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THE SWAN LAUGHED

When God looked down from Heaven's rim
At Lucifer, who fell
From golden joys that had been All to him,
He watched the plunging light beneath His feet
And heard the Archangel's laughter crash through Hell.

When Cleopatra felt the cold
Creep through the failing heart
That never prince, nor king, nor fool could hold,
She saw her Beauty's temple mouldering dust,
And smiled, and kissed the asp—and played her part!

And Nero, when he heard the breath
Of panting, racing fires
That leapt through crumbling Rome and lashed with Death
That greying, wasterl Mistress of the World,
With laughter knelled the death of old desires.

The empty shades that follow after
Our joys and sorrows are not drowned in tears.
The ghosts of sadness, hopes, and joys, and fears,
Are chased by laughter.


Femina Semper Mutabilis

In a little restaurant in Greenwich Village—a place which is never too crowded for guests to linger over an after-dinner cigarette or two, without feeling that they are making a life enemy of the waiter. I met Sam Morrow. The man's strong and weather-beaten face, in high contrast to the pale New Yorkers at other tables, interested me, and I welcomed the opportunity, by offering him a smoke, to draw him into conversation. He moved to my table and began to talk—trails, fishing, and the outdoors generally. Then we shifted to other more general matters. Most of the time I listened. He had views of his own on everything, and no particular reticence.

Somehow I happened to quote the phrase "Femina semper mutabilis."

"Which is what?" he demanded.

"Latin for 'woman is always changing'."

"Lord, those old-time Dagos knew more than you'd ever think. That certainly is true." He laughed at himself. "I don't suppose it really did take much brains to figure that out. But it came so pat that it sounded kind of deep at first. I was just thinking the same thing myself while I was eating. Fact is, I sort of feel that I can speak with authority on that subject. I'll tell you the yarn, if you like. It's personal, of course; but Hell, what's the difference? We aren't ever apt to see each other again."

"Go ahead," I invited.

"Well, it's this way: Two years ago I was working for the Eastern States Bank, up on Thirty-Fourth Street—a regular white collar slave, thin and weak and unhealthy. Yes, it's true, though you might not think so now. Except for Jimmy Blake, a scrawny kid who was assistant mail-clerk, I guess I was about the poorest physical specimen in the office.

"There was a girl there—Mary Sullivan—the manager's secretary, and she was a wonder. I've never seen any one like her. A big Irish girl with lots of dusky black hair, blue eyes, and skin like a baby's. She carried herself like a queen—and she was one, too, in that shop. I don't believe there was a man in the place that wasn't in love with her. I know I was, absolutely gone. She wasn't only good-looking, she was a darned good sort all around. The way she smiled made you think you amounted to something, and she smiled at everybody. Even the girls all liked her.

"She and I were good friends from the day she came into the office. Her desk was right next to mine, and it doesn't take long to get acquainted when you're working together. But we didn't stay just friends long. At least I didn't. It may have taken me as much as three days to realize that I was heels over head in love. All of the men fell for her, as I have said, but none of them as hard as I did.

"I thought she liked me pretty well, too. We used to go out to lunch together, and to shows. She always made it a Dutch treat, but she went with me more than with anybody else. After a month or so I screwed up courage enough to propose to her.

"What happened wasn't anything very original or startling, but, believe me, it hurt. There is no use describing it—just the old, 'I'll always
be a sister' act. I wanted to know to know why, of course. No, there wasn't anybody else, but— Mary tried to be as kind about it as she could. She had a tough job. It is not easy to tell a fellow that he is not enough of a man without hurting his feelings; and that is what she had to say. She was so strong and healthy and alive; and I was not much of anything. It was only about two weeks later that I caught a cold and started coughing blood. I must have been pretty far gone. I can't blame her.

"The doctor sent me up to Saranac to get cured. I had a little money—enough to lay off for a year. Before that time was up I was well. Not only my lungs were all right—that trouble hadn't amounted to much—but I was in better condition all around than I had ever been before. I had gained twenty-five pounds and could eat like a lumberjack. I decided to stay in that country.

"One of the doctors got me a job in the forestry service. For a city-bred man who had always been more or less of an invalid, it was some job. I was stationed on the top of Bald Peak to look for fires. The nearest town was six miles away, by a trail that was only possible for a man on foot, and four thousand feet below. All my grub and duffle had to be packed up by man-power. There was an old cabin near the top where I could sleep if I wanted to; but I had to go to the store at least twice a week for supplies.

"I suppose you think I was a fool to tackle a proposition like that. Maybe I was; but I was dead set on making myself a really strong man, and that seemed to be the quickest way—if it didn't kill me. I was still pretty sore about Mary turning me down. That had hit me really hard, I don't know whether I still hoped I could make her change her mind, but I wanted to prove to her that I was at least worth considering.

"So I took the job, and Lord, how I worked! It nearly killed me at first. I used to hire men to pack up my stuff, and I never went to the village when I could possibly help it. Lonesome! You don't know how bad it can be. I was used to the city, you know, and lots of people around—even if I never talked to them. And there on Bald Peak, why if three people came up in a week, I got all excited. It was Hell! Even so, it was better than trying to make the climb. I don't suppose I had ever walked more than five miles a day in my life, and that trail was no sidewalk. I started coughing once, and thought my lungs had gone bad again. I was very close to suicide that night.

"After a while it got better. That air is marvelous. Seems like it can cure a man all by itself. I felt fine all the time, and ate like a horse. Then I began to harden up. Not from doing anything, especially. It just happened. I found I could get to the store and back the same day, and still be able to cook my supper. There was a man in the town that had a lot of books, and he used to lend them to me. I never had read much before, but I did then. After that the lonesomeness wasn't so bad. It wasn't only that it killed time; the shack never seemed so deserted when there were books around. Sounds funny, but it's so. I guess I was like a kid pretending things. Anyway, I absorbed an awful lot of literature up on that hill. Especially Balzac. That man does know life! The fellow that lent me the book seemed surprised that I liked 'The Human Comedy' more than anything else, but I don't see why. I never found anything else that could touch it. I read it all before I left.

"Very soon after I began to make the trips I began packing up light loads. It was like beginning the struggle all over again. I can't make out

"why, but strength doesn't seem to have much to do with it. I have seen regular young huskies absolutely done up from toting a light load for fifteen miles. It takes time and practice. And of course I wasn't even strong yet.

"By damn! I was before I got through, though. At first I took ten pounds, and the limit of my ambition was forty—a week's grub. It did not seem humanly possible to do any more on that trail. By the end of my first summer I could just make it.

"I could have gone back to the city then, of course. I was so well that I didn't know myself, and none of my old clothes fitted. But I was so interested in seeing how far the change could go that I stayed on. I got a job in the lumber camp. I found that there was too much night work that I hadn't developed. We did fourteen hours a day, and none of it was very soft going. I wondered what Mary would think. She certainly couldn't look down on me as a weakling any more. But would she care? I almost quit two or three times to go and find out.

"The next summer I went back to Bald Peak. I started to find out what I really could do. When you think of what an invalid I had been, it was amazing. On a bet, I went up and down the mountain twice in one day. I was not even especially tired. I decided to have all the comforts of home in my shack, and packed up lots of things that were sort of unexpected above timberline. There was a regular stove that I took up in sections, and a bureau. Finally I toted up a marble-topped table. The stone slab was over two feet across, and thick. I sweated for that all right, but I didn't mind any more. The view from Bald Peak began to be popular that year, and there would be a bunch of men and girls hiking up two or three times a week. I used to get a lot of kick from seeing them eyed at the stuff I had there.

"When the summer ended I decided it was time for me to get back to New York and see Mary. I couldn't do much more developing without graduating into a sidewhewer. I don't like to show off or anything, but really, would you call me a weakling now?"

"He certainly was not. I have seen plenty of bigger men, but never one who gave me such an impression of combined strength and endurance. I said as much, and he continued:

"I got to New York yesterday, and this morning I went around to the bank to see Mary, and find out how she would take to the change. I had been gone nearly three years and we hadn't written, but I somehow hoped she hadn't lost interest. We had been such good pals—and the Lord knows I had thought of her enough. Well, she was still there, and we went out to lunch. She was surprised at my appearance, of course, but not so much as I thought she would be. The whole thing fell pretty flat. What was it that fellow said: 'Femina semper—?'

"'Mutabilis. Was she very different?'"

"'Not to look at. But her opinions had shifted a little. For two years I had been working like Hell because that girl had said I wasn't enough of a man—and now she had promised to marry Jimmie Blake—a little scrawny, pasty-faced runt that I could have crumbled in one hand.'"

"It is hard to be tactfully sympathetic, especially with a total stranger. 'That certainly is mighty tough. I suppose you are pretty much cut up.'"
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“Oh, not so much,” he replied. “It’s a disappointment, of course. I thought Mary had better sense. But I got married myself to one of the tourist girls. She saw that marble-topped table and called me a superman.

—Louis M. Myers, ’25.

FUGITIVE
Book and bell and candle
And in the night a cry—
“Clasp the golden sandle,
Run the race, and die.”

JUNE NIGHT

The fiery wind
That bore the Lesbian’s cry
Sways heaven’s veil, pricked with sultry stars;
Moth, jeweled wings must find
The candle-flame.

—Jr.

A Winter Hike

The week slowly lagged along, and then came Saturday morning. Discussion, day-dreams, and preparation culminated in actual departure. So thorough had been our plans that our equipment included a pair of field-glasses, two kodaks, and a number thirty-eight revolver. Later, we discovered what our equipment excluded.

As soon as we could, we got out onto the river. With delicately placed steps, and at cautious distances from one another, we proceeded, until we came upon a party of fishermen. When they informed us that the ice was from twelve to thirteen inches thick, our courage quickly manifested itself. It was a beautiful sunny morning, and the eight miles along this novel roadway to Kingston Point passed very pleasantly.

We tired of Kingston long before we had traversed its interminably straggling sections, but that did us no good. Something else did. The sight of a suitable lunch-room had an entirely harmonious effect upon all four of us. Within this hall-of-sustenance was the true atmosphere of the departed beer saloon—reeking tobacco smoke; a motley crowd of men gathered about the bar-counter; behind the latter, smiling faced tenders in white aprons and shirt sleeves; and, finally, conspicuous signs worded “free hot soup!” Our fare was in keeping with the character of the establishment—the delectable soup, tasty, “hamy” sandwiches, and more or less near bear.

Refreshed once more, we tramped on during all that afternoon. Very little on the road awakened interest until we neared our destination. The changed aspect of the country, since my last visit in the Spring, puzzled me as to our exact procedure; but we did arrive. There on the slope of Ohio Mountain was the little shack that was to be our home for overnight. The interior proved to be a single room with a loft at one end, rough board walls, rude furniture, an oil cook-stove, and a tin plate wood-stove. The last occupied our attention first, and soon a cheerful fire had removed the deadening chill of the hut.

While we were busied with this work, two strangers entered without knocking. Their bearded faces and rough clothes, as of back-woods lumber-jacks, did not comfortably impress us. The next instant the refinement of their speech startled us. Added to that an invitation which they proffered, to “come to tea,” and we were dumbfounded. “Ten” in this wilderness!

“The Maverick” was the significant name given to the neighboring hut of our courteous acquaintances. Inside it we were introduced to five or six men, dissimilarly dressed in woodsman fashion, with beards a la Bolshevik, and to two women in tam o’shanter and other wise similar apparel. We sat down on stools gathered about a cherry log fire, and between sips of tea and nibbles of crackers the conversation proceeded. Our chief host was a tall, wiry-framed man whose face, at once kindly and strong, was rendered more impressive by long gray-black hair and beard. Poetry was evidently his work. Our talk ranged from colleges in general, and St. Stephen’s in particular, to religions and drama. In the course of the evening we learned that our hosts were artists, in one line or another, and that they lived there in the woods summer and winter. It was there that “Rain” was written. They had their own printing press, a plentiful supply
of books, and an atmosphere free from much formality. We soon found ourselves loath to quit this most interesting company.

When we did leave, we stepped out into a fairy-land of moonlight, still, cold, and white. Few poets have written about such nights as this. Why, I do not know.

...and all the valley seems

Stroum with a softer light, the atmosphere of dreams.

Even our tiny shack was beautified, framed in brightened snow and a stand of dark hemlocks. A thin wisp of smoke, stealing up from the chimney, told of warmth within.

Supper soon over, we gathered about our unromantic but comforting tin-plate stove to recall the incidents of the day, and to speculate further upon the character of our friends at “The Maverick.”

The following morning we had our most extravagant meal. It consisted of grape-fruit, bacon and eggs, toast and jam, and coffee. Then came the disagreeable task of packing up and of saying good-bye. It was afterward before we set out—this time in the direction of home, via Woodstock and Overlook Mountain.

Woodstock is one of those mountain villages that thrive in summer and exist in winter. We passed by many attractive houses and a pretty little Christian Science rest-room; all presented the usual array of boarded windows, like so many blind eyes. One eccentric building bore the sign, “Little Jack Horner Shop.” Here we stopped to procure the necessary addenda to our grub bag. To our pleased surprise the proprietor was a St. Stephen’s man. Either St. Stephen’s was larger, or the world smaller, than we had thought. We inclined to the former supposition.

The road does not wait until it gets out of Woodstock before it begins to ascend. From the midst of a clump of summer cottages it rises abruptly, and winds out of sight over the lower ridge of Overlook. Our packs, our clothing and our breathing, grew steadier. By a half hour of strenuous climbing we sat down to rest, and, by way of deluding ourselves, to gloat over the length of road behind and below us. A white haze had been rapidly spreading itself over the sky from the south-east. The day had lost its brilliancy. We hurried on once more, and in the next hour reached the highest habitation on Overlook Mountain, “Meads,” a sanatorium. A party just returned from the top warned us, “You’ll have a hard time getting up there today,” in view of the icy condition of the exposed summit. From “Meads” we found the trail more steep and the snow deeper. It took but a half hour of this kind of hiking to convince us that we should have to stop and lighten our packs—incidentally, to eat. Immediately we rustled firewood, built and lighted the fire and, with the convenient substitution of snow for water, set a large pot of stew over the fire to warm. The sun, which hitherto had been giving but a dim light, was now obscured by heavier, grey clouds. A keen wind began to blow, and with it came snow. The heat from our fire and the hot stew were noticeably comfortable.

Once more on our way, it took us another hour of hard trudging to reach the summit. Exposed to the full fury of the winds, the bare peak was glazed over with a hard icy crust. There had been an hotel here; now its fire-blackened remains, protruding through the ice-crust, afforded the only available foothold. For a few minutes we clung to an old chimney and obtained what view was possible. It was six o’clock in the evening and, consequently, past sun-down. Also there was a thick haze of snow and clouds; the horizon was a small circle. Here and there the ghostly outline of a nearby mountain was still visible, and immediately below us the valley seemed a terrible depth in the engulfing muck.

Suddenly we came upon the brilliantly wise conviction that we were a long way from home, and that we should have to trek fast to get there that night. With the optimism of truly happy fools we strung off onto what might have been a trail leading in what seemed to be the general direction of Saugerties and home. It soon became obvious that no one had broken through that day since the onset of winter. The snow, knee-deep, was made more vexatious by a layer of ice six or seven inches below the surface. This crust was hard enough to bear our weight for a second—then a jolt as we broke through. Smaller trees, bent over the path by the force of the wind, larger ones, uprooted and fallen across it, were frequent causes of slow progress. Worse yet, the trail was obviously not leading down. Instead, it wound around every shoulder and ravine on the mountain, and often led decidedly upward, as though ascending another peak. The only cheering indication that we were headed in the right direction was an uncertain, intermittent flash far off in the gloom of the valley below us. We were correct in inferring that this was Saugerties lighthouse, but as to how far away it actually was we suffered a happy delusion. For two hours we broke our way, penetrating a forest of small ice-covered trees. At length the path plunged at a precipitous angle. We slipped and fell in that direction quite cheerfully, happy in the knowledge that we were at last getting off the mountain. As we descended, the scenery grew more impressive; particularly prominent were tall black growths of hemlocks. Our imaginations conjured up wild-cats, wolves, and fierce creatures; but all that we met were a few startled grouse. After three hours of this down-trail we were glad to see the sight of two or three twilit lights ahead of us. Their vicinity proved to be the village of Plate’s Clove. Here we learned that West Saugerties was another two miles down the mountain,—“just twenty-five minutes’ walk.”

We slid, ran, and fell the length of this steep, icy grade of “two miles” for a full hour and a half. From the edge of the path each of us dropped a sheer drop of nearly a thousand feet. Not more than five hundred feet across this chasm, the opposite mountain wall rose to a tremendous height.

Arrived at West Saugerties about ten-thirty, we inquired at four houses before we found one that would let us in. A bed-room, though cold, and devoid of everything but a bedstead and mattress, appeared hospitable to us, and we welcomed the offer of it with profuse thanks. We had tramped ten consecutive hours; our feet were wet; our legs and backs ached. The two lamps that were given us we placed side by side on the floor, and gathered about their scant warmth to eat our evening meal—crackers and marmalade. Meanwhile our socks steamed, and we shivered.

The next morning it was with considerable alacrity that we obeyed the breakfast bell. In a cosily warm kitchen-living-room we sat down to breakfast. What a feed that was; Grape-fruit, cereal, a big platter of pan-cakes and syrup, fresh eggs boiled, home-baked bread and jam, and finally, delicious, hot coffee! Strange, what a different attitude we now took toward our experience of yesterday! It had been a perfectly jolly time—absolutely.

A bus carried us from the farmhouse to Saugerties, where we once again struck out onto the river, and set off for Home. That morning there
was a beautiful bright sun around us, a strong wind at our backs; and particularly good spirits moved within us. Far off to our right Overlook and the Clove stood out in bold relief against the blue sky,—no longer merely "one of the mountains seen from the dorm windows." In another brief hour we were home again, on campus. We scrubbed ourselves free from most of the external marks of our trip, but left the inner satisfaction of a colorful experience.


Some Elizabethan Concepts

The secret of man's great achievements is to be found not in the charms of and the desire for external things, but in the compelling force of a subjective reality. That power may be termed concept. It is due to our concepts that we hold certain things dear or worthless, noble or ignoble, worthy to be striven for or fit to be cast upon the dung-hill.

Virtue is a concept. It expresses itself, or men have given expression to it, in different ways at different times throughout recorded history. During the Elizabethan era virtue was associated with certain phases of human activity, always exerting its subtle, unconscious yet powerful sway over the affairs of life. The surpassing greatness of the age, its remarkable flexibility and originality, its vivid imagination and realism, make it worth our while to study the Elizabethan conception of virtue according to the exponent of the time: the prince of that illustrious army of poets who have represented all "the sensitive details of actual truth, and all the philosophic grandeur of general reflection" which distinguish the period and the nation.

The qualities which evoked the admiration and fired the enthusiasm of Elizabethan England are exquisitely delineated in the Chronic History Plays of Shakespeare, as well as in some of his other works. Throughout the Plays characters appear which embody in themselves some aspect of the soul of the time. In "King John" we hear Philip the Bastard giving utterance to that sentiment of patriotism which was held by Elizabethans as one of the noblest, if not the noblest, of all virtues. Expressed at the very end of the play, it has echoed and re-echoed within the hearts of loyal Britons down through the centuries. It runs as follows,—

"This England never did, nor never shall,
Lye at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now these her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true."

In "Richard the Second" we see the jealously regard for patriotism and honour exemplified in the dispute between Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Henry, surnamed Bolingbroke. The former is accused of disloyalty and high treason by the latter. Mowbray replies to this charge with all the fire and passion which were so well understood by the Elizabethan, and which undoubtedly struck a responsive chord in the breasts of the Shakespearean audience. Loyalty, Mowbray declares, is a jewel "in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest." His honour is his life for both grow in one, he says; to take honour from him is comparable to taking life from him. Consequently, he re-affirms his devotion to his sovereign, throws down the gauntlet to his accuser, and prepares to defend his name and to avenge his loyalty.

But it is in the character of the Duke of Gloucester that Shakespeare affords us a picture of the true embodiment of patriotism. The Duke, by his unselfish devotion to the Crown, appears a truly heroic figure. He is the uncle of the youthful King Henry the Sixth, and Protector. By his own merit, he enjoys the confidence of the King and popularity with the
people. His position gives him a vantage ground from which he can order the affairs of the state and initiate schemes that will gain him the royal scepter. Furthermore, his wife Eleanor is ambitious; she would be queen of the realm, and craftily tries to win her husband to her cause. But his noble spirit revolts at the suggestion of disloyalty, and he sternly chides her, despite the fact that he loves her. However, the greatest test of his patriotism is shown when his wife is found guilty of conspiracy against the king, and is condemned to banishment. Because she is a traitress, he refuses to rescue her. Despoiled of honour and clothed in the garb of disgrace, she treads along those streets over which she had often passed in pomp and glory, now as an object of pity, despoiled by all. Gloucester attired in mourning dress awaits her passing-by. The words which fall from his lips when he sees her, bespeak deep grief. Now, notwithstanding such an exhibition of his loyalty, a body of conspirators under the leadership of Suffolk, accuses the Duke of high treason. This was the most grievous charge that could be brought against him, since betrayal of royal trust was deemed a most despicable crime. Nevertheless, confident of his own integrity, Gloucester refuses to tremble at the accusation, and remains undaunted, for, says he, “The purest spring is not so free from mud as I am clear from treason to my sovereign.” These words emanate from a heart conscious of its own loyalty. The portrayal which Shakespeare makes of him enables one to see in his countenance “the map of honour, truth, and loyalty.”

Other instances of Elizabethan esteem for patriotism are designated by the poet. “The Tragedy of Coriolanus” illustrates the sad end of misdirected bravery. Coriolanus is haughty, courageous, noble in some respects; but his patriotism is not so lofty as to tower above his selfishness. He refuses to humble himself in order that he may serve the state. As a result, he becomes an enemy of the commonwealth which has rejected him, employs foreign arms against his fatherland, and dies an ignominious death. Here the unpatriotic reaps the fruits of his own planting. Again, Shakespeare makes Brutus the real hero in “The Tragedy of Julius Caesar” by according to him the role of the true patriot. Notwithstanding the fact that Brutus loves Caesar, and enjoys in his companionship the place of a faithful friend, when the Dictator shows an inclination to assume regal power he feels that his country’s freedom is at stake, and that his ambitious friend must be made powerless to bring Romans into servitude. For this reason he slays him. Brutus’ love for Caesar was sincere, but his love of country superseded his love of friend.

Valour and chivalry were closely associated with patriotism, and held in equal estimation by the Elizabethans. Shakespeare repeatedly manifests himself as a proponent of this conception of virtue, and furnishes notable examples in his dramatic characters. Talbot appears in the “First Part Of Henry The Sixth” as the typical British lion. The hero, after performing illustrious deeds on the field of battle, faces a situation that betokens defeat for his army. He exhorts his son, in view of imminent danger and death, to flee the bloody field, save himself, and thus preserve the name and blood of Talbot. But young John is too true an off-spring of Talbot to do what seems to him a cowardly act;—to desert his father in the hour of need. Therefore he suggests to him that since death is so apparent, they both flee. At this, Talbot retorts, “To leave my followers here to fight and die? My age was never tainted with such shame.” Both father and son refuse to yield, or quit the arena of battle when the oppor-

unity offers itself. They re-enter the hopeless conflict, fight bravely, and end their lives in triumph. There are no scenes in Shakespeare which exhibit a higher degree of chivalry and valour than those in which Talbot and his son are seen.

Henry the Fifth, Shakespeare’s favourite hero-king, is characterized as possessing great bravery both as Prince of Wales and as king. As prince, he is wounded on the field of battle; Westmoreland is desirous of helping him to his tent, but he spurns the offer and exclaims,—“God forbid she now scratch should drive the Prince of Wales from such a field as this, where stain’d nobility lies trodden on, and rebels’ arms triumph in massacre!” When the valiant Henry meets Harry Percy (Hotspur), described as “Mars in swathing clothes,” he exhibits superior prowess and vanquishes the redoubtable foe.

The prince’s heroism is heightened by an event which takes place simultaneously with this fierce engagement. While Henry is battling with Hotspur, the fat, lubberly Sir John Falstaffumbles upon the scene, and is immediately given an opportunity to display his military qualities, for Douglas re-enters and engages him. But being an ardent believer in his own creed, “The better part of valour is discretion,” “the mountain of flesh” falls to the ground simulating death, and Douglas departs. After defeating Hotspur, Prince Henry discovers his beloved Falstaff lying motionless on the turf. The commiserating prince expresses his surprise that such a bulk of flesh could not keep in a little life; on hearing this, Sir John arises, and declares that it were better to counterfeit death than to die in reality. One can imagine how the Elizabethan audience must have acclaimed Harry, the personification of bravery, and roared at Falstaff, the indescribable incarnation of the opposite quality.

As King Henry the Fifth, we behold the hero carrying out exploits at the battle of Agincourt, and on many other battlefields of which there is no space to distinguish himself, always refusing to submit to defeat even against fearful and overwhelming odds, always manifesting undiminished courage; for he truly believed that great danger must be matched by great intrepidity.

Sixteenth century England was not only brave, chivalrous, and patriotic, but it was also adventurous. The Britons of that century were men of action. They lived untrammelled by conventions. They tore themselves away from the meshes that tended to bind them to what had been. They did new things, they embarked upon unattempted paths, both in the arts of peace and of war. As a consequence, they laid the foundation of British commercial greatness, and of Britain’s far flung imperial power. The “res gestae” of Drake, Raleigh, Oxenham, Hawkins, and of other adventurers, which gained them renown, are well known. Those pioneers were demonstrators of the adventurous spirit of the time. The great explorations they successfully undertook, the daring ventures they made on land and on sea, were the outcome of the promptings of that virtue.

The love of adventure had its exemplification in the private citizen as well as in the warrior. One character, Prince Henry, in the first and the second parts of “Henry The Fourth,” depicts both Merrie England and Martial England. The prince’s enterprising traits lead him to associate with boisterous companions, and to engage in many escapades and dare-devil undertakings that give his royal father grave apprehensions for the future ruler. But the deeds attributed to him were not unfamiliar to the Elizabethans, who lived amid daring and exciting things. Men in those
days were given to excesses; their passions ran high, and they did not suppress them. Madecap Harry, as the prince was called, must have been a popular character on the stage, since in him the audience saw the representation of their own spirit.

It was for this reason also that "Richard the Third," portraying one of the most consummate villains of all history, was produced and met with success during Shakespearean times. A character so utterly unscrupulous, so bold in the performance of enormities, resolute in his determination,—with what intrepidity he executes the unnatural and the improbable! Sets him as he halts the funeral cortege of Henry the Sixth, whom he has murdered, breaks down the defiance of Lady Anne, widow of Prince Edward whom his own hands have also despatched to the realms of the departed, and obtains a promise of marriage from her. Such an one, I affirm, could only have been dramatized with success at a time when the adventurous man was accorded almost indiscriminate acclaim.

A comparative study of the characters, Henry the Sixth and Richard the Third, shows the former as pious, generous, affable, and kind; the latter as the perpetrator of almost every imaginable wickedness, a veritable devil incarnate. Yet Henry is presented as one who was a failure. He excites much pity, but little admiration. Richard, however, arch fiend though he be, cannot but win admiration for his hardihood and enterprise.

The fact that Henry the Sixth, noted for his piety, is placed before us as an unheroic figure, must not be construed to signify that Elizabethans had no strong deference for godliness. The fervent spirit that manifested itself in patriotic deeds, in chivalry and adventure, was not lacking in religion. It was patriotism mingled with religious zeal that enabled England to rise "like a giant refreshed with wine," shatter the Spanish Armada, and completely dispel Philip's hope of bringing England under Spain's domination.

The greatest literary genius of the race bears testimony to the religious temper of his day. In the Chronicle History Plays, the real heroes are men in whom the fear of God abides. Often we see them at the hour of death commending their souls to God. Henry the Fifth, the most noble of Shakespeare's royal characters, combines valour with religion. This is also true of many of his other characters. The religious element is strongly expressed in Shakespeare.

To write of Elizabethan virtues without giving due consideration to the estimable place which love and friendship held in the life of the time, would be an unpardonable omission. Affection formed the sphere in which all hearts moved in that passionate age, and Shakespeare celebrates this adequately in his writings. The topic of "Love's Labour's Lost," which was produced within the earliest period of the author's dramatic activity, may as well be fittingly termed "Love Unconquerable In The Fight." Ferdinand, King of Navarre, and his lords, although they have sworn to war against their own affections, find themselves enrobed discomfited and compelled to surrender to irresistible love. Benedick, in "Much Ado About Nothing," has a somewhat similar experience. He expresses immunity from love with such vehemence that it seems as if the charms of the fair sex are powerless to demolish his citadel of neutrality in things amorous. But love possesses potent arms; at last Benedick discovers that he has no armour to protect his heart from its well-directed shafts, and he capitulates to the fascinations of Beatrice. Other works of the poet illustrate the dominating interest of love. Romance is the centre of his literary

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universe, and around it all other themes revolve. The "Sweet Swan of Avon" is a true lover. He sings of love from the depths of his heart's experience. He soars aloft on the pinions of love, and moves majestically in love's atmosphere. How he pours forth his soul in the following lines we shall now see,—

"When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes, I all alone beweep my outcast state, And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries, And look upon myself and curse my fate, Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,

Favour'd like him, like him with friends possess'd, Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope, With what I most enjoy contented least; Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising, Happy I think on thee; and then my state, Like to the lark at break of day arising From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate; For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings That then I scorn to change my state with kings."

With similar strains in many other sonnets, he extols friendship, potent force in the hearts of sixteenth century Britons, and particularly in that circle of literary geniuses where he was admired and loved.

We are grateful to Shakespeare for the valour, the patriotism, the adventures, the godliness, the love and friendship which he celebrates. His resplendent age shines all the brighter because there flourished one who has made it immortal.

The Islander

"What are the modern gods?" he cried,
And bent on me his searching eyes.
I'd asked the question casually
Between a sip of honest wine,
A bit of cheese between rye bread,
And curiosity to learn
How life appeared to one who dwelt
Not quite among his fellow men,
Nor yet within an ivory tower,
But on an island in mid-stream,
Where all life's current touched, and paused,
But went again, leaving him clean—
No favors asked, no compromise—
You understand? His own man quite!
He'd loved, married, and lost his wife
And child; paid his debt to nature.
And now his early melons brought
The highest market rates—he smiled—
That meant the best tobacco, books,
And time to read them, now and then!
The shack? Why yes, he'd built that, yes;
As Adam built his, he supposed,
And any man would, if he must.
A balcony, a gable, rather queer—
Quite un-American. He'd traveled, then?
He puffed his pipe and answered, short:
"Once—long ago," and turned
With some remark about the weeds
That kept a-growing so this weather,
He'd have to hire a Dago village!

And so I came to know the man
Enough to ask that banal question,
When, in the course of conversation,
He said: "Like Solomon of old,
Strange gods we moderns follow!
"What are the modern gods?" I asked.
"What are the modern gods?" he cried;
"Why, man, just look about you!
I'm leaving out, now mark me,
The theologian's God; he's always there;
'Infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being,
Goodness, mercy, justice, truth.'
Yes, I know my catechism—
None too well—" he smiled, somewhat awry.
"But look at men's ideals, now;
They worship what they follow;'
The richest nation in the world,' they boast;
But rich in what? I always ask,
Persistent like—that makes 'em mad.
Richest in gold reserve and cars?

And mighty rich in pride about it!
Not to mention that it's bad economics.
'Blessed are the poor in spirit'—
Yes, long ago and far away!

'Democracy'—and what is that?
The photographs told you last Sunday,
Under the picture of a hatchet-faced female
In crepe de chine and imitation pearls,
Hanging out the family wash:
'Cabinet member's wife is democratic.'
And might have added, 'Specially posed.'
Man! can you best that for bunk?
And while Senator Blank's wife
Milked the cows back home, he takes
To wearing evening clothes in Washington,
And humor says the back-home folks
Will never reelect him.
You see we get our values mixed
And never know the difference.
Huh! I'd rather pay my taxes
For a queen, if she was pretty
And kept her self enthroned
And looking like a queen.
There's Marie of Roumania, a trifle expensive,
But a great asset for any country—
She keeps romance alive,
She wears real pearls!
And lets the maid hang out the clothes—
Or does it privately.

Who said, 'Music hath charms to soothe'
The savage breast'? No matter; has it?
This jazz that whines, shrieks, and caterwauls,
Reminds me of an orgy in Port Said. . .
But music? Give me 'Annie Laurie'
Played by twilight on a cottage organ—
And let them laugh, the vacant minds!
'Religion'? Gospel wagons stand and fire,
Drawn up at the curb; while Sister This
And Brother that keep careful tally,
Count the pennies and the converts,
Then divide— you have the cost.
But the big prize bunk shooter.
Who had the longest sawdust trails
This side the California redwoods,
Where is he? Retired. Blessed is he
By all the banks. He stood out like a fire
For Heaven and Hell and the rights of property.
And now the latest is Communion
By radio. Can you picture it—
mixed up with sounds somewhat irrelevant?
I spare details, but something else
Than Leonardo's quiet upper room.
Yes, tawdry, cheap, mechanical
I call the things we holler most about.
And yet there's some things in this world—"
He tilted back his chair and blew
A ring and squinted through it—
"I'm not religious, understand,
But some things . . . . . . like
A great ship sliding down the ways . . .
Any mother with her baby at her breast . . .
A robin workin' in the rain to build her nest . . .
And that there Anna Pavlova
When she does her Glow-Worm Gavotte
In yellow silk . . . or that doctor
Who discovered insulin
And gave it all away—he's white!
Then there's that sunset over there,
And those mountains, and the purple shadows . . . .
And my melons! Why man,
This island is a world,
And all those things out there
Are only stars, twinkling in the dark.
Give me my island—you can take the rest!"

—Edward Newton Voorhees.

The Carribbean Sea

Hemmed in by the Gulf of Mexico, the West Indies and South America, the Caribbean Sea lies a sparkling jewel, at once beautiful and mysterious, beneath the tropical sky. Most of the time favorable trade winds ruffle its blue waters. Occasionally these breezes die out and a dead calm rests upon its surface. A squall may sweep in from the Atlantic and churn the peaceful sea into a mass of white crests and heaving waves. Once in a great while it is torn up by a hurricane, and many seers on its shores have prophesied the fury of those attacks. During the day a brilliant sun pierces the clear depths, and white shells on its sandy bottom are plainly visible. During the night countless stars, set in a canopy of purple, shine with tropical splendor above its phosphorescent bosom. When soft rays of moonlight envelop it, one is entranced. The atmosphere is clear and sharp; the many islands are shadowy forms distinctly outlined; the sea, a glistening sheet of glass divided by a silver pathway. A strange quietness permeates the scene. Its beauty and enchantment are indescribable. Such nights are found nowhere else in the world.

The land about the sea abounds in historical anecdotes and stirring tales. It was to the site of Santo Domingo City, and to the Virgin Islands, that Columbus came on his second trip to the western continent. Today, as witnesses of the famous discoverer's visit, an old fort and hospital stand on the banks of the Ozama River. The Roman Catholic cathedral there is named after him, and a large copper casket in the center of the nave claims to hold the remains of both Christopher and his son. Portsmouth contains many relics of Napoleon's attempt to conquer the Haitian tribe. Porto Rico has a concealed fort half a mile long which was built by the early Spaniards. It is said they kidnapped three thousand Chinese coolies from the other side of the globe, forced them to tunnel and fortify this huge construction, and then, when the work was finished, in order that the secret passageway should not be known to any except themselves, they hanged every one of the coolies and dropped their bodies through a chute into the sea. Even today, four hundred years later, no Chinaman ventures on the island.

For stirring tales, glamour and romance, St. Thomas is famous. Here an almost landlocked harbor, with a narrow entrance and deep water, and surrounded by high hills, affords an excellent port. As it was on the edge of the route travelled several centuries ago by the treasure ships of Spain, Italy and France, it furnished an ideal hiding place for pirates. The place abounds with legends not, perhaps, altogether mythical. Captain Kidd himself is said to have been a regular visitor. The reputed castles of Bluebeard and Blackbeard still stand and are frequented by curious tourists. For an American dollar the caretaker of Bluebeard's home will show one the remains of that gentleman's wife. However far the truth may be stretched in these details, one relic remains in operation as proof that St. Thomas was once a corsair's haunt—the signal system.

On the hill to the right of the entrance stands a mast and yard, on which are the hill to the right of the entrance a stand mast and yard, on which are hoisted large, black balls according to the prescribed code. When a ship is sighted on the horizon, one ball goes up to indicate the direction and, later on, if she should happen to be a merchantman, two more to indicate her nationality; but if she should be a man-o-war of any size or kind, every ball is immediately run up and the signal mast looks like a cluster of grapes silhouetted against the sky.
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If the ancestors of the negro inhabitants could speak they would give gruesome accounts of Sir Francis Drake and Hawkins; of Africa and kidnappings; of slave ships and tortures; of St. Thomas and tyrannical masters.

However, the most interesting stories are not those of the islands, but those of the sea itself. The choppy blue water seems quite peaceful and safe, but beneath its ruffled surface lie strange and horrible mysteries. The natives dare not sail upon it; hardened old captains breathe more freely when they arrive in port; many vessels purposely avoid entering it; their fears are far from superstitious beliefs; they are based upon actual occurrences.

The coast line of San Domingo was formed of lava from volcanos now extinct. The continual beating of waves ate into the soft strata and left a ragged, jutting ledge of hard rock, rising abruptly from the water to a height of twelve feet. Off this coast two very strange events happened.

In 1909 a two masted schooner, laden with three hundred negroes for the sugar plantations, headed into San Domingo Bay. A bright afternoon sun shone from a cloudless sky; a brisk breeze stirred up a moderate sea and hurried the ship into port. For a quarter of a mile out from its mouth, the mud from the Ozama River discolored the blue waters of the bay. The two colors met in a distinct line. Crowds of the passengers’ friends gathered in the park overlooking the sea to watch the schooner dock. Suddenly, without any warning, as she crossed from the blue to the mud-colored water, her bow banged forward and down! In less than thirty seconds the ship and all aboard disappeared beneath the brown waves. A few seconds later two men, the only survivors of the disaster, rose to the surface, fought for their lives against the strong suction of the current and, cheered by the crowd, struck out for the shore. As they came near, sixteen men jumped over the stone fence which guarded the walk, ran out on a jutting rock, lowered a rope and began to haul the swimmers up. While the attention of all was upon the rescue, an unusually large wave broke against both sides of the point, surged up to the walk, and swept back into the sea. The entire rescue party was hurled into the churning foam and never seen again. During this whole scene there had been no change in the sky or wind, and only a slight increase in the sea.

A tall monument marks the place where the sixteen men stood, and a bronze tablet tells the tragic story of their death and the strange sinking of the schooner. No one has ever explained this catastrophe. It is as mysterious today as it was when it occurred.

Seven years later, in the summer of 1916, the armored cruiser "Memphis" of the United States Navy peacefully rode at anchor in this bay. It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon. The three o’clock party had just left the ship. In a few seconds, for no apparent cause, the sea increased from a gentle roll to a raging mass of green water. The large sea-worthy motor-sailers containing the liberty party were quickly swamped, and sank. Two minutes later the sea gained such force that the "Memphis" herself was in danger. Captain Beach, the commander, ordered all the boilers lighted and steam gotten up immediately; for it was evident the cables could not hold much longer. Blowers and forced drafts were turned under the new fires. A huge wave lifted the cruiser high upon its crest; the steel cables snapped, and she pitched helplessly toward the jagged coast. The captain rushed to the fire-room hatch and ordered the steam turned in the pipes, in order that the "Memphis" might battle her way out to the open sea—her only hope of safety. But the cooled iron could not stand the intense heat. A loud explosion and terrible roar followed the command. The sweating men in the fire-room were dashed to instant death against the iron bulkheads. The "Memphis," a huge mass of twenty-three thousand tons of steel, was hurled shoreward by the tremendous waves. Nothing could be done to prevent disaster. Officers and crew clung desperately to the nearest things they could grasp. Each mountain of green water tossed the doomed ship like a toy. Now she balanced on the crest of an enormous wave, her dark gray hull and superstructure sharply silhouetted against the light blue sky; now she plunged headlong down into the trough, only her military masts visible; a seething, white foam hid her decks. Fifty yards from the ledge a gigantic sea lifted the quivering hull high into the air and swept her crashing into the jagged rocks. Her steel hull cracked like an eggshell. A rugged point of stone, just below the surface of the water, pierced her bottom, tore through five decks and held the cruiser fast. Lines were passed to the ledge and many thus reached safety.

Half an hour later the sea subsided and gentle waves once more danced over the bay. But, somewhere on its sandy bottom, seventy-nine sailors lay; and the "Memphis," a total loss, was fixed on top of a lava rock. There she remains today, a monument to one of the many mysteries of the Caribbean.

The Dominican coast is not the only scene of strange events. On the eighteenth of March 1916, the "U. S. S. Cyclops," the largest collier afloat, the envy of the Kaiser, and the pride of the United States Navy, left the island of Barbadoes and headed north for St. Thomas. She was six hundred feet long, equipped with the latest radio apparatus, and manned by an experienced crew of two hundred and eighty men and fifty officers. Many of them had been picked up in South American ports and were on their way to the States to be honorably discharged. The ship was in first class condition and well supplied with fuel. But, although her course never took her out of sight of land and no unusual disturbances were noticed either of the weather or sea, she was never heard from again. The beaches were combed for hundreds of miles, but no clue of the "Cyclops" found. Some thought a tidal wave swamped her; others, that a hurricane blew her over; still others, that a giant sea monster sank her—but none of these beliefs could be substantiated. Most diligent searches and investigations revealed nothing. The treacherous Caribbean had claimed another victim, and three hundred and thirty-five more bodies rested beneath its tranquil surface.

Such is the Caribbean, rich in history, legends and myths, a sea of unsurpassed beauty and inexplicable mysteries.

—C. L. Willard, Jr., ’25.
Suggested Reading

The President has continued to read, in his avowedly desultory manner, during the past month or two. He has found that the twenty books mentioned below, all of which are in Hoffman Library, have been interesting for non-technical perusal.

1. The book of the month is doubtless K. K. Chesterton's St. Francis of Assisi. Here is a brief biography which is also an interpretation of a life and a presentation of a philosophy; all written with penetration and brilliance, and permeated with humor. In the midst of many books that are "pretty good," such a volume as this rejoices the soul and mind.

2. In The Line of Love James Branch Catell has done some of the best short stories I remember reading. They are tales of love, covering several generations of one family over a period of four centuries, from the time of Jurgen to the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. For whimsicality and beauty one can hardly ask more than is contained in the tale of the old Falstaff greeting his once-young amoureuse, or that about Villon renouncing his lady for love.

3. It is said that The Able McLaughlins is Miss Margaret Wilson's first novel. It is not amateurish. With great deftness she has told a true and simple story of the Iowa pioneers after the Civil War—the sort of tale which Herbert Quick cannot tell because of verisimilitude and which Miss Cather always spoils by her sentimental touch. The story is presented with admirable and effective restraint.

4. Mr. Robert Frost of New Hampshire has given us another volume of his poetic studies of New England, deft, quiet, simple and direct. "Stopping by Woods on a Winter Evening" is one of the most beautiful things I have found in a long time.

5. Of the poems in the Anthology of Magazine Verse, 1923, the compiler, Mr. W. S. Braithwaite, himself says that they mostly are not worth much. The tendency of our present periodicals, and of some of our poets, toward undue introspection, is unfortunate. Mr. Benet's Nation prize poem, "King David," which is included, is interesting. Many of the other are decidedly worth reading.

6. Bishop Gore has done Christian thought a real service in his Belief in God and Belief in Christ. His latest volume on The Holy Spirit and the Church is, equally with the others, careful, scholarly and reverent. The best of these books is their decided readability.

7. The art critic and lecturer, Mr. Royal Cortissoz of New York, has written of American Artists in a thought-provocative and stimulating manner. Everyone who owns his country is more than a thing of flag-waving and Japanese exclusion, would do well to read this book and rejoice in his countrymen's achievement. The book has some well-done half-tone reproductions by way of illustration. Mr. Cortissoz is to be one of the Dragon Club lecturers here next year.

8. Brentano's has published a book entitled Rubens, which contains half-tone reproductions of his exceedingly numerous paintings. One misses, in these black-and-whites, his mastery command of color; but his composition is, of course, a delight. How he did doze on painting adipose ladies!

9. Carl Sandburg, the Chicago poet, has published another collection of his verse, a rather thin one this time, called Slabs of the Sunburnt West. The first poem in the book, about the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington, is far and away the best. Another on the Washington monument is worth noting. Some of the poems are inexcusably obscure.

10. A Short History of India, by E. B. Havell, supplies a want. Most Occidentals do not know or care anything about the story of India, but they should. This history has had a very real connection, by way of cause and effect, with much European history. The present volume err in trying to pack facts in too closely. The result is a certain dulness, in parts. By judicious skipping, however, a view of the whole subject is neither hard nor uninteresting to get. The whole book is less than three hundred pages long.

11. Ancient history is to most people, one fears, a remembrance of dull hours spent in a classroom, probably a preparatory-school classroom at that. A perusal of Wonders of the Past, two of the four volumes of which have been published, will make it all real and fascinating. These are wonderful books. The articles are by some of the world's greatest archaeologists. The illustrations are "stunning," to use the slang of twenty years ago. One finds a pictorial reconstruction of the great ancient cities, not merely some photographs of ruins. Professor Edwards picked it up the other night by chance, and read it till two in the morning. I don't wonder.

12. Frank Swinnerton has, in Nocturne, written a piece of almost photographic realism which, happy change from most realism of the day, is thoroughly healthy.

13. Professor Phelps has rendered a real service in his Essays on Russian Novelists. It is an excellent introduction to this important literature, and done with Mr. Phelps' usual charm and "punch." The essay on Turgeniev struck me as particularly good.

14. The war is now over long enough for intelligent people to realize something of the heroism displayed by those who for convictions' sake would not fight, and served years in prison for what they believed. A sane and accurate book about these men is Norman Thomas' The Conscientious Objector in America.

15. We hear about the rebellion of young people today until most of us are "a bit fed up" on it. Therefore one might be tempted to dodge Stanley High's Revolt of Youth when one sees it on the shelf. It really is much worth looking into. Its description of how the younger people of central Europe have denied themselves and starved themselves for an education ought to make our pampered selves feel fat and flabby and just a bit ashamed.

16. Lists, good lists, of books that ought to have been read by cultured people, are hard to find. Usually they are too "high-brow" for words, and mostly biased as well and lopsided. Some exceedingly good lists are found in the back of a book, otherwise not bad for that matter, entitled What Books Can Do for You. It is by one Jesse L. Bennitt.

17. Walter Pater's papers on The Renaissance have received a new edition, charmingly printed, which is in the library. One need not say anything in praise of the essays at this late date. Pater's style in them is rather at its best.
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18. Hilaire Belloc has done some nonsense rhymes entitled More Peers that gave me, at least, many a good chuckle. The pictures are funny, too.

19. Father Wilfrid Knox of the Oratory, Cambridge, England, has written a much needed book on The Catholic Movement in the Church of England. The content and historical development of this most vital of spiritual movements of the moment are dealt with briefly but accurately and with sympathetic understanding.

20. The famous Dr. J. Arthur Thomson, the Regius Professor of Natural Science at Aberdeen, one of the four or five really great scientists of the day, has taken the trouble to write Everyday Biology which makes things mighty clear to those not biologists who feel, rightly, that every intelligent person must know something about that most vital of the sciences.

BEASTS, MEN, AND SLOBS
—THRU MONGOLIA, SOMEWHAT AFTER OSSENDOSKI—

Moocow, Apr. 31. (via S. S. Myopeye)

I read in the American journals that the first volume of Prof. Ossendowski's Travels in Mongolia is receiving even greater notice than did the log-book of the Kawa. That is but just, for Ossendowski has out-rooked Mrpock, so to speak. However, the Professor has since written another installment, unknown to you. I herewith append a brief but accurate condensation of its three chief episodes, which I believe to be finer than anything since Munchhausen.” (Signed) Rakeoff.

I

Six days without food, we had been traversing the slopes of the Wing-Wang Range. My mount was in a pitiable state. A cross between a camel and a Mongol pony, he was in appearance a mule with a hump, upon the fatty tissue of which he drew for sustenance. This had so fallen away as to make the rider’s seat precarious. On the morning of which I happened to lean too far to one side, and caused the beast to miss his footing. Over and over we rolled, for a thousand feet down a steep declivity. It was a narrow escape for me; I was saved solely by the fact that the rapidity of our descent turned my mount inside out, thus insulating me against the bumps. At the foot of the precipice I crawled forth, and much to my regret abandoned the faithful animal. Altho still alive he was quite useless, with his hooves encased and his tail hanging from his mouth,—which gave him a most droll and reverend appearance, somewhat akin to that of the noted American Senator from Massachusetts. None the worse for my adventure, I continued on foot to Ulissaitai, a distance of two hundred and five miles.

II

Djamsrap Khan, Count Phorranauer—by birth a German nobleman—was dictator of the Ulissaitai Wakwaks. I had heard much about his mesmeric gifts, and of how he was able to conjure up before his charging troops visions of the lexi Bonus, or Warriors’ Paradise. With some misgivings I obeyed his summons to call upon him.

Dressed in correct evening attire, he welcomed me cordially, and said,—

"I hear that you own two pairs of trousers. Does my statement surprise you? As you might see, I have no trousers at all. Our supplies have been cut off; and while my soldiers are all sans-coultibles by conviction, I cannot appear so at reviews. The pair I seem to be wearing is illusory, a creation of my hypnotic gift. Should my mental concentration relax for a moment, I should appear—" He blushed, and hurried on, "Now you will see that I need all my psychic powers to pay my troops, to transport my motor corps by auto-suggestion, etcetera. In short, will you change trousers with me?"

I could not refuse, and went back to my tent clothed in trousers which the Count imagined me to be wearing. I found them somewhat fuller in cut than my second-best pair, which for several days I was compelled to wear beneath my hypnotic garment, pending its dissolution—a not-unwelcome procedure, for the wind is cold in Upper Mongolia.

III

My last interview with Phorranauer occurred when we went together to visit Djimdjamby Hutuxtu, the famous Baa-Baa Lama. The Count was very superstitious, and placed great confidence in the Lama’s ability at divination by means of dice.

"Roll the bones, Djim," he said, "and see if my luck is any better today."

The Lama, with many magic gestures and words of invocation, cast the dice upon the floor.

"Snake eyes, Excellency," he pronounced. "Pay me now, if you would that I try again."

Phorranauer threw down his purse, and the Lama made another pass.

"Box cars, Unlucky One. It signifies that your days of prosperity are numbered, and that you must return to Moocow by freight."

The Count sighed, and walked out a broken man. Less than a week later his troops rebelled, and he saved his life only by riding out of Ulissaitai on the brake-rods of the Trans-Siberian. With him gone, I was no longer safe. I ‘bumbled’—native term for stod—a camel from a Chinese merchant, bought a packet of that excellent restorative kzh’wing gummi, and set out upon the last ten thousand miles of my journey to the sea.
“Mean Temperature 75’”

I

“And now, Mr. Howey, I welcome you to the ranks of those who have gained independence of purse and spirit here in Fruitlandia. We are as yet a small community, but each year finds us richer for the presence among us of estimable and discerning persons like yourself. The best of luck to you and your good wife, and remember that if at any time you find money a little tight, you can always count on your old friend George J. for enough to see you through.”

G. J. Osbourne and Co., Real Estate, Loans, Job Printing & Sundries, pulled back his executive throne, and extended to his guest a moist and receptive key to property. One could fairly exude from the pores of his ruddy skin and from the seams of his impeccably laundered Palm Beach suit. Three cigars of forbidding hue peeped from his breast pocket, on the lapel of his coat sparkled an elk’s head with ruby eyes and rhinestone antlers, and from his silver watch chain dangled a gold-mounted rabbit's foot. There was no way of discovering that Osbourne wore a false shirt-front held in place by tapes, and a pair of shoes the soles of which were re-enforced with cardboard inlets.

Throughout their married life, John and Eliza Howey had consoled themselves for their lack of children by dreaming of the orange grove they would someday own in Florida. John came home at night from the Koko-vo Chair Factory, to forget its clatter in thoughts of mock-birds and warblers that flitted and sang amid branches of golden fruit. Eliza went about her housework with her mind full of plans for a bungalow, which should have in it electric lights, and two porcelain washtubs placed at a comfortable height. Finally, when both of them had passed sixty, they had found themselves able to draw from the savings bank their account of a little over five thousand dollars, and had brought upon themselves a flood of polychrome pamphlets urging them to invest. George J. Osbourne had pursued them: travel the fourteen hundred miles to Fruitlandia, and in less than a day had managed to sell them an orange grove which was then ready to enter its third bearing year. At one end of the property he had shown them a piece of muckland, suitable for potatoes, and at the other end a four room bungalow in good repair. The former owners, so they learned, had inherited property “up North,” and had seen fit to sell at a sacrifice. Four thousand dollars was nothing to pay for such a desirable plot of land; in five years the income from the potatoes alone would give them back their original investment, and as for the profits from the grove! George J. had, over that point become almost lyric. He, it appeared, was about to organize a trust company, with the most prosperous men in Fruitlandia as its directors; he would be glad to pay good interest upon any surplus capital which the Howeys might care to invest with him, after they had marketed their first crop of fruit. Yes, they could take possession of the property at once, and he would see to it that their furniture was sent out to them.

Osbourne stood and watched the old people as they walked down the middle of the street like two happy children, swinging between them on a bit of evanescent beauty in their new home. In honor of the great occasion the agent lit one of his cigars, and then stepped indoors to compose an order to a supply house. Money had been scarce in Fruitlandia since the big freeze of 1917, and for three years Osbourne’s stock of sundries had dwindled away without renewals. Two thousand of his newly acquired dollars would fill his shelves again, and leave him enough to live upon for at least a year. He sighed happily, a man who knows that patience under adversity has brought him reward, then sealed his order in a plain envelope, and strolled down Cherokee Avenue towards the structure of stamped tin which served as both post office and shoe store.

The next day was Sunday and, instead of going to church, Howey and his wife performed a humble sacrament of their own. From among the tissue paper and excelsior of the packing they brought to light a souvenir of days forever dead—John’s battered, repainted and much-soldered dinner pail. Dressed in their best clothes they went down to the canal which bordered upon the potato land, and with them they took the dinner pail. There they filled it with soil from the bank—their bank—and after swinging it several times by the handle let it fly out into the water. Tiny ripples widened to the shore, and John and Eliza stood hand in hand watching the commotion grow fainter and fainter. From that moment until the end of his life John Howey was to be a free man, working at his own discretion, for the profit of no one but himself and Eliza.

As the two walked back to the house, they saw George J. Osbourne on his way home from meeting. His suit was freshly pressed, his Panama hat was resplendent of lemon juice and talcum powder, and on his feet he wore a shiny pair of new patent leather shoes with gray suede tops.

II

One night near the end of February, two years later. John Howey and his wife were making their last stand against the bitter north winds, which whipped the branches of the orange trees remorselessly to and fro, and sent to the ground showers of late blossoms and early fruit. The thermometer stood at eighteen degrees above zero, “a mark unprecedented in the annals of Florida, for so advanced a date.” (Jacksonville Times Union.) Eliza’s hair was down; thorns had torn her dress to shreds; and anxiety, exhaustion, and the smoke of smudge fires had filled her eyes with tears. John, his face bleeding, and streaked with snot and rosin, seemed to be in all places at once. He cut wood for the fires in the grove, piled it in place, and then ran down to the potato patch to tend the smudge pots. He cursed and prayed confusedly, scorching his eyebrows in the flames that leapt up from the pine logs, and setting his clothes on fire as drops of burning gasoline spattered from the torches. Two negroes whom he had hired to help him slept unseen behind a heap of sacking, and in his excitement he took no notice of their absence. Midnight passed. The wind did not subside, but grew more keen. John redoubled his efforts, leaping like a wounded bird from place to place. At one o’clock Eliza gave up the struggle, and went into the house to toss and moan restlessly until morning. Two o’clock passed, and three, and then John too gave way. He collapsed in front of one of the fires, his legs and arms twitching convulsively, his face buried in the sand.

Dawn came at half past five, and with it a deadly calm. The smudge pots were out, the last embers of the fires sent up a feeble smoke, and the frost finished its work unhindered. Howey awoke and struggled to his feet, heedless of the pains that ran like cold knife-blades through his back and chest. Had the fruit escaped unfrozen? Cutting his arms and face with thorns he climbed into the nearest tree, seized an orange with both
hands, and ripped it apart. In the first rays of the sun each kernel stood up stiff and bright, a sparkling jewel of ice.

For a moment he was too unnerved to move, but even then hope did not desert him; perhaps the potatoes were unharmed. All the smoke from the fires in the grove had blown in their direction, and anyway it was warmer down by the canal. If the crop could be saved it ought to bring at least eight dollars a barrel, undug in the field; and there would be over three hundred barrels. With twenty-four hundred dollars he could meet all his obligations to Osbourne and show the fertilizer agent enough margin of profit to justify an advance towards next year’s planting. Then, by saving . . . . . . He reached the muckland, and passed through it to the edge of the canal. The potato vines looked healthy and green, apparently untouched by the frost. He would waken Eliza, and bring her down to see what luck was theirs. They should beat the game yet, he and his old woman. Feel that! It was growing warmer already. There could not possibly be another freeze that winter, and with the first hot weeks of March the crop would come to maturity, a month ahead of the earliest shipments from the Virginia coast.

It took ten minutes to rouse Eliza; then the two stumbled out through the grove. From all sides came the thump of frozen oranges falling to the ground, and the trees were bleeding to death because the sap had turned to ice and split the bark; but what matter? Another year, better luck, and all would be well. At the edge of the muck John paused, and pointed proudly to the rows of potatoes. His finger grew rigid. A chill crept up his arm, spread over his whole body, and he fell, moaning, upon his face. Increasing warmth had melted the ice in the stems and leaves of the vines, and they lay flat in the furrows, black, shriveled, dead. For a moment Eliza stood erect, her hands clenched, her face grey and drawn. Then she knelt beside her husband and began gently to rub his forehead, calling him by name.

John Howey, sixty-five years old, penniless, and with his house and land posted for sheriff’s sale, set out to seek work. His back was stiff from rheumatism contracted during the night of his exposure, and his gnarled hands trembled and twitched, but he still retained much skill with tools. Carpenters are always scarce in Florida, and at the end of a day’s work he was able to sign an agreement for six months’ employment with a contractor near Fruitlandia. He secured a small advance upon his wages, to pay the immediate cost of existence, and came home fairly well content. There had grown up within him that unaccountable and unflagging optimism which comes to all who have, as the Floridians say, “felt the sand in their shoes.” He began to make plans for the future. Sand lots could be bought anywhere about town for fifty dollars an acre; in his spare time he would be able to erect a dwelling of some sort on one of them, and move to it before the sheriff’s sale. They would show them yet, Eliza and he!

As he walked homeward through the golden dust that hung over Cherokee Avenue, a sudden thought came to him: if he were to start work the next morning, how was he to carry his lunch? Of course he must have a pail, for the habit of years demanded that he feel one banging and swinging at his side while on his way to the day’s job. He began to look from one to another of Fruitlandia’s five rococo-fronted emporiums, and finally discovered a whole stack of dinner pails—in the window of G. J. Osbourne, Sundries. That worthy himself leaned against the door post, idly toying with the many-looking remnant of what had once been a gold-mounted rabbit’s foot. He turned a steadfast regard not upon Howey, but upon the battered toe of one patent leather shoe. The top of that shoe was of gray suede, and the welt was worn away to the upper. Whatever Howey’s thoughts may have been he kept them to himself, turned on his heel, and went home.

As he started for bed that night, leaving Eliza to sort and arrange his tools, he paused for a moment and said to her over his shoulder,—

“By the way, old girl, when you put up my lunch you might just wrap it in a bit of newspaper.”


EXIT

I
Come to Cubit’s funeral;
Feign a sigh, squeeze out a tear;
He has met with grief at last
For whom we grieved through many a year
Until, our patience tried too much,
We gave him marble for a crust,—
Content to drive again to dust
Improvidence we dared not jeer.

II
With what old bargains lightly bought
Were found the remnants worn and grim
Whereof, had others timelier wrought,
They might have made a man of him?
Let us not ask, nor deeply pry
For secrets not our own to find;
He yet may give us all the lie,
And live when we are out of mind.

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