Yet never quarrelled in their play,
 They were too small to know the way.
 A dearer couple never were
 Than Curlyhead and Goldenhair.

Home is a place where mothers live
 And it is glad on Christmas Eve,
 When Santa Claus, who never knocks,
 Comes down and fills the children's socks ;
 Then holly berries deck the wall,
 For crumbs the pretty robins call ;
 To stir our pudding huge will make
 The children's chubby fingers ache ;
 And Oh ! what revels there will be
 When Father's ship comes home from sea !

For weeks and weeks before the day
 There are two little tongues that say—
 'Is Christmas Day quite sure to come ?
 Will Santa Claus have really some
 Not very splendid toys to spare
 For Curlyhead and Goldenhair ?'
 And every time the mother said—

‘ My Goldenhair, my Curlyhead,
 All other things I promise you ;
 Pray God to bring your father too !
 But Curlyhead and Goldenhair
 They heeded not the mother’s care,
 They were too small to think of woe,
 They only laughed—‘ Of course we know
 That Father will come home ’—they said—
 ‘ To Goldenhair and Curlyhead.’

But day by day a raging wind
 Rose like a giant fierce and blind,
 And trampling over moor and lea,
 Went forth to wrestle with the sea.
 And night by night the mother wept
 And listened while the children slept.
 And ever dismal tales went round
 Of missing ships and seamen drowned.
 On Christmas Eve the mother rose ;
 All day with drooping head she goes ;
 Ah ! how shall words like death be said
 To Goldenhair and Curlyhead ?

Two little children cannot wait,
 Each minute running to the gate.
 ‘ Oh ! Father, Father, where is he ?
 Why doesn’t he come home from sea ? ’
 Two little loving hearts are sore,
 Two little faces clouded o’er.
 ‘ Oh Mother, does he know ? ’ they say—
 ‘ It is so close to Christmas Day ?
 And know how very much we care—
 His Curlyhead and Goldenhair ? ’

The mother’s cheeks were wet with tears :—
 ‘ Your father knows, your father hears,
 But he has sailed, ah ! far away,
 Where it is always Christmas Day ;
 We too shall reach that happy shore,
 But Father will come back no more,

Not till the sea gives up its dead,
To Goldenhair and Curlyhead.'

Ah! who can tell what thoughts run wild
Within a little wondering child,
That lives its own bright life apart,
And hides what secrets in its heart?
The mother lets them weep awhile,
She comforts them, and lo! they smile.
'Ah, heedless!' to herself she said—
'What memory have they of the dead?'

A bedtime comes in every day;
The mother sat to hear them pray.
Four little knees upon the floor,
Four tender lips that murmur o'er
The words that God can hear as well
As any psalms the angels tell.
The end was reached, they did not rise;
The little maid unclosed her eyes.
'Oh Mother, may we say a prayer
For Father now?' asked Goldenhair.
The mother choked a sob:—'Oh, may
God hear my orphans when they pray!
Go on, my child.' Like flowers in rain,
Two little heads were bowed again.
'Please, God, we want our father so!
We thought You didn't really know.
So please, dear God, to make it right,
Send Jesus down with him to-night!
Oh! let the sea give up its dead!'
'Dear God, Amen!' quoth Curlyhead.,

Two little chins above the sheet;
Two little socks off childish feet
Are hung where Santa Claus will see.
The mother at her work must be.
Two little figures dressed in white
That peep and flutter through the night,
Two little ghosts glide out of bed.

Ah, Goldenhair, ah, Curlyhead !
 Four feet that patter on the stair,
 What do those tiny burglars there ?
 Those footfalls sound so soft and low,
 No mother's ear can ever know.
 Along the passage dark they glide ;
 The kitchen door is standing wide,
 Within, ah, what strange prize are these
 Great giant boots with leathern knees ?
 The wading boots that Father wore,
 A fisherman along the shore.
 What heavy burden up the stair
 Drags Curlyhead, drags Goldenhair ?
 When into bed they climb once more
 Their socks are strewn upon the floor,
 Those boots stand side by side instead,
 Near Goldenhair and Curlyhead.

The mother entered, heavy-eyed,
 ' My children, what is this ? ' she cried.
 ' Is this some mischief you have planned ? '
 ' Oh mother ! Don't you understand ?
 Our socks they are such little things,
 When Jesus comes to-night and brings
 Father, they would be much too small,
 He could not get him in at all ;
 And that is why the boots are there ! '
 Said Curlyhead and Goldenhair.

The mother's tears a mist became ;
 She cannot answer them for shame.
 ' If little children have such faith,
 Oh, why do I despair ? ' she saith.
 ' Like yours must be the angels' joy,
 My little girl, my little boy ! '

The morning broke. From far away
 The bells rang in the Christmas Day.
 The morning broke : Who was it crept
 To where his little children slept ?

The bells sound merry : who is he
In leathern boots that reached his knee ?
With face that bears the weatherstains
Of winter storms and tropic rains ?
What touch of bearded lips can make
Two little voices crying break,—
'Father! Oh Father! Is it you ?
We knew you would come back ! We knew !'

Perhaps not idle was your prayer,
O Curlyhead, O Goldenhair !
Ill tidings are not always true,
Sometimes the missing ship comes through,
On earth some blessed angels roam,
From some far shores the lost come home :
Then even the sea gave up its dead
To Goldenhair and Curlyhead.

Others more softly mould the breathing brass,
Forth from the marble lead the living face,
Harangue more well, with measuring rod mete out
The march of heaven, and tell the ascending stars ;
Thou, Roman, learn to rule the subject lands ;
These be thy arts ; to fix the age of peace,
The broken spare, and beat the haughty down.

From Virgil.

VII

IF anyone would know with how little wisdom the world is governed he need only enter the Civil Service of the British Empire. I entered it by the open door of competition with some thousand more suitable candidates, and was appointed to the General Register Office in Dublin. The Registrar-General of Ireland had applied for the services of a French scholar to correspond with foreign bureaux, and when the news of my appointment reached me I happened to be on a tour in France. I applied for permission to complete my journey, and you would have thought the Registrar-General would have been only too glad for me to improve my knowledge of the language. That only shows your ignorance of the Service. I was commanded to repair to my post within a fortnight. I found the foreign correspondence in the hands of a senior clerk who had no idea of relinquishing his functions; and after spending some months in a cellar among the records of mortality, I was entrusted with the compilation of statistics.

I was in charge of the emigration statistics in the year when 100,000 souls left Ireland out of a population of less than 5,000,000. Apart from adding up that miserable sum, most of the work I had to do appeared to me a waste of time and stationery. I began badly with the invention of a new method of checking the figures which effected a saving of time with an increase of accuracy. This brought me a reproof from my superior official, and an order to return to the old-fashioned way. I got my own back, I think, over a humorous item in the agricultural statistics. These

were sheets filled up by the constabulary once a year, and purported to be a faithful account of the crops raised and the live stock kept on every holding in the country. One year the Registrar-General, in a burst of enterprise, decided to add three new columns to the returns, dealing with the butter, the poultry and even the eggs. This inquiry was sprung on the long-suffering peasantry without any warning; and if you know anything of Ireland you may easily imagine the sort of information the constabulary were likely to extract from a small Connemara holder with an uncertain memory and a strong desire to see the peeler off his premises. Many of the constables seemed to have filled up the columns as Mr. Weller spelt, according to their own taste and fancy, without going through any useless formalities. I was malicious enough to compare the total of poultry with the total of eggs in one district, and to draw my chief's attention to the surprising fact thereby disclosed, that every cock, hen and chicken in that part of Ireland had laid six eggs a day for an entire twelvemonth. The breed must have been a valuable one; it was before the days of intensive culture, too. My detestable zeal broke the Registrar-General's heart, and that return never reached the foreign bureaux.

They don't make the mistake of overworking their men in the Civil Service. Our hours were from 10.15 a.m. to 4 p.m., with half an hour for lunch. Just as an experiment I once did the work allotted me for the day in the luncheon half hour, and rested before and after. I scored heavily off the efficiency cranks by my reply to an invitation from the head of our branch to come to his room to inspect a silver medal presented to the Registrar-General by the Government of Italy. I said, "Tell Mr. — that we are too busy to come and look at the Registrar-General's medal." This is considered the best joke ever made by a Civil Servant.

I began to read for the Irish Bar while I was still in the Service, but having won a scholarship so easily as to assure me of a livelihood in that direction for the next few years, I sent in my resignation. My eyes were troubling me just then, and I assigned this as my reason, entering into the nature of my symptoms with considerable medical learning. The Registrar-General, though a doctor, was not an eye specialist, and it was firmly believed in the Department that my technical terms completely floored him. He accepted my demission with an expression of regret which I apprehend was little better than a form.

At the time I thought it an act of thoughtless cruelty on the part of the Civil Service Commissioners to send an English youth into exile in a country where Englishmen have little claim to be loved. I hadn't yet fully learned that the prophet is an exile in every country, and most of all in that of his nativity. On looking back I can now see that Ireland was generous to the changeling thrown upon her shores. Nowhere have I made more, or more hospitable, friends.

This was especially the case among the Roman Catholics. The Brethren's views on the Papacy are well known. "Little Arthur's History of England" doesn't mince matters in dealing with Bloody Mary. When I was very young, in the course of a walk through a wood we came on a priest reading his breviary. Our nurse drew us back as from the presence of a cobra. Such influences wear out slowly. When I was taken to call on an eminent Jesuit, Father Finlay, for the purpose of a friendly theological discussion, I entertained a distinct doubt whether I should leave the premises alive. I can only say that the Catholics of Dublin showed themselves much more tolerant to me than the Protestants. They did more than tolerate, they confided in me. They must have felt that I was one

of them at heart. They let me freely into the secrets of their communion; and I learned much of the policy of the Vatican in Ireland. No people are better able to distinguish between the religious and political characters of the Pope than the Irish, and I have heard some very plain language used about his Holiness under the latter aspect. As an example of what Irish Catholics are when they are taken the right way, I may refer to a meeting which I once addressed in a village near Dublin. The Pope had just issued a circular condemning the National League, and the parish priest had resigned his membership in consequence. I found the meeting in a state of dismay, and the chairman warned me to make no allusion to his reverence. But I knew Irish audiences by this time. I stood up and told them—"I am an Englishman and a Protestant, and I have come here to attack your parish priest." Of course they cheered me to the echo. I shouldn't have been at all surprised if the priest himself had asked me to supper afterwards.

Lest it should be supposed that I was only tolerated in the character of a Home Ruler, I will add that I have since received equal kindness from English Catholics, many of them belonging to the most Conservative section of the peerage. Perhaps I inherit Catholic sympathies from the Vaughans. The late Cardinal of that name descended from the same family. I am sorry I am a Protestant. It is my secret ambition to end my days in a Benedictine abbey.

The Protestants of Ireland, no doubt, regarded me as a traitor, as well as a heretic. I spoke sometimes in a Secularist meeting, and this gave rise to the unfounded notion that I was a member of that society. Their confession of faith was far too lofty for me to subscribe. My theological views being still undeveloped, and it being necessary to adopt some label as a screen against

inquisition, I had the happy idea at last of calling myself a Buddhist. As no one in Dublin knew anything about Buddhism this enabled me to pass freely in both camps.

The Buddhist faith was privately professed by a wealthy friend of mine who had learnt it from the Japanese priest, Bunyin Nanjio. The Japanese, annoyed by the invasion of Christian missionaries in their country, decided to retaliate by dispatching a missionary of their own to Europe. He came to Oxford, where he is said to have converted Max Müller. I rendered the crowning chapter of the Dhammapada into verse about this time, and sent a copy of it to Max Müller, who wrote me a very kind letter. My wealthy friend was very anxious for me to set up as a Buddhist evangelist in Dublin. He was an old Fenian, and the Fenians had long been anxious to deliver Ireland from the political toils of the Vatican by introducing a new religion. They had experimented with Muhammadanism without success. Unfortunately, my wealthy friend was a miser—not exactly a Buddhist trait—and his idea seemed to be that I should put on a yellow robe and go out into O'Connell Street with a begging bowl in my hand. I don't know where he expected me to sleep. I have had other friends who have urged me to evangelise mankind on the same terms. It never occurs to them that the casual ward is not a place conducive to quiet meditation. In the eighteenth century English landowners were in the habit of building hermitages in their parks and advertising for hermits to occupy them. I wish they would revive the custom. If I knew of any spot where I could go without being prosecuted for trespass I would start a hermit business to-morrow.

Another secret Buddhist was my dear friend Mir Aulad Ali, to whom I owe an education in Oriental culture. He had been poet laureate in the old kingdom

of Oudh, and private secretary to the last king, whom he accompanied to Europe. He was appointed professor of Persian, Arabic, Hindi and Hindustani in Trinity College, but I don't think he ever had any pupils. When the Queen took the title of Empress of India the Mir was commissioned to write the three words *Kaisar-i-Hind* in Persian characters for reproduction on the medal struck on the occasion, for which feat he received a guinea a word—enough to make any poet envious. He told me that an intending missionary once came to him for lessons in Hindustani, but the hours of tuition were passed in discussions of the religions of India. At the end of the course the pupil had learnt no Hindustani, but he had learnt to leave India alone. I used to drop into the Mir's chambers in Trinity College for frequent games of chess, in which he almost invariably beat me. If ever he was in a difficulty he artfully began telling me some fascinating story of Firdausi or Omar Khayyam, and profited by my distraction to carry off a queen or a couple of rooks. Occasionally he made me stay to dinner, and prepared me the most delicious curry I have ever tasted. Our usual dinner hour in Dublin was six, and the curry never appeared till eight, by which time I was ravenously hungry, so this may have heightened my appreciation.

Any chance of a genuine Buddhist propaganda in the West was killed at this time by the boom of Esoteric Buddhism. A branch of the Theosophical Society was started in Trinity College, and I was invited to attend a meeting. Being called upon to speak, I expressed the opinion that Madame Blavatsky's miraculous discovery of a missing tea-cup at a Simla picnic was not calculated to advance the cause of spiritual truth. The Society passed a resolution that no stranger should be allowed to take part in its discussions for the future. Madame

Blavatsky's followers claimed that she could re-materialise a cigarette after smoking it. I asked them if she could re-materialise a sovereign after spending it. I am afraid the poor woman would have been only too glad if she could have. Of course, there are many perfectly sincere members of the Society. "The New Word" received a warm welcome in the *Theosophical Review*. A prominent Scottish Theosophist hoped to persuade Mrs. Besant to offer me an asylum at Adyar. I warned him, of course, that I was the last person whom she was likely to welcome there, and I believe he resigned from the Society in consequence of her refusal. James Allan, of Glasgow, known as the "Socialist Millionaire," and one of the most unselfish men who ever lived, honoured me during the war with a hospitality for which I was none the less grateful because my health broke down under the sudden change to a vegetarian and teetotal regimen.

Curiously enough I was a vegetarian for my first ten years, till I was bribed to adopt carnivorous habits. I was a strict teetotaller till I was thirty. During my Dublin avatar I used to sit night after night in the bar of the Gaiety Theatre, sipping a noxious drink known as lemon squash, while my companions were putting away John Jameson's whisky all round me. It was many more years before I could endure anything stronger than claret. My fall was due to indignation at the tactics of the Temperance log-rollers who wrecked the Liberal Party in 1895 by forcing Local Option into our programme, with the full knowledge that they were over-riding the will of the people. I was dining with Lloyd George at the House of Commons some time afterwards, the other guests being the late Tom Ellis, a staunch friend of mine, and Llewellyn Williams. Everyone chose his own brand of aerated poison, but when it came to my turn I astonished the company by

demanding claret. "We thought you were a teetotaller!" burst from their pale lips. I had to explain that I had taken to drink as a protest against the General Election. I am not sure that my evil example hasn't been followed since by others of the party.

By some strange accident the only letter I have preserved from the present Prime Minister, who is not a good correspondent, is in response to my effort to return the aforesaid hospitality. It won't take up much of your valuable time to read it.

" House of Commons,
" *January 28th.* '97.

" DEAR _____

" Very pleased. Shall we say 7 p.m. Friday ?

" Yours sincerely,

" D. LLOYD-GEORGE."

I landed in Dublin in 1882, the year of the Phoenix Park murders, and soon became absorbed in the campaign in which the famous Parnell was leading his countrymen, as they have never been led before or since. A young Civil Servant had just been dismissed for having taken part in a political meeting, so I had to be careful. I spoke under a nom-de-guerre, and contributed to *United Ireland* under a nom-de-plume. I used to walk round back streets to the office, and drop my MS. into the letter-box by stealth. Some of my anonymous verses are still reprinted from time to time in collections of Irish poetry and humour, by editors ignorant of their source. A less creditable performance was a hoax of an evening paper, to which I sent what purported to be a dying farewell found floating in the canal. As soon as it appeared some one must have drawn the editor's attention to the fact that the poem was an acrostic, the initials spelling the words: "This is a jolly good sell." He explained to

his readers in a subsequent edition that he had inserted it in order to show "Mr. Harris that his poor attempt at a practical joke had missed fire."

A year in advance of Gladstone's conversion I published "The Truth About Ireland," my first volume in either verse or prose. As I was still in the Civil Service the pamphlet had to be anonymous, only the publisher, Kegan Paul, being entrusted with the secret. In Ireland it was attributed to Joseph Chamberlain, who was then coquetting with Home Rule, and it made a corresponding sensation. I was told that it had converted Earl Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant, and the language of the Orange Press gave some colour to the story. Its production cost me a third of my year's income, but it brought me a handsome acknowledgment in the offer of a seat in Parliament from Parnell the next year, when I was able to acknowledge it. His secretary, J. J. Clancy, M.P., the editor of the *Nation*, who became a warm friend of mine, invited me to meet Parnell for the purpose. I have always been sorry I didn't take the opportunity of making acquaintance with a great historical character. Tempting as the offer was to a demagogue of twenty-one, however, I felt obliged to decline it, on the ground that I could not pledge myself to vote with the Nationalist party on English questions, such as education. I should have been glad to stand as an English Home Ruler, but that proposal didn't commend itself to Parnell. I now think we were both unwise; I might have been dispensed from voting against my conscience; and Parnell might have found my independent support more valuable to him in the House of Commons than the addition of another item to his disciplined corps.

I sent a subsequent brochure to Hawarden, which brought me one of the historic postcards:

"DEAR SIR,

"Allow me to thank you as a fellow-labourer in a great cause for the entertaining and I trust useful publication which you have been good enough to send me.

"Your faithful and obedient,

"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"D.2.88."

I became more friendly with the Fenians than the Parnellites as time went on. Their ideals were undoubtedly more heroic; the Parnellite party was very distinctly bourgeois in its constitution and aims, deriving its strength from fairly prosperous farmers who wanted to become landowners. The Fenian chiefs were looking on in a critical spirit at the movement. They had told Parnell that they would give him so many years, and if he hadn't won the battle in that time they would take the game into their own hands again. Behind the Fenians stood the dynamiters. My nearest contact with them was one day when I was walking with a friend along the quays. He nodded to two men, and when they had gone by told me that one of them was the Fenian "head centre" of the counties of Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford, and the other a dynamiter from Chicago. Life was not without excitement in those days. One of my friends, an amiable young journalist, was arrested on a charge of high treason, for having arms in his possession. The authorities let him off very lightly. I am not sure that I didn't fall under police supervision. One of my most intimate friends was a Dane, who had been mixed up in the Paris Commune, and I used to visit him almost nightly, carrying a suspicious-looking black bag, which contained nothing more dangerous than the works of Shelley and similar writers. I fancied I sometimes encountered detectives round his house; however, I was never searched. In

those days I often took my meals in a room from the window of which Shelley had scattered leaflets on his visit to Ireland. Some of my friends used to compare me with him, but they meant it kindly.

A visitor from America, whom I took to see Robert Emmett's grave, told me of a rather ghastly sequel to the Phoenix Park murders which, I believe, has never been reported. The informer Carey was murdered off the South African coast by an emissary sent from Chicago; and when this man, O'Donnell, was brought to England to be tried, another emissary was sent to effect his rescue. In this attempt he failed, or rather he failed to make a serious attempt, and was adjudged guilty of treachery accordingly. On his return to Chicago nothing was said to him about the sentence; but he was induced one day to come in a boat out of sight of land, and there put to death, his body being sunk in the lake.

The Fenians were dissatisfied with Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, as were the Parnellites, though it was their policy not to say so. An official of the National League, with whom I discussed the situation, though admitting that the Bill could only be regarded as an instalment, declared that any man who said so openly would deserve to be hanged at the nearest lamp-post. In spite of this warning I went to a meeting of the Law Students Debating Society, and, in the character of Fenian spokesman, moved the rejection of the Bill on the ground that it did not satisfy the legitimate claims of Ireland. Timothy Healy, whom the Fenians held in particular distrust, was in the chair, and perhaps thought my connection with the Fenians was closer than it actually was. He scored off me in his reply with a characteristic sarcasm—"Mr.——, as an Englishman, naturally knows the feeling of the Irish people better than I do."

It was a singular sequel to these experiences that I should have been invited in after years to come out as the Orange candidate in the Everton Division of Liverpool. But I had long ago pointed out to my Parnellite friends that every argument in favour of Home Rule applied with almost equal force to self-determination for Ulster. Their failure to take that view has delayed their triumph for thirty years. When Sir Edward Carson declared not long ago in the House of Commons that "Ulster was to be won," I felt that old hint was justified at last.

Perhaps it may strike you as remarkable that the one Englishman who has been fortunate enough to inspire confidence in all sorts of Irishmen should inspire no confidence in the British statesmen who seem in such sore need of help in dealing with Ireland. One possible explanation is that any prescription really suited to the Irish temperament would be *ipso facto* unsuited to the British judgment. No Englishman can ever see a foreigner as anything but an ill-bred Englishman, which is exactly what English government succeeds in making of so many subject races. I remember talking with an Irish judge, himself a Unionist, at the outbreak of the war. I suggested that if the Prime Minister, or better still the King, would go over to Ireland, hoist the green flag on Dublin Castle as a promise for the future, and appeal to the Irish nation to come into the fight for the world's liberty, there would be a great response. He agreed with me. But he also agreed that it would be quite impossible to get any Englishman to see it. In fact all my English friends treated the suggestion with the contempt which it seemed to them to deserve. His verdict has since been endorsed by my old friend Justice Pym, who added: "England is always a year and an idea too late in dealing with Ireland." The Germans

have always been so disliked, and the French so loved, in Ireland, that nothing could have held the nation back save British statesmanship. But you must have seen the recent letter in the *Daily Mail* complaining of the unreasonable conduct of the American people in not acknowledging George V. as their King, as the one way to a good understanding between us. The writer of that letter is certain to be made Chief Secretary for Ireland if he lives. You will be lucky if you don't have him as Ambassador in Washington.

That man is ill qualified to play the part of peace-maker in Ireland who cannot realise that Irishmen will make good Englishmen—

“ When laws can stop the blades of grass from
growing as they grow,
And when the leaves in summer time their
colour dare not show.”

That is the truth about Ireland.

Your kiss shall be the bribe of kings ;
Your heart shall blossom in lands afar,
Where the realms of riotous passion are
And the scent of all mysterious things :

In a sunburnt garden of sallow grass,
Where the scorching wind devours the plains,
And the blood-drops flag in exhausted veins ;
Is an ebony hall with pillars of brass,
Where the feet of a forsworn lover pass,
And the pavement reddens with reeling stains.

Impression in Yellow.

VIII

WHEN I was exploring London as a boy of fourteen I strayed one day into Westminster Hall, where the Law Courts then stood, and promptly made up my mind to become a barrister. A small legacy enabled me to achieve this ambition in the year 1887.

One of my first acquaintances in Dublin was the present Attorney General for Ireland, Sir Denis Henry, who boarded in the same house with me. His ability was so marked that I expected to see him on the Bench long before this. By the way, I must apologise if he hasn't yet been knighted. Nearly all my old friends have been by this time, so that I like to be on the safe side. It looks as if it would soon be customary to give every one an honorific "Sir," as it is now to give the "Esquire." Edward VII launched this flood of titles on us, doubtless as an antiseptic to republicanism. Before I became an esquire by law I tried to prevent my correspondents from addressing me as such. As a barrister, however, it will be my gratifying privilege to be described as esquire in the indictment whenever I am tried for murder. I mention this because you don't seem to know it.

One of my professors in the King's Inns was an odd character, known in the Four Courts as "Pongo." On his appointment word went round that he was to lecture on springing uses and estate tails. Tim Healy, already a member of Parliament, was among his hearers, and he was once rash enough, in commenting on the Criminal Code Bill, which had recently been before the House of Commons, to express

dissatisfaction at a certain amendment, due to his distinguished pupil, and to invite him to explain why he had moved it. Tim growled out—"For purposes of obstruction." Healy was very popular among us, and Orangemen joined with Nationalists in celebrating his call to the Bar with a convivial supper, presided over by Edwin Hamilton. Our guest came out in a new light, singing a long and melancholy ballad of a nature calculated to damp the festivity of his Orange hosts.

Another friend and fellow student was Barry, who lived to be Lord Chancellor of Ireland. I found the law students as a body very much what I have found larger and more important human communities. They gave me their gold medal for oratory, which was awarded by merit, but they refused me the post of auditor, which went by favour.

When I won the Brooke Scholarship the mark sheet showed that not one of the four examiners had placed me first, but they had all placed me second. You may remember Themistocles won the prize for Salamis under similar conditions—I seemed fated to plagiarise Plutarch. When I went up to receive two medals from our president, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, at the annual meeting, he handed them to me in stony silence, while complimenting the winners of the other two. This was no doubt due to Christian feeling. A Protestant fellow student once asked me to his home on the Sabbath, and as soon as dinner was over I found I was expected to accompany his parents to their place of worship. After declining I was never admitted within their doors again.

The grave authorities of Trinity took alarm at my appearances in the Philosophical Society of their College. I was not eligible as a member, but the debates were open to strangers at the close, and my speeches, which struck a humorous note, were so much appreci-

ated that the Society used to send me its programme as though I were on its books. A rising young statesman named Patton was specially deputed to crush the intruder, and he violated the rules of debate by speaking after me. The Society sent its secretary to me to apologise for the incident, and assure me of a continued welcome. Some five years back I went over to address the annual meeting of the Phil, and dined with the Fellows of Trinity. One of them pressed me to spend a few days among the undergraduates, assuring me that I should find them congenial company, as their minds were wholly wrapped up in football, without any nonsense about politics. The first undergraduate I went to see had a copy of the Protestant Vow, adorned with a blood-red hand, and signed by himself, posted conspicuously over the mantelpiece; and I found him very good company indeed.

My call to the Bar introduced me into the genial atmosphere of the Four Courts. No Irish barrister indulged in the expensive luxury of chambers, and we were quite a family party all working side by side in the library, attorney-generals and solicitor-generals side by side with parvenus like myself. Sir Edward Carson was just coming to the front as a junior, and a thrill of envy went round the library when it was reported that he had earned a hundred guineas one morning by moving fifty undefended motions *en bloc*. The largest income made at the Irish Bar was £3,000 a year, so that judgeships weren't often refused. The dozen or so of judges had rather a struggle to keep up the pretence of being employed. The English Judge Bramwell was said to have offered to take a salary of £10,000 a year and do the entire work of the Irish Bench. I give this on Denis Henry's authority. The judgeships were regarded as Government bribes to keep the intellectuals out of mischief.

My first case, in which my client was the Danish conspirator, had the honour of appearing in the Irish Law Reports, which gave half a page to my argument. In my second case I was opposed single-handed to the Solicitor-General, The MacDermot, and vanquished him. The judges were kind to me on the whole, and sometimes complimented me from the bench, a favour I have only once received in the English Law Courts. It was in a case involving the law of distraint, a branch of the law so archaic that I introduced a citation from "Littleton on Tenures," probably the only time he has been quoted in court for some centuries. The amazed judges asked me if I was citing Coke upon Littleton, and were awed by learning that I was citing Littleton himself. But I anticipate.

As the Four Courts held about ten barristers for every brief, much of our time was spent in idle conversation round the library fire-place. Chief Baron Palles was the hero of one story I recall. He had gone down to try a number of prisoners charged with sedition, and knowing there wasn't the faintest chance of a conviction if any patriot got on to the jury, he sent a private intimation to the counsel defending the first prisoner, that if his client pleaded guilty he should receive a nominal sentence. The offer was accepted, and the Chief Baron, who was known to be a stern and unbending Tory, astonished the Court by addressing a mild rebuke to the accused, and letting him off with a few hours' imprisonment. The word was quickly passed, and all the other prisoners promptly pleaded guilty in turn, the judge deferring their sentences till he had taken all the pleas. Then a change came over the scene. His lordship suddenly resumed his natural voice and sentenced the whole batch to a long term of penal servitude.

I don't vouch for the truth of that story. Neither

do I for another which I only venture to repeat because it was told to us by the late Judge Adams, who was an adherent of the Church of Rome. According to him the Catholic Bishop of Galway had a brother in that town who was engaged in the fish trade. With an eye to the family prosperity his lordship proclaimed a special fast of indefinite duration, giving private notice beforehand to his brother, who made arrangements accordingly for the arrival of a cargo of salt fish in the nick of time, and did a roaring trade. His business rivals, perceiving this too late, instantly wired for similar consignments, and a whole fleet laden with fish arrived in Galway Bay. The moment their sails were seen in the offing, the wily bishop took off the fast as suddenly as he had proclaimed it, and all the rival fish-mongers were ruined.

I have still to confess the most discreditable of all my misdeeds in Ireland, one for which I can't reasonably expect forgiveness even now. As if it were not bad enough to be a poet, a Buddhist and a Home Ruler, I now became a Labour agitator. What was worse, I became one through a practical joke.

I had been dining with some other students at the King's Inns one Saturday night, and after dinner we sallied forth bent on amusement, and found our way into a gathering known as the Saturday Club. This was an excellent institution set on foot by a few liberal-minded Presbyterians who wanted to accustom the working classes of Dublin to the intelligent discussion of political questions, as a change from the stereotyped oratory of Nationalist or Unionist platforms. They took a hall in the Rotunda every Saturday night, charged a penny for admission, and allowed smoking. One of themselves took the chair, and announced the subject for debate. An opening speech was usually arranged for beforehand, and after that the debate was free to all comers.

On this fatal night the subject chanced to be the merits of Trade Unionism. Before I was born the prophet Carlyle had uttered the memorable warning—"The organisation of Labour is the universal, vital problem of the world"; and he had appealed to the owners of England to think of other things than the preservation of their game. And he had been howled down, and bidden to go back to his history; and the owners of England had gone on preserving their game; and labour had been left to organise itself for the coming of the prophet Lenin. I didn't know this at that time. I had never heard the words Trade Unionism, and hadn't the vaguest idea what they meant. But my evil companions were insistent that I should intervene in the debate, and I stepped on to the platform.

I am a natural orator. I have sometimes overheard my audiences comparing me with Gladstone, but the comparison does me injustice. I speak English, a tongue which Gladstone never mastered. Perhaps I am the first of living speakers; perhaps the first who has ever lived. I don't know. And the public doesn't care. As you and I have agreed, it isn't the speech that matters, but the speaker. As a member of the Eighty Club it has been my frequent task to follow some ambitious tradesman who had bought a seat in Parliament, and wake up the audience he had just put to sleep. I made many enemies in that way. If I were not an original thinker I should be Prime Minister at this moment, very likely. There have been other difficulties in the way, of course. It is easier for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for an honest man to enter the House of Commons. The question of finance is also serious; however, Trebitsch Lincoln managed that all right. I think you may take it from me that the real difficulty lies in my not being an Earthman.

My speech in the Saturday Club that night was meant to be a burlesque of the previous speaker for the benefit of my friends. Unfortunately my first words were taken seriously. I was sobered by a burst of applause. Then I stopped and looked round me on that throng of rough working men, the sons of poverty and toil, come there to be gladdened by words of hope and promise for the future, and I was ashamed. I felt that here was a cause greater than Ireland's, greater than England's, the cause of the whole human race. And I spoke accordingly. The die was cast. From that hour I ceased to be a respectable politician, and became an Ishmael with every man's hand against me.

The next stage in my downfall was the foundation of the National Labour League. A little group of about a dozen Socialists gathered about me; and I am sorry to say my experience of them as fellow workers was such as to prevent my ever becoming a Socialist. Jealousy of myself seemed to be the strongest passion in their breasts, with personal vanity next, and love of Humanity—with a big H—a bad third. At one of our conferences a crank named Toomey advanced to strike me from behind, and if I had moved an eyelash I believe he would have done me a serious injury. The others thought he was bent on murder. I sat still, not turning my head, and his resolution failed him. I drew up the constitution of the League on half a sheet of notepaper, and the whole group sat and wrangled over it for two solid hours, thirsting to pick some hole in it, but without success. I can see now it must have been rather galling.

The motto printed on our card of membership ran—
 "Secure Employment: Sufficient Wages: Short Hours." It does not sound very revolutionary in these days, but it earned me the reputation of a Marat. The meetings of the League were held in the Phoenix Park and other open spaces round Dublin, and were

sometimes attended by five thousand people. The movement had an extraordinary success in the way of reconciling political parties, Orangemen from Guinness's brewery and Fenians coming together on the same platform. Even the constabulary sent by a watchful Government to take notes of the speeches assured us privately that they were on our side. We had less to fear from the Castle than from the Parnellite organisation. I had quite a friendly interview with Sir David Harrel, the head of the police. The Parnellites thought I was distracting popular attention from Home Rule, and charged me with drawing a red herring over the trail. My friend Timothy Harrington, who was secretary of the National League, playfully told me I was the first man an Irish Parliament would put in prison. I have had to wait a long time first.

The League collapsed as suddenly as it arose. I was obliged to go over to London to win some scholarships, and my Socialist colleagues were left with a free hand. On my return at the end of a few months I found the League had died a natural death.

Meanwhile I had seized an opportunity to riot in Trafalgar Square. A few Socialists had been breaking some shop windows, and the Government had retaliated by depriving the working classes of their immemorial meeting-ground. This was the more resented because a previous Government had ordered them to meet in the Square, instead of in Hyde Park. As a constitutional lawyer I held the edict illegal, and went to join in the protest organised by a Radical Federation. I attended a preliminary meeting in Clerkenwell Green, and had the privilege of speaking from the same wagon as William Morris, Bernard Shaw and Annie Besant. A more dispirited crowd it has never been my lot to address, and the speakers weren't much more cheerful. I found it a sad change from my Irish audiences. We

all set off in procession to march to the Square, but apparently without much hope of ever getting there. On the way the police charged our column in force, and Morris and Shaw went home to tea. Mrs. Besant and I held on our way, and I tried to persuade a boy with a drum to beat a rally, but he was too badly frightened. We found the approaches to the Square packed with a dense mass of people, who recognised my companion, and parted to let her through. As soon as we came in sight of a row of policemen lining the Square opposite to the National Gallery, Mrs. Besant raised her hands in the air, rushed forward, and flung herself on to the bosom of a stalwart constable, demanding that he should arrest her. The constable gallantly declined the harsh office. At this point my sense of humour overcame me, and I left off rioting, and withdrew to the peaceful shades of the Middle Temple, where I dined decorously under the eyes of the Benchers. The only serious effort to gain the Square was made by the column led by John Burns and Cunninghame Graham, who both did time for their offence. Needless to add, the Square was restored to the people after the next election.

My income from my practice as an Irish barrister was exactly ten pounds a year. As this is not quite enough even for a poet to live on, I decided at the end of two years to become a Welshman.

And midway down the pass
One rich wild cherry's mass
Glowed like the wine of Andalusia
In a clear green glass.

Upon the silent sward
Its passionate leaves were poured,
That dyed the guilty moss like blood-drops
Shaken from a sword.

The sun shone down in scorn
Of lesser lights forlorn,
And drenched in foam of yellow glory
Staggering miles of corn.

The world bloomed one great flower,
And I was in that hour
An insect sheltering in the petals
From a pollen shower.

The Woods of Wye.

IX

IN my time every Irish law student was required to join an English Inn of Court, and eat dinners for four terms, a rule that has now been abolished. I entered the Middle Temple, having a family connection among the Benchers, old Master Anderson. He had been an intimate friend of the Lord Chancellor Westbury, of whom he had some good stories. Westbury was notoriously lax in his private life, and when he boasted that, by a celebrated decision in the Privy Council he had "abolished Hell with costs," Cardinal Newman is said to have retorted that it was not a fair decision as the judge had a personal interest in the question. Westbury's son was as bad as himself, and gave his father a good deal of trouble. After getting him out of one serious scrape the Chancellor observed—"It's all very well for me to save you now, Dick, but when I am gone you will be the greatest scamp in England." "Yes," was the dutiful reply, "yes, father, when you're gone."

As soon as I was called to the English bar I joined the South Wales Circuit, and settled as a local barrister in Cardiff. Over in Dublin I had made the most of my Welsh lineage in order to propitiate Celtic feeling, and I ended by persuading myself that I was as much Welsh as English. I took perhaps an unfair advantage of the Law Students Debating Society, by composing verses of pure gibberish and palming them off as quotations from Taliesin and other Welsh bards. I then favoured my hearers with a translation, the point of which told strongly in favour of my argument. Of course I didn't

know a syllable of Welsh. I once inflicted on them a quotation from Euripides, to the delight of the venerable chairman, who happened to be a Greek scholar, and made me transcribe it for him after the debate.

Fresh from these associations I came to Wales as to my native soil. Unfortunately the Fates had arranged that my arrival should coincide with a vigorous awakening of Welsh nationalism, embodied in the cry of "Wales for the Welsh." The Welsh language was made a test, and it was one which my extracts from Taliesin were ill-qualified to pass. But for Cardiff being so much of an English town my stay there might have been briefer than it was.

Happily I am now a Welsh bard myself—A Bard after the Privilege and Ceremonial of the Bards of the Isle of Britain, as the diploma runs. The degree was conferred on me in the National Gorsedd by the venerable Arch-Druid Clwyddfardd. The honorary degree usually conferred on distinguished foreigners is the inferior one of Ovate. Matthew Arnold was a mere Ovate. The late Queen of Rumania, better known as Carmen Sylva, was the first to be made an honorary Bard. I was the second. I was not going to take a lower rank than Carmen Sylva on Parnassus; I should have been happy to give her Majesty the *pas* in Rumania. The ceremony was impressive. I was led into the mystic circle of unhewn stones, formed as it was in the days of Julius Cæsar, and the Arch-Druid bound a blue ribbon round my arm. The *Daily Graphic* depicted the scene on its front page. But the *Daily Graphic* didn't report the vital part of the proceedings. As I approached the sacred precinct, my mind filled with high thoughts of Merlin and Taliesin, I was stopped by a reverend official who asked me with an air of some distrust if I was aware that there was a fee payable on initiation. I tremblingly inquired the amount, and

was relieved to learn that it was five shillings, a sum which I was fortunate enough to possess.

In my character as a Welsh Bard—my bardic name is Maenhir—I wrote an Awdl preserved in the archives of the South Wales Circuit. It is far too private and personal for reproduction, but I will quote four lines on which a story hangs:—

“ The next was B. F., who was seen at his best
When his case was the worst, and his client confessed,
Convincing the jury with fervour and fire
That the man was no felon, but merely a liar.”

The real hero of the story was a barrister named Lewis, afterwards a County Court Judge. He had been retained by the friends of a prisoner to defend him, at the last moment, but the prisoner wasn't aware of this, and pleaded guilty. Lewis instantly jumped up with the contradiction—“No, you're not guilty; I defend you!” A jury was empanelled, and the case proceeded, with the result that the prisoner was acquitted. The judge leant over to him, and observed—“I heard you say you were guilty, but the jury think otherwise. You are discharged.”

B. F. was the affectionate abbreviation of Benjamin Francis Williams, K.C., Recorder of Cardiff, and a great wit. I heard, or rather saw, him make the smartest repartee in my recollection. He was cross-examining the plaintiff in a slander case on his sufferings, and asked him—“Did they point the finger of scorn at you?” Vaughan Williams, who was on the bench, rolled himself about in his indescribable way, and inquired—“And which is the finger of scorn, Mr. Williams?” Without a moment's hesitation B. F. retorted—“I believe it's the thumb, my lord,” at the same time putting his own thumb to his nose and

extending his fingers as nearly in his lordship's direction as was prudent.

The late Sir Samuel Evans was the life and soul of the Circuit Mess, to which he imparted quite a new spirit. While he was still a solicitor I once overheard a touting barrister's clerk point him out in a voice clearly meant to reach his ears, as the "ablest advocate in Neath." He proved to be a much abler advocate than the clerk's employer, who owed most of his practice to his relationship to the local bishop. Sam, as we called him, was a good friend of mine, and after his rise to the Bench, kindly authorised me to make use of his name. Whenever suspicious landladies asked me for a reference it was a great treat to me to answer—"The President of the Divorce Court!" They hardly dared to breathe after it.

Justices Sankey and Bailhache were other distinguished members of the Circuit, whom I may mention again. Poor F. C. Philips also turned up occasionally. He was supposed to be the hero of Anstey's "Giant's Robe." A member of the Circuit assured me quite positively that "As in a Looking-Glass" was really the work of another man, named Morgan, I think, and that Philips had taken the MS. out of his portmanteau after his death. I noticed that Philips in his book of reminiscences described with marked elaboration the circumstances in which he had written this particular novel, under the eyes of numerous witnesses. It is certain he never wrote anything so good again.

The Mess was very strict in imposing penalties for unprofessional conduct, the worst crime of all being to accept hospitality from a solicitor in assize time. I was once presented for this offence. After a fellow culprit had worn out everybody's patience with a laborious and serious attempt at exculpation, I contented myself with repeating the plea of an ancestress in a

like situation—"The serpent tempted me, and I did eat."

At one assize it was my misfortune to act as clerk of the court to Grantham, an excellent man in many ways, I believe, but probably the worst judge who ever sat in any court. He summed up on the wrong side in every case throughout the assize. I had to send in a bill to the Treasury for my fees and expenses, and in the first draft I put in a claim, in imitation of President Kruger, for £100 for "moral and intellectual damage." I have been told that Lord Salisbury was responsible for his appointment. Grantham himself was sublimely unconscious of his failure, and lived in the full expectation of receiving a peerage.

Another eminent man with whom I came in contact on the Circuit was Lord Riddell, who was acting as solicitor for the *Western Mail* in a case in which I was retained on the other side. We were opposed to each other in some interlocutory proceedings in Judge's Chambers in London. It was my first experience of Judge's Chambers, and I inquired of a brother barrister as to the procedure, receiving the information that it was on the lines of a Rugby scrum, the most violent advocate generally coming out on top. I took the advice, assumed a truculent demeanour quite foreign to my nature, bullied the judge, and treated Lord Riddell as a worm. I can still see his face as I snatched his copy of the Supreme Court Rules out of his hands, and read it to him like a curse. I hope he will accept this belated apology. I adopted very different tactics in dealing with a Master of the King's Bench who, I had heard, liked to be addressed as "Your Honour," though only entitled to the style of "Master." I allowed my unconcealed reverence to betray me time after time into the inadvertence of calling him "m'lud," to the surprise and disgust of the opposing barrister, who

had the law on his side, but found it a hollow support in the end.

Welsh juries are proverbial for their leniency, due probably to historical causes. There is an old story of an English judge who went to a coursing match shortly after going the Welsh circuit. When he saw the hare almost in the greyhound's jaws he exclaimed—"Nothing can save that hare now but a Welsh jury." I got on with them very well, a record in my fee book showing that of the numerous prisoners I defended, just half were acquitted. I twice had the glory of seeing a jury ordered out of the box by an indignant judge for letting off my client in the teeth of the evidence. The late Judge Williams of Glamorganshire told me once that I deserved these acquittals because I always seemed personally convinced of my client's innocence. I had to explain to him that that was by no means the case, my real feeling being that for a prisoner to retain my services was a merit which ought to atone for any crime. However, I have seen many a case thrown away by the levity of a young counsel in turning to chat with his friends as soon as he sat down, as though he felt no further interest in the result. I made it a rule to keep my eyes fixed appealingly on the jury till they had arrived at their verdict.

In one case which I remember I received a severe preliminary shock. A barrister is entitled to defend a prisoner without the intervention of a solicitor, and as I was more popular with the criminal classes than with the lower branch of the profession I got most of my briefs in this way. I came into my chambers one day just before the assizes, and found a surly youth seated with his hat on, which he didn't offer to remove. I inquired rather sternly what he wanted, and he asked me if I could take his case at the assizes. Rightly assuming that it was not a case for the Civil Court, I

said—"Yes. What are you charged with?" "Highway robbery with violence," was the startling reply, which caused me to take a very meek tone during the rest of the consultation.

My interesting client proceeded to inform me that I had been recommended to him by the Irish National League of Merthyr—a gratifying testimonial. It appeared that he had been one of a crowd in a court outside a public house on Saturday night, when the prosecutor emerged. The man had been hustled and knocked down, and the sum of eighteenpence had been taken from his pocket, I was careful not to ask my client by whom. I framed the defence on these lines. I got the prosecutor to say in cross-examination that fighting was going on in the court, and then threw in a final suggestion—"You might call it a faction fight?" The prosecutor thoughtlessly assented, probably without the least idea of what I meant, and I sat down. No one in court perceived my drift till I rose to speak in defence, when I explained to the jury that a faction fight was an Irish form of sport, holding much the same place as football in Wales, that the tussle between the prosecutor and the prisoner was all part of the game, and that the missing coins had probably rolled out of the victim's pocket if they hadn't already rolled into the till of the public house. The presiding judge made the error of taking the charge too seriously, and the defence too lightly, and he was rather taken aback by the verdict. I found my grateful client waiting outside the court with his friends to offer me a drink, but I am glad to say my teetotal principles prevailed over the temptation.

Another of my defences became the subject of inquiry in Parliament, and roused the authorities to resolute action. It was in connection with what were called the Anti-Tithe Riots. The farmers of Cardiganshire, moved by poverty, I was told, more than hostility

to the Church, were refusing to pay their tithes, and when the bailiff came to distrain for them they formed a living hedge to bar his entrance on the land. (This was the nice point on which I had to cite Littleton on Tenures.) On one occasion the bailiff had tried to break through, and got his head broken. Two men were summoned for the assault, and I was retained to defend them in the police court. In an excess of zeal, or temper, they were charged in the summons with unlawful wounding. I elicited from the doctor that the skin, in the medical sense, had not been penetrated, and that being so, the injury, however serious, did not come within the statute. The other side hadn't the sense to substitute a charge of assault, and the magistrates found themselves obliged to dismiss the case.

This result created consternation in Anglican circles. An English member of Parliament of strong Church sympathies suggested in a question in the House that it was due to the Nonconformist bias of the unfortunate clerk to the magistrates. Then an indictment for unlawful wounding was solemnly preferred at the assizes, and the late Justice Charles was dispatched on the South Wales Circuit with instructions to vindicate the majesty of the law against all comers, especially myself. The Honourable Stephen Coleridge, who was Clerk of Arraignment, told me he had cautioned Charles that I was a scholar in Constitutional Law, as the judge was to learn for himself before the trial was over. Cross-examining the bailiff as to malice, I asked him if he was responsible for the unfair attack on the magistrates' clerk. Charles rashly tried to protect him by demanding—"How can this man know about what takes place in Parliament?" I had the satisfaction of answering—"Pardon me, my lord, every subject is presumed to be present in Parliament by his representatives." There were no more interruptions from the

Bench. Charles, of course, knew better than to proceed on the indictment for unlawful wounding, and after summing up dead against the accused, told the jury that he would leave it to them to find a verdict of common or aggravated assault. I instantly got up and said—"I presume your lordship will be willing to tell the jury that they are at liberty to return a verdict of Not Guilty." He had to swallow this pill, and one of the defendants was acquitted, the other being convicted of common assault, for which he suffered a few weeks' imprisonment. I am glad to add that Charles bore no malice. He was one of the judges to whom I cited Littleton, and I had nothing to complain of on that occasion.

It is dangerous as well as unpleasant for an advocate to quarrel with his judge, especially in this country, where the practical irremovability of the judges places them above the reach of public opinion. This power is seldom abused in the High Court, but one County Judge in my experience took such scandalous advantage of his immunity that no respectable solicitor would consent to appear before him. He had one particular pet, whom he had encouraged to get called to the Bar, and he would listen to no one else. A case in his Court simply resolved itself into a competition for the services of the Judge's friend. I have known two rival solicitors, who had each sent him a brief, come before the Judge to try the question which of them was entitled to be represented by the favoured one. The Judge's decision was considered to conclude the whole case, the loser not thinking it worth while to go on. I have seen a young solicitor attempt to move a motion before "His Honour," and after having it refused, rush out of court to hand a sheet of paper and a fee to this influential advocate, who walked in and at once procured a reversal of the decision. The judge in question never openly

refused to let me practise in his Court, but he effected the same purpose by deciding against me, whenever he could safely do so, in a tone intended to convey to my solicitor that the decision would have been different with another counsel.

I had a slight difference with one other judge, the late A. L. Smith. It was in the first prosecution for Cruelty to Children tried on the Circuit, and I represented the Society, which I had taken a very minor share in forming. There was a very strong prejudice against the Society at first, which it has happily lived down. The magistrates had dismissed the case in the police court, and Smith appeared to take their view of it. He resented a comment of mine on their decision, and did his best to procure a verdict of Not Guilty, but without success. To obtain a conviction from a Welsh jury against the judge's influence was rather a rare event. I have also acted as counsel for the Vigilance Society, but I am sure you will not wish me to enter into further details. I confess I did not like the part of prosecuting counsel, as a rule. I scarcely anticipated that I should one day have to play that of hanging judge.

The last case I need touch on was the trial of Have-lock Wilson, the founder of the Seamen's and Firemen's Union, for unlawful assembly. I was only junior counsel for the defence, and he was convicted on evidence, all of it thin, and some of it by no means above suspicion. The Recorder of Cardiff, who happened to be a Conservative, tried the case with the utmost fairness, and passed a very light sentence. The responsibility for the result lay entirely with the jury drawn from the shopkeeping class, every man of whom must naturally have regarded Wilson as an enemy delivered into his hands by Providence. The moment the case was over the Labour element in Cardiff set up a cry against the

Recorder, as though he were a second Jeffries. I pointed out to them where the responsibility really lay, a course of action which led to my being threatened in the press with the loss of my gown at the hands of Lord Halsbury, who was ignorantly supposed to have jurisdiction in the matter. It also led to a demand for a withdrawal of my language from a solicitor acting on behalf of the foreman of the jury. I replied that I should not withdraw one inch, and he proceeded no further.

Meanwhile I had looked up the law, and made the amusing discovery that no one could sit on a jury unless he were rated at over £20, or lived in a house with fifteen windows—a relic of the old Window Tax. Of course I made the most of this in urging the Labour party to promote a reform of the law, so as to ensure the presence of some working men on juries called to decide questions between Capital and Labour. A Bill which I drafted on the subject was unanimously accepted by the National Trades Congress, and introduced by Havelock Wilson into the House of Commons. I fear it went no further.

The Labour Party is not happily inspired in its attitude towards law and lawyers, which seems a veneer of theoretical anarchism over practical conservatism. Wilson, I believe, became afraid of my simple Bill, and allowed some Parliamentary draughtsman to disguise it in the unintelligent verbiage which mediocrity reveres. In a sanely governed country of course there would be no professional lawyers, and a minimum of law, but the only practical efforts to reduce these evils hitherto have been made by the lawyers themselves, and defeated by the laity. England must be the only civilised country without a code, but every attempt at one has been shipwrecked in the House of Commons. The judges tried to abate the nuisance of complicated pleadings

by inserting a few simple models in the Supreme Court Rules. I was probably the only barrister who ventured to take them at their word. I drew a statement of claim so brief that the solicitor instructing me thought I had gone out of my mind, and the other side, who had Blake Odgers, took proceedings to compel me to enlarge it. My solicitor implored me to give way, but I refused, and of course the hostile motion was dismissed with costs. But our client was poor, the actual costs of litigation are always greater than those allowed by taxing-masters, and I was made to feel that I should have done better to keep in the rut of stupidity.

I commend this anecdote to my Labour friends. It is not against Capitalism, any more than Bolshevism, that the gods fight in vain. A typical specimen of modern legislation is the Barbed Wire Act, which, in much unnecessary language, authorises public corporations to remove barbed wire bordering on a highway if they shall deem it to be a nuisance. Barbed wire so situated is a nuisance by common law, which anybody is authorised to remove; I have removed some myself; and when this insane Act was passed the only barbed wire bordering a highway in the borough of Cardiff was placed there by the corporation itself, which had to pay damages to a passer-by whose coat was torn by it. Such is the wisdom with which we are legislated for; I trust you are better off in America.

Although I have been writing in the past tense I hope you won't think I have retired from active practice at the Bar. Should you be in trouble any time over here I shall be glad to do my best for you.

Once I wandered with Yolande in Yian
 In the streets of the town of the Moon—
 In the emerald groves of the Moon;
Where the river that rolls from Mount Kian
 Sinks down through the sweltering noon
Under bridges of brasswork and iron
 In the midst of the town of the Moon :

Ere the bells in the temples of Yian
 Were jangled and rung out of tune—
 Ere they rang to the barbarous tune
Of the demons that dwell in Mount Kian,
 Of the gold working gnomes of the Moon,
That toil in the bowels of Kian
 In the caves of the blinding monsoon :

Ere the gardens were rusted like iron
 By the scorching siroccos of June;
Ere the lightning that scourges Mount Kian,
 Steel blue like the beams of the Moon,
Had blasted the gardens of Yian;
 Ere the demons that revel at noon—
 The gnomes that are scarlet at noon,
Had blinded fair Yolande in Yian
 With the breath of the burning monsoon.

Yolande in Yian.

X

YOU must have remarked with shame and sorrow that I was hardly less of an outlaw in Cardiff than in Dublin. My intervention in the Havelock Wilson affair brought me into touch with the local Trades Council, and enabled me to do a good deal of mischief with their backing. Keir Hardie hadn't yet succeeded in converting the Labour movement into one of naked civil war against democracy, and thereby paralysing it for a generation, till Arthur Henderson introduced a better spirit. I was unfortunate enough to meet "Comrade" Keir Hardie in South Wales. We addressed a meeting of tin-platers at Llanelly, and went to have tea in the house of the local M.P. He had recently been attacking the other Labour members, and I made some remark to him on the subject. He gave me the most vindictive scowl I have ever seen on a human countenance, and replied—"I decline to discuss my class with you." That was his way of thanking me for having brought on myself professional ruin in the Labour cause. This poison was beginning to work in Cardiff, and I earned much odium in the local Liberal Party by my efforts as a peacemaker between all the progressive elements. Freedom was my individual aim, and I had no objection to receiving it at the hands of Liberals, or even Tories. But no doubt my sympathies with the poor took too practical a form to commend itself to the sort of Liberal whose political faith was summed up in the two articles of Welsh Disestablishment and Local Option.

One rather lively episode followed naturally on my Trafalgar Square adventure. The Cardiff Corporation

were about to lay out a new park, and they applied to the Local Government Board for a set of bye-laws to govern all the open spaces in the town. The Board sent down its model code, teeming with absurdities which I had no difficulty in making a laughing-stock among all classes by a skit in the *South Wales Echo*. The serious clause, however, was one which forbade public meetings. The Town Council had adopted this monstrous exemplar of bureaucratic folly and impertinence before my attention was drawn to it, and refused to consider an amendment. The Liberal councillors were particularly bitter. One of them pronounced that to concede the right of public meeting in the parks would lead to riot and even murder! Thereupon I proceeded to set the heather on fire, as it was well put by my enemy the *Western Mail*. I induced the Trades Council to call a mass meeting in the new park, for an approaching holiday, and the colliers of the Rhondda Valley were bidden to come down and help us. The Corporation now saw the red light, and consented to receive a deputation. Supported by representatives of the Trades Council and the Irish National League and by a Conservative solicitor, I went to the Town Hall, and lectured the Corporation for twenty minutes on the elementary principles of free government. They unanimously tore up the model code and ordered their Town Clerk to prepare a more reasonable one containing a provision that one section of the park should be left open day and night for ever. The gentleman who had prophesied of murder atoned for his error by proposing to plant a tree of liberty in the consecrated soil.

Sir Charles Dilke came down to speak at the mass meeting, bringing with him Reginald McKenna, who was just entering on public life. Dilke impressed me very unfavourably. His great abilities were rendered

barren by a calculating selfishness which he could not disguise. I should describe him as a man without a soul. He was standing for the Forest of Dean at this time, and I did my best to protect him in the local press from the cowardly attacks of W. T. Stead. I conducted a column of legal answers to correspondents in the *South Wales Daily News*, and in answer to one correspondent told him it was not true that Dilke could prosecute Stead for libel, as he asserted. Stead was furious, and wrote a letter, as from one newspaper proprietor to another, to the Messrs. Duncan, describing me as an Ananias. They handed the letter to me, and I dealt with it in my column exactly as though Stead were one of my humble applicants for advice. He didn't write again. A prosecution for libel, I may explain, as distinguished from a civil action, can only be brought with the assent of the Attorney-General, who could not authorise it in a case of public comment on the verdict of a jury.

Stead now came down to Cardiff to form a branch of what he called the Civic Church, whose function was to be the exclusion of sinners from public life. I attended a conference of leading Nonconformists called to hear his proposals. His whole speech was a tirade against Dilke, a topic on which I am inclined to think he was insane. As no one else seemed prepared to bell the cat, I ventured to make a few remarks, citing the leading case of the woman taken in adultery. A dear old Wesleyan minister then rose on the same side, and the meeting went decidedly against Stead, who foamed at the mouth with rage. He had to go back to London unsuccessful. An attempt was made some time afterwards to start the Civic Church, but it came to nothing.

I don't suppose Dilke ever heard of these episodes; at all events he never referred to them. When I was

coming to the front in London as an Eighty Club speaker, he wrote me a letter offering me a suggestion about my literary work. Across the top was written the pathetic notice—"This letter does not require an acknowledgment." The secretary of the Club told me that Dilke made it a policy to try and ingratiate himself with the younger members of the party, with a view to his political rehabilitation; but his offers of help were sometimes met by abusive letters from Puritans. It was a tragedy not glorified by anything heroic in the victim. Naturally I wrote back to Dilke as cordially as I could. He recommended some of my short stories to the notice of his friend Jules Claretie, Director of the Comédie Française, and Claretie wrote an article of two columns in *Le Temps*, calling me the contemporary Dumas. It was a great contrast to my reviews in the English press. I once ventured to remark to Dilke on the treatment of my fiction by English reviewers. He hastened to inform me that he never interfered with the discretion of the editor of his own paper. According to a recent life this was scarcely accurate, as Dilke not only wrote a good deal himself in the *Athenæum*, but frequently took over the editorship when Watts-Dunton was on a holiday. R. I. P.

You ought to be thankful that my religious character stood higher in Wales than in Ireland. I came to Cardiff under the shield of a great-uncle, the Reverend Alfred Tilly, who was a much respected Baptist minister, and this made all the difference. I was therefore a Baptist instead of a Buddhist. I want you to make the most of this in America, although it would damage me over here, if anybody believed it. Nevertheless there were rocks ahead, as you shall hear anon.

I wasn't a bigoted Baptist. I have preached a sermon

in a Congregational chapel. In Wales every politician is expected to preach occasionally. I had a little trouble on with the Corporation just then, so I took as my text—"Here we have no abiding city." As my dear Welsh friend Arlunydd Penygarn used to say of himself, I was "a Baptist in all but essentials." But I was sound in Welsh Disestablishment, which was the one thing that mattered. I was a thorn in the side of the Bishop of Llandaff, whose son was my most formidable competitor at the local Bar. My terrible reputation penetrated to Monmouth, where I had been invited to give a lecture on the Puritans in an Evangelical institute. At the last moment I received a letter from the secretary, informing me that their trust-deed forbade any utterance hostile to the Church of England, and asking for a synopsis of my lecture. I declined to furnish one, and the town was thrown into consternation. The prospective chairman, a strong Low Churchman, refused to be present, and a Nonconformist had to be hastily substituted. A clergyman representing some Church Defence society came to hear me, primed with a speech in answer to the expected diatribe. My lecture was a purely historical one, and its whole point was to make clear that Puritanism was a Low Church movement. When I had finished, the Church champion candidly avowed that the lecture hadn't contained a word to which he could take exception, and moved a vote of thanks which was seconded by a Baptist minister. My baffled refuter had to let off his speech apropos of some recent utterance by Joseph Chamberlain.

My friend the editor of the *Monmouthshire Beacon* (which ventured to report the lecture almost verbatim) has already forgiven me once for telling tales of him, and I dare say he will do so again. It was his custom to usher in the New Year with a masterly disquisition

on European politics, in which he dealt faithfully with the statesmen of the Continent. One year the article opened with words to this effect:—"We are glad that Prince Bismarck has acted in accordance with the advice we offered him twelve months ago."

My activities in Cardiff procured me the honour of Dr. Barnardo's friendship. He surprised me by coming into my chambers one morning, and having a long talk with me, holding a sheet of cardboard between his teeth to enable him to hear. He had many wealthier supporters in the town, of course, but he confided to me that some of them were lacking in judgment, and asked me to act as a sort of visitor and adviser to a receiving depot he was opening. He had just been dragged up to the House of Lords by Roman Catholic zealots over the case of a boy whom he had rescued from a drunken mother of their persuasion. The mother was induced to reclaim her offspring by a writ of Habeas Corpus, and Barnardo lost the case; but as he had shipped off the boy to Canada I believe he is still a Protestant. Not long afterwards it was my disagreeable duty to prosecute a poor Irish boy for theft. I am ashamed to say he was convicted, but as the evidence made it clear that he was a homeless waif who had stolen from sheer hunger the Recorder refrained from passing any sentence. I intercepted him outside the Court, and finding he had nowhere else to go to I took him down to Barnardo's hostel. I then went to my Catholic friends in the town and explained the circumstances to them. I told them they could have the boy if they undertook to provide for him, but that I would not let him go back on to the streets. They agreed that this was fair, and after applying to various Catholic institutions on his behalf in vain, they frankly consented to his going to Barnardo. The

Tablet was good enough to make a handsome acknowledgment on this occasion. I am naturally out of sympathy with proselytism under the roof of charity, and I thought it right to tell my young friend that he must expect to hear Protestant doctrine where he was going. The poor boy answered—"I don't mind that, sir—I have read the Bible!" Barnardo had many critics. I shall feel disposed to criticise him when I have done as much good as he did.

My numerous wars with the Corporation didn't always end in my favour. A series of philippics against their disfigurement of the Roath Park by means of unsightly railings and other devices dear to the hearts of Corporations produced no effect whatever. In that struggle I received no support from Trades Councils and National Leagues and Conservative solicitors. It was the cause of Art, which has never been popular in either England or Wales. Of course it is quite different on your side. I was rather more successful afterwards in the case of Battersea Park, which used to be disfigured with tin enamel threats, attached to every seat and almost every flower, of penalties for improbable acts of devastation. Pushful tin-waresmen manufacture these atrocities and County Councils buy them with avidity. I put a short paragraph into the *Weekly Sun* contrasting Battersea with the Royal Parks, and expressing regret that John Burns should hold so much worse an opinion of his fellow-citizens than the effete minions of monarchy. Most of the insulting eye-sores have since disappeared, and I haven't noticed that the park has suffered much damage in consequence.

My last duel with the Cardiff authorities took place over a toll of twopence which the millionaire Marquis of Bute proposed to levy on passengers departing from

the Pier Head for excursions in the Bristol Channel. The toll would have brought him in about £5,000 a year, some of it out of my pocket. A clause for this purpose was inserted in a private Bill, which the Corporation were inveigled into supporting. The Bill had passed through the usual stages in Private Committee before I heard about it, and it was too late to oppose it by ordinary methods.

By this time my position in Cardiff resembled that of a tribune in ancient Rome. The editor of the *South Wales Daily News* appealed to me to exercise my veto, and I readily consented. After sounding the tocsin in his columns, I drew up a memorial to the Mayor, asking him to summon a town's meeting, and sent it down to the Docks for signature. A hundred signatures were collected in as many minutes, and the memorial was sent in. The whole town rallied round me on this occasion; even the *Western Mail* buried the hatchet, and supported me as cordially as the *News*. The Mayor was obliged to call the meeting, and preside over it in his robes of office with a gold chain round his neck, surrounded by Aldermen and Councillors, all trembling like guilty schoolboys. I moved a strongly-worded resolution repudiating the action of the Corporation in assenting to the clause, and bidding the member for Cardiff to oppose the Bill in the House of Commons unless it were struck out. This was carried without a dissentient voice; Sir Edward Reed bowed to the mandate of his constituents, and within two days the obnoxious impost was withdrawn.

This affair quite fluttered the doves of the Parliamentary agents in London, who had never dreamed that the public could take a hand in their parlour game. It is a pity that it does not occur to some member of the House of Commons occasionally to keep an eye on private legislation. The House of Lords

has not been above following my lead. Very soon after the agitation over the park bye-laws its Chairman of Committees deleted a similar restriction on public meetings from the Bill of some Corporation elsewhere. But I believe the Local Government Board's views on the subject of free speech prevail pretty generally in the provinces. An attempt to close the consecrated space in Cardiff was made soon after I left the town. And I shouldn't wonder if the citizens were now meekly paying the toll.

Towards the end of my Welsh avatar I was able to put a stop to the prosecution of working men for intimidation in connection with strikes. If a few colliers met a "blackleg" on his way to work and told him he deserved to be hanged, it was customary to place them in the dock on a criminal charge. After I had reminded a few juries that such language was not infrequently used by highly respectable Conservatives about men like Gladstone and Chamberlain, and suggested that it wasn't taken very seriously by the blacklegs themselves, they ceased to convict the offenders and no more cases were brought. I am afraid my clients would have been better pleased if I had adopted different tactics, and thumped the table of the Court. There was another local barrister who used to storm at the jury in that fashion. His clients were invariably convicted, but they went cheerfully to gaol, filled with admiration and gratitude towards their champion.

The Right Honourable William Brace came into South Wales while I was there, as the emissary of the Miners' Federation, which wanted to absorb the Welsh colliers. The move was resisted by their leader, William Abraham, better known as "Mabon." I gave my support to Brace, who proposed that I should come out as the

candidate of the Miners' Federation against Mabon in the Rhondda Division. I objected to fight a genuine Labour man, and I turned my eyes to the Merthyr Boroughs, at that time represented by D. A. Thomas (afterwards Lord Rhondda) and an amusing politician named Pritchard Morgan.

The Gold King, as Morgan called himself, had got in as an independent candidate. He came down to Wales originally quite ignorant of politics, with a draft address, in which he described himself as an opponent of Welsh Disestablishment. He took this into the office of the *South Wales Daily News*, and showed it to the then editor, Sonley Johnstone, a stalwart old Nonconformist minister. Johnstone told him that he would never carry a Welsh constituency on that programme, whereupon he promptly snatched up a pen, crossed out the word "opponent," and substituted "supporter," under the eyes of my astonished friend, who told me the story. Morgan's return had broken up the Liberal Association in the Boroughs, so the field was open. After a preliminary canter I received a requisition signed by 700 colliers inviting me to come out in the election of 1895, and accepted it.

I must explain that a Welsh election in those days turned on religion rather than politics. It was assumed that the seat would be won by a Liberal, and the only question was whether he should be a Baptist, a Congregationalist or a Calvinistic Methodist. The Baptists were the most numerous body in Merthyr, and therefore as the Baptist candidate my position was a strong one. But I had overlooked the hidden shoal. While the election was in full swing I called one evening on one of my most respectable supporters. He met me in the hall, and instead of taking me into the bosom of his family as heretofore he led me gravely into a cheerless study, and asked me if I was aware of what my enemies

in the constituency were saying about me. I cast a hasty mental glance over my past life, as drowning men are said to do, and trembled ; however, I summoned up nerve enough to answer that whatever it might be I was sure none of my friends would believe it. He responded sorrowfully : " When you came down here we understood that you were a Baptist ; now your enemies are saying that *you have never been baptised !* "

The Prime Minister may remember the sympathy elicited by that anecdote from a group of Welsh members whose health I was proposing at a subsequent banquet. The toast was not coupled with the name of any speaker in response, the Welsh members having unanimously declined beforehand to step into the breach. The Welsh are a brave people ; the Prime Minister has shown himself unafraid of William Hohenzollern ; but he wisely drew the line at me. I wonder how we should get on in the House ?

In this connection I can't resist transcribing what had proved the most popular of all my literary works. It aroused interest in the Hawaiian Islands.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of a letter in which you ask me to send you a copy of one of my books (which you name), for the library of the Ala-road Literary Society, Pwllheli. I have heard of Pwllheli, but I have never heard of the Ala-road Literary Society. Before complying with your request, therefore, I should be glad of a little more information. I should like to know how many members (if any) beside yourself there are in the society, and whether it is run on denominational lines. Its name sounds as if it were held in a chapel, and I want to know which chapel. It is well known that I am a Baptist, and therefore I could not possibly send my works to a Congregational society, far less to a Wesleyan one. You state that you have to fall back on the sympathy

and kindness of others owing to lack of funds. But lack of funds is not peculiar to the Ala-road Literary Society. Authors even have been known to experience it. This fact in itself, therefore, does not convince me that I ought to send you my book. You inform me that several authors, whose names you mention, have sent you copies of their works. But the list you give is not entirely satisfactory. Authors like Lord Rosebery and Lord Roberts are not fair samples of their class. These *littérateurs* appear to be noblemen, and, therefore, probably have other sources of income than the sale of their writings. Neither do such names as Sir Lewis Morris and Mr. Le Gallienne carry real weight. They are poets, and everyone knows that poetry is a drug in the market. Had you asked me for a copy of my poetical works I would have sent it with pleasure, and accompanied it by my portrait and autograph. It is true that you add a request for my other books, but in such language as makes it painfully clear that you have never heard of the others. This has naturally offended me. You should be more careful when writing to authors, proverbially a sensitive and quick-tempered race. Had you been prudent enough to refrain from particularising, and simply offered to take all my works, I should have sent a miscellaneous collection that would have astonished you. As it is, you have asked for my worst book—a book quite unworthy of the attention of a literary society, and which it would be insulting to Mr. A. J. Balfour and Mr. A. W. Pinero to place on your shelves alongside of the works they have forwarded to you. The fact is that you have fallen into a common error. You think that authors like giving away their books, and they regard it as a compliment to be asked for them. Some authors may, but they are not always the authors whose books are best worth having. It would distress me to think that my writings would never penetrate to Ala-road, Pwllheli. I can only mention with modest deference that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son are kind enough to supply the public with the work you have expressed a wish for at

the price of 3s. 6d. in cloth covers or 2s. in boards (with picture). Surely 2s. is a sum which may one day be within the reach of the literary society. The firm I allude to probably have a stall at the Pwllheli Railway Station, if there is a railway to Pwllheli. But to say any more might seem like asking you to buy my work. Accept my sincere admiration for your zeal and enterprise in the pursuit of literature, and believe me,

Obediently yours,

I am sorry I haven't kept the secretary's answer, which was much funnier than anything I have ever written. He admitted that his was a Congregational Society. He told me there was a railway to Pwllheli. He snubbed me with the information that my identification as a Baptist was not so well known as I supposed. He then rebuked my religious bigotry, and cited the names of eminent Baptists who had given him their books. He mentioned Dr. Lorimer of Boston, who, as he sneeringly observed, probably considered himself as good a Baptist as I did. He really quite wiped the floor with me. I should think he must be a Welsh member now—if there is a member for Pwllheli. I have no doubt I shall hear from him again if these lines ever meet his eye.

My true ecclesiastical status is certain to be the subject of future controversy among my biographers. By strict canon law I suspect I must rank with the inhabitants of an Indian Reservation. By common law I am a member of the Church of England. As a lawyer I naturally take the more favourable view. I have had the privilege of reading the Lessons in my parish church, and the honour of taking part in private conferences of the clergy on knotty theological questions. However, it is not for me to prejudice the verdict of posterity.

I received 7,000 promises of votes in the Merthyr election, and 700 votes. I was told the "chapel screw" had been put on at the eleventh hour, through fear of the Conservative candidate slipping in between us. It was the first general election in which Labour candidates came out independently, and I don't think any of them were much more successful than myself. In the next election there was no Conservative candidate in the field, and Keir Hardie came like a cuckoo into the nest which I had made. I never heard that he accomplished anything for his constituents. Lord Rhondda lived to wreck the miners' organisation in South Wales. Meeting my old friend Brace in the Strand many years later, I remarked that the colliers had not done much for themselves by rejecting me in favour of D. A. Thomas. He answered: "I sometimes think there has been a curse on us ever since. Nothing has prospered with us."

Barabbas is a popular candidate, but it doesn't always pay to vote for him.

I left Cardiff at the end of six years because I wasn't able to make a living there. A Conservative solicitor explained to me that all the local briefs were given by influence. "I should often have liked to brief you," he said, "but there's ———; he gives me £200 a year in leases, and I have to give him my work, though he's a fool of a lawyer, and I often tell him so." My friend, now Mr. Justice Sankey, was kind enough to tell me I could have made £1,000 a year if I had kept out of politics. I doubt if either of them was right. I expect my biological friend Professor Geddes hit the nail on the head when he said to me, "You don't smell of the pack."

There the towers and palaces stand,
Living chronicles of our land ;
All the legends our youth has known
Rise before us and turn to stone.
There is the cloister gray and old,
Thickly heaped with famous mould :
Poet and preacher, king and heir,
Statesman and soldier, crowded there.
There in its age-worn Gothic shrine
Stands the throne of the royal line ;
There round her sceptre smiting mace
Meets the Parliament of the race.
Britain folds her glory there ;
Freedom, familiar to the air,
Beside her trophies seems to sleep,
Like the huge lion, couching deep,
That scarcely shakes his dreadful mane
None shall touch and 'scape again.

A Day's Tragedy.

XI

I AM anxious that you should conceal the fact that I have written novels. It was with the greatest reluctance that I came to recognise, at the age of thirty, that this was the only means of support open to me. I have always envied Spinoza for being able to maintain himself by a handicraft which did not compromise him as a philosopher. I was reduced to grind romances instead of lenses. My nature was not subdued to what it worked in, like my more celebrated ancestor's, but my reputation was. The British public will never consent to regard me as anything but a novelist for the remainder of my existence; "the well-known novelist," as the papers politely put it, when they feel doubtful whether their readers have heard my name before. When at the age of forty I produced a work more consonant with my real vocation on your planet, it was either cast on the floor unopened, or greeted in this fashion: "Mr. ——'s previous record had not prepared us for his appearance as a thinker of enormous power. Nevertheless the book, though it were written by Marie Corelli," and so on, in a vein of mingled sorrow and reproach. My favourite paper, the *Church Times*, introduced me to its readers very kindly as "the distinguished Philhellene."

Before resigning myself to be a novelist I essayed the slippery foothold of a humorist. Humour, as any mental specialist will tell you, is a healthy nervous reaction very necessary to the sanity of an idealist, if he is not to become a persecutor. The martyr has more need of it than most, and it is the life-belt

that has kept me afloat during a voyage which, like Chateaubriand's, has been little more than a monotonous succession of shipwrecks.

My first and, up to now, my only real success as a writer was made with a weekly sketch contributed to the Cardiff evening paper, the *South Wales Echo*. A newly-appointed editor, poor Sonley Johnstone fils, asked me to write for him, and I agreed to do so on the terms of "no pay and no editing." He was young and brave enough to accept these conditions, and I began the adventures of *Ebenezer Lobb*, which I kept up for four years. *Lobb* became a household word in South Wales, and as the satire played equally over my political friends and opponents, I hope it did something to soften their mutual strife.

No journalist could have received more generous treatment than I did from the proprietors of the paper, Messrs. Duncan & Sons. They not only very soon began to pay me, and doubled and trebled the amount as time went on, but they allowed me an absolutely free hand. I learned long afterwards that they actually paid a small sum to settle a pretended claim for libel, without even letting me know of the complaint. This was to understand how to get the best out of a man of genius, a far rarer gift than genius itself. If the owners of the earth were to spend half the pains on the artist that they do on that other nervous animal, the race-horse—but I mustn't waste your time.

The series was brought to an abrupt close by the conduct of Lloyd George. He rose in rebellion against Gladstone, the *South Wales Daily News* rebuked him, and I tried to take his side in the *Echo*. My article was refused insertion, the first breach of our compact, and I never wrote another. I subsequently made repeated offers to write on the same terms in the London press, but they were invariably declined. I have seen

dozens of papers scrapped by their proprietors at a heavy loss in consequence. The only time I received a free hand was from the Committee of the Eighty Club, which was accustomed to issue a small sheet at considerable cost during general elections. I took charge of this in 1900, wrote it entirely myself, made it up and saw it through the press. We sold upwards of 200,000 copies, and cleared our expenses without a single advertisement. On the strength of this I asked the Chief Whip, afterwards Lord Gladstone, to find some one to finance a Liberal humorous weekly. He put the suggestion before Sir George Newnes. Newnes thought it a good idea, purchased a moribund paper called *Fun*, entrusted it to his own staff, and dropped it before the year was out at a loss of some thousands of pounds. Every good business man would rather lose money on safe and prudent lines like that than make it by tolerating eccentricity.

Humour, to be worth anything, must be original, and the more original it is the longer it takes the British public to see the joke. When it once has seen the joke, it wants to have it over and over again. That was the secret of "Ebenezer Lobb." The first articles were probably a failure. When a volume of selections came out in London the reviewers had no difficulty in killing it. Old Kelly, of the London Directory, who had an interest in the publisher's business, wrote indignantly to demand why he had paid so much for such rubbish. The publisher's reply was to send him the book. Kelly wrote back to say he had never laughed so much before in his life, and considered he had received full value for his money. The publisher told this to me, unfortunately. If he had made a press note of it, like your Company, I might now be a knight like everybody else.

One newspaper that shall be nameless assailed the book with personal ferocity, probably because it included

a revised version of one of my ancestor's dramas, in which Shylock's name was changed to Baron Sherlock. In case you should be a Jew yourself, I enclose a letter from the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, which shows how easy it is to be misunderstood by your not always forgiving race. The correspondence was provoked by a piece of malice on the part of a Christian judge, who deliberately distorted something said by me on behalf of a Jewish client.

Office of the Chief Rabbi,
16 Finsbury Square, London,
July 18, 1889/5649.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your favour of yesterday's date, and beg to thank you for the information given therein. I am pleased to tell you that I consider your explanation quite satisfactory, and am glad to learn that you have sent a correction to the *Mail*. I shall be pleased to have an opportunity of reading your brochure. [One containing a tribute to the Jews.]

I am gratified to know that you entertain an affectionate regard for the House of Israel, and would apply to you the words of our Minstrel King, Psalm cxxii, v. 6. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

With every good wish,
I remain,

Yours very faithfully,
H. ADLER.

I had made some abortive experiments in fiction over in Ireland—one story was returned to me by the editor of a since defunct magazine to punish me for rioting in Trafalgar Square. Towards the close of my stay in Cardiff I took advantage of Messrs. Duncans' friendship to write a serial in their weekly paper. (They made me change all the English names into Welsh

ones, and falsely pretend it was a local story.) A brother barrister who happened to know Andrew Chatto sent him up the slips, and the book was published. This wretched performance made, or unmade, my reputation. I followed it up with another, called *A Bride's Madness*, which I offered to Sir Arthur Pearson for his *Weekly*. No sooner did I announce the title than he literally jumped at it. My fortune, or misfortune, was made. I shook the dust of Cardiff off my feet, to the great relief of the inhabitants, and pitched my moving tent in London.

Chatto was a friendly old man, who saw I was tempted to write literature, and gave me good advice. He held up R. L. Stevenson, as other publishers have done, as a warning to me not to look for ready appreciation, or much ready money. I am bound to say I can't see any other resemblance between myself and Stevenson beside our having aroused the same savage determination in the British breast to convert us into sound British novelists. It was a good deal more successful with him than me.

Chatto did his best for me in the way of press notes. He also urged me to do something for myself. He whispered that it might be well for me to go about and cultivate the society of men, knowledge of whom is power. I am well aware of the harm an artist does himself by spending too much time in the studio, and too little in the shop. But drummers are born and not made, except of course by commercial colleges, in which I have taken no degree. Some of us have but a limited store of energy, and by the time we have written an epic poem, or solved the riddle of the universe, we are too exhausted to travel in our own merits. That is why I am so anxious to find another partner like my collaborator in "Facing the Music." I want him to impersonate me. As most people think my name

is a *nom de plume*, it should be quite easy. Perhaps the —— Company can find a presentable young man to lecture for me in America. A young woman would be better still. Women are popular just now. She must have good teeth—the public are quite mad about teeth, especially the movie public. Perhaps you would rather I sent you over by parcel post a set of artificial teeth, made to measure, for the Company to put in their window. They might find that draw still better than the walruses or the woolly dogs.

It will be quite useless for you to tell people that I am so susceptible to bronchial attacks as to be unfit for society for three months out of every year. No one accepts that excuse. I have a bad character. The first time my Dutch friend, Van Eeden, wrote to me he told me he had heard I was “the most unapproachable man in Europe.” Cats make a similar complaint of mice. Some of the Earthmen who are anxious to approach me are still more anxious to get away from me, as soon as they come near enough to see the angel’s feather beneath the domino of the well-known novelist. I have to be as careful as poor Satan with his foot. If I should ever write my real reminiscences they would be burnt by the common hangman.

Sir Arthur Pearson was by far the most open-minded editor I met with in London. I don’t remember his declining anything I offered him, and he several times paid me more than I had bargained for. But he *would* make suggestions. He was just starting his *Magazine*, and the most important feature during its first year was a series called “Secrets of the Courts of Europe.” These stories had the luck to please two publics. The wise read them as irony, and the foolish as genuine history. Even Sir Samuel Evans stopped me on the Thames Embankment to ask if they were true. The worst of writing like Poe is that you get no credit for imagination.

Pearson wanted me to leave out the irony, no doubt in the interest of his advertisers. Advertisers hate anything over the heads of the people who go in for electric belts and systems of memory training. The Pale Person who takes the Pink Pills is the real editor of almost every publication in the English language, except the Law Reports. I formerly remarked on this at a literary dinner at Saffron Walden—H. G. Wells lives near Saffron Walden. R. D. Blumenfeld, who also lives near there, had asked me beforehand to let him have a press note of my speech. He returned it with the grim comment—"We dare not print this. It is too true." By the way, I hope the — Company won't find any of these notes too true!

Of course, any organ that defied the Pale Person would go like wildfire, if it ever reached the bookstalls. Nothing is quite so respectable as a bookstall. A certain friend of mine used to edit an illustrated paper that tried to brighten us with the *joie de vivre* of the Boulevards. His idea of the *joie de vivre* was exclusively embodied in pictures of joyous *viveuses*. Their bodices weren't cut nearly so low as fashion now requires, but they were cut too low for the bookstalls. Regularly every week, almost, the bookstall put its finger on some young lady's corset, and insisted that my friend should hatch in another inch of frilling over the bust. (You can print this, but I shall say that I struck it out in a proof which got mislaid.)

Much as I feel indebted to Sir Arthur Pearson, I must be pardoned for thinking that he made a great mistake in not making it possible for me to do more for him. My judgment of my own public is better than anybody else's. I wrote one story against my judgment, to meet his views, and he was delighted with it; but after its appearance he complained to me that it had done harm to the magazine, for which he seemed to think I was

responsible. The magazine soon struck a shoot in the soil of America, which added to my troubles. The American editor detected in the most innocent invention a veiled attack on the dignity of the United States. I wish you had more confidence in yourselves in America. After all you have a territory of 3,000,000 square miles, and a population of upwards of 100,000,000, still growing. You are the richest country on earth, and the most powerful. You should think of these things occasionally and cheer up.

The running fire of editorial objections under which I worked was so depressing that I was unable to prolong the series for another year, as Sir Arthur Pearson most kindly requested me to do. His partner, Peter Keary, then commissioned a struggling writer, from whom I afterwards received an honourable apology, to produce imitations of my stories. They weren't very like. For years afterwards young editors told me they were being urged to secure contributions on the same lines. Meanwhile I saw publication after publication come to grief, which I think I could have saved had it been under my control. So far as I can judge, this was the turning point in the history of the Pearson Company. They have not made an equal success since.

It coincided with a more serious turning point in the history of English periodical literature generally. Everyone who remembers the magazines of twenty years ago has remarked the difference between now and then, when a whole group of writers were coming to the front, and reputations were being made every year. Even business men have complained to me that they can no longer find anything on the bookstalls fit to beguile their business journeys. H. G. Wells has made some observations on the subject; I will give him and you the explanation. Peter Keary, who I am afraid had a personal dislike for men of genius, conveyed the

information to me nearly in these words :—"The Harmsworths and Newnes and we have been putting our heads together, and we have decided that the day of the author is over. We are not going to let authors write what they like any longer. They will have to write what we want. We shall pay them well, but we shall stand over them, and if we are not satisfied with what they have written, they will have to go back to their desks, and rewrite it till we are pleased." Those are, I believe, the conditions under which the boy's penny dreadful has always been produced. The result of their application to the adult's magazine has been to lower their circulations to one-third, but their advertisements are better than ever.

Some contributions to the *Idler* brought me the friendship of its founder and editor, Jerome K. Jerome. Jerome had made a great popular hit with his humorous "Three Men in a Boat," and when the *Idler* came out everyone rushed for it with his mouth already on the grin. Unluckily, Jerome's adverse star was in the ascendant, and the first number revealed him as the weeping instead of the laughing philosopher. He may have been goaded into this by the venomous sneers at his early life and education which his success provoked from the kind of man whom universities can no more make into a gentleman than they can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. I doubt if the *Idler* ever got over this first shock. Jerome was also badly let down by most of his contributors, always excepting W. W. Jacobs. A misdirected financial criticism in *To-Day* compelled him to resign his connection with both publications, and go into exile. It took him years to pay off the damages in which he was condemned. He should have imitated the wily Labouchere, who was a master in the art of selecting safe objects for his righteous zeal.

On Jerome's retirement there was some expectation that I should take over the *Idler*; however, it was bought by a publisher who thought he could manage it himself, and it soon ceased to exist. I got a certain practice as a salver of derelict publications. Mortgagees and directors used to engage me to raise the circulation for a short time, and then sell them as going concerns to some one like Sir George Newnes. *The Weekly Dispatch* was one paper that Sir George was lured into purchasing. His editor promptly replaced me by G. R. Sims, in spite of which I understand the paper has now passed into other hands.

Behind the scenes in journalism is a country little explored. There are literary reviews enjoying quite a reputation, which are kept going by the methods of the old Cornish wreckers. Ambitious youths come up from the universities with a thousand pounds or so, which they invest in the paper as a short cut to fame and fortune. When their money is gone they are left stranded in Fleet Street, and the editorial chair is sold to the next comer. Some of these aspirants used to approach me with tempting offers to start magazines for their benefit, but as their aged fathers also came and asked for assurance that the magazine would ensure their boys a livelihood I had to send them away. I don't pretend it is easy to assist the budding genius, or that I have the necessary tact and patience, although I hope I have the good will. When Clement Scott was dying, Mrs. Scott offered me the *Free Lance*, which was perfectly solvent, practically as a free gift. I at once put it before a younger literary friend, as yet unrecognised, with an offer of the editorial control, except over my own contributions. He demanded that his name should immediately replace Clement Scott's on the front page. As soon as this stipulation reached Mrs. Scott's ears she withdrew her generous offer, with a remark which I have not

repeated to my friend. Another young would-be editor haughtily refused to start his voyage under the flag of my friend, T. P. O'Connor, a man who had only to walk out into Fleet Street to pick up a fortune.

A rather artful trap was laid for me by a Tory brewer who thought he was an Individualist. There was an Individualist Club in these days, presided over by my friend, L. Cranmer Byng. Its name struck me as a contradiction in terms, and I asserted my Individualism by not joining it. I was present at one of its meetings, called for the purpose of a debate on Socialism with Bernard Shaw. The heckling became rather acrimonious, and Shaw put forth his strength. By the time it was over the floor was strewn with Individualists, like a skittle-ground after an exhibition by a skilful trundler. My non-teetotal friend desired to start a paper in the cause of Individualism, especially in the sphere of Temperance reform. I prepared an estimate for a popular weekly, which he accepted after taking expert advice. He then changed his mind, and offered me a much smaller sum to start a select organ, the aim of which was to be the conversion of the Prime Minister, A. J. Balfour, to the Individualist faith. Without wishing to underrate my influence with A. J. Balfour, my experience of Prime Ministers has taught me that the most efficacious means of converting them is the conversion of a few million voters. I also knew that the last select organ launched on the select public had come to grief after costing its supporters £20,000 in about 20 months. On both grounds I regretfully made up my mind to leave Mr. Balfour in his Socialist sins.

Thou hast come, O guest, to the land renowned
of steeds, to earth's most glorious ground,
unto white Kolonos, where
the clear-throated, murmuring
nightingale doth most repair
under the greenwood, harbouring
within the wine-faced ivy tod
and grove inviolate of the God;
many-fruited, glare of sun,
shock of storm-wind, cometh none;
ever by Bacchic footsteps trod;
Dionysus roams at ease
beside his nursing Goddesses. . . .

From Sophocles.

XII

HAVING made Ireland and Wales and England successively too hot to hold me, I next became the scourge of Europe. In the year 1897 what is now called the League of Nations was called the Concert of Europe. The Concert was rather more exclusive than the League; membership of it was confined to six Powers, calling themselves Great; but that made very little difference indeed. Count William Hohenzollern was then the informal President of the League—I should say the Concert—but its professions and practices were precisely what they are to-day. So imposing an authority could not long escape my notice, and it followed as a matter of course that I quickly came into conflict with it. Our difference was over a nice point of international law, in which I am a specialist, and you will easily foresee that the Concert fared no better than the Cardiff Corporation.

The League of Nations had been lecturing my late friend, the Sultan Abdul Hamid, for about twenty years on his duties as a ruler, and asserting a fatherly interest in his Christian subjects—they didn't mind what became of the Muslims. One fine day the Christian inhabitants of Crete decided to take the Concert at its word. They turned all the Turkish troops out of their island, except from two garrison towns, hauled down the Crescent, and hoisted the Greek Cross. Thereupon, as you would expect, if you know anything about Leagues of Nations, the League left off lecturing Abdul Hamid, and hastened to offer him its warm support. It proclaimed a blockade of Crete, and dispatched a formidable fleet of seventy

men-of-war drawn from the navies of Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Austria and Italy, to surround the island, and prevent all mankind from landing on it.

My answer to this was to land. As any international lawyer will tell you, you can't legally start a blockade unless you are at war; and the League wasn't at war. If the battleships that chased me had hoisted the Turkish flag they would have committed a breach of the Foreign Enlistment Act; as it was they were mere pirates. I was rather disappointed that they didn't capture me, because I could have got heavy damages for false imprisonment from the Admiralty. It is never wise to challenge an expert in his own subject. What do rough seamen know of these technicalities? I blamed the Foreign Office more than them. If I had been a vindictive man I might have had Lord Salisbury hanged in chains.

My trip to Crete took the public by surprise. It much embarrassed a distinguished Philhellene who was holding public meetings in London, and generally coming out as a Liberal leader by threatening to equip a British Legion and dispatch it to the front. He was disagreeably surprised when he found I was really going. He remonstrated earnestly with a young man from the provinces, who had come up to join me. At last, seeing that his hand was forced, he engaged an ex-lieutenant from South Africa to take charge of us, and drew up an imposing document appointing him Colonel of the unborn Legion, "with the rank of Colonel Commanding-in-Chief." Our departure was signalled by banquets and ovations. My late friend, G.W. E. Russell, and other stalwarts saw us off at Charing Cross. As soon as the train started the Colonel Commanding-in-Chief produced his commission, appointed my young adherent a Captain, and seemed disposed to take command of me forthwith as a private in the ranks. I opened his eyes

gently during the journey, and I doubt if he ventured to show his full powers to the Greek War Office, which granted him the rank of captain in its Foreign Legion. Let me add that he did so well that they retained him in their own service. The British Legion materialised ultimately in the form of two detachments about a dozen strong, to the natural disgust of the Greek Government, which had arranged to dispatch a warship to bring the promised regiment.

I don't think any of my crimes made me so many enemies as this excursion. When I got back I found my desk piled with press cuttings—I took in press cuttings then—all denouncing my infamy. Sir Rider Haggard, or some one similar, demanded that I should be brought to trial like his friends of the Jameson Raid. The generally expressed opinion was that I was a novelist in search of local colour, combined with advertisement, and that I shouldn't get further than a hotel in Athens. (Curiously enough the same type of mind confronted me years afterwards when I went over to Belgium. A certain editor, whose brother was fighting the Germans from the shelter of a hotel in Paris, stipulated that I should not stay in a hotel in Brussels. I stayed in the Grand Hotel there the night before the Germans marched in, and I had the hotel to myself.) It hadn't occurred to one journalist in Fleet Street, apparently, that fighting in a decent cause is the most glorious form of sport, and that I might be a sportsman. I was positively shocked. I almost suspected that the English were no longer a brave people. But for the generous amend made by the *Daily Mail*, in reporting that its correspondent had found me fighting in the trenches, I have no doubt I should be regarded as a braggart to this hour.

My young companion the "Captain" in the British Legion, did his best to justify these cowardly anticipa-

tions. He confided to me on the journey out that his volunteering was a bluff, put up to terrify his fond parents into giving their consent to his marriage with a young woman whom he liked better than they did. At Brindisi he found the expected telegram announcing their surrender. He came on to Athens, allowed the Greek press to produce his portrait in an English volunteer uniform, enjoyed the hospitality of the Metropolitan of Athens and other confiding Greeks, and departed home the moment Turkey declared war. His regiment, I am told, stripped him of his uniform on his return.

War hadn't broken out on our arrival. I saw the Foreign Minister, and told him frankly that he mustn't expect much in the way of military support. My only hope was that if a few of us came out it might stir up enough sympathy to influence our government, and make it hesitate to take its orders from Wilhelm II. He saw the point, and at once drew up a press note for the Havas agency. I next called on the Minister of Marine, Levidis, who gave me a cordial welcome. He said two vessels had already tried to run the blockade of Crete, one of which had been captured and the other sunk, and agreed to let me take part in a third attempt in course of preparation.

Athens was swarming with spies of the League of Nations in the shape of diplomatists, consuls, and newspaper men, and I had to use the guile of Ulysses to escape from the Hotel Grande Bretagne when the summons came. In a delightful atmosphere of mystery and stealth a launch conveyed me from the Piræus harbour to a lonely inlet in the coast opposite Salamis—a new link with Themistocles—where I found a steamer taking on board a cargo of food for the Cretan insurgents. By this time the League of Nations had landed troops on the island, and they had penned up an

isolated force in the peninsula of Akrotiri, hard by Canea. Our mission was to relieve this body, which was on the point of being starved into surrender.

We weighed anchor at midnight, and the next morning found us abreast of the isle from which the immortal Venus of Milo takes her name. At three in the afternoon we sighted the snowy ridge of Ida flashing across the sea like a silver comb. There we had to wait, thirty miles from land, till the sun went down. Then by the light of the glittering constellations we headed for the forbidden coast.

The League of Nations was on the look out for us. Of the seventy war-ships sent by Wilhelm II to defend Abdul Hamid, an undue proportion were patrolling these particular waters, Canea being the main seat of strife. Their searchlights showed in the distance like pink feathers, in a line between us and our destination. The Greek captain skilfully outmanœuvred the pirate fleet by making a circuit round its eastern flank, till we were within the shadow of the cliffs, beneath which we stole cautiously towards the little cove where our friends awaited us. The news of our approach had been signalled from shore to shore by beacon fires, exactly like the home-coming of Agamemnon three thousand years before.

As we approached we saw and heard the signs of battle raging on the land. By a coincidence the beleagured Cretans were being engaged that night by a British force which included General Morland, then a junior officer. I met him five years afterwards at Sir Frederick Lugard's table in Nigeria, where he was Commandant, and there we found out that we had been in opposite camps on this fairy night. Seventeen years later I met General Morland once more in occupied Germany, where I had gone over to lecture on behalf of the War Office. He entertained me in the palace

of the ex-Emperor's sister at Bonn. I wish all my old enemies were equally forgiving. However, I don't think the British army or navy had much heart in their work at Crete. Their private sentiments about the conductor of the European Concert were probably the same as mine.

The steamer anchored in the darkness, and put out a boat and I slipped into it behind the captain's back—all my Greek friends were desperately bent on keeping me in cotton wool throughout the hostilities. We moved towards the beach on which we could make out shadowy forms. Were they friends or enemies? A subdued hail assured us that all was well. The boatmen responded with another, and I caught the words "Effolonti Angliki," meaning English volunteer. Whereupon a sturdy Cretan waded out waist deep in the water, and carried me ashore on his back. I thus had the satisfaction of vindicating the Law of Nations just ten days after the League had broken it. The Benchers who had rewarded my studies so profusely should have been gratified.

A picturesque bandit armed with a rifle took his stand beside me as a guard of honour, while I sat down to watch the unloading of the cargo. Another placed himself in front of me with his coat spread out to screen the spark of my cigarette from a battleship whose lights were visible about two miles out at sea. The poor fellows were sadly disappointed when they found I wasn't staying with them. But I had done all that the law required; and I preferred slaking my thirst for blood on the Turks instead of on General Morland and his men.

When I got back to the steamer I found the crew in some dismay. One of the pirate craft, H.M.S. *Camperdown*, I believe, had left her station and was bearing straight down on us, brandishing her search-

light as she came. The beam settled full on our decks more than once, with such blinding effect that I thought it impossible for us to escape. I have been caught by a searchlight since, when I was on a British destroyer running the Needles passage with my friend Commander Meredith, and promptly fired on; but luckily that was in time of peace, and the guns didn't hurt. The *Camperdown* was less successful, failing to pick us out from the rocky background, apparently. She swept right past us, and the moment the passage was free we made a dash of it out to sea, with our anchor trailing behind us in the water, for fear the noise of getting it on board should bring the pirates down on us.

The *Manchester Guardian*, whose liberality had made it possible for me to come out, filled three columns with the story. I hope Wilhelm II read it. He was one of the most attentive readers of my stories in *Pearson's Magazine*, of which he was frequently the hero, but he has never written to thank me for the pleasure I had given him. (You might try to get this press note into the Dutch papers.) An English friend of his actually resented my attempts to brighten international politics, and wrote threatening me with the wrath of the German Ambassador in London. It would be nice to know that this gentleman's feelings are still the same. One should not forsake one's old friends when they are down on their luck.

My Athenian friends thought there was more prospect of serious fighting on the west frontier of Greece than in Thessaly, where the army was to be commanded by the Crown Prince Constantine. (At the moment of writing I believe he is King.) Accordingly I went up to Arta, accompanied by a British officer whom I had better not name, as we were both breaking the Foreign Enlistment Act, and he was endangering his

pension besides. I hadn't enlisted in the Foreign Legion, as I should have found myself under the command of a drunken English sergeant. I wasn't a mercenary soldier. The pay of the Legionaries was a lepton a day, and if you know that the Greek lepton corresponds to the French centime, and the Greek exchange was down to half, you can calculate for yourself how much that came to in dollars. I reckoned it would take me two and a half years to earn one. Captain X and I bought our own rifles, and served as supernumeraries in the ranks, enjoying perfect freedom to shoot Turks when we felt inclined, and leave off when we were tired. There were any number of Greeks fighting in the same airy fashion.

The steamer that brought us safely into the Gulf of Arta was sunk by the Turkish fortress at the entrance on her way out again, another instance of the good luck which favoured me through the whole business. The Greek commander, General Manos, first told us he didn't want us, and next offered to attach us to his staff. Having ascertained that he proposed retiring five miles to the rear the moment hostilities broke out, I thought we should find it livelier in the trenches. Our place was adequately taken by two experienced English war correspondents who sacrificed much of their valuable time to tendering advice to the General on points of strategy. At the close of the brief campaign poor Manos was sent back to Athens in chains, so I suppose he must have followed it. Meanwhile not a word of their voluminous correspondence reached London, the Greek telegraphist having hidden it away in despair. A young representative of the *Daily Mail*, whose presence they seemed to resent as an impertinence, made arrangements which caused his copy to get through.

The first shot of the war was fired as I was stepping

into the post office of Arta. The town lay in the bend of a river crossed by an old Roman bridge, and according to Captain X the campaign ought to have opened with the blowing up of this bridge by whichever army didn't want the other to cross. Nothing of the kind occurred. The river was only ankle deep, at that time of year; still, military etiquette ought to have been observed. Each side had artillery mounted on opposite hills, that of the foe directed by German officers, and they pounded away at one another till the Turks resigned. I understood from Captain X it was against the rules for them to fire on each other's infantry. A Greek artillery officer pointed out to me with pride a Turkish cottage across the river, with a window containing four panes of glass, each of which he had broken with a separate cannon-ball. If there were any Turks inside they must have felt nervous.

The battle lasted three or four days. At the outset my commander, dear old Colonel Pappagianopoulos, thoughtfully stationed me in the cellar of a farm-house, under the care of the corporal whom I murdered afterwards. I remained there about ten seconds, and then basely forsook my post to go Turk shooting, leaving the faithful corporal anchored like a second Casabianca to the cellar floor. The Colonel let me off the extreme penalty for desertion in the face of the enemy, and attached me with Captain X and my future victim to a company of engineers, armed with pickaxes as well as rifles. I spent most of my time in a trench beside the bridge, exchanging pot shots across the river bed, which was mostly dry stones. The only serious discomfort was an enfilading fire, due to the bend in the river, against which my comrades threw up traverses. The Greek army was quite untrained, and probably none of the engineers had handled a rifle before. Most of them sat in the bottom of the trench, and fired

into the air, in the hope that their bullets would fall on the heads of the Turks, I suppose. It was a fairly bloodless victory. However, I am able to depose that I saw one man wounded, no other than the Colonel himself. There was an orange orchard just behind us, and whenever I felt thirsty I used to climb the trees and feast on the delicious fruit, with the bullets whizzing all round me like excited wasps. I haven't cared to eat an orange in this country since; I know what real oranges taste like. One day I picked a couple and brought them to the Colonel, who was esconced in what looked like a place of safety behind the orchard wall. I was in the act of handing them to him when I saw a spent bullet gently glide over the wall, drop on his leg, and fall to the ground. To my surprise it knocked him over, and he was laid up for some days. The brave fellow was on horseback again before he was able to put on a boot. He was killed in another action a fortnight later.

I didn't get a scratch. My nearest approach to one was when I was returning a rather hot fire from the Turks across the river bed, and suddenly felt a splash of water on my cheek. I glanced at the river; it was too far off. I looked up at the sky; there was no cloud in sight. Then I noticed a gash in the leaf of a cactus growing on the bank in front of me. A bullet had struck the leaf, which was as thick as a man's hand, and the juice had spirted on my face. I found a mushroom-shaped bullet at my feet, and picked it up as a souvenir. I am sometimes asked by children, how many Turks I slew. As they were quite invisible, and I could only fire into the smoke, I don't know. I can only say that if any Turks perished at that particular spot, which I think improbable, they must have fallen to Captain X or myself, as no one else attempted to take aim at them. The most serious fighting was done by the Evzones,

mountaineers in white kilts, who honoured me by an invitation to join their corps at a later stage.

On the third or fourth night of this warfare a Turkish officer—they were all Albanians, really—stole on to the bridge to spy on us. The Greek sentry shot him dead; I marched across the pool of blood next day. The report woke up the Turkish camp; they thought we were upon them, as of course we ought to have been days before; and they rose up and fled for forty miles to Yannina without a halt.

I can't say at what hour in the morning the news reached General Manos, or what advice the war correspondents gave him. His movements were not unduly hurried. No orders had reached us by noon. Captain X was in the act of explaining the military precautions which must precede the crossing of the river, when I noticed a large party of unarmed peasants fording it in front of us, probably in search of plunder. Our orders arrived shortly afterwards. The little engineer corps of 200 strong was given the post of honour. We were sent forward a day in advance of the Greek army, into the heart of Turkey, our mission being to ascertain if the Turkish retreat was a ruse designed to draw their enemy into an ambush. It was just as well for us that it wasn't.

We advanced for seven miles through a wooded country, in skirmishing order, according to the strict rules of military art, as Captain X joyfully admitted. I was wearing a thick Greek overcoat, and carrying a knapsack, a rifle, a heavy army service revolver, and two belts of ammunition; and as it was as hot as an English July, I found the marching a good deal more trying than fighting. We halted for the night in the village of Scrivena, all by ourselves, and if it had occurred to the Turks to look behind them as they fled; they would have found us an easy morsel.

I sought refuge in the village inn and called for a cup of coffee. My corporal interpreter reported that the innkeeper couldn't give me coffee, because he had no fire. I suggested that he might make a fire. The innkeeper received this happy thought as an inspired revelation, and consented to make one. I next demanded eggs. "He says he has no eggs," came the report. I pointed to some fowls running in the road outside, and said, "Tell him, where there are fowls there must be eggs." The innkeeper, prostrated by this reasoning, confessed to the possession of eggs, but excused himself from boiling them on the ground that he had no fire. "Ask him," I replied impressively, "why shouldn't he boil the eggs at the same fire at which he is making the coffee!" The innkeeper gazed at me as one who had found a greater than Solomon, and obeyed like a little child. That is what it is to be an old campaigner.

Probably it was a case of religious scruples. We were approaching the Greek Easter, and the Orthodox Lent is severe. The Greek soldiers had to subsist on a loaf of bread a day, and didn't always get that. I had to pass thirty hours without food, up in the mountains, marching most of the time. For a man so unaccustomed to out-door exercise it was a little stiff.

The Greek army overtook us next day, and we entered the town of Philippiada in triumph. The engineers were quartered in a mosque, as an honourable distinction, and I am sorry to say I looted it of a small wooden crescent. I have since tried to atone for this outrage by building a mosque in Nigeria. Then Colonel Pappagianopoulos, who had taken possession of the Turkish commander's house, invited Captain X and myself to share his quarters, and I had the romantic experience of sleeping in a Turkish harem. You must decide whether to let the public know that the fair inmates had all fled. I rather

think it spoils the anecdote, myself, but of course I am a poet.

We, that is to say, Captain X, the corporal and I, were left stranded in a mountain pass the following day, our regiment having hurriedly departed, in obedience to fresh orders, while we were broiling a chicken in the open air, round the corner. It would have been a tedious business to follow them down to Philippiada, and then up another road again, so I undertook to guide my comrades by a short cut across the mountains. They followed me hopefully for an hour or so, and then, losing heart, began to assail me with reproaches such as Moses used to receive from the Israelites when the commisariat broke down and the Amalekites got busy. Not having his resources at my command, I could only fall back on the arts which had prevailed with the inn-keeper of Scrivena. I told them, "There is a mountain ridge, on the other side of it there must be a valley; where there is a valley there will be a river, and beside the river we shall find a road." We crossed the ridge, we found the valley, we found the river, and we found a fine military road not marked in any map; I put it into Stanford's on my return.

Scouting is another thing that came to me by nature, like shooting. I discovered this tramping over Dartmoor in search of Cranmere Pool. I had nearly reached the pool when a dense mist shut down on the moor. I couldn't see a hundred yards in any direction, there was no path within miles, and I was in the middle of a bog. I made for the first trickle of running water and followed it, arguing that it must reach the sea some time or other, and that ground firm enough for water *to run across* must be firm enough to support me. It turned out to be the River Dart, and brought me after about ten miles on to the high road near Princetown. I am now the distinguished holder of a scoutmaster's warrant.

That night I slept on the bare ground, beside two cannon pointing up the pass ready for any return rush of the enemy. Mary Queen of Scots would have envied me. We were within striking distance of Yannina, the capital of Epirus, and had we taken it, our success might have done something to redeem Constantine's disastrous campaign in Thessaly. So others seem to have thought. Before daybreak a dispatch reached us from Athens, ordering the whole army to return to Arta. I found the Brigadier in command—General Manos, true to his principles, was miles away in the rear—reading the dispatch by lantern light, seated on a pile of saddles, and sipping Turkish coffee, of which he was good enough to give me a cup. The troops crowded round him, with the freedom of Greek democracy, and mutiny was in the air. The opinion expressed on the spot was that our recall was the work of the German Emperor, who had promised the King of Greece to see him safely out of the war, on condition that he put up no serious resistance to the Turks. It may have been so; I have not been able to verify it. Our march back was a miserable spectacle, most of the men falling out of the ranks and completely disregarding their officers. I collapsed on the wayside with a touch of fever some miles outside of Arta, but my friend of the *Daily Mail* happened to come by, and he very kindly put me on a horse, and brought me into the town.

There we were greeted with the news that a revolution had broken out in Athens, the mob had forced its way into the king's palace, and a British warship was waiting in the Piræus harbour with steam up, ready to take the royal family on board.

In these circumstances I felt myself *de trop*, and I demobilised. Some of my Greek friends hastened my departure by saying they would rather have me for king

than their actual monarch. They were wise, but it is against my principles to interfere in the internal politics of foreigners.

I dare say your people will like to know that.

So that lost religion knew
From whose wells if we yet drew
We should breathe where joy was rife ;
Not this caterpillar life
Creeping through the tunnelled shade ;
But in dancing robes arrayed
We might pitch our mortal tent
In some fair spot, and be content
With a present paradise.
Heaven around the happy lies.
To love all things and to be
Glad is immortality....

The Faun of Pompeii.

XIII

WHEN Humanity has nailed a man to a cross it likes to see him writhe. The Athenians were most annoyed with Socrates for not running away from the cup of hemlock. A Christian friend of mine fairly gloated over "De Profundis," and told me it would delight the Nonconformist conscience. The Earthmen are more likely to forgive me for any other crime than for forgiving them. They like to be talked to in the style of Lamartine :—

“ Scaffold of Sidney, gibbets, tombs and pyres,
How deep you bid us scorn the human race
That prays to God for light, and hates His fires ! ”

For this reason you must be careful not to let them know there have been cheerful moments in my life. They only like revelations that repeat the previous revelation, and therefore teach them nothing. My ethical message is that good-temper is well-nigh the only virtue, and bad temper well-nigh the only sin ; and they would rather die than hear it. The editor who returned my story to punish me for trying to exercise my legal rights in Trafalgar Square had returned a previous satire on the anarchists, on the ground that anarchy was too serious a matter for ridicule. The one thing anarchists fear is ridicule. The lunatic who killed a miserable empress made it his one request that he should not be dealt with as a lunatic, a request respectfully complied with to please a neurotic emperor. The Earthmen expect every prophet to behave like the last prophet. If the last prophet has raised an army for the conquest of half the earth, his successor must raise an

army too. If the last prophet had nowhere to lay his head, his successor must sleep on the Thames Embankment to be genuine. But the supreme rule is that a prophet must never smile. If he playfully tells fishermen to become fishers of men ; if he answers a request to destroy a village by describing the petitioners as " Sons of Thunder," or calls the most impulsive and unstable of his followers " The Rock," these touches of humour and irony must be invested with the solemnity in which he recognised his deadliest foe. In the same way, if he leaves off working miracles, because he has found that the mobs drawn by the husks of spiritualism only turn and rend him when he offers them the pearls of the Spirit, then miracles must be made his chief claim to reverence, and miracles must be invented in his honour.

I can work miracles. I have worked one or two in private as an experiment. I could work miracles to-morrow that would bring the slaves of superstition round me in swarms. The natives of Nigeria credited me with supernatural powers, and so would the natives of England, if I would let them. I could make as many dollars as Mrs. Eddy, if I consented not to smile. I prefer to smile. I have more faith in smiles than in miracles as a means of redemption for the human race. I am going to smile now. I may even smile at America ; and if America doesn't like it, so much the worse for America.

I smiled at America once before. When I set up in business as a publisher I put this notice in my first book, " Copyright, except in the United States of America, Hayti, San Domingo and other Negro republics." That smile did more good than all the diatribes of Charles Dickens. These notes may enjoy copyright in the United States.

My first attempt to found the Order of Genius was made soon after my return from Greece. It was made in

conjunction with my friend Lancelot Cranmer Byng and his brother Hugh, both men of genius of that erratic type which finds it so difficult to produce works like "The Scarlet Pimple" and "The Bugs of the Limberlost." A sympathiser who did not actively participate was the Honourable Ruadri Erskine, who had achieved fame as editor of a paper called the *Whirlwind*. Whistler drew for the *Whirlwind*, and my most precious autograph is a note I received from him at Cardiff, signed with the famous butterfly :

" 21 Cheyne Walk,
" Chelsea.

" DEAR SIR,

" I am charmed with your letter. When you run up to town, come and see me.

" (Insect)."

His "Gentle Art of Making Enemies" elicited one of the half-dozen reviews I have written. It brought me a copy of the *Whirlwind*. As the editor affected a tone of inordinate egoism my acknowledgment ran in the same vein :—" Why have you sent me your paper ? Do you expect me to read it ? I never read any papers except those I write for, and only my own writings in them."

My two friends and I now agreed to start a co-operative society of poets in Horham Hall, near Dunmow, a Tudor mansion surrounded by a moat, and reputed to be haunted by the ghost of Queen Elizabeth. The post-war house-hunter may be interested to hear that we rented this palace furnished for £100 a year, the furniture including an unknown Gainsborough and a superb pair of Charles I fire-dogs, whose value was first revealed to the landlord by my accomplished friends. If they hadn't been poets they would have bought them first. Alas ! You will anticipate the end of this brief

honeymoon of art when you learn that an Eve was admitted into our Paradise. My elder friend was already a Benedict, a part not easily reconciled with that of a Benedictine. Another character in Genesis was impersonated by the neighbouring Countess of Warwick, who broke in upon our privacy in a coach and four, bringing with her a brother of Queen Mary's. It was hardly in feminine nature to withstand such temptations. My friends relapsed into the slough of fashion, and I fled back to the Temple. One of the neighbours, by the way, was old Sir Walter Gilbey, an extremely good sort. We used to take a wicked pleasure in going into London restaurants and calling for a bottle of Gilbey's Borgia claret. The waiter invariably went in quest of it, and came back with the respectful message that their last bottle had just gone. As you are a foreigner I must explain that Gilbey's wines are the most trustworthy in the market, and I drink them regularly.

Lancelot Cranmer Byng made a perfect host, and I remember my many visits to him since as bright spots of sunshine among the clouds. Our friendship was only threatened by one mutually discreditable incident, which I have sworn never to relate, except to you and the ——Company.

Byng had taken advantage of my absence in Nigeria to found the International Hoax League, of European celebrity. This infamous association, which consisted chiefly of him and myself, was long a baffling mystery to Fleet Street. Respectable journals used to receive printed notices announcing the coming out of newspapers under the patronage of the German Emperor, and the establishment of Chinese Guilds to civilise the foreign devils; and dispatch reporters to purely fictitious addresses in search of further information which wasn't forthcoming. They complained of it

sometimes. The Guild of the Luscious Nectarine aroused the darkest suspicions in the mind of Henry Labouchere. It was, and is, a carefully chosen body. Admission to it is by examination, and no one has yet passed the ordeal. Our friend Alfonso Toft of the Chelsea Arts Club, now painter-in-ordinary to Viscount Northcliffe, came nearest to success, but he broke down at the final test. This is varied according to the caprice of the examiners. In his case it was to perform a Taoist miracle by walking through the wall of the examination-room. He received honourable mention only. If you would like to join the Guild, let me know. The examinations are held every ten years.

In my absence my friends had been skilfully exploiting the psychical renown of Horham Hall, and had made many converts to Sir Conan Doyle's beliefs. The most striking phenomenon concerned the key of a small lumber-room half-way up the tower. These hyenas in human form used to marshal groups of earnest truth-seekers into the upper chamber of the tower, and solemnly place this key outside the door. Another hyena next stole up from below, and restored the key to its place, the transaction being credited to the ghost of Queen Elizabeth. Why her late Majesty's spirit should have set so much store by this particular key wasn't explained. You don't have to explain things to people like that. No hyena in his senses thinks of it. The psychical world of London was profoundly stirred by these marvels. Horham Hall leaped into fame. Drawing-room meetings were held under the auspices of a well-known novelist (not me) to hear accounts of them, the hyenas themselves being called as witnesses.

In the midst of the excitement I turned up from Africa. The hyenas, carried away by their triumph, presumed to treat me as if I were Sir Conan Doyle.

This was treacherous. It was also foolish, because I wasn't a psychical expert. When they led me to the ghostly door, and showed me the enchanted key, with assurances that if it were removed by human hands it would be instantly brought back by Queen Elizabeth, I at once took it off and locked it up in my portmanteau, where her Majesty allowed it to remain for the rest of my stay.

It doesn't do to trifle with a revengeful man with many homicides upon his soul. I resolved to repay treachery by treachery, and I secretly denounced the chief hyena to a mutual friend, F——, at one time hon. secretary of the Psychical Research Society. I am not sure how far he had been deceived by Byng, but at all events he planned a diabolical vengeance to which I willingly became a party. We went to dine with him at his house in John Street, Mayfair, said to be the one assigned to Becky Sharpe by Thackeray. A youth whose name escapes me was of the party, and the plot was for F—— to pretend to hypnotise him after dinner, and then fail to awaken him, thereby striking consternation into the archdeceiver. The plot worked well up to a certain point, and Byng was becoming much excited, when the hypnotised youth, unable to keep his countenance, woke up. The disappointed mesmerist thereupon had an unhappy inspiration. Feigning to be overcome by his exertions he suddenly cast himself on the floor, simulating a hysterical fit so admirably that I confess I was deceived myself for a moment. The deluded Byng bent over him with most unhyena-like solicitude, loosened his collar, and took off his necktie; while I administered the contents of a decanter of toast-water, prepared beforehand, till Byng held my hand, exclaiming in stricken tones: "He has swallowed a tumbler-full of raw brandy!" Things were at this point when the door was suddenly thrown

open, and two perfect strangers walked in with dramatic effect.

The new-comers were F——'s brother and sister-in-law, Lord and Lady D——. Lord D—— was a Lord-in-waiting to King Edward VII, in attendance at Buckingham Palace, and not having a town house at the moment he was staying with his Countess under his brother's roof. They had been out to dinner and to the theatre; and F—— had omitted to let them know of his proceedings in their absence, which they weren't likely to approve, and had equally failed to let us know they were staying with him. They had come in towards midnight, and their ears being greeted with wild shrieks from the drawing-room, they had burst in to find their relation on his back on the floor, apparently in convulsions, with three doubtful men hovering over him. There have been duller scenes on the stage.

I had to take the burden of the situation on myself, as F—— wouldn't give up his joke; and it was rather delicate work to pacify his relations, as I diagnosed they must be, without undeceiving Byng. In answer to Lord D——'s justifiable demand for an explanation, I murmured that F—— had been trying to hypnotise one of us, and the effort had been rather too much for him. Lord D——, who had every reason to regard me as an adventurer of the lowest class, sternly retorted, "Has he been hypnotising you, or have you been hypnotising him?" Lady D—— next urged him to go for a doctor, which he hastened off to do. F——, feigning a still more violent spasm, sprang to his feet, and rushed out of the room to stop him, leaving us to face the indignation of Lady D——, whose views on spiritualist quackery were of course those of the Roman Church. I shall always admire the courage with which her ladyship rebuked us. After one scathing

glance, which made me wish there were a trapdoor beneath my feet, she exclaimed, "Why, you haven't even opened the window! Are you *men*?" And she advanced across the room, and flung it open, to our shame; although it wasn't clear to me how the action could benefit the sufferer, who was by this time in the street.

There incredible events had happened. Lord D—— had reached a doctor's doorway and pulled the bell, before his brother could overtake him and disclose the true state of affairs. They darted back into the house, leaving the unfortunate doctor to descend into the street and find it empty of patients. He may not have suspected that the runaway ring was given by a Lord-in-waiting fresh from the immediate presence of his Sovereign. The International Hoax League was a body exerting a very great influence. The League of Nations often reminds me of it.

The return of the revellers eased the situation, as far as I was concerned. Lady D—— vanished from the scene, and shortly afterwards Byng was induced to take flight in a state of torturing remorse. For once a human hyena got its deserts. He had his revenge next morning when I went over to his side, and gave the show away. I thought F——'s afterthought was intended to deceive me as well. Perhaps I was a little sore under the merited castigation I had received from his family. Anyway we put our heads together, and concocted a letter to F——, criticising his acrobatic display from the expert standpoint of the International Hoax League, and falsely insinuating that Byng had been warned by me beforehand, and had therefore been deceiver instead of deceived. This brought the retort discourteous from our injured friend; to which we responded by entrusting a boy messenger with a poisoned arrow from Nigeria, and bidding him

to deliver it at F——'s house and come away without uttering a word. We followed this up by dispatching a cavalry officer to Aldershot, where there had recently been a ragging scandal, and whence he sent a wire to our victim, summoning him to attend a subaltern's court-martial. The harried one now realised that the League was a formidable organisation with wide ramifications and relentless activity; and he took the next train for Paris.

If it is not too intimate, I should like to tell you an anecdote of Lord D——. A youngster whom I had never met, but who was distantly related to me, entered the office of an estate agent who managed the Earl's property. Apparently the lad mentioned my name in the office. The next time Lord D—— dropped in, he called out my young kinsman, told him he was a friend of mine, and spoke to him in the kindest terms. It was an act likely to do good to a boy in the circumstances, and an act not to be forgotten.

Had I known the ——Company would want personal notes about me I should have led a very different life. I have missed chances that would make the Company mad. A highborn youth, who told me he was the grandson of a duke every time he came to see me, offered to get me into the Smart Set if I would part with the ends of my moustache. He assured me I should be quite presentable. It is true he wanted to get something out of me, but that is just the sort of awkward, unnecessary detail which a good literary agent knows how to leave out of a press note. Speaking of that reminds me that a question was once nearly asked in Parliament about my beard. I have always worn a beard out of respect for the example set by royalty; I regard a man who shaves as little better than a republican. But there is a very strong feeling

against beards in the legal profession, and I was threatened with the loss of a small temporary appointment unless I consented to assume the outward appearance of a disloyal subject. The instigator of covert rebellion against the Throne was the son of the Lord Chief Justice of England, which made it all the more serious. The South Wales Circuit took up my cause rather warmly, and my friend Judge Lloyd Morgan, who was then in the House, announced that he should make it a parliamentary matter. Think what a press note that would have made! It would have been in every paper in the United Kingdom. But the traitor thought better of it—I have no luck.

My highborn friend was in the Smart Set himself, there could be no doubt of it. He was present among the most exalted of the earth, at a famous fancy-dress ball given in Devonshire House, and he told me some of the conversation that passed there. A friend of his, whose christian name was Sarah, who added to her revenues by chaperoning young ladies blessed with the world's goods, reproached him for not having saluted one of her protégées. My friend smartly retorted, "I can't be expected to know all your lodgers, Lady Sarah." Such is the badinage exchanged in the very highest circles. Were I to reproduce it in one of my well-known novels, I should be charged in Hampstead with ignorance of good society. My witty friend called at my garret one afternoon with a dowager countess who had just been entertaining an exalted personage in her place on the Solent. They were on their way to be photographed in the Westminster Aquarium, and had I been at home I should have formed one of the group. There would have been a snapshot for the ——Company! I was pressed to go down to the Solent, as it were to tread in the very footsteps of my illustrious predecessor; perchance——

But the imagination reels! No one will believe press notes like these.

I daren't tell you half the secrets my patron confided to me about the exalted personage whom he was anxious for me to know. My "Secrets" of the magazine were poor beside them. His Royal Highness was known among his courtiers by a nickname unknown to himself. One night a youth looking round the billiard-room, and not seeing the Prince, who was just behind him, asked, "Where is ——?" His host stepped forward and blandly inquired, "Who is ——?" I forget the rest. An other story reached me from different sources. A well-known monarch now deceased had accepted an invitation from a duke and duchess to visit them at their ducal seat. The coming visit was announced in the press, triumphal arches were erected on the demesne, and all the Sunday school children in their best clothes were to attend in force. Rather late in the day the duchess sent to his Majesty, as required by etiquette, a list of the guests she proposed asking to meet him. Using the prerogative of his rank, the King returned the list with an added name. Unluckily her Grace had shortly before been playing bridge with his Majesty's other friend, who had accused her with too much justice of cheating. Her Grace's little weakness was well known—it may have accounted for her exalted guest's desire to make sure of a different partner—but then her opponent also had vulnerable spots in her own record, and it would destroy half the pleasure of meeting one's friends if remarks of that kind were too freely indulged in. The aggrieved duchess struck out the name, and sent the list back again, no doubt with suitable explanations. The fatal missive reached the Sovereign just as he was out in the garden planting a tree round which his little grandsons were dancing with innocent

joy. The evening papers had already published a full description of the charming scene, when the very unexpected news followed that his Majesty was confined to his room by a severe cold, the expected visit being postponed in consequence. The news was confirmed by a bulletin from the royal bedside signed by a court physician at the very moment his wraith was observed by numerous passers-by crossing Piccadilly Circus many miles away. It is one of the best authenticated cases of an apparition on record—probably the very best, resting as it does on medical evidence, the testimony of all the newspapers, and the archives of a great Empire. You should send this note to the occult press.

I wish I had more anecdotes about Royalty to send you. I'm sure the public would rather have them than anecdotes about me. Royalty fascinates me, not only as a descendant of kings, but also as a poet. I am a mass of contradictions. At the very time I was denouncing Queen Victoria in the school playground, I had a secret cult for her future successor. I used to stand gazing at his photograph in the shop windows, and envying my cousin on the *Britannia*. I should have been a far more sympathetic chum. Other monarchs have solicited my friendship in vain. I was almost rude to poor broken-spirited Abdul Hamid. I said I would neither see him, nor accept the Order of the Medjideh—if that is how you spell it. When I was leaving Constantinople his Grand Vizier begged me to write his Majesty a friendly letter, under cover to himself, as the Sultan thought he had offended me. I posted it in Athens and I expect there is a copy of it in the secret pigeon-holes of the Greek Foreign Office to this day.

King Constantine did offend me, but he was then only a Crown Prince. He had somewhat prematurely

informed his friends that he was going to see me on my arrival in Athens, as he wished to learn my views on Macedonia. To that I made no objection. They next came and explained to me that I must first call at his palace, and write my name in a book, after which his marshal would send me an appointment. As I attach value to my autograph, I asked why? They said it was to solicit an audience, and that these forms were prescribed by the "protocol." That drew from me the historic letter in which I pointed out to them that, while willing to wait on the Crown Prince on business, I wasn't soliciting an audience of him, but he was asking one of me. I added that no such ceremonies were in vogue at Marlborough House in similar circumstances, and that it wouldn't become me to show more deference to a foreign Prince than to the Prince of Wales. And I concluded with the observation that "literature has its protocol as well as Royalty."

The letter got about in Athens, and it became a standing joke for his intimates to go up to the Prince and ask with an innocent air, "Has Your Royal Highness seen Mr. — yet?" His father, who was a man of the world, marked his sense of the transaction by sending me a very courteous message through the Foreign Office, that he should be glad to receive me, if I hadn't taken my ticket. I admired the tact with which he left me the option. Reading this invitation as a gracious apology on behalf of his son, I thanked him and said I had taken my ticket. As soon as I got back to London he sent me the Order of the Redeemer. This put me in rather a quandary. It would have hurt the feelings of my Greek friends to send it back on the ground that I didn't want it. Besides I had told them so already, and they couldn't believe it. In that part of the world, if you want to be eccentric, it is always best to put forward a religious motive. The

boiled eye of a lamb is esteemed a choice morsel by the Greek peasant—I am giving you this as a tip, in case you ever go out there. If you are offered one, you mustn't make a face, and say—"Take that nasty thing away!" You must say—"A boiled lamb's eye! My favourite delicacy! But—alas! I am under a vow not to taste one for six months!" That will prove to them that you are a sensible man, because it is just the sort of thing they would do themselves. Accordingly I excused myself to King George's Minister in London by explaining that I had been brought up as a Plymouth Brother, and that my feelings would not allow me to accept an Order of knighthood whose name had a religious significance for me.

I am sorry now, for your sake, that I declined it. The ——Company could have billed my book as the work of a Chevalier. And there have been times when the gold cross would have come in useful.

As the tree puts forth its flowers,
Time at certain seasons dowers
Men with moments so delicious
They forget all former hours.

Magic hints that wake the mind
From the sleep that seals mankind,
Raptures, tumults, yearnings, visions,
Light that breaks upon the blind.

* * * * *

Round the seagull's rocky home
Azure waves through fretted foam
Glanced and glowed like lancet windows,
Sapphire in an ivory dome.

Every golden hour went by
Like a bead of tracery
Strung upon an Indian necklace
To enchant a sultan's eye. . . .

Holidays.

XIV

TOWARDS the close of the nineteenth century I decided to turn over a new leaf, and become respectable. For this purpose it was necessary to migrate once more to the provinces. You can't be respectable in London without losing caste; and, as you must have realised by this time, I am sensitive about my social position. I have reason to be. While I was still in Cardiff the Chief Whip, Tom Ellis, pitched on me as one of the two Liberal candidates for Bath. The other was Sir Martin Conway, the great Alpinist, who confessed to me that he was a stranger to politics, and should be glad of a colleague who would coach him. But we had still to reckon with the Liberals of Bath. I went down to interview their leader, a linendraper, I believe, and came away imagining that all was well. The sturdy democrats of Bath were not so easily satisfied. They proceeded to draft a circular bristling with the most searching questions about my political, religious and moral character, and winding up with an inquiry as to my social position. This they dispatched to a number of representative Cardiffians, all entire strangers to them, marking it private and confidential. Some of the recipients threw it into the fire. The secretary of the Trades Council, a small jobbing printer, who luckily enjoyed my patronage, felt equally indignant, but he told me he had answered it for fear of injuring me. It is hard to see what worse injury he could have done me than to make me member for Bath.

My kind old friend Lady Fanny Fitz-Wygram was the first to understand my weakness. I have met

commoners at her table, though most of them have become peers by this time, but they were barely tolerated. Generally I found myself the only untitled member of the party. My hostess, by a slip of the tongue natural in the circumstances, sometimes introduced me to her friends as "Lord———" She had been a beauty in her day, and was still something of a character. What I loved her for was that she never referred to my literary works. She didn't mistake me for a well-known novelist. She knew me simply as the only good-tempered bridge player in the Court Guide, and she made me a member of the family. I used often to drop in to dine with her and old Fitz-Wygram, who was not less kind-hearted. He was an old-fashioned Evangelical, and it was my custom to go into the library and discuss Protestant theology with him, and then repair to Lady Fanny in the drawing-room, where the conversation took a more worldly turn. On one of these occasions her ladyship apologised for not asking me to dinner for the next few days on the ground that one of the footmen was on his holiday. I said, thoughtlessly—"You needn't mind me, Lady Fanny; I'm accustomed to rough it; I can dine quite well with only one footman." She replied—"Oh, but, Mr.———, I like to be comfortable."

However, it won't do for me to tell stories against myself.

Having formed the opinion that Torquay was the most respectable place in England. I settled there in the blameless character of a villa resident. My claims to respectability were promptly recognised. Almost my first caller was a dear old retired parson, one of the most lovable men I have ever known, who took a great fancy to me. The happiness of such a man's friendship, and his wife's, did much to reconcile me to my rather strait environment. My character

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was further guaranteed by the opportune arrival of my old Circuit colleague, Woodfall, in the role of Judge of the Devonshire County Court. As I was suspected of being the coming Liberal candidate it was well for me that his brother-in-law was Lord Chancellor in the Conservative Government. I had ocular evidence of this. The Judge was an old member of the well-known Savage Club, and one Sunday night at supper he suddenly asked me—"———, are you a Savage?" I answered in an aggrieved tone—"Well, Judge, you have known me a long time; I hope you don't think so." The first half of the remonstrance caused a flash of visible relief to come into the face of a girl at the table, whose mother had recently entertained a foreign prince—I rather think the present King of the Belgians—and had clearly been hesitating as to whether I was a fit and proper person to be taken up. The very next day she sent me an invitation to dinner.

Later on she brought her daughter to my villa in a carriage and pair—we were practically next-door neighbours—to enter her for a ladies' billiard tournament, held on a miniature table in my smoking-room. The first prize was my hand in marriage, and the second my Persian cat—the one that upset poor Nat Gould. Although the tournament was open to ladies already married, plenty of people in Torquay took it quite seriously, and I had sixteen entries. Naturally I was the handicapper; an old campaigner doesn't take risks. The winner, being disqualified for the first prize, received the Persian cat instead, without objection on the part of her husband.

My first experience as a judge was at Totnes, where I sat as deputy for Woodfall. One of my judgments was reviewed by the Lord Chancellor himself. A builder had written to a local quarry owner, asking his price for slates. The quarryman's price was

14s. per 100, but in writing he carelessly added a third 0. The overjoyed builder rushed off to have the document stamped as an agreement, and then ordered the number he required. The next time he met the vendor in the street he slapped his breast pocket, and said—"I have you on the hip!" And when the bill came in he tendered payment at the rate of 14s. per 1,000.

The plaintiff's solicitor offered no observations, and I had to conduct the case. I asked the defendant if 14s. per 100 was the usual price of slates in the neighbourhood, and he admitted it was. I asked him if he believed the plaintiff really meant to let him have slates for 14s. per 1,000, and he swore he had believed it. I next invited him, as a keen business man, to explain why he hadn't ordered the entire output of the quarry for years to come in order to sell it at a profit of 900 per cent, and make himself rich for life; and his response was a sheepish grin. I then found as a fact that he knew perfectly well what the plaintiff meant to say; pronounced a Latin exorcism, and exercising my equitable jurisdiction, ordered the registrar of the Court to amend the document by striking out the final 0. After which I gave judgment for the plaintiff.

This daring decision so perturbed the mind of Judge Woodfall, as a new-comer to the Bench, that he privately submitted it to Lord Halsbury, who gave it his full approval. It also earned me a gratifying press note in a London paper, headed—"The Law not an Ass."

I passed two very quiet years in Torquay, taking no part whatever in public life, unless you count a speech at a yachting dinner, and another at a meeting of Devon journalists. In one of them I sketched out the plot of a highly sensational local novel, calculated

to attract visitors to the town, and offered it as a gift to the Torquay Advertising Association, if that was its name. The Torquay paper thoughtlessly appealed to two well-known novelists living in the place to carry out this suggestion, thereby making me two more enemies for life.

Towards the end of my stay I was astonished to receive an offer of the Mayoralty. The outgoing Mayor, a staunch Conservative, pressed me to succeed him, telling me that the Council were prepared to accept his recommendation. I inquired what it would cost me to serve the town in that capacity, and he said £500. I was sorry to have to decline, as I should have been entitled as Mayor to give a fancy dress children's ball; and I only taste true happiness when I am at a children's party, or when my life is in danger.

It doesn't seem to me uninstrucive to compare my career in Torquay with my very different career in Cardiff.

I lived in Cardiff for six years, devoting a large part of my time to the public service. I did something to educate the public on important questions, and to promote the true interest of all classes by an early recognition of the claims of Labour to fair consideration, on the one hand, while on the other, I endeavoured to recommend to the Labour Party that policy of comprehension and that statesmanlike outlook which it has now adopted. I urged upon the Corporation views so entirely reasonable that they were accepted in the end without a dissenting voice, and were endorsed by the House of Lords. I completed my services to the townspeople, with the cordial approval of every section of them, by extricating their Corporation at the last moment from an incredible blunder, and thereby handing them back the sum of £5,000 a year. Their acknowledgment was to refuse me a seat in their

Council, and to let me be driven from their midst without the smallest token of sympathy, without one word of thanks or of regret.

I spent just two years in Torquay, leading, so far as my neighbours knew, a completely selfish life. I did not lift a finger on behalf of any cause, good or bad. I only opened my mouth twice, on festival occasions. I treated the Corporation and the inhabitants, outside a small social circle, with more indifference than if they had been Chinese. And they showed their appreciation by offering me the highest honour in their power to bestow, and begging me to rule over them.

There is nothing in all this out of the commonplace. It throws no new light on human nature. It is in the main a question of dollars. Bernard Shaw, or one of his characters, somewhere says that a man must learn to help himself before he tries to help others. Bonar Law acted on that principle. It is a piece of undeserved luck that he happens to be an honest man. The Gospels are its best illustration, perhaps. The exceptions to the rule are those whose fathers have helped themselves, honestly or otherwise. Charles Dickens puts their case into the mouth of a character in *David Copperfield*: "For my part I would sooner any day be knocked down by a man who had Blood in him, than be picked up by a man who hadn't." Nowadays yellow Blood is better than blue, that is the only difference.

There is not one business undertaking that could be run on this principle for a twelvemonth. A bank, a railway, or a factory that put up its responsible posts for auction would come to grief very quickly. It is the same with governments. The nations that are in grief to-day are so because they acted on the principle. Most nations are always in grief because they have always acted on it. Humanity as a whole is in grief

from this one cause. This is my political message, if I have one. While I write, England is staggering under an enormous debt, much of it due to sheerly stupid expenditure. You, at least, know by this time that I could save her many millions a year. Were I to approach any constituency in the country with an offer to do so, I should instantly be met with the question,—“ How much will you pay for the privilege ?” That question was put to me lately by a Labour leader. Were I to approach any one privately the question would be, “ What is your claim on us ?” Those, in fact, were the words of a man who has every prospect of becoming Prime Minister before very many years. He had buttonholed me in the street, and as I wanted to get away without hurting his feelings, I had the happy thought of telling him that his party had refused me justice. Sir ——— recollected an engagement inside of thirty seconds.

This is no grievance of mine. I am less interested in financial questions than in any others. The grievance, if there be one, is that of the only class that has no vote, I mean the future generation. I only make this point because it is the easiest for the Earthmen to grasp. They know they are being robbed, and they don't like it; but they would rather be robbed any day by a man who had helped himself than be enriched by a man who hadn't.

By way of contrast, let me cite one case in which my advice was asked, and taken. On the eve of my departure for Africa, in 1901, the Hardwicke Society was holding a full dress debate on Women's Suffrage in the hall of the Middle Temple. The leading women were to be present, and Justice Darling, supported by Pember Reeves of New Zealand, was to speak on their behalf. At the last moment the chairman of the Hardwicke found no one bold enough to take the

other side, and he appealed to me. I spoke accordingly but I artfully prefaced my remarks by pretending that I was a secret sympathiser, who had only consented to play the part of devil's advocate in order to make a debate. The women took this seriously, and I was asked to address the annual meeting of all the Suffrage societies, with Lady Frances Balfour in the chair. I had been moderately opposed to the movement up to that time, not taking it much more seriously than did the rest of the public. It now struck me that if the women were willing to accept me as a leader they must be a good deal better qualified to exercise the franchise than most men; and I decided that they should have it. I told them in my speech that they were being humbugged by their nominal supporters; that no one believed them to be in earnest; and that if they wanted the vote they must copy the tactics of the working men who had gained it by breaking down the railings of Hyde Park. These ideas were so novel and surprising that when I suggested their rousing public attention by a mild procession along the Thames Embankment, there was laughter in the room. But there were some there who didn't laugh. That little seed struck root. It grew before long into an agitation which was damaged by some hysteria, but which has made an era in the history of the world far more momentous than the "great" war.

Mentioning the Hardwicke reminds me of one of poor J. K. Stephen's brilliant paradoxes, which I heard at one of its meetings. The motion before the house was that Parnell, who had just passed through the Divorce Court, ought to retire from public life. J. K. S. expressed his surprise that Parnell should be called upon "to leave that public life for which he has shown himself to be so eminently qualified, for that private life in which he has been as conspicuous a failure."

Meanwhile my real business in Torquay went unsuspected by anyone there. I was leading a double life. I was paying income tax for the first time at nearly forty years of age. I had helped myself, you see. I had invented a new form of fiction, which proved popular, and if London had contained a firm like Messrs. Duncan, would have made a fortune for us both. For the first time I had secured that leisure and seclusion without which I cannot do good work. I took advantage of the respite to set about my real business on earth.

I am tempted to quote here Seeley's inspired comment on the inspired saying: "Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." Prophets had been martyred before, in other places than Jerusalem, but this was the first revelation that the spirit which furnishes houses for Shakespeare and Carlyle as soon as they are dead is the same spirit which denies the living Shakespeare and the living Carlyle a garret in which to work. Shakespeare's passionate lament over the means by which he was compelled to "help himself" has not yet touched the heart of anyone of all his readers. Much sympathy is felt with the fowls whose crowing mangled Carlyle's brain. But I have no hope that the people who believe that they have won the war will listen to words like these. It is money they are after. It is as profiteers that I desire to reason with them. I am not a proselytiser. It is not my business to preach the worship of God to those who honestly believe in Mammon.

My object in trying to found the Order of Genius may seem to you indistinguishable from my old friend Ben Tillet's in founding the Dockers' Union. I am not so ambitious. I take much lower ground. I don't venture to contend that Shakespeares are entitled to a living wage. The man whom I am trying to convert

is the profiteering slave-owner. The slave-owner, if he is a practical man, will tell you that a certain minimum of starch and other proteids is as necessary to the working of the human machine as coal is to a steam engine. It is a nicely adjusted balance. Put in so many pounds of proteids and you get out so many pounds of cotton. Put in less proteid, and you get less cotton.

This economic law applies equally to the artist. Give him so much in the shape of joy, and you get out so much in the shape of art. Now there is money in art—that is my whole point. There is no better investment than a well-chosen picture gallery. Even as a gamble it is cheap and amusing. Why pay fancy prices for first editions which you can't sell at a profit, when with less money you can buy a copyright, manuscript and all, which may prove a little gold mine? All that is wanted is for some one to set the fashion.

It is remarkable how few men have cared to be known as friends of genius. Alexander the Great, Augustus, Charlemagne, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Louis XIV and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar nearly exhaust the list. It reads like a fable that King George III should have offered a pension, equal to £1,000 a year in these days, to Jean Jacques Rousseau. He can't have known what he was doing. The last pension given to a man of genius about whom I knew something in this country was given to him because he had gone out of his mind. As long as there was any chance of his giving value for the money the pension was withheld. As soon as he had succumbed under his misery he was offered a comfortable asylum. That is altruism. I want to persuade people to be more selfish.

Take my own case. My brain is a machine which works well or ill according to the attention it receives.

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Place it in a warm, perfectly quiet room, and leave it alone long enough, and it will turn out wonderful writing. Place it in a noisy room, bang at the door, drag it up and downstairs, and set it to grind out advertisements in the shape of popular fiction, and its output will be scribble like these notes.

And now let me forget the walruses and woolly bears for a moment and scribble a few press notes for posterity. Tell the ——Company to put them away in a cellar, and look at them at the end of a hundred years.

In the Pot it is called Scum :
In the Sea it is called Foam :
In the Sky it is called Light.

Thought.

XV

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

THE science of psycho-analysis, if it be a science, should explain to you how difficult it is for me to write seriously about myself. After fifty years of stern self-suppression it has become as painful for me to speak in my natural voice as it is for a Chinese woman to walk with her feet unbandaged. My inducement to write these notes is the hope that they may benefit the Order of Genius.

The true story of my life is the story of my struggle to learn the Will of my Creator and fulfil it. I was born in an age which saw the hand of the Creator shatter the temples of superstition with the lightnings of science. At the age of sixteen I was called to reconstruct the broken bridge of faith, and interpret the new revelation added to the Book of Life. I have before me the boyish vow by which I gave myself to the service of Truth, a word whose meaning I apprehended after twenty years.

Such is the simplest explanation of my many failures in so many subsidiary pursuits. My whole heart was not in them, but only in the pursuit of Verihood. While I was grinding the lenses by which I kept myself alive, my eyes were always turned away from them to the horizon of the universe.

From the beginning I was faced with the fact that I was enlisted in the most unpopular of all causes, and one in which I must not expect a single sympathiser. If I have lived to write the only outspoken utterances that have been well received by the accredited organs

of science and of spiritualism, of orthodoxy and free-thought, it is because I have led a solitary life outside all their camps. The persecution I suffered in my boyhood and early manhood taught me that I must lead a double life, or perish with my task undone.

My reverence for my vocation, and knowledge of my own ignorance, alike restrained me from any premature utterance of half formed views. My design was to spend the first half of my life in learning, and the rest in teaching. I looked forward to a time when I should be able to shut myself in some remote asylum, and devote ten years to the production of a serious work. Such were my secret dreams when I was taking scholarships and refusing seats in Parliament at the age of twenty-one.

There is, perhaps, no university in Europe or America that does not profess that its highest ambition is to educate men like me. There are few that do not possess endowments intended for my benefit. There can be none without some chair which I could fill to our mutual advantage. Every one of them has always treated me as its natural enemy. If I have been compared with Bacon and with Shelley, their experience has indeed been mine in this respect. Bacon's own words warned me not to waste my youthful years in the academic mill, when my friends put it to me that I had only to hold out my hand to pluck the prizes of the undergraduate. I was too well aware by that time how Themistocles fares at the hands of jealous vanity. After the public voice had decreed me the laurels of Socrates and Bacon and Darwin and Carlyle, I knocked at the doors of their commentators, and was refused admission. My commentators will be more welcome—at the end of a hundred years.

It is a law of the prophet's, as it is of the artist's, brain that it shall not be wholly under his own control.

I was burdened with a double disability. The fairies at my christening suffocated me with too many gifts. My temptations have not been those which have so often led genius astray. A cautious banker, making inquiries of a youth in my household, was told that I took no pleasures—that I worked like a slave. Years afterwards I received a quaint testimonial to the same effect from an old native judge in the heart of Africa. The sirens that have lured me astray have been intellectual faculties craving for exercise, and sympathies that would not wait for satisfaction. I have hoped and believed that no one of my adventures among the Earthmen has been altogether in vain. I have gathered as much from experience as from books. And I should like to think I had sometimes done good to others by the way.

My holiday from grinding lenses in Torquay enabled me to concentrate my mind with an intensity which may remind you of Buddha under his tree. It was as if my brain caught fire from the friction of continuous study. I transcribe the only egoistic jotting I can remember making since I was a boy: "Date, 4 May, 1900. I seemed at last to find light bursting on my mind—to hear the music of the spheres." The notes that follow are from another book, and merely illustrate the gradual ripening of my literary designs.

"DIVISION.—The work is an essay on knowledge. But we seek knowledge for its use to us, its bearing on life. Hence the Book of Knowledge is followed by the Book of Life.

"STANDPOINT.—All sciences may be treated as branches of one—e.g. of Numbers, Pythagoras. Of Anthropology, Protagoras. A circle in which we must choose some *point de depart*. . . .

"Simplest starting-point is *words*, to me. I may

be quite wrong. . . . I shall plunge in and seize the link of the revolving chain that comes uppermost."

The word I was looking for was offered me within a few months by the Swedish chemist, Nobel, who died about this time, bequeathing me a legacy to enable me to serve mankind.

Meanwhile the bolt had fallen. The day of the author was over. The Pale Person had issued his fiat by the mouth of his advertising agents, and I found myself pacing my little garden, repeating the words of Henry IV on the eve of Ravallac's stroke: "All this must be quitted." I returned to London, where I found every avenue barred to me. I sought distraction by taking an active part in the general election, writing a paper and speaking in about twenty constituencies. As soon as it was all over, I put down my name at the Colonial Office for a legal appointment in some region where I could study primitive man at first hand.

While I was waiting for employment I found one morning on my breakfast table a paper containing an account of Nobel's will. I was arrested by the word "Idealist," and before the breakfast had been cleared away I had begun work on "The New Word."

Nobel had helped himself to £2,000,000 by providing mankind with a new and deadlier means of mutual destruction. Perhaps it was remorse that moved him to bequeath his riches in the form of five annual prizes to the value of £12,000 or £15,000 each for services to mankind. Among these the prize in literature infinitely transcended the others in importance; indeed the others have almost dropped out of the public mind. This bequest was for "the most remarkable work of an idealist tendency."

Nobel could hardly have made me his legatee more distinctly if he had pointed me out by name. Had he

employed me to draw his will I could not have found words more to my own satisfaction. But I could have saved him from the fatal blunder of entrusting the award of a prize for extreme individualism to a collective body, and constituting an academy the trustees of a bequest to prophets. The only possible chance of such a legacy occasionally reaching the rightful legatee would have been if a series of individuals qualified by courage and a strong sense of justice had each in turn had the sole voice in its bestowal. To do the Swedish Academy justice, their first impulse was to decline a task so conspicuously outside their scope. They only accepted it on the condition that their awards should not be questioned.

Nobel had equally failed to provide payment for his trustees. On this and other grounds his will was rewritten by the Swedish Government. The legacies were cut down by about one-half. A great building was put up in Stockholm, salaried officials were appointed, and among other things an international library was formed containing almost every form of literature except remarkable books of an idealist tendency. The provision that the literary prize should go to a work produced during the current year silently went by the board, as did the word "idealist." The Swedish Academy treated the endowment of the prophet as a retiring pension for men of letters of national or European celebrity, irrespective of the character of their work. On the appearance of my essay, which was strongly resented in the Swedish Press, they made a new departure by giving the prize to an obscure professor of metaphysics for a book of the kind that professors of metaphysics write. But that was a solitary exception. At that time the King of Sweden was a member of the Academy; the Swedes were beginning to lean on Germany as their shield against Russia;

and the German Emperor took a very active interest in these awards. A Polish friend informed me that when a Polish novelist received the prize it was cut down by half, at the Emperor's instance, because his novels dealt unfavourably with the Germans in Poland. I thought I could trace the same influence in an award nearer home. However, I have no reason to think the Imperial intervention was at all needed to exclude my book from its reward.

Although saddened by the knowledge that my chances of receiving my legacy were less than the tentmaker Paul's of receiving a Sabine farm from Nero, I nevertheless made up my mind to deserve it. It is not easy for me to write anything that shall not be remarkable. My artistic conscience will not let me pour new wine into old bottles. The task now set me was the easiest and most delightful I could have asked. I wrote "The New Word" in a fortnight. I had been composing it for twenty-five years. .

I was weak enough to offer it to one or two publishers. The Swedish Government had added a clause to Nobel's will requiring the legatee to produce his work in print. In their eyes no one who had not helped himself to a hundred pounds had any right to help mankind. The first publisher I interviewed was the head of a once great business which broke down in his hands. He corrected me for saying Andrónicus instead of Andronicus. I had been corresponding on the subject with my friend Professor Tyrrell of Dublin; but I accepted the correction meekly, and excused myself on the ground that I had lately been in Greece, where I had fallen into the habit of pronouncing Greek names as the Greeks pronounced them. However, I saw it was all over with the book in that quarter.

I carried the manuscript about with me into many

countries for the next five years. I was provided with the means of printing it by my mother's death. I revised it in Switzerland, and my friend, Professor Roget, helped me to see it through the University Press in Geneva. I advertised in the *Publishers' Circular* for a house in London to sell it on commission, and received an answer from an obscure publisher. I applied to the Authors' Society, of which I was then a member, for information as to his stability, and was informed that nothing was known against him. The slightest inquiry would have disclosed the fact that he had long been hopelessly insolvent. The moment he had sold out the first edition he disappeared carrying with him nearly half my worldly wealth. The Society has never shown any consciousness of having wronged me. I refer, of course, not to the loss of a few hundred pounds, but to the fatal blow thus dealt to a book in the first moment of its welcome. My friend, William Archer, devoted two columns to it while it was still anonymous.

Three more years passed before I could find another publisher willing to give his imprint to a work that had suffered so disastrous an eclipse. I then printed a second edition. My old friend, Harry Jones, found a copy lying on the floor of the *Daily Chronicle* office, picked it up, and wrote a column and a half of generous eulogy on the leader page. It was too late. The publisher told me this notice had sold ten copies. After twelve years the book is once more out of print; and I shall not reprint it.

The second edition attracted the notice of my good friend, Gerald Stanley Lee, through whose kind offices "The New Word" was published in America. To J. B. Kerfoot and many an unknown reviewer in that foreign country I am under a debt which cannot be repaid. I am ignorant of what has happened to the

book since then. It is, I fear, increasingly the habit of your public to regard every book as a book of the season, or no book at all, and the English public is following the example. The day of the classic is over. I was just beginning to hear from would-be translators in France and Germany when war broke out. I now hear it is being translated into Dutch and Norwegian. But I should think that no book yet written would be harder to translate accurately.

I have taken this opportunity of explaining to certain correspondents why it is that I have not been able to carry on the work begun in "The New Word." I meant it as a foreword, and as an advertisement. I stated this as frankly as seemed to me becoming, both in the work itself, and in the preface to the American edition. Knowing full well what likelihood there was of my receiving Nobel's legacy, I felt bound to intimate that my going on must depend on the goodwill of my readers. Twenty years, perhaps the best twenty years, of my life have now been lost to the world. I am still, what I always have been, one of the unemployed. Like Milton's angels, my part is to stand and wait. During an illusory respite shortly before the war I sat down to write "The Horoscope of Man." Again my brain caught fire. Wonderful glimpses began opening on every side. Sometimes I had to lay down the pen in sheer amazement at the things which flowed from it, not at the dictation of the lying spirits of the dead, but of the Spirit which prompts every true work of an idealist tendency, the Muse of prophecy.

The respite proved illusory. I am again leading a double life. I have gone back to grinding lenses. My latest lenses have been those through which the future generation are being trained to look on life, the lens of the Latin grammar and the lens of Commercial Geography. I am now on the books of the Board of

Education. But the Board of Education does not know me as the author of "The New Word." It does not even know me by my name. Fulfilling already one prediction in the book the ——— Company are handling, it knows me only by a number. Well might I write in the preface to that book that, though it would strike the reader as satire, my experience was that my predictions were only too speedily fulfilled.

Now you know why I have asked you to put these press notes in the cellar. Posterity may be interested in the state of education in England in this year of grace. It will learn a good deal in-learning that the Board of Education knew me as 20/1631.

In that town what flat-topped towers,
Minaret or mosque between,
Where the Dragon standard lowers,
Flaunts defiance to our Queen!
In those temples what fell rites,
Blood upon the altar screen;
Dervishes and kedeshites
Dance before their Gods obscene:
Where the Cross was never seen.
Who shall tell
What dark hell
Seethes in secret Khandarin.

Men of what wild Tartar breeds
Ride between those gateways tall,
Where the lake with yellow reeds
Bathes the white foot of the wall. . . .

The Yellow Dragon Flower.

XVI

THE African Society had just been founded in honour of Mary Kingsley, a woman of genius whose trips to the West Coast revealed it for the first time to its owners. Chamberlain and Asquith jointly laid the foundation stones of this sepulchre of a prophet, and publicly called for further prophets to take up Mary Kingsley's work. It would be superfluous to tell you how they received my acceptance of their invitation.

My name had been on the books of the Colonial Office nearly a year when I received a letter from an old friend and fellow-student, J. M. Gover, telling me that the new Chief Justice of Northern Nigeria had asked him to recommend a barrister as legal assessor to a Resident of a Province. Some of the military Residents had singular methods of administering justice. One sent a report to the Chief Justice in these terms: "Six men were brought before me charged with highway robbery. Five of them pleaded guilty. One pleaded not guilty. I ordered him a dozen lashes, after which he pleaded guilty." Torture not being a recognised part of judicial procedure in these days, the Chief Justice had obtained permission to look out for a barrister or two to send out with the rank of Third Class Resident. My friend apologised for offering me a post so very much beneath what my professional qualifications and standing entitled me to receive. The Colonial Office itself was good enough to convert it into a Second Class Residency of its own accord. Meanwhile I was interviewed by the High Commissioner, Sir Frederick D. Lugard, at the Royal Societies Club.

Sir Frederick Lugard is famous for courage, but I doubt if he had often done a braver thing than in giving me this appointment. My reputation was such that a Member of Parliament went about openly saying: "If — goes out there, he will give the show away." Sir Frederick felt himself obliged to stipulate that I should not publish anything about my experiences in Nigeria. After four months' experience of me he withdrew the embargo, and very kindly accepted the dedication of my prospective volume in advance, merely stipulating that it should contain no eulogy of himself. A slight infringement of that prohibition brought me a mild rebuke.

" Government House,
 " Northern Nigeria.
 " *January 23rd, 1903.*

" DEAR —,

" Thanks for your letter of December 13th, and for the two copies of the *Morning Post* which you sent. I do not know what to say about the second article, 'The Work.' . . . I thought you had promised to keep my name out of print altogether, and I would have wished it so. Still I cannot but be glad and proud that you have formed such an estimate of myself and my work as this article expresses, and I thank you most heartily for the appreciation—I had almost written 'the exaggeration'—which prompted your kind description of me.

" I greatly wish you could look in here and see the new capital, 'Zungeru'; I think it would astonish and fascinate you. Much progress has been made since you left. Lokoja looks a different place, and new provinces have been added. I hope I shall see you in England this summer and be able to tell you what has been done. I am most glad to hear that you have lost all traces of fever. I shall read the story in the *Fortnightly* when it arrives with the greatest pleasure.

" Very sincerely yours,
 " F. D. LUGARD."

On arriving in the heart of Africa for the first time I found myself, not legal assessor to some old coast hand, but Resident of the two provinces of Lokoja and Kabba, combined into one for the first and, I believe, the last time. Something like chaos prevailed. The country had only been taken over by the Colonial Office a year before ; and it was being run by a wholly inadequate staff. The High Commissioner showed me one of his dispatches to the Secretary of State in which he informed him that I had twenty times as much work as I could do. Malaria was constantly bowling men over. My post had been filled by a series of eight transient deputies during the previous six months, and I found it in charge of C. L. Temple, who had come from the Amazon a fortnight in advance of me. Temple acted as my assistant till he was given a province. He ultimately rose to be Lieutenant-Governor of Northern Nigeria ; and he has been kind enough to tell me that my views on native administration have guided him throughout his career. As there is still some difference of opinion on the subject, I wish I had the ear of more of those entrusted with the welfare of backward races.

I reached Lokoja at nine o'clock on Christmas Eve, 1901, and seeing that one of my fellow-voyagers out was disposed to treat me as a new chum, and assume the direction of affairs, I took over the province from Temple at seven the next morning. He can afford to have it known that his first fortnight as an administrator in Africa had not been quite free from mistakes. Among the mass of documents which piled my table dealing with cases of unpunished murders and kidnappings in the interior during the past year or so, I found an urgent and confidential wire from H. E. (to use the official abbreviation of His Excellency) four hundred miles away up the Niger, asking me to try to avoid dealing with any military cases for the present,

as a sentence passed on a soldier by my acting predecessor had caused serious trouble. I also found that the Lady Superintendent of the Freed Slaves Home was in a state of acute distress—I learned later that she had been on the point of resigning in despair. The Home was under the Resident's direction; Temple had been hesitating over an application for fourpence to buy a cooking-pot, and the children were dying like flies for want of food and attention.

It comforts me to remember that my first official act was to visit the Freed Slaves Home, and to hand the poor Superintendent a cheque on my own bank, telling her to get whatever was wanted, and let me know when it was spent. (I need scarcely say that H.E. saw me reimbursed.) I told her to look on me as her assistant rather than her official superior; and she thoroughly deserved my confidence. The Home contained women as well as children, all rescued from slave caravans. The women were usually disposed of in marriage, and I acted as marriage-broker. A Hausa soldier would come to me with a note from his commanding officer certifying him to be a man of good character and able to support a wife, or another wife, as the case might be. I then turned over a corner of the note and scribbled: "To Lady Superintendent, Freed Slaves Home.—Please let bearer have one wife." The wooer carried this to the Home, and selected a damsel according to his fancy. I don't think there were many refusals. The bridegroom was required to make a morgengift in advance in the shape of a pound, which the bride invariably spent on a gorgeous wedding dress. The happy couples came before me to be made one. I asked the bridegroom: "Abdullah, do you want this woman for your wife?" and received a manly response. I next put a similar question to Fatima, who sometimes shyly hung her head and made no answer,

on which I would say: "Very well, if you don't want him, you shan't have him." This drew a startled "Yes!" I then addressed them a brief allocution on the reciprocal duties of the married state, and dismissed them to live happily ever after.

My kind-hearted Chief will surely pardon me the tardy confession that the one point in which I failed to carry out his orders whole-heartedly was in connection with the freed children. It had been the practice to have them adopted by respectable natives of Lokoja. This policy was now reversed, because spiteful natives complained that we took slaves from their lawful owners and gave them to our friends, the difference between an adopted child and a domestic slave being imperceptible in that part of the world. My orders were to summon these adopted children before me and, if possible, take them back into the Home. A number of them came into my Court, all looking so much healthier and happier than the poor little creatures I was responsible for that I could not bring myself to change their lot. I rather think H.E. would have acted likewise if he had been on the spot.

My second official act was to waive etiquette, and call on the Colonel commanding the troops at Lokoja, now deceased, with a view to a friendly understanding. He greeted me with the alarming intimation that we should have many official quarrels, which, he said, must not interfere with our private friendship. I answered that I had no intention of quarrelling with anybody if I could help it. The soldiers, as he frankly avowed to me, considered that the natives hadn't yet been "broken," they resented the appearance of civilians on the scene, and were bent on making our position untenable. Their efforts to get up a quarrel with me were rather unsuccessful. One commanding officer realised that he had put himself so badly on the wrong

in some official correspondence that he came to me privately and begged me to cancel it, which I was most glad to do. (It is still in my possession.) The threatened mutiny which had caused H.E.'s telegram to me was due to my predecessor's action in fining a black sergeant-major, who had been recommended for a commission, for assault. Owo, as he was named, afterwards came with me on my tour, carried me over streams on his back, and rendered me valuable services. The Colonel commanding asked me to send accused soldiers before him for trial, undertaking to report the proceedings to me, and I at once consented. The arrangement was suited to the conditions of the country, and it worked perfectly well.

As I was the first lawyer Resident, I thought it natural enough that there should have been some apprehension lest I should stand on professional forms, and it was a satisfaction to be able to send a reassuring wire to headquarters within a few hours of taking over the reins. The dispatch reached H.E. in the middle of a conference with Chief Justice Golland and General Morland over the whole question. He at once adjourned the discussion, saying: "This new man, who only arrived last night, has settled the question already. I shall do nothing more till I have gone down to Lokoja and found what he has done." I learned this from my friend Golland, who thought at first I had conceded too much to the soldiers. But, as he put it, I had robbed them of their grievance, and the soldiers themselves felt in the end that they had taken the bait rather too unsuspectingly.

My truce with the soldiers of course earned me the enmity of the Commissioner of Police, who had the usual standing feud with them, and who deemed it my duty to throw myself warmly into it on his side. It was a playful trick of his to enlist in his force men

who had been dismissed the army for misconduct, and then send them back into the lines to arrest their old non-commissioned officers. Even a white soldier could hardly be expected to carry out such an arrest without some unseemly exultation. The Commissioner had been in the habit of tendering legal advice to my predecessors, and was disposed to accord me the same favour. Indeed, he told me that his position was that of acting Attorney-General, and Inspector of Residents. One night he arrested a black soldier in the native town on some criminal charge, extracted a confession from him, and burst into the Residency, demanding that I should receive it, as a magistrate, on oath. After informing him that such a proceeding was unknown to the law of England, I consented to take down in writing any statement that the prisoner wished to volunteer. I then gave him the prescribed caution, that anything he said might be used in evidence against him on his trial; whereupon he very naturally refused to speak. The acting Attorney-General was very greatly displeased. Soon after my arrival he sent a report to headquarters calculated to do me serious injury. I believed him to be an entirely well-meaning man, and a humane friend to the natives, nevertheless. If these observations meet his eye, he may be surprised to learn that I was officially authorised to send him home if I could not get on with him.

My native staff were most of them missionary pupils, who had done time, or ought to have been doing it, for blackmailing and similar practices. Being informed that the natives were kept back from coming into my Court by these scoundrels, I caused a notice to be placed on the door inviting every person who was suffering wrong to present himself before me, and forbidding any one to obstruct them under severe penalties. The invitation was promptly accepted by

some natives of an adjoining province, the Resident of which reposed a blind confidence in his Native Agent. My visitors complained to me that they were debarred from access to the White Man. It was difficult to deal with such an appeal without giving offence; however, I gave them a letter to my brother Resident, and sent them off under the escort of a policeman. The policeman arrived by himself, the complainants having lost heart by the way. There was a native judge in Lokoja called Alikali, Houssa for Al Kadi, the cadi of the "Arabian Nights." After some acquaintance with him I came to the conclusion that he was an honest man, and much better qualified than I was to deal with native cases, and I transferred much of my judicial work to him. He introduced himself to me first by the following epistle. The original is in Arabic; the translation accompanied it.

IN THE NAME OF GOD.

"From the Native Judge, Lokoja.

"To the Honourable, wise and impartial white judge.

"I observe that of all White judges sent here by the Queen you are the remarkable one for equity and mildness who yield [take] no pleasure in pomp and gaiety. And as you are a strange man here and have not [been] acquainted with the habit of the people of Lokoja, I feel bound to inform you that they are all hypocrites and false tale bearers, therefore if any of them come to you to mislead you do not listen to him, unless what you hear from me or from Amza the Emir of Lokoja in whom we are all pleased, and is the son of a good Emir late Mr. Mieu who was my good friend and friend to all Musulmen. And I am an aged and experienced man, and most of my works I think were recorded in your book, you come to help us and will see how my works are. May God help us all."

The Emir referred to had been deprived of the succession in favour of a romantic old rascal of whom I could tell you interesting things if you had asked me to write a book about Nigeria instead of a panegyric of myself. Finding that Lokoja was under a ban on this account, I sacked his felonious Majesty (he had recently been in gaol), and raised the rightful heir to the throne with the assent of H.E. This high-handed action earned me the nickname of the King-Maker among the White inhabitants. The Grand Vizier of Abdul Hamid turned pale when I mentioned this to him at his dinner-table. My nickname among the Blacks, I learned by accident, was "The Great White Judge." I fancy they ranked me above the Chief Justice himself after I had sentenced one or two of them to be hanged.

I was surprised at the sensation made by this ordinary act of justice half across Africa. The new monarch appointed his small brother of twelve Crown Prince, and sent him to apply for the position of page in my household. The Emir of Kano, who was still independent, and one of the greatest potentates of the Sudan, despatched an embassy of congratulation to his brother Emir. What was more to the purpose the ban on Lokoja was lifted, and caravans began to arrive in the town from all quarters. Merchants and others from distant regions came and settled in Lokoja to be under my rule; for such is the custom of Africa, where a strong man attracts subjects from far around. Nothing of this would have been possible, of course, but for the more than generous confidence and support accorded to me by the great man whom it was my privilege to serve under. Lokoja lay, as it were, on the threshold of Northern Nigeria, and new Residents coming out for the first time generally received instruction to pass a short time with me, studying my methods of administration, before proceeding to their posts.

I was warned that the Colonial Office didn't like its men to be popular with the natives, but I don't think any popularity I may have enjoyed was my fault. I was the first Resident to pass death sentences, I believe. I arrested their chiefs, and burned their villages, when they deserved it in my judgment, and they never so much as threw a stone at me. I passed half my time in trying to keep the peace among my fractious white neighbours, with nothing like the same success. I blamed the mosquitoes more than them for their eternal bickerings. Many of them, I dare say, had more friends than I in the Colonial Office. No doubt I was guilty of *trop de zèle*. One morning I got a wire from H.E., who wanted our native clerks to build houses for themselves in the Cantonment, saying that the officer entrusted with the work of granting leases had reported that no one would accept them on H.E.'s carefully thought out conditions, and asking me to find out what terms it was desirable to offer. The same evening I was able to wire back: "Your Excellency's terms perfectly satisfactory. Several leases granted already. Other applications coming in." That was not the way to win popularity with the man whose work I had had to do for him, and who was extremely well-connected.

The moment I had established some degree of order in Lokoja, I set out on a tour through the interior of the province of Kabba. I have referred to the arrears which I found waiting to be dealt with. The police force at my disposal, only numbering six black men, was inadequate to maintain order over a country larger than Wales, with a quarter of a million inhabitants, a large part of them still unsubdued. I had applied to the military authorities to execute one warrant. They sent a column a hundred strong, who were away eleven days, and returned without effecting

the arrest. According to them it was rather a rare stroke of luck to take a prisoner. I can only record that I went through the same country with an escort of thirty-five men, and returned at the end of three weeks with a bag of twenty felons, several of them kings.

My military friends—for they were all that was friendly and hospitable apart from their wretched professional jealousy—tried to frighten me from going with tales of men who had been pegged down on the earth and eaten alive by red ants. One of my predecessors, the Honourable Captain Carnegie, in fact, had been killed by a poisoned arrow in trying to arrest a chief. Professing to believe that I should not venture beyond the settled region they proposed to place my escort under a non-commissioned officer. A new comer from India, Captain Kinsman, taking a different view of military honour, obtained leave at the last moment to come with me. He told me he had exchanged from India in the hope of seeing active service, and he was good enough to say that our little trip together had satisfied his expectations. I had the pleasure of publicly thanking him and his little force, on behalf of the High Commissioner, for their conduct in one critical enterprise. This was almost a breach of etiquette, it being the rule for a Resident and the commander of his escort to be at daggers drawn.

The tale of a poet's tour in Fairyland must be told as a romance, or not at all. I have before me two narratives written in the third person, yet literally true, which I cannot bring myself to translate into the dull prose of press notes. Neither is it in my power to furnish you with snapshots of the White Judge sitting under a tree, with a Crown Prince in silk robe and turban holding a white umbrella over him, in the midst of a mob of savages, held back by fixed bayonets ;

trying their king for stealing a poor man's one cow;—nor of the same Judge standing on the height of the blood-stained Stone of Semarika, with a revolver in his hand, and three human skulls at his feet, while an ogre, whose boast it is that he never has to strike more than one blow to cut off a human head, yells to his followers to deliver him out of the Judge's hands. You must wait till some man with a grain of imagination goes into the film business. Let us pass on. The rest of the acts of the White Judge, are they not written in Reports that have long gathered dust in the distant archives of Fairyland?

The Fates held their hand for just four months. Then they struck home. A malarial fever sent my temperature up to 107·8 by the thermometer; and I was conscious of Africa shrinking beneath me like a rolled-up map, as I ascended from your planet. I am told my last words were—"I am tired, and I am going to sleep; please don't wake me." The prayer was not granted. I was wakened to find myself in a bath, with cold water being dashed violently into my face. A medical board shook its head over the *revenant*, and banished him from the White Man's Grave for life.

I am afraid of your sharing the regret with which I returned to England, and to the twentieth century, and to "the insolence of office, and the spurns" that the helpers of Humanity take from its parasites. The Colonial Office had explained to me that its comfortable posts were reserved for men who had entered the service through the dreaded portals of the White Man's Grave. The Colonial Office proceeded to bestow two such posts on men who had not gone further afield than the Temple. I was called on by one man, who was being pressed to go out as my successor, and who was obviously unfitted for anything but the work of a conveyancing counsel in London. I advised him to

decline the offer, and he did so, telling me airily that he was sure of receiving a better one, because his uncle possessed influence in the Departments. Another Department sent him to India as an Attorney-General, but had to hurry him out of the country in six months, on account of trouble with the Indian Bar. He was consoled with the Chief Justiceship of some unfortunate Pacific island out of the reach of public opinion. The Colonial Office was aggrieved because I refused a testimonial to a man whom they were trying to force the High Commissioner to retain in Nigeria, and on whose behalf I had exerted myself to the utmost out there. Finally it suggested that I was prejudiced against him. On that I opened my mouth. I said—“You force me to tell you that this man, whom I detected in blackmailing native chiefs, actually asked me to embezzle official funds for his benefit; and that I rode straight over to the Chief Justice, and got him to make a note of the fact in his private diary, for my own protection, in case of future trouble. I have kept that a secret till now, in the hope of being able to save him, and you accuse me of prejudice against him.” Of such are the favourites of Departments.

In the end the Colonial Office told me, in a rare burst of frankness, that it was afraid my “Radical writings were against me in the Department.” As Joseph Chamberlain was then Colonial Secretary I could say nothing, except that I had retired from politics on entering the service, and was not the only person who had “his Radical days.” A Radical Ministry was in office for more than ten years subsequently, but it was evidently not in power. One Radical Minister, General Seely, caused me to take a long journey to see him, in order that he might inform me that the “Department” had made a new regulation, apparently with a special view to my exclusion. I feel at liberty to

mention his name, because he was not an old personal friend.

My treatment has been rather worse, no doubt, than Gordon's or Burton's, but not worse than Spencer's or Carlyle's or Dickens's, each of whom was refused public employment. Dickens was considered unfit for the work of a London magistrate. English audiences always laugh if I remind them of these things. They have begun laughing on the other side of their mouth lately, though. Another little joke of mine began to sound less funny after the Battle of Jutland, fought so near the spot:

"After Nelson had won the battle of the Nile he was sent to win the battle of Copenhagen under the command of an elderly admiral whose signals he had to disobey in order to gain the victory. No one in his senses doubts that the same kind of thing will happen in our next naval war."—*The New Age*, 3rd Feb., 1910.

These notes will excite a smile if they are read in England. And the place where they will be read with most pleasure is the Colonial Office. Because the most rigid of all the rules of the Departments is that any appeal to the public from any wrong done by them disqualifies the appellant from ever serving the British Empire again in any capacity. It is a breach of the first commandment in the code of the public schoolboy. From now on the Departments will be able to say that they were all on the point of offering me one of the many situations for which I appear to be qualified, when I made myself impossible. There is an old fable about a lamb which gained nothing by pointing out to the wolf that it was drinking down the stream. I am afraid my impossibility dates from the battle of Chickemauga.

Almost every other visitor to Nigeria seems to write

a book about it, and their books are to be found in the Free Libraries. My book is still waiting publication. The publishers explained to me on my return that the public had lately been rather over-dosed by books on South Africa, and therefore it would be hopeless to ask them to read one on West Africa. You must see yourself how unreasonable it would be to offer a book on Greenland to a public surfeited with books on Brazil. Perhaps if your public are not tired of reading about the Philippine Islands, they may like another on a country practically indistinguishable from that. I am always glad to hear from publishers. Drop a hint to the —— Company. You can easily tell them Nigeria is in Asia.

P.S. I was almost forgetting this testimonial, which seems to have been written expressly for the Company's eye.

The African Society,
(Founded in Memory of Mary Kingsley.)
March 24/03.

DEAR MR.——,

I am returning you the two Photos you kindly sent me as we have decided that your article is simply too good to want any illustrations.

Yours faithfully,
COMTE DE CARDI,
Hon. Sec.

O boy with the collar of blue,
My heart is longing for you !
Though to call you I am not free,
Wherefore not turn to me ?

O boy with the girdle of blue,
Long, long do I think of you !
Though to seek you I am not free,
Why come not you to me ?

Ah, random and pleasure-drawn,
To the View Tower you are gone !
And a day without your sight
Is like three months in its flight.

From the Shi-Kiang.

XVII

BEFORE settling down in the Temple again, I took a trip to the Swedish island of Gothland in search of health.

Visby, "the city of ruins and roses," was an unforgettable joy. I had come to the island on the trail of a dialect still lingering in two of its villages, which was said to represent the Gothic of Ulflas, and I found that a master of the High School, Dr. Klintberg, had devoted his life to embalming it in a dictionary before it faded out. My interest in his labours moved him to tears; he said it was the first appreciation his life's work had received. I have tried to obtain him a small grant from Oxford to print it, in the English language, but unsuccessfully. (Is it of any use to approach Harvard?) I engaged Dr. Klintberg to give me daily lessons in Swedish, and became able to read a child's book without much difficulty. At the end of my stay he would not hear of accepting the stipulated fee.

Professor Pipping of Helsingfors was on the island studying its singular monumental stones—maenhirion as we call them in Wales; and as the subject is one in which my bardic name requires me to take an interest, I had the privilege of being of some slight use to him. As a Finlander, of course I regarded him as a wizard, and we passed pleasant evenings on a balcony overlooking the Eastern Sea, while with his magic he made the sun go down.

Sweden has charming customs. My birthday fell while I was in Visby, and all my friends gave me roses. Every child in the house where I was boarding brought

me its flower, the stalk wrapped in silver paper. I was made at home in a rather more embarrassing fashion when I went to the public baths. Hardly had I lain down in a warm bath, as I supposed, in privacy, when the door was opened, and a motherly old dame called Sophy entered with a cake of soap and a loofah, and proceeded to scrub me as though I were an infant. My Swedish friends rather exulted over my abasement. Old Sophy was quite a public character, but probably I was her first English captive. In Visby I was taught that when you are dining out it is the correct thing to go up to your hostess after dinner, shake hands with her, and thank her for the meal. Shortly after I arrived in Stockholm my most kind friend Major the High Well-Born Graf von Cronhielm asked me to dinner to meet his brother, who held the romantic post of Swedish Minister in Portugal. The moment we entered the drawing-room I went up to the Grafinn, held out my hand, and said—"Tak," to their equal surprise and amusement.

While in Stockholm I was taken over the Nobel Institute by a friendly professor who little suspected that the stranger had a remarkable work of an idealist tendency in his kit-bag. My most remarkable experience in Stockholm, as it happened, was my correspondence with the German historian Mommsen, who shortly afterwards received the Nobel bequest to idealism. I had found my friends seriously impressed by the danger of Russian encroachment. The Russians had just Russified Finland; they were planning a railway across Sweden to a Norwegian port: Russian spies disguised as woodcutters had been traversing the country, and the geography of Sweden was being studied in the Military Academy of Petersburg. In consequence I wrote (without telling them) to Mommsen as the most influential of living writers, suggesting that he might

follow up Nobel's work by organising a species of literary Pan-Teutonic league, including Germany, America and Britain, for the protection of Teutonic culture from the Slave menace. I believe I referred to the then recent case of the forcible Russification of the ancient German university of Dorpat.

I am sorry I haven't preserved MommSEN's reply, especially as I have found it added several inches to my stature in the eyes of German acquaintances for me to have been honoured by a communication from "*the MommSEN!*" It was in his own hand, and it was distinctly friendly. And it was not less frank. He told me that there could be no co-operation between England and Germany for any such common purpose until they had fought each other for the mastery. I recollect one striking phrase:—"The bull and the bear must come to grips." Such candour could not but fill me with respect for the writer, while I drew the moral that if such was the deliberate conviction, and the avowed policy, of the man who might be said to preside over the intellectual training of the German people, the prattle about international peace and disarmament that was always going on in England was more likely to do harm than good. To do the Germans justice, no nation ever prepared for war with less disguise. The only man who blocked the way was the Emperor himself, whose constant rattling of the sword was a guarantee to any intelligent student of human nature that he would be the last man to draw it. I feel perfectly sure that he was goaded into doing so at last by others, including members of his own family.

I am not prepared to say positively that I could not have averted the war, had I commanded as much confidence in my own country as in some others. Abdul Hamid both feared and trusted me. The first time I met Venizelos he offered me a diplomatic mission of the

highest importance. During the Bucharest Conference the *Neue Freie Presse* asked me for my advice on the policy of Austria in the Balkans, and a week or two after my article appeared I read in the London papers that the Austrian Government were changing their policy in the direction I had recommended. Even England has sometimes shown herself willing to let me serve her at my own expense. Her Foreign Office, through its Embassy in Constantinople, begged me to go to Salonika and ascertain who were the real heads of the Young Turk Committee. The War Office, in the most flattering terms, invited me to act as an unpaid and unacknowledged counsellor to its Intelligence Department during the war. It is only when there is money going that departments stickle for the rules of seniority and the claims of their nephews and godsons.

I am not one of those who blame the Swedes for thinking Germany a better neighbour than Russia. I may be permitted, at the same time, to doubt if Mommson's idealism was nearer akin to Nobel's than my own.

The most gratifying compliment paid me in Stockholm was when I attended a lecture at the Anthropological and Geographical Society. The lecturer was dealing with a British exploring expedition in the North Sea, and when he quoted the British Government's instructions to the expedition to pay more attention to the interests of the fisheries than to questions of abstract science, a ripple of laughter ran through the audience, as the secret of England's greatness stood revealed. At the close of the lecture I was called on to stand up and receive a greeting in the character of an English scientist. It was the first time it had occurred to me that I had any title to such a designation, and I found it a pleasant change from being a well-known novelist. I was not less surprised when my book came out. The comparison with Socrates was inevitable; the book contained a Platonic dialogue. I

had challenged comparison with Bacon by the title. But when the *Boston Transcript* bracketed my unknown name with Darwin's I was overpowered.

Sweden has always ranked next to Greece in my affection. The city of ruins and roses is the one place where I have found myself able to loaf.

The friendship I receive from foreigners is not flattering to the reputation of the Englishman abroad. My ignorance of their languages seems to make no difference. I have held a long conversation with a Greek merchant, through the medium of a little Italian on his part, and a little Latin on mine. I have spent a delightful afternoon in a Portuguese slum with some Portuguese children whose mother conversed with me in the language of smiles. A Swiss child of four has stamped his foot at me for my stupidity in French ; but in France I am regularly treated as a Frenchman till I open my lips, and have been asked to tell people the way in Paris, Marseilles and Chartres. At a supper given by Lord Howard de Walden to our fencing master, Felix Bertrand, I had to propose a toast. When I sat down M. Bertrand came to clap me on the back, and tell me I ought to have been a Frenchman. There was too much truth in the remark, I'm afraid. The pleasantest fortnight I passed in Switzerland was in a little inn out of the route of British travellers, among a party of Swiss families. The local custom house officer took me fishing, and when I returned with a two-pound trout it was fairly snatched out of my hand by one excited little girl. I personated a tiger so successfully, that when I called on Madame Cerisole (whose uncle was President of the Swiss Republic) at Morges, she rushed out of the drawing-room before shaking hands, to announce my arrival in the words—"Voilà, M. le Tigre!" For the most unapproachable man in Europe it was not so bad.

Paderewski lived at Morges, and he was so addicted to

the game of bridge that he obtained permission from his friends to bring in his valet when needed to make up a four. I was pressed to settle in the town for Paderewski's benefit. But the arts of poetry and music don't seem to combine well. It is difficult to write verses bad enough to be set to music. My friend, Liza Lehmann, was anxious to use one of my poems, but couldn't. She told me she had equally failed with Barry Pain. Curiously enough the only verses of mine that have found a composer are two renderings from the Shi-Kiang, which Professor Granville Bantock has honoured with a musical setting.

All this isn't a digression. I have been cork-screwing my way round to the subject of my experiences as a publisher in Fleet Street, which followed closely on the trip to Sweden. My ultimate object, of course, was to launch books of an idealist tendency, but I thought it necessary to begin at the bottom of the ladder. My friend Byng came into partnership with me, and we started with a joint capital of about £100. The name of the firm was originally "The Yellow Press," which was modified first into "Primrose," and lastly into "Orient." When I called on the manager of Messrs. Smith & Sons' book department with our first publication he met me with the declaration—"We never handle books published by the authors." I retorted—"Oh, but I'm not Mr.—; I'm the Primrose Press." This explanation proved perfectly satisfactory, and we did business. You see commercial colleges haven't much to teach me, after all.

This book manager was an old Wesleyan, and a quite uneducated man. He had ruled over English literature for a generation with a power which must have excited envy in the Roman Inquisition. A drunken publishers' tout in our employ assured me he had much influence

with the censor because the old gentleman suffered from biliousness, and was accessible to bribes in the form of new patent pills. It was the Pale Person in *propria persona*, and *ex cathedra*, too. But I must be careful, or I shall expose myself to the sneer addressed to a barrister on my Circuit, who had approached Latin rather late in life, and had steeped his mind in the words *tu quoque*, as he was never tired of demonstrating. A bored victim at last cured him by saying, "Look here, —, we all know by now that you have mastered one Latin phrase ; suppose you try another for a change. Try *sine qua non*."

Our first venture proved unlucky. It was a satire on the boy's penny dreadful, entitled "Blood-marks." A Christian publisher lent me, under the seal of secrecy, a number of his old blocks, and one page of the issue contained portraits of celebrities labelled with wrong names, as it were, in error. Lord Northcliffe was represented by a venerable Sunday School superintendent with a long white beard ; a portrait of General Booth was labelled "Bobs," and one of Spurgeon occupied the place of honour as the effigy of "The German Emperor." This innocent pleasantry in a good cause roused the wrath of a wholesale newsagent, who, like Dr. Lorimer of Boston, considered himself a better Baptist than I ; and he went round the trade asking everyone as a personal favour to join in suppressing the publication. Barely 30,000 copies were disposed of, in consequence. It is the proud boast of the Baptist denomination that they have never persecuted, as you may like to hear.

Our most important enterprise was the founding of the "Wisdom of the East" series, which is still being kept up by the house of John Murray, under my friend's editorship. To this I contributed a volume of the "Sayings of Confucius" which is now out of print, though the new publisher very kindly asked me to let him

issue a fresh edition. My partner undertook the "Odes," a task too difficult for me, which he executed with supreme felicity. A number of his charming renderings have received musical honours. Beyond a little help at the start, the entire credit for the series is due to him. It has exercised a widespread influence, as I realised the other day when I saw extracts from Chinese poets thrown on the screen in a kinetic melodrama. My Confucian volume had a foreword which would have delighted Anatole France; but I dare say no English reader noticed anything wrong in the remark that no other great religion-founder had taught his disciples so little about the Unknown. The editor was more on his guard, and felt some qualms when the series was graciously accepted by the present Queen of England, a step naturally dictated more by an interest in Indian thought than in the personnel of the Orient Press.

I made use of the Press to remind Chamberlain of the axiom that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. Under the general heading of "The Romance of Politics," we issued a bright booklet purporting to disclose "The Secret of Mr. Chamberlain's Resignation." That statesman had just thrown up the Colonial Office to embark on his fatal agitation against Free Trade, and the "Secret" was that this move was a bold bid against Balfour for the Premiership. The story appeared to come from a warm admirer of Chamberlain, who looked up to him as the saviour of the Empire; and it imposed on many of his supporters. Sir Arthur Pearson himself had a narrow escape from giving it a cordial welcome in the *Daily Express*. I am ignorant with what feelings it was read in Downing Street.

Our last publication of any consequence disclosed a bona fide Court secret, concealed from every eye save the German Emperor's and mine. I commend this coming note to the particular attention of the —

Company. It mayn't be so good as a walrus, but I consider it is better than a woolly dog.

Being in London on the night of Queen Victoria's demise, I walked round to St. James's Palace the next forenoon, in the hope of witnessing the historic ceremony of the Proclamation of the new King. I found no one about but a few soldiers and policemen, and learned that the ceremony was postponed to the morrow. On returning at the same time the next day, I was told that the Proclamation had been made at the unprecedented hour of half-past eight, and the heralds had hurried on to repeat it in the City of London at nine.

The mystery became clear to me a day or two later, when I was called on at my chambers in the Temple by a young literary friend who asked me if I would defend him on a charge of high treason. My friends are so often arrested on charges of that kind that I showed less agitation than he seemed to anticipate. He explained that he was a member of a Jacobite or Legitimist Guild, in whose eyes the Princess Mary of Bavaria was the rightful Queen of England, Prince Rupprecht being Prince of Wales; and he revealed to me some strange happenings, on the authority of an old friend of his family, who was on intimate terms with a Royal personage, and had warned him of the danger in which he stood.

The adherents of Prince Rupprecht and his mother had drawn up a document asserting the right of "Mary III" to the throne and posted it on the walls of St. James's Palace on the night of the Queen's death. A passing policeman had caught sight of the Assertion, torn it down, and, pale with fear, doubtless, had carried it to Scotland Yard. A high official had instantly taken it down to Osborne to show it to King Edward VII. Wilhelm II was on the spot; King Edward gave it to him to read, and received the Hohenzollern-like advice:

“ If I were you I should take those fellows out into a backyard and have them shot ! ” It is believed that poor Mary III heard some plain speaking from her suzerain on his return to his own dominions. The King, or his constitutional advisers, thought it prudent, in the circumstances, to defer his own Proclamation for a day, and have it carried out almost furtively, for fear the authors of the Assertion should be guilty of some interruption which might produce a bad impression abroad, and perhaps in the Dominions, such as India. Meanwhile, the police had raided the premises of the seditious society, and seized its papers, and my friend was momentarily expecting to be arrested. He had chosen me for his counsel, although aware that my sympathy with the Legitimist cause was feeble, to say the least, because he didn't want to be defended on pettifogging lines, but to have the claims of Mary III fully set forth in court.

Whether it became known to the authorities that I was retained, or not, I can't tell. Anyhow they very wisely determined to deprive Mary III, and incidentally myself, of a magnificent advertisement, such as I have little chance of securing again. Not only so, but they succeeded in keeping the news of what had happened out of every newspaper in London, except one. Three years had elapsed, and Edward VII was securely seated on his throne, when I lifted the veil from this hidden page of history in a storyette entitled “ Treason. ” By this time the Jacobites had got over their fright, and as soon as they heard of my intention their secretary wrote me of his own accord, offering me any information I might require.

The existence of a rival claimant to the British throne is kept out of all the school histories, perhaps designedly. The ordinary citizen is brought up in the belief that the lineal representatives of the Stuarts died out with the Cardinal of York, in the reign of George IV. But the

Act of Parliament by virtue of which George V is the lawful King of these realms, in calling the House of Brunswick to the throne as the nearest Protestant heirs, silently passed over an elder branch of the Stuarts who were Catholics ; and but for the Act in question, Prince Rupprecht would be reigning over the British Empire at this moment by right of birth.

In my story these curiosities of history were linked up with the much more important movement in the National Church, known as Ritualism. Ritualism has been from the beginning essentially a clerical movement, the dominant clerical party having taken advantage of the increasing indifference of the nation to religion, to force their views on the comparatively small body of laymen which still takes the Church of England seriously. Her communicants only number 5 per cent. of the inhabitants in the most populous dioceses to-day. The success of the clergy has probably done more to weaken the church than it has to strengthen themselves, by digging a deeper gulf between it and the life of the nation. The redeeming feature of the movement, and the secret of its success, has been the devoted social service of its best representatives. Practically, the nation has said to them, "Look after the poor like that, and we will let you run your services to please yourselves."

Meanwhile the obvious tendency of Ritualism, and the avowed aim of many of its leaders, has been to promote the return of the Anglican community into the Roman fold. To point this lesson was the whole purpose of "Treason." The Ritualists were not without friends at Court ; indeed, King Edward VII was suspected or accused of some tenderness towards the Roman Church. The story drew his attention, and that of others, to the fact that the Bavarian line had been deprived of their rights solely on the ground of their religion ; that they had every title to rank as confessors and martyrs in

Catholic eyes, and that any step in the direction of reunion with Rome would convert the Legitimist propaganda from an insignificant fad into a serious threat to the Protestant dynasty. King Edward was quite shrewd enough to take the hint. He discussed the question, as I am informed, with his Prime Minister, and a Royal Commission on Ritualism quickly followed and resulted, I rather think, in some legislation.

When "Treason" appeared I was on friendly terms with the late Colonel Knollys, a brother of the King's life-long friend and servant, Lord Knollys. We had no direct communication on the subject, but a lady whom we both knew assured me that the details given in my story were absolutely correct, and added that the King was very curious to know where I got my information. I replied, "If the King wishes to know, he has only to ask me."

A Protestant firm of publishers, attracted by the booklet, took it off our hands, and sold about 30,000 copies, the Church Association being their principal customer. The preface stated that the story was founded on fact, and the secretary of the Association, whose experience of Protestant controversialists seemed to have filled him with distrust of them, was extremely nervous as to my power to support this statement. He was somewhat reassured by a reference to the Jacobite secretary. Letters poured in upon me from all parts of the country asking for corroboration, which I ultimately published in the *Protestant Observer*. I had offered to justify my statements on the public platform, but the challenge was not taken up, except by a person in Bristol, whose lack of credentials made him a negligible quantity. The Catholic Truth Society lay in wait for a more profitable opening, and it presently came. A Protestant clergyman rashly stated on the platform of Exeter Hall that the King had read "Treason," and admitted that

every word in it was true. As the story contained many picturesque details characteristic of the well-known novelist rather than the sober historian, this was going rather far. The Catholic Truth Society promptly addressed an inquiry to Lord Knollys, and received the satisfactory answer, which it sent to all the papers, that the King had never even heard of my publication. A retired naval captain instantly wrote to me to contradict Lord Knollys, with the assurance that he himself had placed a copy of "Treason" in His Majesty's very hands. I don't know if he expected me to forward his letter to the press. It seemed to me that the clergyman's speech was unpardonable, and the King's response the only one possible to a constitutional monarch with several millions of Catholic subjects. In writing "Treason," I had not been oblivious of my ancestor's distinction :

" This thou shouldst have done,
And not have spoken of it. In me 'twere treason ;
In thee it had been good service."

In the end, I became rather tired of my Protestant friends, and I told the last of them, with a candour like Mommsen's, that the true cause of the decay of Protestantism was not the exertions of the Catholics, but the narrow-mindedness and intolerance of the Protestants themselves. This closed the correspondence.

Before then, however, I had received a letter from the chairman of a body styling itself the National Protestant Electoral Federation, asking if I would consent to come out as the Protestant candidate for the Everton division of Liverpool, where a bye-election was impending. Everton, I understand, is as much the Orange division of Liverpool, as Scotland Ward is the Nationalist one, so that I feel entitled to set off this invitation against

Parnell's previous one as evidence that I am a man of broad sympathies. The Federation appeared willing to pay all my expenses, and promised me a free hand on every other question save one. This, by an extraordinary oversight, wasn't Home Rule, so little am I known, but teetotalism. They had a narrow escape when I declined the candidature by Lord Gladstone's particular request. But that must be the subject of another pressnote.

"Treason" may claim, perhaps, to have done something to remind the heads of the Established Church of their lawful obligations, and to make it safer for the saner minds among the clergy to go forwards instead of backwards. Alas, that they should have let themselves be schooled by a sensational storyette, instead of by a true revelation! Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit may seem a paying game, but it is not one that can be carried on for ever.

The Plougher went forth to plough,
In his hands were iron and wood,
Scorn and thorns on his brow,
Husks and scorn were his food.
To the great waste he took his way
To wrestle with unclean weeds and clay,
And die or ever the dawn grew day,
And lie where he had stood.

The Harvester came and reaped,
In his hands were silver and gold,
The moon-bright sickle leaped,
The sun-bright corn-waves rolled.
The flatterers shouted in the gate,
They laid him to rest in royal state,
In the ermine robe and the coronet,
In the minster grand and old.

But they who change the shapes,
The bright destroyers of might,
The wheels that nothing escapes,
And the scales that weigh aright,
Have chosen the plough for the crest of heaven ;
And the stars on the Plougher's head are seven,
In his right hand he holds the levin
And shares the fields of light.

The Plougher.

XVIII

NOT finding myself equal to the double task of writing and publishing, I relinquished the latter branch of the book trade and returned to politics. I couldn't afford to go into Parliament, as there was then no salary attached to that form of public service; my object was merely to turn out the Government in the hope that my Radical writings would be less offensive in the eyes of their successors, a delusion of which I am now ashamed.

The Liberal Whips, having deserved and incurred the distrust of the constituencies by selling candidatures to financial adventurers of the worst type, had become afraid to make recommendations, and most of the vacancies were being filled up by my friend R. C. Hawkin, then secretary of the Eighty Club. I asked him to find me a seat which it was impossible to win, and he selected the Newark Division of Nottinghamshire. He arranged a meeting for me in Gladstone's first constituency, accordingly, and after addressing it I was invited to come before the Liberal Association with a view to adoption. Only one hitch occurred. Dropping into a vein of irony unsuited to so serious an occasion, I announced that I wasn't a bigoted Free Trader, and should be prepared to give a fair consideration to Mr. Chamberlain's arguments in favour of Protection. The secretary of the association, my staunch friend and supporter, W. Mumby, at once rose and demanded a formal pledge that I wouldn't listen to a word Chamberlain had to say, and would become a bigoted Free Trader. I promised to be a bigot, and

the Liberals cheerfully adopted me as a fitting representative.

Armed with this testimonial I waited once more on Lord Gladstone, who was still Chief Whip. The estimated expenses of a contest were £1,500, and my personal resources were about £50. Gladstone conveyed to me, of course in the strictest confidence, that philanthropists in the background, desirous of doing good by stealth, would provide £1,300 on condition that I found the balance; and I closed with this handsome offer, trusting to earn the money by my pen before the day arrived.

I at once took lodgings in the town of Newark, and spent a whole winter in evangelising the rural villages. After addressing a meeting I made it my practice to spend the night in the village, and walk round it the next day. These tactics won the hearts of the people and the Unionist agent told my man that I was going to win the seat. I was spoiling for a fight, but the enemy meanly refused to fight with me, some of them going so far as to write letters to the local paper saying that they intended to vote for me on the absurd ground that I seemed to know something about politics, and their own candidate didn't. All this was alarming, because I should have had to apply for the Chiltern Hundreds the moment I was returned, not being strong enough to combine the work of an honest member of Parliament with that of a well-known novelist.

While I was making this unfortunate impression on Newark I was earning a very different reputation in the Chertsey Division, an annexe of London. The treasurer of the Eighty Club was fighting a bye-election there, and having studied my Radical writings on behalf of the Club, he asked me to come and help him with something of the same kind. I found my late friend Palmer Newbould acting as election agent, and

we put our heads together and decided that our cry should be "Chinese Slavery." This was the first launch of one of the most successful election cries in the history of English politics. The Unionists have always claimed that it turned them out of office, and it is not for me to contradict them. I will confine myself to saying that I have other cries which I consider better, that I am out of work just now, and that if there should be any persons who think the present Government has held office long enough I shall be glad to hear from them.

The cry was not strictly original. I borrowed the suggestion from Sir Arthur Pearson, who had been publishing in his magazine accounts of various sweated trades under the heading—"The White Slaves of England." The Liberal leaders were too frightened to apply to me to defend them when the storm burst, or they could have turned the tables very neatly on their adversaries, who pretended to think that the word "Slavery" was a criminal libel. I was amused by the ineffective wriggling of even clever debaters under this heinous charge.

What I expect you, but certainly no one else, to see, is that this result was entirely due to my having a free hand. Had I been writing under the fretful supervision of some third-rate mind I could not have electrified the country in ten days.

Unfortunately Newbould led me into a pitfall un-awares. He asked me to write him an election song, and stipulated that it should go to a hymn tune, as Liberals were not familiar with music-hall melodies. I chose my favourite hymn, and it was inevitable in the circumstances that the opening line should run—"Johannesburg the Golden."

This was the signal for such a storm of obloquy as has seldom fallen on one defenceless head. The

Unionists were prompt to perceive the merits of my Radical writings, if the Liberals weren't. The Prime Minister whom I had refused to convert to Individualism addressed a letter of indignant sympathy to his candidate. One London newspaper issued a poster bearing the words—"Blasphemy and Hooliganism in the Chertsey Division." The *Daily Mail* assailed me so violently that a friendly solicitor wrote urging me to bring an action for libel. I hadn't read the libels, but I wrote back that I didn't suppose the *Daily Mail* had said anything worse about me than I was prepared to say about it when occasion arose, and that I had found no paper in London so willing to accept my contributions. In fact one of the most Radical letters I had ever written, one on Army Reform, had brought me a most flattering response from Viscount Northcliffe, saying that I had exactly expressed his own views, and asking me to convert it into an article for which I received a liberal fee.

Meanwhile I found a few sympathisers in Fleet Street. *Punch* began parodying my *Pearson* stories, with sly allusions to the havoc I had wrought in the peaceful riverside suburb of Chertsey; and *Vanity Fair* contemplated a cartoon. The only remonstrance I received from outside came from a Baptist minister in Worcestershire, who wrote in a spirit of brotherly love to suggest that I should not make a regular practice of parodying hymns even in so good a cause. The Newark Division bore my fall with equal stoicism. Exactly one of my supporters, a leading Wesleyan, ventured to hint that the Muse of parody had led me in a direction which he could not approve, and softened the rebuke by doubling his subscription to our funds..

The only person who was gulled by the Unionist outcry was the Chief Whip. He waited to see if my

blasphemy and hooliganism was going to win the seat, and as soon as he found it had only reduced the majority, I received a stern letter from him, beginning—"Dear Sir," to request a pledge that I would refrain from blasphemy and hooliganism in the Newark Division. I replied that I should be happy to give up my candidature if I had forfeited his confidence. He next dispatched an emissary in the form of the Quaker member for a neighbouring constituency, who called together a meeting of my supporters behind my back, and asked them to throw me over. My supporters declining to do anything of the kind, I then received a second letter from Gladstone, beginning—"My dear Sir," which repeated the request that I should forgo my taste for blasphemy in rather less peremptory terms. By what I must really call a providence almost the same post brought me the invitation from the extreme Tories of Liverpool to come out as the Protestant candidate! I communicated this invitation to Gladstone with perfect gravity, leaving it to him to decide whether I should accept the offer. He now realised his mistake in stooping to controversy with a hooligan, and I was pleased to receive an answer beginning—"Dear Mr.—" begging me on no account to forsake the Newark Division, and leaving me free to blaspheme to my heart's content.

By this time it had become necessary for me to do some more lens-grinding, and I ground out a serial for the *Daily Express*. This highly-coloured fiction had almost a boom in America, but owing to my having entrusted the sale to an agency of whose good faith the Authors' Society professed itself satisfied, most of the proceeds were embezzled. This blow, following on so many similar ones, broke down my health and left me with little prospect of finding the £200 I had undertaken to give to the Liberals of Newark. I

dare say my chief supporter there might have come to the rescue if I had asked him, but the asking of favours is to me the most painful of all things in the world. I went abroad, and after consulting a specialist in Paris, I was bidden to relinquish public life for some time to come. The Newark Liberals replaced me by a man who was a financier and who filed his position soon after his defeat.

I passed the next three years recovering my health in France and Switzerland. In both countries I was surprised by the discovery that to be a man of letters was considered by many of the inhabitants to be a title to considerate treatment. I don't think I should have returned to England had it not become necessary in the interests of the Macedonian Greeks.

I wrote almost my only serious novel, "Lord Alistair's Rebellion," in Dinard, where I was treated with especial kindness by Colonel and Lady Theodora Davidson. The Colonel feigned to be jealous of me, and would say in the club,—“I know what you're doing; you're writing to my wife. She has you at her bridge parties, but she won't have me!” Lady Theodora's devoted service during the war does not need my tribute. The secret of uniting the most perfect social charm with deep religious sincerity seems almost peculiar to our old Catholic families. Lady Theodora introduced me to a poor French monk, who was obliged to pass as a layman, as a condition of earning his livelihood as a teacher, just as public schoolmasters in England are obliged to pass as Anglican communicants. I was a witness of a historical scene outside the parish church of Dinard. A registrar with a party of gendarmes came to take an inventory of the church furniture. The priest met him on the threshold like Ambrose of Milan, and read out a protest containing the words —“Rome has spoken.” The armed

party meekly retired on that occasion, though they forced an entrance later. My poor French *bonne à tout faire* was in great distress over the persecution, and I did my best to console her, as became a friend of old Holyoake, almost the last man to suffer imprisonment for religion's sake among us. The head master of the Government school in Dinard, a very superior man, who honoured me with his friendship, told his own pupils that their behaviour was much less creditable than that of the boys taught by the proscribed monks.

By good fortune I had an intelligent travelling companion and dragoman who spoke fluent English, French, Spanish and Arabic, in the form of a boy of eleven, the son of a Scottish father, who had a small hotel in Tangier, and a Spanish Jewess. With the business instinct common to both races he drove a small trade on his own account by selling Moorish curiosities to visitors in the hotel. On a holiday trip to Tangier just before my breakdown I proved an easy victim to his commercial enterprise. Thinking it a shame that a youngster with such abilities should grow up in such an environment, I persuaded his parents to let him have a European education. He now came all the way to Paris by himself, and remained with me for several years, attending French and Swiss schools. The first approach of winter rather alarmed him, and he asked me—"If a snowflake falls on my head, will it hurt me?" He was extremely brave, notwithstanding, and allowed his hand to be crushed till it bled in a steamboat collision without uttering a cry or telling me what had happened. He was the soul of loyalty, and brought his business capacity to my aid. When I was about to close with a shopkeeper's terms for some chairs at the price of seven francs each, he promptly interposed with an offer of six francs, which was instantly accepted. He became a great favourite everywhere, and used to return

from parties with his friends and tell me how he had heard the ladies addressing each other as "Madame Duchesse," and "Madame la Générale." Unluckily the poor little fellow suffered terribly from temper, and as I was suffering in consequence, I had to send him away for a time. His parting reproach weighed heavily on my conscience as I fear it ought to weigh more than one mother's—"Oh, uncle, you ought to have whipped me oftener!" He was managing a motor company in Madrid during the war, and seeing that our interests were suffering seriously for want of trustworthy agents who knew Spanish, he was innocent enough to come all the way to London, armed with recommendations from the British authorities in Madrid and Gibraltar, to offer his services to the Government. I have just received a stately invitation to his wedding with the niece of a Grandee of Spain.

Towards the end of the year 1908 I had accepted an unsolicited offer from the *Paris Daily Mail*, to act as its local correspondent at the munificent salary of 75 francs a week; and my letters were bringing them such crowds of advertisements that they sent their agents back again to collect them, with a promise of promotion to the Riviera. These bright prospects were interrupted by an appeal from the Macedonian Greeks to come over and help them—unaccompanied by any stipulation that I should first help myself.

They were being robbed, maltreated and murdered by Bulgarian bands in order to persuade them to call themselves Bulgarians, with the tempting prospect of being annexed to the Principality. The missionaries were being egged on by the applause of the entire European press, and notably the Liberal press of Great Britain. All men had made up their minds that Bulgaria was the coming country in the Balkans, and the destined

heir of the Turkish dominions. The Greeks, who have always shown themselves hopelessly incapable of putting their case before the bar of European opinion in the right way, were in despair. They could hardly get so much as a letter into any paper in London or elsewhere. (I found the *Paris Daily Mail* equally obdurate.) They were too poor, or else too ignorant, to advertise. Naturally they had forgotten that they had a friend who had already proved himself a match for the rest of Europe. Desiring the services of a writer, they naturally applied to a friend who had never handled a pen. They had undeserved luck in striking Palmer Newbould, who had the sense to send their proposal on to me.

The proposal, as it reached me, was only less ridiculous than the choice of Newbould. They offered to provide the sum of £300 to cover the expenses of a tour through Macedonia—and it didn't cover them—on condition that the tourist should secure the insertion of his correspondence in some paper published in England. They would have been satisfied with a provincial paper. They had been greatly cheered by a paragraph in a Ramsgate organ. They seemed fully persuaded that a journal of the standing of the *Liverpool Post* (one Liverpool paper was mentioned) might be induced by almost any unknown writer to devote its space to long columns of a strictly partial character about a country in which its readers took little interest, and that such a publication would succeed in changing the foreign policy of the British Empire. I was reminded of the Egyptian priest who said (to Herodotus, unless my memory is failing)—“ You Greeks are always children.”

It is reckoned lawful to deceive children for their good. I expressed myself as willing to send letters to any paper that would take them, fore-knowing that the promise committed me to nothing, and I privately prepared to write a book that should carry some weight

in influential quarters. My travelling expenses were forwarded to me in the form of odd cheques from wealthy London Greeks; and I resigned my position on the staff of the *Paris Daily Mail*, and set out for Athens.

I was welcomed as a trustful stranger, and handed over to the custody of a smart professor, to have the right sort of information about Macedonia pumped into me. I need scarcely say that before I had spent many weeks in Macedonia I knew a good deal more about it than any Greek in Athens, and had discovered important points in their own favour, whose importance they hadn't the sense to grasp. Here is a typical case.

SCENE: A Macedonian village, far from the track of newspaper correspondents. PRESENT: A Turkish officer, an Athenian professor, a Greek interpreter, a Macedonian peasant, and a trustful stranger from Switzerland.

TRUSTFUL STRANGER: "Ask him what language he speaks."

INTERPRETER: (*Gibberish, in an unknown tongue*).

PEASANT: (*Gibberish, amid which the ear of the T. officer catches the word "Makedonski"*).

INTERPRETER: "He speaks Bulgarian."

TRUSTFUL STRANGER: "He didn't say Bulgarian, he said Macedonian. Ask him why."

PEASANT (*Proving the whole Greek case up to the hilt in one sentence*): "Our language used to be called Bulgarian, but now we call it Macedonian, to show that we are not Bulgarians."

The Turkish officer was the only listener who saw how much this meant.

My tutelage in Athens didn't last long. Old friend recalled me to memory. Captain Koukoudakes came to remind me of how we had run the blockade together. Levidis, now President of the Chamber, proclaimed me not a Philhellene, but a Hellene. The manager of the

Grande Bretagne, an old Arta comrade, spotted me lunching there, and issued secret instructions that I was to be given no bill. The smart professor discreetly withdrew, and was replaced by a royal aide-de-camp, who wanted me to take him with me through the wilds of Albania disguised as my valet. A still better friend was Philip Chrysoveloni, a Greek from Liverpool, holding a modest position in an Athenian bank, I think. His confidence in me remained unshaken, even when I returned from Macedonia the friend of Abdul Hamid, with a notebook filled with damaging admissions by trustful Greeks. Romanos, who was about to leave for London as Greek Minister (he went on to Paris), begged me to modify one specimen chapter which I read to him. When the book had appeared he had the rare greatness of mind to say to me, "I was wrong, and you were right." I have no recollection of hearing so much from anybody else in the course of my life, although my friends have sometimes complained of my having deferred to their views and wishes.

As "The East End of Europe" is no doubt in your library, or may still be obtained from John Murray, I will spare you a repetition of its contents. In case the —Company should have confidence in the judgment of the *Boston Herald*, you can show them this press note: "Ever since I was in the Balkans myself I have read practically all that has been written about them, and the present book seems to me altogether the most valuable document produced on the subject." Personally, I think this note from the Greek Legation more calculated to impress the public: "The other day I had a letter from H.R.H. Prince Nicholas, who has read your book, and was writing to me to express his delight with it." Observe the extreme caution with which I am approached by Royalty. H.R.H. must have heard of Constantine's *faux pas*.

Joking aside, I am honestly sorry that my protocol is so rigorous. I am in the same position as the Pope. I feel bound to assert the exterritoriality of genius. Unless that is conceded it is only agreeable to me to meet heads of States incognito.

I had no personal objection to meet Abdul Hamid. I had entered his dominions once before as an invader. The moment he heard from the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles that I had entered them again on a peaceful errand, although on behalf of the Greeks, he telegraphed orders throughout the country that I was to go where I liked and see what I liked. I satisfied myself of his sincerity by a simple test. The British Consul in Monastir informed me that the Turkish prison in that town was so horrible a den that no Europeans were allowed to enter it. He had, I presume, sent that report to his Government. The next morning I was driving with a Turkish official to see some schools. On the way I said suddenly, "I should like to see your prison." The horses' heads were instantly turned, and we drove straight thither. In the courtyard I found some prisoners watching a stork. Within the building I found prisoners, many of them Christian murderers, lying on comfortable beds, smoking cigarettes and chatting with each other. When I tell you that I had previously visited the prison of Dartmoor (which I could not have entered unless I had been a member of the Bar), you may understand the impression made upon me. You may also understand how the British Empire is served abroad.

If you wish to know my opinion of Abdul Hamid, I think he was, like Napoleon III, "a great unrecognised incapacity." He gained a reputation for cleverness by his defence of Turkey against the Concert of Europe. It depends on what you think of the Concert. Like many greater men he was a neurotic subject, but as his neurosis led him to breaches of the Sixth Commandmen

instead of the Seventh, the prejudice against him in places like England and America must be put down to his religion. He expressed this view to me himself. When not excited by fear, he was a humane and peace-loving ruler. I came back from Macedonia with ample evidence that the peasantry were better off than in many Christian countries, some of them under the British flag. Some of the evidence I received in confidence under the roof of Greek Consulates fairly amazed me. It was fully confirmed by British missionaries elsewhere. The American missionaries charged the Greeks with worse crimes than Abdul Hamid, as you will see in my book. Although aware that statements by "the man on the spot" are subject to a discount of 99 per cent, and the statements of missionaries to at least double, I confess I entered the country expecting to find some evidence against Abdul Hamid. I could meet with none.

I should have liked to meet him, and probably should have done so later on, but for his dethronement, because I was looking out for a home for the Order of Genius, where it could enjoy the same freedom as the old Order of the Hospital in Rhodes and Malta, and the monks on Mount Athos. The Sultan seemed to me the only sovereign likely to grant us an asylum. I afterwards discussed the matter with a Greek Prime Minister, my hospitable friend Stephen Dragoumis. He thought the Islet of Delos a suitable site, both on account of its traditions, and because it was uninhabited, but he confessed that the Greek Government would be slow to relinquish its sovereignty over the island. For this reason I had no desire to quarrel with the Sultan, but I made the mistake of overrating his intelligence on the report of others, before I had personally tested it. He ought to have seen that it was in his own interest that I should refrain from accepting favours at his hands in

the shape of entertainments and decorations, so that my testimony on his behalf should be above suspicion.

He showed his unwisdom by communicating with me through his English aide-de-camp, Sir Henry Woods Pasha. Woods Pasha was an amiable man, whom I liked personally, and we kept up a correspondence for a long time. But it was unreasonable to deal with me as an English tourist. In the world of Islam, of which Abdul Hamid was supreme head, the builder of a mosque has a distinct rank—I am not sure I was not entitled to wear a green turban. I had built a mosque in Lokoja, that is to say, I had encouraged the Muslims to build one, which they had been afraid to do before; I had granted them a site, supplied them with materials, and exercised a friendly supervision over the erection. The Pashas in Macedonia had appreciated this. A general had marched his army past me, well knowing that I had previously fought against him, and had tendered me other military honours whose significance was pointed out to me by a British military consul. I had been introduced to the Khalif by his religious representative in Great Britain, and not by the British Embassy. A man with any *savoir faire* would have understood the character in which I was visiting his capital by his own request.

He made a far worse mistake in sending me a long written communication, expressing a desire to "decorate" me; and winding up with a veiled threat to hold poor Woods Pasha responsible for the contents of my forthcoming book; through his favourite, the infamous Izzet Pasha. Izzet, as his master ought to have known, was in German pay, and therefore an enemy to any good understanding between Turkey and Great Britain. This treacherous scoundrel read me out the message with studied insolence. I now saw that I was dealing with a fool, who could only be influenced through fear, and I sent Woods a short note in French, intended for

the Sultan's eye, in which I announced that I was leaving Constantinople in consequence of my reception, but that I should take "a more Christian revenge" than Firdausi's on the Sultan Mahmud.

This deadly stab to a Commander of the Faithful threw all Constantinople into consternation. I was roused in bed the next morning by Woods' Armenian dragoman, who had come to implore me to say what were my real sentiments; and I told him. I also told him that I knew what I was doing. Later in the day Woods himself came round and gleefully assured me that Izzet's head had been "washed" by his master, as it deserved to be. An officer in the Turkish army called with a message from the Grand Vizier to request me to put off my departure as a favour to his Highness. This was followed up by a dinner in my honour, a compliment that particularly impressed Woods, who told me the Grand Vizier never entertained the Ambassadors. The Vizier's nephew took me about Constantinople for the rest of my stay. The British Ambassador hastened to follow suit, and paid me such marked attentions that his wife and some foreign diplomatists present could scarcely conceal their astonishment. Lady O'Connor, who was heart-broken by her husband's death soon afterwards, wrote me a most touching note to thank me for my portrayal of him in my book, and asked me to let her have my autograph in memory of the evening.

It may be within the recollection of the public that the Bulgarian propaganda practically ceased with the appearance of the "East End of Europe," and has not been revived. The book was promptly and frankly accepted by the British Foreign Office, and the responsible press of both parties, as the truth about Macedonia. Only one hostile review came under my notice. The English patrons of Bulgaria deserted their fallen idol—and rushed off to cast themselves down before the Young Turks!

We, whose gift and doom it is
To be more sensitive than other men,
For us must much excuse be made ; to us
Beauty is an intoxicating drug ;
Our dreams are potions, and we suffer for it,
Bruising our feet on rocks our whole lives long.

The rest are all pretenders, when they mouth
Of deathless art, and sacred fame of song.
Our art is but the blossom, and our love
The seed-cell ; we enact our tragedies
Before we write them ; and these books of ours,
With gems inwrought and cunning workmanship,
These are the garnered flagons of our tears.

Dedication.

XIX

"I THANK you for your kind communication, and much regret that I find it needful if I would not seriously overtax my strength, to leave without proper acknowledgment many letters which it has given me the greatest pleasure to receive.

“ _____ ”

“Middle Temple.”

You will do me a great service if you can induce the — Company to distribute the above post card through the length and breadth of America. I hate sending it to my friends, though I sometimes like sending it to my enemies. It is so well lithographed that one vexed recipient scored off me with the retort—“It would have taken you less time to answer my question than to write your post card.”

Amateur authors have a passion for correspondence with real ones. They seldom want you to benefit them with your light; they want to benefit you with theirs. Some real authors enjoy reading their works aloud to worshippers—I loathe it—but what the amateur author wants is to read his works to you, and that is even worse. It doesn't strike them that they are blacklegs, taking the bread out of the mouths of people who have no other means of support. I consider Mrs. Asquith has no more right to sell reminiscences over my head than she has to go into the Old Bailey and take away my clients. I can't deny that I have now and then addressed distinguished men myself, but it has generally been on some point dealt with in their books, or one which I thought I had something to learn or to teach. I made

an exception in the case of dear Mark Twain, because I had just met him in our publisher's office and had been too shy to tell him to his face what I thought of him; and he was down on his luck at the time. My liberty wasn't misconstrued.

" London, June 2 /97.

" DEAR MR.———

" These are very pleasant words to me, and although you have not required an answer, I think it was most kind of you to take the trouble to say them, and so I cannot deny myself the gratification of thanking you—which I do, cordially.

" Sincerely yours,
" S. L. CLEMENS."

The following letter will not please the Pale Person, so you had better leave it out.

" *Private.*

" *Athenæum Club,*
" *May 3, 1889.*

" DEAR SIR,

" I am much obliged for your kind letter; I get so many which appear to be paraphrases of the Communion Service that the change to your style is refreshing, though I will not be so conceited as to think that it is any better deserved.

" I mean to republish my essays next autumn. My desire has been to strike a sharp blow at the rotten fabric of ecclesiastical Christianity, and I rejoice to think that it has told and is telling. [This to a Protestant candidate!]

" I wind up the discussion in the June number. In the meanwhile my stock of health and strength is nearly used up, and I must go and make holiday in fresh air.

" Yours very faithfully,
" T. H. HUXLEY."

Huxley was so pleased that he carried my letter down

with him to Brighton and wrote me another from there, which I have parted with to a member of his family.

This letter dealt with a problem on which I found new light in Nigeria :

“ *Somerleaze, Wells, Somerset,*
“ *August 18/1889.*”

“ DEAR SIR,

“The matter on which you write to me, the exact position of Harold as Earl of the West Saxons, is one on which, as there is no direct statement in any contemporary writer, it is easy to come to very different conclusions. Whatever view any one comes to can be reached only by comparing a great number of casual notices, which are sure to strike different minds differently. For instance, Mr. T. R. Green had a theory, which he set forth in his posthumous volume, ‘The Conquest of England,’ which would trace back the position of Godwine and Harold to a much earlier time. [The Nigerian evidence favoured this.] I saw no force in what he said, and have given my reasons in the *English Historical Review* a year or two back. But it shows the ease with which different conclusions may be come to when there is no document or other contemporary evidence putting the matter beyond doubt.

“ Believe me, yours faithfully,

“ EDWARD A. FREEMAN.”

I have dealt with the fetish of the contemporary document in one of my historical works. The work of the true historian begins where the documents leave off. Any trained expert can tack documents together, and will be handsomely paid by universities for doing so.

My only object in troubling you with these letters is to show that there is a right and a wrong way of addressing people who are sick of the very sight of a pen when their day’s work is over. A country-woman of yours once wrote to ask me the meaning of the word “Meriah,” for which she had ransacked libraries in vain. I sent

her a full explanation, which must have been lost in the post, and received a second letter, taunting me with arrogance and laziness for my silence.

My enviable reputation as the most unapproachable man in Europe was earned by a correspondence rashly begun by myself. I had read, with sympathy, a rather illegible book by an author unknown to me by name, who seemed to me to be struggling after good ideas which he could neither make clear to his own mind, nor to his readers. Thinking I might be of use to him, I sent him a much too flattering letter, paving the way to an interview. This brought me a reply politely informing me that I had ignorantly addressed a personage whose correct style and title was "The Hon.—Lady ——" and recommending me to read, for my good, another of her works, which she named. Within a few months I found myself unexpectedly in 'political antagonism to her son, and I took an opportunity to heap coals of fire on her head by a public tribute to her merits, which her son suitably acknowledged. Some years elapsed, and I had got over my rebuff, when the appearance of a second edition of "The New Word" (on my return to England—I know you like having these notes in strict chronological order) brought me a fleeting notoriety. Lady ——— now remembered that we were old friends, and wrote, mildly reproaching me for not having advertised her works in "The New Word," because, as she put it, such a mention of herself would have justified her in giving me a puff in return in an article she was about to contribute to the "Encyclopædia Britannica"; and, as she tantalised me by adding, "Mention in the 'Encyclopædia' always sells a few copies." The letter closed with an intimation that she was at last prepared to receive a call from me in her home in a distant suburb.

Hoping against hope that she might still have some

good in her, I let her off far more lightly than I had just let off the Sultan of Turkey and the Crown Prince of Greece. I accorded her the honours of the protocol as a commercial author like myself. I answered with perfect truthfulness that I was suffering from nervous depression to an extent that unfitted me for the society of strangers. Lady ——'s response enclosed the article, from which she had omitted my name to pay me out for my neglect of her, with a request for my expert advice and revision. Probably she expected me to insert my name. I could no longer shut my eyes to the fact that the unfortunate woman belonged to the class labelled "mattoids" by Lombroso; and my own state of health made it imperative that I should put an end to what threatened to be a persecution. I did this by returning the article with a note in the third person, regretting my inability to be of service to her. She forbore to heap coals on my head. I am still without mention in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

Believe me, you will render a very great service to others beside myself if you can obtain a circulation for this anecdote. Charges equally malicious and equally unfounded are always in circulation about men of genius; they seldom leap to the light to be repelled in their life-time; and they become the staple of prurient biographers the moment they can be printed with safety. *J'ai peur de trop dire en pensant à ce que "qui s'excuse s'accuse." Mais Madame Potiphare vit encore, et j'ai la rencontré plus d'un fois. moyennant des épîtres peu reconnaissantes de M. le Capitaine. Or, on ne peut pas déranger une ménage tranquille en s'excusant auprès de Madame Potiphare. Donc c'est reconnu que je suis misogynne aussi que misanthrope. Vous verrez prochainement que j'ai beaucoup de sujets pour regretter que je ne suis pas érudit français.*

I redeemed my character in the eyes of Van Eeden

(who was a friend of Lady ——'s) by spending a week with him in his philosophic retreat near Amsterdam. His two dear little children approached me quite fearlessly, and found me more interested in their picture-books than in some encyclopædias.

A mare's nest, that may have done me more harm than I know, was revealed to me years after its birth. On the eve of my Greek expedition I said to a meeting in Hyde Park: "I am going to join the Greeks, and if Lord Salisbury sends troops out there he may have the pleasure of shooting down some of his own countrymen." In the *oratio obliqua* of Fleet Street this read "Mr. —— said he was going to join the Greeks, and if Lord Salisbury sent troops out there *he* might have the pleasure of shooting down some of his own countrymen." I was taunted with this bloodthirsty sentiment long after my return, by an excitable Irishman, in a satire printed in a literary annual. Tell the —— Company to send that anecdote to the legal press. It is a curiosity in the way of evidence, and of the "contemporary document." It will sell a few copies of my book. I sold several copies of the "Sayings of Confucius" by inserting a passage from the *Analects* that I thought would appeal to sporting men: "The Master shot, but not at birds sitting; he fished, but did not use a net." It was approvingly quoted in the *Field*.

I have only once done a thing which I knew to be wrong. At the age of five I stole some raisins out of a red cupboard. I didn't want the raisins, but I wanted to feel what it was like to break the Ten Commandments. Blue fire from the ceiling wouldn't have surprised me in the least.

In the course of the next year, 1900, I was discovered by my friend, A. R. Orage, of the *New Age*, a discovery which was not wholly without result in the history of

England. He is almost the only editor who has approached me of his own accord to ask for contributions, and he offered me an absolutely free hand. Although his paper had the character of a Socialist organ, he accepted me as an Individualist. It was his original proposal that I should develop my ideas on the subject of the Overman, in correction of Nietzsche, and I made a serious effort to obey the call. I contributed three articles under the heading of "The Order of the Seraphim," which seem to have made an impression on some of their readers, inasmuch as I have had many requests to continue them. But my circumstances were not such as to enable me to do so, although the *New Age* treated me with a liberality its resources can scarcely have justified. Perfect quiet is an expensive luxury, and the higher centres of my brain went on strike for want of it. In addition, the Socialist readers of the paper showed less openness of mind than their editor. I was reminded of old days in Dublin. I took the occasion of an angry letter containing the familiar "I, for one, protest," to confess my inability to go on; and with Orage's good will I fell back on my second gear as a statesman, instead of a prophet.

My third gear, as an anthropologist, came into use about the same time, with the beginning of the "Divine Mystery," a work which I cannot look on with satisfaction. It is, I believe, the nearest approach to a sound general history of religion, and certainly the only outspoken one that has commanded general approval; but I feel it to be unworthy of the subject, and to be a grave disgrace to the Church of England, to the Board of Education, to the Universities of America, and to the Swedish Academy. Not to be too hard on them I append a more favourable criticism.

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" 28 Mallord St., Chelsea, S.W.3,

" Nov. 6, 1918.

" DEAR MR. ———,

" I am very sorry to have missed you when you called yesterday . . . I found your book 'The Divine Mystery' perfectly enthralling, and have ordered 'The New Word.' In hopes of meeting you soon,

" Yours very truly,

" AUGUSTUS E. JOHN."

"The New Word" was ordered in vain, as the "Divine Mystery" will be ere long.

By way of recreation I now applied for a scoutmaster's warrant, which was kindly granted me without the examination which it states that I have passed. I settled in a suburban town, in which I found a stained glass window in memory of King George's chum, and amalgamated three derelict troops, one composed of the pupils of an exclusive preparatory school, another containing boys of the County School class, and a third largely made up of errand boys. They harmonised very well. One of the youthful aristocrats ventured to ask me if some of his companions were not "common boys." I reminded him that in the eyes of the Prince of Wales even he might rank as a common boy, and suggested that it was for him to refine and elevate his inferiors to his own level. The advice was well received and I heard from a mutual friend that his mother had testified that a month or two as a boy scout had quite changed his character, and done him more good than several years of the preparatory school.

Our troop must have acquired a little reputation judging from certain testimonials. We even got our name into the newspapers by capturing at the request of Headquarters three emissaries of Lord Burnham's troop carrying dispatches, and sending them back empty handed. The *Daily Telegraph* seemed to resent this, but

its emissaries didn't, as we gave them supper, and put them up for the night. It was a long-delayed revenge for calling me Hans Andersen.

I have started troops since in several places, as my means afforded, and I record with gratitude that I have had no complaint from any parent. Some boys have complained because I didn't drill them enough; but then I don't run troops to please boys, but to amuse myself. Also the Chief Scout is against drill.

If this were a book likely to be read by parents who took an intelligent interest in their children's welfare I might write some valuable pages on the subject of the Boy Scout movement; as it is I will confine myself to two very earnest warnings: (1) *All boys are not equal to one another* (neither are all scoutmasters); (2) *Never let the movement come under the control of the Board of Education, the County Council, or any other body interested in education.*

The Young Turks had annoyed me, not only by deposing my friend Abdul Hamid but by timing their revolution while "the East End of Europe" was in the press, thereby compelling me to add another chapter. This was ticklish work, because the whole world was hailing them as champions of liberty, whereas I could see they were aggressive Imperialists, who had really risen not so much against the Sultan as against the League of Nations, which had been slowly squeezing him out of his European territories in the interest of Austria and Russia. As you will see by referring to it, the chapter is a plagiarism of Mark Antony's oration at his friend's funeral, beginning with fulsome homage to the Young Turks, and ending with very plain hints that the Christians of Turkey had exchanged King Log for King Stork.

Now I was dragged from my useful work as a scout-

master, an anthropologist and a journalist by a solicitor who hired me to go out to Constantinople as a lawyer; and the Young Turks had every reason for dread.

I haven't said much about my practice in London, because the Benchers of my Inn are the one authority I fear, but perhaps they won't mind my telling you of one case in which I was my own lawyer. An aged relative died, leaving her trustees, one of whom was my uncle, to distribute the trust fund under the terms of an ancient will. The solicitor to the trustees advised them that our particular branch of the family was entitled to nothing, and my uncle was about to deprive himself and me of a substantial sum of money without consulting me, when I happened by the merest accident to hear of it. I expressed a natural wish to hear more. This brought the solicitor to my chambers with a small brief for opinion. Justified in despising me as a Common Law practitioner, he told me with some patronage that he was very pleased to give me a complimentary brief, as a member of the family, but that he had taken the opinion of his regular Chancery man, in whom he had entire confidence, and that he should be glad if I would confine myself to subscribing to it as a matter of form. As soon as he was gone I looked up the authorities and wrote an opinion disagreeing point-blank with my learned friend's, and claiming our share in the inheritance. The regular Chancery man stuck to his guns, and wrote a counter opinion, and the solicitor was compelled to take the opinion of a judge. My learned friend met me in the corridor outside the Court, and observed with professional bonhomie, "You're quite right, —, I overlooked that case." He then went into Court and, after a hollow argument, said, "I understand my friend is going to rely on this case"—citing it. The judge inquired, "How do you propose to get over it?" and receiving the reply, "I'm afraid I can't get over it,"

decided in our favour without calling on me. I had no more complimentary briefs from that solicitor.

I had the common experience of acting as counsel for a short time to the once celebrated Mrs. Weldon. Her love-affair with Gounod had ended in monomania, and it was a mistake, perhaps, to let her out of the asylum in which she had been placed. She told me that Gounod wrote his famous tune, "There is a green hill far away," in her drawing-room one Sunday. She had printed a book detailing the history of their relations, and gave me a copy of it. She persecuted him even after his death, and when his statue was set up in the Parc Monceau she boasted that the French Government had been afraid to "dedicate" it through fear of her. She had an extraordinary power of logical reasoning; you saw the chain was unsound, but it wasn't easy to put your finger on the flaw. The judges wisely refused to hear her in the end. She was bringing what I rather think was her last case, against a firm of booksellers. She had the law on her side, but what revolted me was the sheer lust of cruelty which soon came to the surface. When I retired from the case she issued a writ against me, and wrote to ask for an address where her process-server could find me. I had just gone to Dinard, and told her where I was, but she wrote back to say she well knew I had sent my letter there to be posted, and I was hiding somewhere in London from her vengeance. This was the woman who obtained a verdict for £10,000 against Gounod.

I had reason to go abroad.

Vainly mounts the soaring mind to rock the stars, to
break the sky,
Thoughts that rend the universe, moods that daunt the
gods on high.

Vainly smites the soul her pinions ; underneath the
body's need
Tangles all and drags her down, like an anchor fouled
in weed. . . .

The feet of fifty years shall tread the dust of these
devouring fires ;
The wrinkles on the brow of old are graves of youth's
sublime desires.

Couplets.

XX

COMING to Constantinople in a purely professional capacity, I had no intercourse with the new Government, beyond a brief business interview with the Finance Minister, Djavid Pasha. He treated me with every courtesy ; in fact, I was given to understand that it was a considerable favour on his part to see the representative of a private business firm. Fitzgerald, the dragoman of the British Embassy, complained to me that the Ministers would no longer consent to see him, as in the old days, and had used the expression, " Who are these dogs of dragomen ? " Still, it was clear to me that I was regarded as a friend of the Sultan's, and as such, a person to be shunned. Abdul Hamid had only ventured to thank me for my book by a private message. The new Grand Vizier, an old acquaintance, first asked me to call on him at a very early hour in the morning, to avoid notice, and then thought better of it, and excused himself. Constantinople was under a reign of terror, in short, compared with which the Hamidian terror was almost licence. The idealists, who thought they had engineered the revolution from Paris, had been politely shelved. Their leader, Ahmed Riza, whom I had seen, and seen through, in Paris was enjoying himself as mock President of a Chamber of mock Deputies. Elections which went in favour of the Christians were freely quashed, and Muslims appointed in their stead. Liberal journalists were murdered in the streets of Constantinople within a few yards of me while I was there.

The British Embassy appeared to be without influence

and without information. The Ambassador was a new man, and as he was away at Therapia, I didn't think it worth while to trouble him. Fitzgerald, who was in charge of the Embassy, kindly gave me the run of the library, where I wanted to consult the Turkish Code on my client's behalf. It was his proposal that I should go to Salonika, which was still the headquarters of the Committee of Union and Progress, to ascertain who were the real directing spirits. I found it a little difficult to understand why England maintained an Embassy in Constantinople, except to accommodate deserving men with claims.

I embodied my judgment of the Young Turks in a pamphlet which appeared in your country and in France. It was rather premature for the British public. When I offered it to an idealist publisher in London he refused it his imprint on the ground that I was a false prophet, and that he could not countenance an attack on such noble friends of freedom.

The pamphlet was written in Athens in a quiet room placed at my disposal in my friend Paspati's bank. The Greeks had no more doubts as to my *bona fides*. The Grande Bretagne asserted its regular claim to lodge and board me in the most sumptuous manner at its own expense. The Foreign Office had already, I think, appointed my friend Gennadius its Minister in London on my recommendation. I am not sure that the history of Greece during the recent war would have been quite the same if I possessed any claims to serve my native country. There are some highly-respected officials in Whitehall who must have consoled themselves for the vain sacrifice of Galipolli with Napoleon's words to Metternich, "What are two hundred thousand lives to me?"

From Athens some friends took me to Crete to visit the ruins of Knossos, laid bare by Sir Arthur Evans,

with whom I travelled back. The outgoing steamer touched at Canea, hard by the spot where I had landed twelve years before. Some one unknown to me conveyed the news of my being on board to Venizelos, who was then President of the island, but had just accepted the Premiership of the Greek kingdom. A Government barge, draped with Greek flags, came off to the steamer with an invitation to me to come ashore and see his Excellency. More touched by the sight of those flags than I care to say, I put off my trip to Knossos, and landed, for the second time, in Crete.

The great statesman's house was a modest one, such as a Labour member might occupy in England, and the door was opened to me by an old woman, possibly the only servant. I found Venizelos in bed suffering from a slight attack of fever. He asked me to talk to him in English, while he used French himself. He was good enough to say he had read "The East End of Europe." He explained to me that he was a practical man, not under the illusions that swayed so many Greek politicians; that he recognised that Greece was a small and feeble Power, and that she must cut her coat according to her cloth. His name reminded me that Crete had been once a Venetian province, and I thought I saw in him a good deal of the sobriety of the ancient statesmen of Venice. He confided to me that it was his purpose to organise a league of the Christian States of the Balkans against the Young Turks, and expressed a wish for me to go as his confidential agent to Sofia, to sound the Bulgarian Government on the subject.

This request took me by surprise, because the Bulgarians had read "The East End of Europe," too, and it did not flatter them. But Venizelos no doubt considered that they had acquired some respect for me as a publicist, and that they would be cautious how they attempted to deceive me. I confess this is one of the

occasions when I have had to regret my failure to help myself to more of the world's goods. I found it impossible to tell Venizelos that I couldn't accept the mission unless my expenses were suitably defrayed. I came away exceeding sorrowful. To my friends in Athens I excused myself on the ground that I had no faith that the Bulgarians would keep any treaty they might enter into. This prevision was justified in due course, but fortunately with no injury to anyone but themselves.

Let me contrast that anecdote with one which slightly antedates it. The reception given to "The East End of Europe" by a noble lord who had been Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs emboldened me to offer my services to the Foreign Office through him. I had already seen his successor in the Foreign Office, to whom I was introduced, not as a capable public man, but as a man who had been punished for putting him into office. The post which I suggested as the one for which I might be thought most eligible was that of Consular judge in Constantinople or, failing that, a legal or administrative post in Egypt. The Minister told me with a despondent air, "Sometimes we can get a man in, if we hear of a vacancy in time, but the permanent officials generally fill them up before we hear anything."

Such a person was clearly a broken reed, but I had a higher opinion of the noble lord, because he had himself been overlooked on the formation of the new Government, and had publicly ventilated his wrongs, with the result that he was now Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He asked me to call on him at the offices of the Duchy, where his staff appeared to consist of one man and a boy. I found him hugging a dispatch-box which may, or may not, have contained something beside sandwiches. In the course of some desultory remarks he suddenly dropped into French, apparently

to test my proficiency in the language of diplomacy, much as if I were a young gentleman applying for a post as dancing attaché in a legation in South America. Now a Frenchwoman, related to Paul Bourget, once surprised me with the remark that I always used "*le mot juste*," which ought to be of some importance in diplomacy. But I confess my French soon gets rusty in England, and I felt the test a fatal one. I could only remind him respectfully in English that my inquiries in Macedonia had been conducted in French. But the interview was over—and with it England's chance of having an influential representative in the east end of Europe.

Some of my articles in the *New Age* are still worth reading—I may have reproduced one or two phrases from them in these notes. Many of them were anonymous, but I fancy my style is not easily to be mistaken. I am, of course, well-nigh the only contributor to the *New Age* whose contributions have not been eagerly culled out by publishers for reproduction. Some of my articles dealt faithfully with the Labour Party and its mischievous leader, Keir Hardie. The pills were swallowed without thanks, but the cure was wrought. I am now allowed to belong to the Labour Party. I have even acted as chairman of a Trades Council which I assisted to form.

My opportunity arrived when the House of Lords threw out my old friend Lloyd George's Budget. The Liberal Party were overjoyed. This was the opportunity they had been waiting for for eighty years. For eighty years the House of Lords had stood between the country and log-rolling legislation. It had made many blunders; it blundered badly over the Budget, as I pointed out to it; but on the whole it had been more representative of the democracy than the so-called House of Commons, as I also pointed out. The Liberal

Party proclaimed a Holy War in the name of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and prepared to rouse the country to revolution. But they had counted without the real revolutionists.

It may have struck you by this time that my enemies generally come to a bad end. That is not always my doing. I am one of the least malicious men who have ever lived. I think I may fairly refer you to your own countryman's verdict: "No critic has had at his command so vitriolic a wit, and used it so magnanimously." The sequence of events is due to the fact, surely obvious by this time, that no one could possibly injure me unless he were a fool or a knave—probably both. And though fools and knaves may flourish for a season they are apt to come to grief in the long run. Good men may come to grief as well, but then they have their consolations. You remember Milton's reply to James II, when the Duke of York asked him if he didn't regard the loss of his sight as a judgment of Providence on his blasphemous and disloyal writings, "What about your father, who lost his head?"

The Liberal Party had played the knave and fool at once in repudiating and apologising for the election cry which had given them the greatest majority on record. Their indignation was in a way sincere. They were anxious enough for office, but they were only less anxious to do nothing when in office, except close the public-houses and the racecourses and the football grounds and the theatres as in the good old days of the Commonwealth. They had hoped to float into office on the Conservative cry of Free Trade, which would have justified them in marking time for the next five years. They were alarmed and annoyed when they felt themselves lifted up on the broad roller of democratic righteousness, and swept forward to the abolition of "indentured labour."

Now they had changed their minds. They stood forth in the borrowed robes of Rousseau and of Lincoln, and summoned the spirited democracy to arise in its might and re-make the British Constitution.

The spirited democracy wasn't having any, if I may drop into the language of a spirited democracy. I was asked to write a supplement to the *New Age* on the crisis, and I told the spirited democracy that they were being fooled. The democracy didn't read the *New Age* of course, but the aristocracy did. Its best circulation was in Fleet Street, and one of the soundest and most democratic minds in that august Court of Public Opinion testified that it was very carefully studied there about this time. It took all the heart out of the business. The bogus Lincolns and Rousseaus called the spirit of democracy from the vasty deep in vain. England rejected their appeal with scorn. The Liberal Government was just able to cling to office with the help of the deluded Irish vote.

Then came the Constitutional Crisis. I had written another supplement interpreting the verdict of the country to mean, "Reform the House of Lords by all means; but let it be done soberly in consultation with all parties in the State, and not as a Party measure in the sole interest of log-rolling cranks." Asquith, the admirer of Mary Kingsley, paid no heed to her successor. He went to Brighton to demand of Edward VII the creation of several hundred peers. Edward VII, who appreciated me better, received him, so I am incredibly informed, with a copy of the *New Age* in his hand, and told him, "You haven't got a majority." The Prime Minister went for a walk on the Esplanade, musing on Mary Kingsley, possibly, and returned to His Majesty in a meek and chastened spirit. The accession of a new King was made the excuse for taking my advice, and a conference of the leaders of both parties was held

in Buckingham Palace. No statesman being present, the conference proved abortive. The Liberals, after a second election with a similar result, decided to go on clinging to office, and passed a mock Act of Parliament forbidding the House of Lords to veto their measures more than twice. They haven't yet sent up many measures which the House of Lords has thought worth vetoing once.

Lest you should be afraid to tell all this to the — Company, I append an extract from the most sober political organ in the British Isles.

“ We cannot, however, resist the temptation to express our admiration for the way in which, during the most strenuous period of the Constitutional crisis, the *New Age* faced the facts, and spoke the words of soberness and truth rather than of enticing sophistry as regards the political situation.”—*The Spectator*, June 11th, 1910.

So far that is, I think, the nearest approach to thanks I have received for my services to the British public during some forty years. In that time I could have been President of the United States.

My last public service prior to the war earned me a portrait on the front page of the *Daily Mirror*, and honourable mention in a Sunday newspaper taken in by a servant of my friend Mrs. Llewellyn Williams, who reported the discovery to her mistress. Real fame at last !

A poor mother, deserted by a drunken husband, had been obliged to go into the Lewisham Workhouse with her two youngest boys, and died there. On her death-bed she was comforted by a vow from an elder son, who was earning his living, that he would not let his brothers grow up in the workhouse. He was a clerk in a shipping office at a salary of thirty shillings a week, but there

was another brother in South Africa who was willing to assist. He applied to Mr. Bumble for his little wards, and Mr. Bumble haughtily refused to part with them. The fine young fellow was only eighteen years of age; the drunken father, who had left no address, was the only person who had a legal right to their custody. Their brother came to the workhouse to take them out for a walk, and took them as far as Brighton, where he hid them successfully from Mr. Bumble, a proceeding by which he showed himself fitter to have charge of them than all the Bumbles in the British Empire. Mr. Bumble rose in his wrath, haled this respectable youth into a police court and had him fined, at the same time setting detectives on his track with a view to recovering the prisoners.

The Press of England rang with the story, but no one interfered. If my friend John Burns, who was just then President of the Local Government Board and, as such, Arch-Bumble of all Bumbledom, noticed the case, he may have spoken to a permanent official, in which event he must have been told that the Department had no authority to do anything, under the Act XXXVII and XXXVIII Vic. cap. 73, s. 19, subs. 2 (5), or some similar Departmental spell. Newspapers never act; their business is to talk. The German cities in the Middle Ages appointed a Defender of the Poor; England only appoints a Public Prosecutor. It was clearly a chance for the ex-tribune of Cardiff.

I asked the heroic brother to come and see me, and offered to take the boys out of Mr. Bumble's jurisdiction, and assume their legal guardianship myself till he was of age, with the understanding that I should hand them over on the spot to him, and interfere no further. He welcomed this offer, all the more because I told him I could offer nothing in the way of financial help. I wrote accordingly to Mr. Bumble offering him this way out of

an odious situation, and hinting that I was not unknown to the President of the Local Government Board. Mr. Bumble promptly closed with the suggestion; I attended a meeting of the Board of Guardians with my young wards; and they were formally delivered into my custody, to be delivered into their brother's outside the door of the building. The *Daily Mirror* favoured me with a very pleasing photograph of the scene, which I should be glad to send you if I felt sure you wouldn't lose it. The happy family, when I last heard from them, were doing well.

This successful press note brought me appeals from unexpected quarters. My own "daily woman" heard of me, and told me a heartrending tale of her own daughter's imprisonment in a charitable institution, to which I had luckily subscribed. I called on the secretary, and the poor girl was allowed to visit her mother for the first time for many years. The mother had been a servant in a good family, and was the soul of respectability, an ideal parent to have charge of a girl. For years afterwards I had the privilege of assisting in a small way my friend H. J. Brooke, of the Home Office, in his noble, and often successful, efforts to substitute mothers' pensions for orphanages, a work so magnificently carried on in your country by my honoured friend Judge Neill.

Meanwhile the storm was gathering of which I had heard the first rumble twelve years before in Moyns's historic letter. The British Foreign Office had made all its plans, unknown to the nation, behind the screen of Sir Edward Grey, who was described in the Department as "a fine profile." The last light I obtained on what was toward was at a lunch in the Royal Societies' Club, where I was entertaining the Greek Minister Gennadius, the other guests being a distinguished

official in the confidence of the Foreign Office and a distinguished journalist supposed to be in the confidence of a very important Minister. A discussion arose as to whether England was or was not in military alliance with France, and my two English friends differed. At last, to clinch his argument, the journalist exclaimed, "I have the personal assurance of a Cabinet Minister that there is no such agreement." To which the official quietly responded, "And I have seen the treaty."

The signs of the times could not be mistaken by any thoughtful man who was willing to look truth in the face. There were few such men among the prophets who enjoyed honour in their own country. I was reading the signs in a light not familiar to men like Lord Haldane, and to Foreign Office clerks. Lest I should be cursed with worshippers hereafter, and they should boast that I successfully cursed mankind, let me record once again that the true prophet is an Æolian harp, and no more responsible than it for the utterance breathed through him. As I had put it long ago in "A Day's Tragedy":

"The order of the universe
Rolled through me like a golden rhyme,
And all the tendencies of Time—
Our fates but dust and straws in these—
And God's eternal purposes."

Not once in my life have I written anything with a heavier heart than these words, offered in vain to "Hibbert Journals" and to business men, and printed by myself one year before the war:

"When civilisation sets Jesus the Nazarene on a gibbet, and Caligula on a throne, it is time for it to be laid waste. Our era is too like the Christian one, our

society too like that of Antioch, our empires are too like that of Rome, for the thoughtful man not to apprehend, and for the prophet not to denounce, and even to demand, a parallel catastrophe." "The Divine Mystery," p. 183.

These words stand in a book the — Company bought after their fulfilment had begun, and which it hopes to recommend as the work of a smart press agent.

On the day war broke out I had forgotten having written those words. I turned up an older, youthful page of my "Songs in Ziklag," and made the record :

" 1914.

The rulers mad with pride, the mobs with fear,
Draw down destruction on the world, fulfilling
The prophecy of one neglected bard."

You have struck your last blow, O Spain !
From continent to continent
The rags of your empire old are rent :
Go, and make haste, O Spain !
For your rule in the freeman's West is o'er,
And your flag shall darken the East no more,
Nor the shadow be flung on Cuba's shore,
Nor your traitor seas drink in the gore
Of another crew of the Maine !

Ode on the Battle of Manila.

XXI

ENGLAND went into the war with a light heart, and the motto: "Business as usual." That is still the motto of the bankers' syndicate trading as the League of Nations. There is no sign yet visible to me that the owners of the earth have learnt any lesson from the ruin they have wrought except that slaughter on too large a scale does interfere with business.

The one country that came into the war, and came out of the alleged peace, with entire dignity and credit to herself was yours, if it is not a liberty to say so. I hope these notes haven't made you put me down as a flatterer. In the first dark days of the war I cheered up many a Belgian who looked on their cause as lost by saying to them: "America will come in if she is wanted." But I don't claim to know America. I once found myself sitting next to an American lady at a dinner given to the Imagist poets of London (it is well known that I am an Imagist) by Amy Lowell, herself *prima inter pares*; and I cheered her up by saying that we should get on much better if we recognised frankly that we were foreigners. You will now know why the British Government didn't send me over to lecture to you during the war.

In case the — Company should persist in taking me up, after all, and should want me to lecture in America, I had better say here that I have received many warnings not to go. The most friendly was from Amy Lowell herself, though she softened her advice with a postscript which I should like you to show to a smart lecture agency, if there is a lecture agency in

America: "Personally, I do hope you will come, because I shall never forget that after-dinner speech you made at the Imagist dinner. It left an indelible impression, and I know the same charm would attach to a serious subject." The difficulty I see is the one we have discussed already. It isn't the lecture that matters, but the lecturer. People don't like lectures. What they like is to sit staring for an hour at some one who has climbed Mount Everest, or said he could have climbed it if it wasn't so high. They don't mind his talking, especially if they can't hear what he is saying. The Company had better do what I said some way back. Let them engage a movie man to wave his arms for an hour—action is the soul of oratory—and then hand over the film to a lecture agent. If that doesn't fetch the public I am no good as a publicity expert.

The world was dragged into the war by its Pacifists. I had warned the Germans plainly in "The East End of Europe" that our Pacifists would retire from business in favour of the Pugilists as soon as there was trouble, but they chose to believe the Pacifists rather than me.

When Edward VII was beating up allies against the Germans the Pacifists assured them that he was Edward the Pacifist. When during the last decisive days the Germans were trying to get a plain answer from Sir Edward Grey to the question whether England meant to fight, the Pacifists prevented him from giving one that might even then have averted the war. To please them Belgium had to be invaded first, so that they might say: "Perish India! Let the Germans have Canada and Australia! Let them come over and sack London if they please; and we shall suffer them with Christian meekness. But if they touch one hair of any Belgian, then we are sworn to fight!"

Finding myself prevented from carrying on business

as usual by the failure of my humble efforts as a peacemaker, I felt it incumbent on me to demonstrate the difference between a peacemaker and a Pacifist.

I had been libelling Wilhelm II steadily for about twenty years, though my libels had latterly been anonymous, because I was trying to live down my reputation as a well-known novelist. I now attempted to write further libels, and to republish those already written, but found coyness on the part of editors and publishers, some of whom clearly anticipated that the day was not far distant when his Imperial Majesty would have it in his power to send them out into a back yard to be shot. "This is the best story from your pen I have read for many a long year, but we dare not use it," wrote one old friend, who wrote again asking me to let him have the story the moment Wilhelm II abdicated. In these circumstances I thought honour required me to face the German army in the field; and I believe I was the first Englishman to do so.

May I say in passing that I entirely respect the motives which led Romain Rolland to take a different course. My only important European utterance during the war was written to some extent in support of his attitude. The *Amsterdammer* was printing a series of articles by well-known English novelists justifying the action of their country on various altruistic principles, not forgetting the wrongs of Belgium; and my friend Van Eeden, as one of the editors, asked me to join in the symposium. I was rather surprised that the *Amsterdammer* printed the result. I didn't want gallant little Holland dragged into the war on either side, because once when I was in the Isle of Marken, in the Zuyder Zee, and hadn't change to pay for a post-card, the Dutch post-mistress insisted on making me a present of the difference, a thing most permanent

officials in my experience would rather die than do. Besides the Dutch had their generous hands full in sheltering Belgian refugees. Still less did I want to see strife break out in Holland itself over the question. I therefore wrote an article calculated to discourage the Dutch from meddling in a strife into which none of the combatants had come with perfectly clean hands. I have no copy by me, but I imagine I must have expressed the view that wars sprang out of instincts deep in human nature, which it was better to indulge in international strife with manly weapons, than in inter-social strife carried on with bombs and bankers' cheques; and which it would be still better to satisfy in peaceful athletic contests under the educational influence of a religion in which grown men could honestly believe.

Of course I was too old to be accepted by the War Office in any capacity but that of Commander-in-Chief, or, let us say, Under Secretary at War. In that capacity I might have hastened the conclusion of the war by at least a year, and saved America some trouble. On my last visit to Constantinople in 1910, perceiving that the Young Turks would be fighting us before very long, I made a strategical survey, and devised a plan for taking Constantinople by surprise, going so far as to pick out the site for batteries by which the city could be reduced in a few hours. In case you should doubt my military judgment, I can refer you to the foreign editor of a London newspaper, who will no doubt remember that I walked into his room on the outbreak of the Balkan War, and put my finger on the map near Kirk Kilissi, saying—"That is where the first battle will be fought." As the success of my plan depended on secrecy, and I heard our plans were being freely sold to the Germans by persons in high places,

I dared not take anyone into my confidence short of Lord Kitchener or some one equally responsible. I thought of the Russian Ambassador, as my plan involved Russian co-operation, but I was restrained by various reasons, including my ignorance of his personal character. My tentative approaches in other quarters were rebuffed till the opportunity had passed away. It was only in the last days of the war that the Secret Intelligence branch of the War Office approached me of its own accord, through an officer who had seen me at work in European Turkey.

Not being eligible to serve England I decided to try Belgium—she, at least, had been dragged into the war against her will. (I little suspected that England had taken her precautions against me in advance.) Belgium had mobilised her Boy Scouts, according to the papers. I ought to have known the papers by this time; before I had been in Belgium six hours I was personally engaged in demobilising boy scouts—undressing them, as the process was termed. However, I put on my scoutmaster's uniform, mounted a Union Jack button, and repaired to Headquarters, where I was kindly furnished with an introduction to the Chief Scout of Belgium. I was supplied with funds by a rather sanguinary editor on the strict understanding that I should expose my life freely; and before I had been twenty-four hours in Belgium I was marching up to the muzzle of a German rifle, so that I think he got value for his money.

I went across on the same boat with Dr. Sarolea, and proceeded straight to the peaceful neighbourhood of Brussels. According to the papers the German armies had sustained a decisive check before Liège, if they were not already in full retreat. One of the first sights I saw in Brussels was the Garde Civile, a species of Territorial Force, marching to their barracks to deposit

their arms and uniforms, in order that the approaching Germans might have no excuse to treat Brussels as a defended town. This wasn't very promising for my chances of a fight. I was taking coffee on the pavement outside my hotel after dinner with two Belgian scouts when a scoutmaster came up on a bicycle and ordered them to go home and "put themselves in civil," as the Belgian tongue hath it. It appeared that the Germans were treating the scout uniform as a military one, and firing on it, as they had some grounds for doing. In Antwerp I was introduced to a boy scout wearing a medal bestowed on him for having killed a Uhlan at Liége. The poor boy was not quite right in his mind, perhaps in consequence of his tragical experience. In any case it would have been wrong to let young boys take a risk their fathers were not taking, and I at once got up and patrolled the streets of Brussels for an hour or two, stopping all the scouts I met, and passing on the order to them.

On my return to the hotel late at night I found Dr. Sarolea in the act of quitting it. He had just brought out a book dealing rather faithfully with the German Emperor, and may have been justified in the belief that the German army had orders to shoot him at sight. I took a mean advantage of my own criticisms of his Imperial Majesty having been anonymous of late years to sleep where I was. The last person to leave me alone in my glory was an English newspaper correspondent, whose contract of course required him to avoid unnecessary risks. He had seen the Belgian troops making for Antwerp.

I am rather a late riser when I am on a holiday, but I had time for breakfast before the Germans arrived. I called on the Chief Scout to procure a pass for Antwerp, and received a highly incriminating one from the Brussels Commandant, stating that I was on my way thither to

offer my services to the Ministry of War. The railway service being suspended by reason of the German advance, I had no option but to march across country with a knapsack on my back. This proceeding struck the Chief Scout as hazardous. He raised his hands, with an exclamation too flattering for me to repeat, even to you. But it is scarcely fair to chaff the poor Belgians, who had no duty to fight in the quarrels of their big neighbours. I will only record one strange belief then current which impressed me by its symbolic significance. When the Germans were carrying out the policy of frightfulness in some parts of Belgium I found people who believed that the spirits of the Congolese, who had suffered so much from Belgian frightfulness, had entered into the German soldiers, like demons in the New Testament, to take vengeance for their wrongs. That is a kind of superstition for which I do not blame the Church.

Being an old campaigner I discovered there was a steam or electric tram still running to Vilvorde, and saved myself the first ten miles. On board the tram I picked up two young Belgians in civilian dress on their way to Antwerp on the same errand as myself. They were full of pluck, and insisted on walking with me, carrying my knapsack by turns. Some way along the road we heard a report which they pronounced not to be from a Belgian gun. They wanted to run towards it, with the idea of picking up the rifles of fallen men, and joining in the fight, just the thing that would have furnished a fair pretext to the Germans for stern measures towards the civilian population. A little way farther along I saw soldiers retiring from a railway embankment which bordered the highway. There had been a rumour in Brussels that English troops were in the near neighbourhood, and I mistook these men for Englishmen in retreat. Their overcoats reminded me

of the London Scottish. As we approached, two of them took cover behind trees on each side of the road, with their rifles pointed at us. I went up to the nearest with a friendly smile and pronounced the word—"English." He stared at me without comprehension, and pointed to an officer on horseback who had stopped a Belgian cart just beyond. I marched up to the officer, still supposing I was among my fellow-countrymen, and gave him the scout salute, as required by our regulations. He very politely drew his horse out of the way, and motioned to us to proceed. After passing through the party unharmed, we came to a deserted inn, and went in for refreshments. I was excusing the lack of cordiality shown by the soldiers as a British eccentricity, when the proprietress of the inn came out of hiding and astonished me with the news that we had marched through a body of German troops engaged in blowing up the culverts of the railway from Brussels to Antwerp!

The poor old dame was in tears. I comforted her with the assurance that the Germans would leave her alone if she left them alone. I had already made myself responsible for their peaceful behaviour in Brussels, on the same condition, and I haven't heard that they seriously infringed the guarantee, though your Minister has received all the credit. She refused to let us pay for what we had stolen from her, and dismissed me with what I was well aware was only a motherly embrace.

We went on through the German lines, only being stopped once and searched for weapons. I felt no regret that a revolver formed no part of the scout-master's outfit, as prescribed in "Scouting for Boys." Outside the village of Epeghem, the scene of a subsequent combat, we came on a party of fighting men lying down to take their noonday meal. One man came

out of the village, staggering under a sack whose contents I hope may have been acquired honestly. I couldn't help smiling at his distress under the load, and he rewarded me with a most friendly grin in exchange. A comrade lying by the wayside looked up and tipped me a pleasant wink. Such is my yielding nature that I firmly believe I should have stayed and shared their lunch with these ruthless enemies had I been alone. I can generally get on with foreigners. It would have fulfilled a prophecy of H. G. Wells—but Wells has no luck with his prophecies. I was saved from the indiscretion by the presence of my Belgian allies, who would naturally have set me down as a spy. The spy fever was raging so strongly that when we reached Antwerp I was asked if I could answer for the good faith of my travelling companions.

Passing through the village a Belgian woman ran out from her cottage door to urge me to take off my Union Jack button. It had escaped my own attention and that of the Germans, too, perhaps. But the danger was now past. I had declined to quit the main road while we were under the eyes of the enemy, lest they should interpret the action correctly, and fire on us. Beyond Eppeghem a by-road opened before us, and I was extremely glad to take it. I had seen Wilhelm II once already, at Cowes, and had no wish to beat him up in his quarters while without any means of defence. My abilities as a scout enabled me to conduct my followers in safety to Mechlin, where we found a train which landed us in Antwerp the same evening.

My military friends have been considerably puzzled by this amusing adventure. Those of them who don't think me a liar, attribute the escape to the Germans being too busy to make prisoners. My own theory is that they mistook my white shoulder knot for a flag

of truce. Perhaps what really saved me was the keen enjoyment of the absurd situation which must have been visible in my air. An English volunteer in khaki with a Union Jack conspicuously displayed, and a Belgian pass certifying to his military character in his pocket, marching in the friendliest manner through the German army was too much for their mentality to grasp.

The boy scouts of Antwerp welcomed me with enthusiasm and escorted me to the War Office. I was base enough to leave my spectacles at home, in order to impose on the recruiting officer. But England had been before me. I was informed that an agreement had been entered into by which neither country was to enlist citizens of the other. It was a most fortunate escape. I can get on with every other foreign people, but I am sorry to say I could not get on with the Belgians. I soon found myself under suspicion in Antwerp, and I quitted it for Ostend.

There I learned from the papers that our troops round Mons and Valenciennes were suffering for want of interpreters. My knowledge of the world told me that I should be rejected with scorn by the War Office in London, but welcomed with open arms by the fighting men at Mons. After being refused a pass to leave Ostend by railway I left it by the steam tram, and by devious routes entered France.

I was now in a civilised country and had nothing more to fear. By a special favour of my enemy the Foreign Office I am allowed to keep my old passport, viséd by the French authorities—"Going to join the British lines at Valenciennes." The German authorities knew better, unfortunately. Bitter experience had taught them that small detachments were useless against a man like myself, and they hastened to throw a large army between me and Valenciennes.

I was going along comfortably in a French train, the guard of which had thoughtfully padded the windows with seat cushions to protect me against stray bullets—why will people take such care of me?—when it pulled up at the small station of Cysoing. The station master objected to our proceeding farther on the ground that the Germans were shelling the station beyond. I mustn't be heartless here: I saw carts containing the wounded come past as we talked. This was the great flanking movement which so nearly led to the destruction of the British Expeditionary Force. The army which had entered Brussels just as I was leaving it had swept southward, ignoring Antwerp in its rear and Lille on its right flank, to surround the British troops. I missed taking part in the famous retreat from Mons by a few hours.

The Cysoing station master, the engine driver, the guard and all the passengers formed themselves into a public meeting on the platform to discuss the situation. As soon as I perceived there was no chance of going on, I urged them to run the train back towards Lille which was supposed to be a fortress with a garrison of 20,000 men. After the discussion had lasted about two hours this course was adopted.

The train put us out at a junction three miles from Lille, where the public meeting was resumed. Feeling desperately hungry and tired I left them at it, and strode off at the top of my speed into Lille. I had no idea that I was being followed by peasants armed with bludgeons bent on taking my life, with the impression that I was a German marching to capture Lille single-handed; but I am assured that such was the case, and that I owed my escape to the intervention of some fellow passengers coming behind. It was growing dark when I reached Lille, but not too dark for me to see that while it was a very good fortress according

to the standard of the Franco-German war of 1870, it was little better than an open town as things stood.

In the morning I stopped a French soldier in the street and asked him to direct me to the Commandant. He replied—" *La ville est rendu.*" He followed this up with a sensational story for which I would rather not be responsible, though I have heard it since from English sources. It may have been one of the wild rumours of the war. The impression I formed was that Lille had been abandoned rather precipitately, and without sufficient notice to the British force whose left flank was thus left exposed.

I picked up a few more French and Belgian soldiers who had been left behind, and together we boarded a goods train which took us to Bethune *en route* for Calais, passing the site of Miladi's famous execution in "The Three Musketeers." The people cheered us at each stopping-place, and I tasted beer for the only time in my life, to please a patriotic Frenchwoman; my comrades having called out to her, "The English has thirst. Beer for the English!"

On reaching Calais in the afternoon, I wrote a long letter indicating that the British army was in great danger of another Sedan, and registered it at the Calais post office. It wasn't delivered, and I don't suppose it would have been published in any case. The British Government were under the delusion that the right way to make the British people take the war seriously was to tell them that all was going merrily as a marriage bell. An hour or two later I was stopped in the street and asked to show my papers to a detective, who pronounced them false. I blandly differed from him, and he let me go. On returning to my hotel at night I was met in the entrance by the English landlord, who informed me with a pale face that the Chief Commissary of Police and

two men were waiting for me inside. The Commissary proved open to reason, and with the politeness of his nation, merely requested me as a courtesy to himself to register at the office of the Commandant next morning. The Commandant's officer wanted me to go on to the Commissary, but on hearing my story he very kindly said I had been troubled enough, and obtained me a visa from the Commandant.

All was not yet over. Anxious to spare the authorities any further anxiety on my account, I made for the beach, as the place where my presence would be least menacing to the safety of Calais. On the way thither I was stopped by two boys who asked me for a light for their cigarettes. I told them they were too young to smoke, and received the assurance that they had fifteen years—between them, I should think. I retorted: "You don't look it, and the reason you are so short is because you smoke"—knowing by experience that this argument is the most effective with boys. (They don't mind being told that they are undermining their constitutions any more than we do.) This improving conversation was observed by an officer on the ramparts. At once he summoned a soldier to him, and said, "Behold that English! He asks questions wherever he goes! Follow him, and find out what he is up to!" The soldier followed me, and as he seemed to be over fifteen, I gave him a cigarette, and learned of the terror I was innocently striking into the garrison of Calais. I now thought it best to take refuge in the British Consulate, and I went to lunch with the Chaplain. While we were having it in a restaurant two boy scouts approached me with an invitation from their Commissioner to visit their headquarters. My troubles were over at last. They escorted me thither, and I addressed a crowd of scouts, telling them the story of my adventures much as I have told it to you. They were too polite to point

out to me that my French was not up to the standard of the Duchy of Lancaster.

An hour later I was in the train bound for Ostend, and Calais breathed again. Thanks to the possession of a gorgeous document in which Sir Edward Grey personally requested every one in Europe to place their services at my disposal—I only paid him five shillings for it—I travelled free on all the French railways, first class when there was a first class. I was sorry to tear myself away from a people who, even in the midst of peril, did not forget that they were gentlemen.

My return to Ostend coincided with the landing there of a force of British marines under the command of Brigadier-General Sir George Aston. A British fleet had previously appeared off the town, only to receive a request from the burgomaster to go away again, as the inhabitants didn't want Ostend to be the theatre of war; at least, so I was informed. Their motto was "Business as usual." The railway authorities of Ostend did their utmost to thwart and annoy the British troops, and I was constantly called upon to assist our men in the work of getting their stores past the obstructions placed in their way.

Feeling in the town was divided, however. I called on the British Commander at his headquarters in the railway station to offer him my services, and while I was waiting outside boy scouts began flocking round me. I had enlisted about a dozen before the General was ready to see me. The local committee invested me with the command of all the Ostend scouts, to the extreme annoyance of a Count commanding the Sea Scouts, whom he forbade me to enrol, and of a young assistant scoutmaster who wrote threatening letters to me, and others to my boys, threatening to pay them out when I had gone. Before embarking again Sir

George Aston favoured us with a note which may be read with pleasure by scouts elsewhere :—

“ The Brigadier-General in command of the Brigade of Royal Marines at Ostend wishes to thank the Scoutmaster and Scouts for the great help and assistance they have rendered during their stay at Ostend.

“ GEORGE ASTON, Brigadier-General.

“ Ostend,

“ 31st August, 1914.”

England was rather neatly dished, I flattered myself.

In fairness to England I must admit that she scored off me in another matter. In passing in and out of Antwerp and Dunkirk I had been struck by the dazzling brilliance of the barbed wire, which rendered it conspicuous at a great distance ; and it occurred to me that it should be covered with a coat of varnish or green paint, so as to conceal it from an approaching enemy till they were in the middle of it. I forwarded this suggestion to the Belgian War Office, which promptly sent an officer to communicate with me on the subject. I forwarded it to the British War Office, which didn't even acknowledge it. After a few years had passed, and a few thousand lives had been wasted, my suggestion appears to have been carried out in imitation of the French authorities, under the sounding name of camouflage.

On the day after the British General's departure I was arrested, with his note in my pocket, as a spy, in the office of the Belgian gendarmerie, to which I had rendered a service by its own request a few days before. The officer who arrested me did so with most provocative language, as though desirous to goad me into a retort which would have served as an excuse for harsher measures. He sent me through the streets in the custody of a gendarme to my hotel to have my papers

examined. The hotel proprietor, whose own son had been in my troop, prudently abstained from uttering a word on my behalf. The official pass signed by the Chief Scout of Belgium alone secured my release. I quitted Belgian soil by the next boat, not to return.

Once back in London I hastened round to the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee. They received me like an angel from the sky. The London music halls had just offered to give a ten-minute turn to an appeal for recruits, and the job was not very well suited for the local County Councillors who formed the bulk of the Committee's staff. The sight of my scoutmaster's uniform came like manna in the wilderness. Walruses and woolly dogs weren't in it with khaki, just then. I went round the halls, briefly relating my experiences at the front, and calling on the audience to rise and root up "William the Weed." There was a slight confusion in the popular mind between his Imperial Majesty and a certain Prince William of Wied, whom he had foisted as a ruler on the poor Albanians; and an old demagogue is not above using a catchy phrase. The local recruiting sergeants assured me they were getting a hundred volunteers a night, the exact number enrolled after a speech by the Prime Minister at the Guildhall, according to his flatterers in the press. The War Office was roused at last. It sent an officer all the way to New Cross to listen to me. His report must have been adverse. The recruiting sergeant told me he had been obliged to rebuke this gentleman for insinuating that I was a liar. He added the comforting reflection, "If he were any good he would be at the front." It is not very often, one trusts, that a soldier feels himself obliged to apologise for his superior officer to a civilian. However, I wasn't arrested or shot.

The Recruiting Committee were called off soon afterwards because there weren't enough officers to drill the

recruits. It is a favourite theory in places like Sandhurst that every civilian is a coward, and the War Office was as much embarrassed as William the Weed by the discovery that the English are a martial race. If unknown scoutmasters and County Councillors could rake in volunteers too fast for them, one wonders what would have happened if there had been a Chatham or a Gladstone in the land—or if I had been at the Guildhall!

O terrible, dragging sunsets
That strike your hooks in my soul,
As if ye would draw me after you
Out of this straitening shoal—
This narrow, earth-bound shoal ;

As if ye would draw me with you
Over the ocean of light,
Unshackled and splendid and afloat,
Beyond the limits of sight—
Of purblind, mortal sight ;

Forbear ; I am anchored hither,
And the anchor that holdeth me
Its name is Life, and its flukes are fast
In the sands of Destiny—
In the rock of Destiny . . .

Sunsets.

XXII

THE Labour Party intervened during the war to preserve the British Museum. It was a natural mistake on the part of ignorant men. They were deceived by its name. If they had been Greek scholars they would have known that this building is the exact opposite of a museum. It is a mausoleum. It is one of those sepulchres of genius which the Earthmen know so well how to convert into fortresses, like Hadrian's tomb in Rome. The Labour Party should have consulted me. As chairman of the Chelsea Trades Council I had a right to be heard. And I had some experience of the British Museum.

At a time when I saw no prospect of publishing the "Divine Mystery," I applied to the Museum to warehouse the MS. for the benefit of anyone who might wish to consult it. The Museum declined to do so on the ground that I was still alive. It said that was its regulation. You see. Within a few weeks I read that the Museum had paid £500, some of it out of my pocket as a tax-payer, for a hysterical letter by a morally insane playwright who had died in great misery abroad. You see again.

This made it necessary for me to tell the Labour Party something about the Museum. I chose the language of signs. Sign language comes easier to me than Greek. It is the natural tongue of prophets. It is a dead language, and as such it ought to be familiar to the Museum, if not to the Labour Party.

In the course of twenty years I had accumulated two thousand pages of MS. notes on the composition of the

Gospels and the life of their Hero. I dredged deeper than the textual critic. I had studied the text with enough care to correct some mistranslations. But I hadn't studied it only in the light of classical lexicons compiled from the writings of cultured Athenians in the fourth century before Christ. I had learnt that one recondite expression of Plato's which had stumped a professor of Greek in Cambridge was quite familiar to the street boys in modern Salonika, and meant blowing bubbles. I had studied the text in the light of the Parsi and Buddhist scriptures; the history of religion in the Levant, including the history of Jerusalem; and the results of anthropological research, including my own research. I had stood upon a green hill far away outside a city wall in Africa, on turf wet with the blood of immemorial redeemers. And I had brought to the work one qualification that the scribe never can possess—some insight into the mind and heart of genius.

The "Divine Mystery" had been written as a preface to this work, and been announced as such. It seemed to me that I had made an advance towards the solution of the most difficult and momentous of all literary problems, and in doing so had recovered some genuine features of the central Figure of the world's history, from beneath the reverential gilding by which they had been obscured, as the Byzantine icon is overlaid by its golden frame.

This MS. had now become a burden to me. No business man would accept it as a gift. I could not look forward to the death of another parent to enable me to print it in his blood, as I had printed its predecessors. I had only two. I was faced with the dreary task of dragging it about me for the next twenty years, for my executor to burn it in the end. I resolved to spare him the trouble.

I did not do this in the expectation that it would

disturb the self-satisfaction of the British Museum, or the Church of England, or the Rationalist Press, or the Universities of America, or the Swedish Academy. I did so in the hope that the sacrifice might redeem some more precious manuscripts from the flames hereafter. After all, the work was strictly an excursus, undertaken rather as a hobby than an appointed task. And the loss was trifling as far as I was concerned. The grain was stored in my own mind. I was only burning chaff.

Having now done my bit in the war—as many bits as England would let me do—I had to look for a new lens to grind. The day of the author was over with a vengeance, for many years to come. Some authors didn't mind this. The Prince of Wales had collected £6,000,000 for their benefit, and they were having rather a good time. I came across an advertising agent who had been provided with a pleasant furnished house in the best suburb of London, with plenty to eat and drink, and free education for his children in expensive boarding schools. I had to "help myself." The Prince of Wales would have had to send me on to the Barristers' Benevolent Society, which would have referred me to the Royal Literary Fund, which would have dismissed me to the Authors' Society, against which I had a bill for £1,000 already, and which strongly resented my attempt to recoup my losses by stopping my subscription to its funds. I bethought myself of an ancient saying called forth by the last days of Dionysius the Tyrant, I fancy, that when a man had disappeared from the public stage, he was pretty sure to be found in business as a schoolmaster; and, although conscious of lacking some of the Tyrant's training for the profession, I decided it was my best refuge. It occurred to me that some elementary teachers might have responded to my appeal for recruits, and I offered my services to the London County Council as a substitute.

I have now been for about two years on the panel of Special Lecturers to the County Council, at two guineas a lecture, and therefore you will see that I must refer to it with caution. I haven't yet given any lectures. But the Council has interviewed me twice at some trouble to itself, and it has certified me as capable of lecturing on exactly one subject in my rather bewildering repertory. It has chosen me to lecture on the burning subject of the Balkans, so near to the heart of its young students, and so eminently calculated as a training for their duties as citizens of London. I can't deny that it was a good choice. I am qualified to lecture on the Balkans. In fact I once wrote a book about them. The Council hasn't read my book, of course, but it has ascertained that the price put on it by the publisher was 14s. That proved to be the decisive question. As soon as I had answered it satisfactorily the Council's face was wreathed in smiles, and I became one of its four lecturers on the Balkans—none of whom have yet lectured. We are all treated alike, you see. There is no favouritism in the London County Council. I wasn't asked what were my claims on it. It compares very favourably with Government Departments.

The Council declined me as an elementary teacher, almost rudely. It mayn't have heard there was a war on. Or it may have seen in the inspired *communiqués* from the War Office to the press that the war was practically over. Again, it may have shared the opinion of other public authorities that its own employees were indispensable, an opinion justified in the case of elementary teachers by the high salaries they have always commanded. Anyhow, I had to try elsewhere.

I was staying just then with a master in a Public School, and he tempted my ambition with the prospect of a loftier career. Unfortunately I have no qualifications as a schoolmaster. I doubt if I am qualified to

lecture on physics. The Board of Trade thinks otherwise, but it would be unreasonable to expect a Government Department to show the same intelligence as a County Council. As soon as the Board opened a branch of its Labour Exchange for the benefit of professional men I put my name on its books. It is still there. The only post Sir Robert Horne has offered me up to now is a lectureship in physics, which I am too shy to take. My application exercised the Board a good deal, because it had another candidate of the same name (it wrote me) whose qualifications and career struck it as being hardly distinguishable from mine. My double proved on inquiry to be a young engineer who had contributed sometimes to an engineering paper on technical subjects. So perhaps the lectureship on physics was intended for him, after all. If so, it wasn't a bad shot for a Government Department. Sir Robert exercises some discrimination in his appointments. He must have taken particular pains over the gentleman who dealt with me, don't you think? Just the man to pull the country through its Labour troubles! I am expecting every day to hear that my other self has been offered a lectureship in metaphysics, or the Poet Laureateship, or the Lord Chief Justiceship of England.

To return.—I have no qualifications as a schoolmaster. I am not a champion football player. I rarely play cricket, and when I do I bowl underhand; and I get the batsmen out, which is adding injury to insult. I had no testimonials either, when I started as a schoolmaster for the first time. The head master of the Public School whom I was dealing with made a point of this. I suggested that he might supply the deficiency. "I am coming here to get a testimonial from you," were my words, I believe. As he only wanted me for a few weeks till his regular history man came back, he took the sporting risk. The Board of Education heard of his

rash act, and dispatched an inspector to inspect me at the end of a fortnight. The inspector sat out a lesson on Joan of Arc and Jack Cade. It was a trying ordeal for a speaker better accustomed to address mobs in places like Trafalgar Square. The Board of Education judged of me more favourably than the War Office had done. I did get a testimonial from the head master (the original of which is at your disposal), and it contained this sentence: "One of his history classes was attended by H.M. Inspector, who reported on it as being the most interesting and living lesson he had ever heard."

You know me well enough by this time to anticipate the harm done me by this well-meant certificate from the supreme educational authority in Great Britain. If the Board of Education had believed its own report it wouldn't have mattered, because in that case it would naturally have exerted itself to find me a post in which I could teach history. My more experienced friend shook his head rather over this testimonial. He was much better pleased with a later one from the principal of a preparatory school, certifying that I could keep boys in order. The Board of Education's opinion was received with general distrust. It wasn't till some months had elapsed that I got a telegram, on the very last day of the holidays, from a gentleman whom I had interviewed, to say the gentleman whom he had appointed had thrown him over, and to offer me the post.

I desire to speak with unaffected respect of my new profession and of by far the greater number of its professors. Of all the lenses I have tried to grind this has been much the hardest, and I think no competent schoolmaster can be overpaid. Sweetened as the task has been to me by the affection of my pupils, it has taxed my strength to the utmost, and I am glad of an excuse to lay it down. A schoolmaster is an actor who has to act all day to an audience that doesn't want to

hear him, and to keep his audience quiet by discharging the functions of a drill-sergeant at the same time. It would be very different if the master were his own master, and could train his pupils according to his own ideas. But he is the slave of examiners and parents, and of all the cranks who wander up and down the world trying to remake all their fellow creatures on a private model of their own.

Many of the head masters I have met with have been reduced to nervous wrecks by anxious mothers who deem it the first duty of a teacher to see that their darlings never step into a puddle. I have myself incurred a mild remonstrance at the end of an afternoon's scouting by bringing home my scouts with muddy boots. When I consider in addition the narrowing effect on the mind of continual coaching in the same subjects for the same examinations, I think it is surprising that the head masters should have given me the testimonials they have; and I feel their treatment of me compares only too favourably with that which I have received in other walks of life.

The chief difficulty in their minds always is the football. It is their difficulty; not the boys'. The boys are most charitable to my failings as an athlete. They are extremely thankful to do some scouting as a change. They dislike me as a bowler naturally, but prefer me to be on their side. Next to my football, it is my discipline that inspires misgivings. I am a bad disciplinarian. But then my pupils are good ones. In my first school a boy who had broken the drill sergeant's heart, and was considered irreclaimable by his parents, constituted himself a volunteer monitor to maintain order in my class. In my next school I learned that when I admonished a boy in class his schoolfellows set upon him afterwards in the playground. I put in two terms with an army coach of whose pupils I had heard

the most terrifying accounts. I gave exactly one punishment in the two terms, and that was in revenge for the victim's father having been a leader of the Conservatives in the Newark Division—you see it isn't only coincidence that has a long arm. It is seldom wise to cross me. The senior boys made me an honorary member of their study, a compliment which I rank only second to the diploma of the Philological Society of Athens. The local vicar told me I was the only master he had ever seen walking down the village with the boys. The son of my Newark opponent, a most respectable General, taught me how to poach. (The vicar didn't know this.) One of my colleagues, of whose gifts as a teacher the boys spoke to me very generously, maintained a species of civil war with them as a disciplinarian, and boasted to me of the terror he inspired. The war ended in his leaving by night in the middle of a subsequent term.

The only schools in which I have experienced difficulty in maintaining discipline have been those in which the boys were accustomed to be knocked about freely by their teachers. I had smacked a boy once in my previous career, and I admit it did him a world of good. But to maltreat boys for finding the Latin grammar a dull book doesn't appeal to me as good teaching or good discipline. The Latin grammar is dull. It is, moreover, calculated to dull the mind of the brightest boy, and is perhaps retained in our schools for no other purpose by a very powerful faction directly interested in the spiritual training of the nation. In one school, when I remarked on a bruise on a boy's leg, the whole class began turning up their clothes and displaying similar bruises given to them by the head master, a man who was sincerely fond of boys but wholly unable to control his temper. I was told things on the subject which I would rather not believe. One of the boys

appealed to me as a barrister to put the law in motion for their protection ; and I may tell you it takes a good deal to make an English boy of the Public School type "foul his own nest," as he would call it. As an old counsel for the N.S.P.C.C. I was obliged to treat the appeal more seriously than it was meant, most likely, and I took an early opportunity to resign my post. The head master gave me an opening by a complaint of my discipline, but I didn't take it. I knew perfectly well that ninety-nine out of every hundred parents in that class of life would consider him much better fitted than me to have charge of their children. His school has expanded since I left. In a word, he has money. His father had helped himself.

I am rather too rough with little children, myself. I frightened the mother of a delicate little boy called Poz, who had spent most of his life on her lap, by throwing him all about the room. She thought I was going to break Poz. But Poz didn't think so. I was the first stranger he trusted to take him out for a walk. I bribed him with a pair of red shoes. He hurried home as soon as he got them lest I should steal them by the way. He knew I was dishonest, because I kept stealing his black velvet elephant, the one he slept with at night. But he was a good-hearted little boy, and when he saw how much I wanted the black elephant he gave it to me as a parting present. I sent him a grey elephant in exchange. I wrote on a luggage label: "Please don't break me ; I am going to little Poz" ; and tied it to the elephant's trunk. The British Post Office rose nobly to the occasion. It received the elephant, just as it was, with perfect sang-froid, carried it from one end of England to the other, and delivered it safely to little Poz. What a pity it wasn't a walrus !

But I am wasting your valuable time. You want me to write about myself, not about children. I mustn't

give way to Mr. Dick's weakness on the subject of King Charles's head. I will turn off this tap with the startling note that I have been a head master. I was appointed to that post in a small Public School which had long been in difficulties, and the head master's salary was payable out of fees. The school was in Scotland. I need say no more; you must have heard of the Jew who thought he could make a living in Aberdeen. Sir Alfred Ewing, then at the Admiralty, showed me great kindness. Professor Geddes organised a lecture for me to give in the University of Edinburgh; and the Professor of Education took the chair, and spoke in the most handsome terms. I held the head mastership till I found myself getting into debt for the first time. But there was no harm in trying.

I can generally get on with foreign children, and I am considered quick at picking up new games. If you know of any school in America where extreme proficiency in baseball is not a *sine qua non* for every master, I can forward you a batch of quite extraordinary testimonials to my success as a teacher of Civics, History, Geography, French, Latin, Mathematics (including Algebra and Geometry), Elementary Science, and even English; and as to my ability to lecture on the Balkans if required.

Tell your friends to write to—

20/1631,
c/o The Board of Education,
London, Eng.

N.B.—I forgot to tell you I was a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, before which I had the honour of reading a paper on an ancient stone monument on the island of Gothland, that threw an unexpected beam of light across the European and American foreworld, upon the walls of Troy. My

friend Miss Edith Durham and other Fellows were able to corroborate some of my suggestions with further evidence; and Professor Gilbert Murray has favoured me with his approval of others. Our long-time President, Professor Arthur Keith, F.R.S., has most kindly authorised me to refer to him, should your friends take an interest in other subjects than the Balkans.

There are other things I should have liked to tell you about; of great days in the Chelsea Arts Club; of the first candidature in the history of the world on behalf of Art and Literature; of a nomination paper signed by Augustus John; of a unanimous adoption by the Labour and Liberal Parties; and of the triumphant return of a financier who had helped himself. But my holiday is over.

I enclose my bill.

BILL

20/1631 IN ACCOUNT WITH HUMANITY

CR.	DR.
By Scientific Demonstration of God.	To Love from Children.
„ Discovery of the Origin of Life.	„ Hatred from Adults.
„ Prophecy of the Son of Man.	„ One Elephant, black velvet slightly soiled.
„ Announcement of the Order of Genius.	„ Two Medals.
„ Poems, Miscellaneous.	„ Four Scholarships.
„ Plays, Miscellaneous.	„ Two Degrees, Legal.
„ Jokes, Miscellaneous.	„ Three Diplomas, Honorary.
„ Well-known Novels, Miscellaneous.	„ Reviews, Miscellaneous.
„ Sundry Prisoners, Released.	„ Hospitality, Occasional.
„ £100,000 paid Cardiff.	„ Thanks from British General.
„ One Blockade, Run.	„ Gratitude, from Greece.
„ One Dynasty, Preserved.	„ A Bare Living, from England.
„ One Revolution, Averted.	
„ Services to Woman.	
„ Services to Labour.	
„ Services to Ireland.	
„ Services to Greece.	
„ Services to Sweden.	
„ Services to Turkey.	
„ Services to Belgium.	
„ Services to England.	
„ Sundry Lessons in Commercial Geography, etc.	<i>Balance—</i>
„ Press Notes, Miscellaneous,	One Sepulchre, designed by a Professor of Poetry, Author of “Eccentricities of Genius.”
<hr/>	<hr/>

Here, O here, and for one hour, before my vision
Let the winged children of the future stand !
Let me gaze along the avenue elysian,
Though my feet may never tread the promised
land ! . . .

O my children, on your far-off terrace risen,
If you ever hear who fell upon the slope,
Say of him who now salutes you from his prison
That in faith and love he drew your horoscope !

Say that he was one to whom the sight of sorrows
Which he could have cured was sharper than a
thorn ;
That his spirit had felt the kiss of bright to-morrows,
And was shaken by the rushing wheels of morn !

The Son of Man (1885).

XXIII

PLEASE excuse this brief scrawl. I wanted to write you fully, but I hadn't time. If these notes aren't enough for the —— Company to go on with, cable me, and I will let you have some more. Tell me if they have got to be true. Fiction comes so much easier to an old hand. And besides my fiction always sounds so much more true than my facts. Nobody over here will believe a word of these notes. Fortunately they aren't likely to read them. My literary agent on this side holds out no hopes.

Still, writing them has been a pleasant change from the Latin grammar. Not having kept a diary I have had to rely mainly on my memory. I have generally found it more reliable than books, especially history books. When memory fails me I prefer to fall back on common sense. I find that is more reliable than Commercial Geography books. I remember telling some of my young friends that Mount Everest wouldn't always remain precisely 29,002 feet high, as reported in their manuals. I see by the papers it has grown over a hundred feet already. I hope Mount Everest will go ahead. I wish it well.

Common sense is of some use even to a prophet. I foresee the notes that will interest the public most will be those on this topic. I want you to point out to them the distinction between a prediction and a prophecy. Any sensible man can make predictions. My most frivolous works are full of them. The villain of my second novel was described by one reviewer as either a marvellous portrait or a great creation. He was

neither ; he was simply a reasoned guess, based on such knowledge of Russia as can be acquired from the newspapers. He proved to be a fairly good portrait of the infamous Azeff, of whom neither the papers nor I had heard anything, and who had not yet been found out in Russia. A similar guess about the Siberian Railway was also verified. I am almost qualified to lecture on Russia, like my friend Stephen Graham. Only the other day, on his return from that country, he told me that a story of mine about Lenin, rejected by an editor as lacking in plausibility, described the conditions under which he lives with the utmost fidelity. The reason why Wilhelm II disapproved of my stories about him was because they were too true. I guess equally well in geography. I can often describe a place I have never been near better than one I have seen. A Spanish friend was convinced that a Spanish romance of mine was true. A description of the coast of Pomerania in an English paper caused its German proprietor to congratulate me on my intimate knowledge of the region. I had once spent two hours in Germany, in the streets of Munich. I wish some one would set me an examination paper in all the subjects on which I am not an authority. I should enjoy answering it.

By one of those coincidences of which my life has been so full that I simply dare not write my autobiography, I was supplied with a further illustration a few hours ago. My Pacifist friends think very harshly of me for not gushing with them over their League of Nations. I retired from the League of Nations on the day America retired from it. It is not for me to discuss America's reasons, in so far as they involve issues between the domestic parties of America. My reason was simply the feeling that if England could not establish a firm peace with America she wasn't likely to establish one with France or Germany or Russia or

Guatemala. Personally I would rather be in partnership with America than Guatemala, apart from any question as to which is the better fighting ally. It seemed to me that it was better to make peace with the devil you know than the devil you didn't know; and that the safest and soundest way to build up a working League of Nations was on the foundation of a League of those nations which had a common language, a common culture, and to a great extent a common origin and a common history. My Pacifist friends seem to think otherwise. I have now had the honour of reading these words in a letter from the President-Elect of the United States of America to Mr. John A. Stewart, of the Sulgrave Institution, as reported in to-day's London Press:

"I believe that when the wisdom of America is summoned to assist the world in building a workable, as distinguished from a bungling, agreement or association for the prevention of war, the unity of the English-speaking peoples will play no small part, not to invade the rights or exclude the fellowship of other nations, but to protect and include them."

Those are my sentiments, speaking as a Democrat who would be liable to be hanged, drawn and quartered if he were a Republican.

By another coincidence more interesting to me than to you I was in the rooms of the American Y.M.C.A. in London when the signal rang out that the war had reached its end. I spent that evening in an American camp; and it was as well that the Y.M.C.A. had engaged a demagogue by mistake instead of a lecturer, for the men were in no mood for a quiet discourse. I harangued them from a soap-box standing so near to a huge bonfire that the flames occasionally licked my hair and filled me with increased reverence for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The Americans listened to me very happily. They weren't quite so near the fire.

thousand years ago. It is a lie that God died in a town of Asia Minor in the year A.D. 325. The Instructions bear that the Temple of Man shall not be consecrated to the glory of Man, but to the service of the Living God ; and that it shall be built by peacemakers who are the children of God.

The upward march of man is hymned by poets, and beguiled by dance and jest. Great musicians play him on ; great painters decorate his banners ; great sculptors draw his future lineaments ; great architects pitch tents for him to take his rest. Pioneers make the way smooth before him with their soiled and bleeding feet. Ahead, in the Happy Valley beyond the mountain range, the prophet flashes back the signal to advance. These are your Guides, O Israel ; your gods are the common sutlers of the camp.

The pilgrimage of man is long and toilsome. Many fall out by the way, unable to keep up, and content with the ground they have gained. My Instructions are not to disturb their repose. There are to be no pressed men in the ranks. The call is one for volunteers.

All volunteers are not accepted. The League of Peace is an exclusive League. Admission is granted only to those who have shown themselves willing and able to keep the peace. The League is not a pact of bandits for their mutual safety, nor of profiteers for their common profit. It is a Church, open to all who wish to be redeemed. It is a Brotherhood of would-be angels, not open to the cousins of the ape.

The priesthood in the Church is filled by Messengers—angels, as it is written in another tongue. The angel is not the Overman—that is the lurid Lesson of the vast international Prize-Fight. He is the Son of Man ; a Child of many prayers. He is the fulfilment of prophecy, of that ancient, mystic prophecy interpreted in vain a whole generation ago :

“ In the days whose dust o'erwhelms us with its wonder,
When the Assyrian hewed his bearded, marvellous Bull,
Winged, and faced like Man, yet merged in Brute thereunder,
He rebuked a Race that deemed its stature full.”

All this, much more than this, I would have told you ;
but you were not willing, O America, America !

The Order of Genius is a society for the prevention of cruelty to the Son of Man, because He is the Servant of Man. It is an international society, because Genius is the servant of all nations ; and it is not meet that when the Israelite indeed has been stoned and driven forth from the place of his nativity he should be persecuted in other cities as a Jew.

For this cause the League of Peacemakers must be set up in a new Geneva, not under any flag but its own flag, the White Flag of Truce. There it must teach mankind the Way of Peace, by walking in it ; there it must build the Holy City, New Jerusalem, as it was seen coming down adorned like a bride, from God, out of Heaven.

Only the Order itself can draw up the Laws of the City. My Instructions are not to legislate for it beneath an alien flag, under the shadow of a prison wall. The Rules must be drawn up in peace by the Committee of the Club.

The Order of the Servants of Man will be in need of service. Its rulers—that is to say, its servants—will not be chosen for their genius, but for their sympathy with Genius. They will be chosen to keep peace among the children, and to make peace between the Son of Man and Man. The best peacemaker among them will be their Archangel.

Under such care it will arise, the Capitol of Peace ;

the true Museum, devoted to the Muses ; the University for the education of specialists into generalists ; the open Academy, from whose doors the living Plato will not be turned away ; the Free Press of the living prophet ; the Gallery of the living artist ; the Temple of the Living Spirit of God.

That Temple is not mine to build. Like David, I have been a man of strife. Solomon's temple must be built by Solomon. My Instructions read that my part is not that of Founder, but of foundation-victim.

They who are not allowed to serve their own generation are sometimes allowed to serve future generations. These Notes are at the service of Posterity.

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