

The Original Stephen Leacock

Stephen Leacock
1913 to 1921

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The Original Stephen Leacock

*A compilation of early stories, transcribed from
their original magazine scans.*

With reproductions of the original illustrations.

Stephen Leacock

First published 2016

PUBLISHING HISTORY

The articles in this book were transcribed from scans of the magazines indicated here. Publishing history may be incomplete.

Homer and Humbug *The Century Magazine*, page 952-955, October 1913. Also published in *Behind the Beyond and Other Contributions to Human Knowledge* under the title Homer and Humbug: An Academic Discussion with a slightly modified introduction, and editing changes.

Novels read to order. First Aid for the Busy Millionaire *The Century Magazine*, pages 156-160, November 1913. Illustrations by *John Leach* (1817-1864).

An Every-day Experience *The Century Magazine*, page 968, April 1914.

Aristocratic Anecdotes; or, Little Stories of Great People *The Century Magazine*, page 803-805, March 1914. Illustrations by *Reginald Bathurst Birch* (1846-1943).

My Tailor: A Study in Still Life *The Century Magazine*, page 637-638, August 1916. Also published in *Further Foolishness* under the title A Study in Still Life—My Tailor.

Our “Shorter Still” Stories *The Century Magazine*, page 318-319, June 1916. Also published in *Follies in Fiction* under the title Stories Shorter Still, with fairly significant editing changes, and lead paragraph changes in each section.

Politics From Within *Maclean's*, page 23-25, December 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Hohenzollerns in America*.

Inside the Tank: An Allegory for the New Year *Maclean's*, page 38-40, January 1918. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

May Time in Mariposa *Maclean's*, page 13-15, May 1918. Illustrations by *Lou Skuce* (1885-1951).

Better Dead: The Silly World of the Spiritualists *Maclean's*, page 24-26, November 1918. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

The Peace Makers *Maclean's*, page 7-9, 104, 106-108, December 1915. Illustrator unknown. Also published in *Further Foolishness* under the title Over the Grape Juice, or, The Peace Makers.

More About Germany from Within *Maclean's*, page 10-11, 65-67, February 1919. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Hohenzollerns in America* under the title With the Bolsheviks in Berlin.

The Lecturer at Large: A Few Painful Reminiscences of the Platform *Maclean's*, page 13-14, 61-62, August 1919. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *My Discovery of England* under the title "We Have With Us To-night" with numerous changes to make it make sense in a tour of England, and a significant addition on the end.

Reconstruction in Turkey *Maclean's*, page 20-21, 66, April 1919. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Hohenzollerns in America* under the title Afternoon Tea with the Sultan: A Study of Reconstruction in Turkey, with the lead-in paragraph changed, and minor differences in editing.

My Memories and Miseries as a Schoolmaster *Maclean's*, page 18-19, November 1919. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *College Days*, without obvious changes.

Abdul Aziz Has His: The Adventures of a Canadian Professor in the Yildiz Kiosk *Maclean's*, page 19-22, 77-81, December 1916. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Further Foolishness*, under the title Abdul Aziz Has His: An Adventure in the Yildiz Kiosk, with minor differences in editing.

In Dry Toronto: As Told by a Montreal Man *Maclean's*, page 13-25, January 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Wet Wit & Dry Humour*, and in *Frenzied Fiction* under the title In Dry Toronto: A Local Study of a Universal Topic, with minor differences in editing.

In Merry Mexico *Maclean's*, page 16-18, 76-79, February 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951). Also published in *Further Foolishness*, with minor differences in editing.

Ten Million Dollars for the Asking: An Offer to the Government of Canada *Maclean's*, page 9-11, March 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

Frenzied Fiction for the Dog Days (Done by the Dipperful) *Maclean's*, page 33-35, August 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

The Old, Old Story of How Five Men Went Fishing *Maclean's*, page 21-23, September 1917. Illustrations by *F. Horsman Varley* (1881-1969). Also published in *Frenzied Fiction* with minor editing changes.

Back to the City! This is the End of a Perfect Growing Season *Maclean's*, page 39-42, October 1917. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

Stephen Interviews Leacock: The Art of being Interviewed in England, Canada and the United States *Maclean's*, page 9, December 1921. Illustrations by *C. W. Jefferys* (1869-1951).

INTRODUCTION

In the first half of the twentieth century, periodicals of all kinds abounded. Authors would commonly publish in those periodicals first: either a short story, or a serialized novel. Commonly, their published works would be spread over many magazines.

Stephen Leacock published many works of humour in the short story form. These were published in various magazines, typically one or two magazine pages, sometimes with little pieces scattered through the end pages of the magazine, embedded in the advertising. They were then collected, with one work typically giving the collection its name. Of course, this is the format that virtually all Leacock aficionados are familiar with. In Leacock's case, some were collected into multiple collections, or re-collected many times.

However, these stories were frequently modified. The name was frequently changed; but sometimes the contents were changed as well. For example, in one work investigated, the character *A Philanthropist* was changed into *A Lady Pacifist*. Were Lady Pacifists more in vogue to make fun of?

The magazines usually had a staff illustrator. Most of Leacock's works published in magazines had one or more illustrations. These illustrations were not reproduced in the collections you have read. They have been included here, when copyright permits. In this volume, the majority of the stories are illustrated by *Charles William Jefferys* (see <http://www.cwj Jefferys.ca>).

Note that the original magazines were severely discoloured, and hence there has been significant image editing in an attempt to remove the yellowing and fading. This obviously requires a certain amount of judgement, what is discolouration, and what is actually grey background by the artist?

All of the illustrators have now entered the public domain in Canada.

The works collected in this volume are all from *The Century Magazine* or *Maclean's*, published in the years 1913 through 1919. The Century Magazine, an American publication, existed from 1881 until 1930, when it merged with *The Forum*, which itself ceased publication in 1950. Maclean's is still with us.

Beware, some of these works would not be considered politically correct these days! We make no attempt at censorship, but give you the original words.

As these stories appeared in different magazines, they had different editors, with different editing styles, and different typographical conventions. No attempt has been made to make them consistent; only obvious printer or typographical errors have been corrected.

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HOMER AND HUMBUG

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

Author of "Literary Lapses," "Nonsense Novels," etc.

I do not mind confessing that for a long time past I have been very skeptical about the classics. I was myself trained as a classical scholar. It seemed the only thing to do with me. I acquired such a singular facility in handling Latin and Greek that I could take a page of either of them, distinguish which it was by glancing at it, and, with the help of a dictionary and a compass, whip off a translation of it in less than three hours.

But I never got any pleasure from it. I lied about the pleasure of it. At first, perhaps, I lied through vanity. Any scholar will understand the feeling. Later on I lied through habit; later still because, after all, the classics were all that I had and so I valued them. I have seen a deceived dog thus value a pup with a broken leg, and a pauper child nurse a dead doll with the sawdust out of it. So I nursed my dead Homer and my broken Demosthenes though I knew that there was more sawdust in the stomach of one modern author than in the whole lot of them. Observe, I do not say which it is that has it full of it.

So, I say, I began to lie about the classics. I said to people who knew no Greek that there was a sublimity, a majesty about Homer which they could never hope to grasp. I said it was like the sound of the sea beating against the granite cliffs of the Ionian Esophagus; or words to that effect. As for the truth of it, I might as well have said that it was like the sound of a rum distillery running a night shift on halftime. At any rate this is what I said about Homer, and when I spoke of Pindar,—the dainty grace of his strophes,—and Aristophanes, the delicious sallies of his wit, sally after sally, each sally explained in a note, calling it a sally, I managed to suffuse my face with a coruscation of appreciative animation which made it almost beautiful.

I admitted of course that Vergil, in spite of his genius, had a hardness and a cold glitter which resembled rather the brilliance of a cut diamond than the soft grace of a flower. Certainly I admitted this: the mere admission of it would knock the breath out of any one who was arguing.

From such talks my friends went away saddened. The conclusion was too cruel. It had all the cold logic of a syllogism (like that almost brutal form of argument so much admired in the Paraphernalia of Socrates). For if:—

Vergil and Homer and Pindar had all this grace, and pith, and these sallies,
And if I read Vergil and Homer and Pindar,
And if they only read Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Humphry Ward,
Then where were they?

So, continued lying brought its own reward in the sense of superiority, and I lied some more.

When I reflect that I have openly expressed regret, as a personal matter, even in the presence of women, for the missing books of Tacitus, and the entire loss of the Abracadabra of Polyphemus of Syracuse, I can find no words in which to beg for pardon. In reality I was just as much worried over the loss of the ichthyosaurus. More, indeed: I'd like to have seen it; but if the books Tacitus *did* lose were like those he didn't, I wouldn't.

I believe all scholars lie like this. An ancient friend of mine, a clergyman, tells me that in Hesiod he finds a peculiar grace that he doesn't find elsewhere. He's a liar. That's all. Another man, in politics and in the legislature, tells me that every night before going to bed he reads over a page or two of Thucydides to keep his mind fresh. Either he never goes to bed or *he's* a liar. Doubly so; no one could read Greek at that frantic rate; and, anyway, his mind isn't fresh. How could it be?—he's in the legislature. I don't object to his talking freely of the classics, but he ought to keep it for the voters. My own opinion is that before he goes to bed he takes whisky; why call it Thucydides?



THE ICHTHYOSAURUS DEVOURING TWO OF THE LOST BOOKS OF TACITUS

I know there are solid arguments advanced in favor of the classics. I often hear them from my colleagues. My friend the Professor of Greek tells me that he truly believes the classics have made him what he is. This is a very grave statement, if well founded. Indeed, I have heard the same argument from a great many Latin and Greek scholars. They all claim, with some heat, that Latin and Greek have practically made them what they are. This damaging charge against the classics should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would be what they are, no matter what they were.

Be this as it may, I for my part bitterly regret the lies I have told about my appreciation of Latin and Greek literature. I am anxious to do what I can to set things right. I am therefore engaged on, indeed have nearly completed, a work which will enable all readers to judge the matter for themselves. What I have done is a translation of all the great classics, not in the usual literal way but on a design that brings them into harmony with modern life.

The translation is intended to be within reach of everybody. It is so designed that the entire set of volumes can go on a shelf twenty-seven feet long, or even longer. The first edition will be an *édition de luxe* bound in vellum, or perhaps in buckskin, and sold at five hundred dollars. It will be limited to five hundred copies, and, of course, sold only to the feeble-minded. The next edition will be the Literary Edition, sold to artists, authors, and actors.

My plan is to transpose the classical writers so as to give, not the literal translation word for word, but what is really the modern equivalent. Let me give an odd sample or two to show what I mean. Take the passage in the First Book of Homer that describes Ajax, the Greek, dashing into the battle in front of Troy. Here is the way it runs (as nearly as I remember) in the

usual word for word translation of the classroom, as done by the very best professor, his spectacles glittering with the literary rapture of it.

Then he too Ajax on the one hand leaped (or possibly jumped) into the fight wearing on the other hand yes certainly a steel corselet (or possibly a bronze under tunic) and on his head of course yes without doubt he had a helmet with a tossing plume taken from the mane (or perhaps extracted from the tail) of some horse which once fed along the banks of the Scamander (and it sees the herd and raises its head and paws the ground) and in his hand a shield worth a hundred oxen and on his knees two especially in particular greaves made by some cunning artificer (or perhaps blacksmith) and he blows the fire and it is hot.

Thus Ajax leaped (or, better, was propelled from behind) into the fight.



AJAX, "PROPELLED FROM BEHIND"

Now that's grand stuff. There is no doubt of it. There's a wonderful movement and force to it. You can almost see it move, it goes so fast. But the modern reader can't get it. It won't mean to him what it meant to the early Greek. The setting, the costume, the scene have all got to be changed in order to let the modern reader have a real equivalent so as to judge for himself just how good the Greek verse is. In my translation I alter the original just a little, not much but just enough to give the passage a form that reproduces for us the proper literary value of the verses, without losing anything of their majesty. It describes, I may say, the Directors of the American Industrial Stocks plunging into the Balkan War Cloud:

Then there came rushing to the shock of war
Mr. McNicoll of the C. P. R.
He wore suspenders and about his throat
High rose the collar of a sealskin coat.
He had on gaiters and he wore a tie,
He had his trousers buttoned good and high;
About his waist a woollen undervest
Bought from a sad-eyed farmer of the West.
(And every time he clips a sheep he sees
Some bloated plutocrat who ought to freeze.)
Thus in the Stock Exchange he burst to view,
Leaped to the post, and shouted,
 “Ninety-two!”

There! That’s Homer, the real thing! Just exactly as it sounded to the rude crowd of Greek peasants who sat in a ring and guffawed at the rhymes and watched the minstrel stamp it out into “feet” as he recited it!

Let me take another example, this time from the so-called Catalogue of the Ships, which fills up nearly an entire book of Homer. This famous passage names all the ships, one by one, and names the chiefs who sailed on them, and names the particular town, or hill, or valley that each came from. It has been much admired. It has that same majesty of style that has been brought to an even loftier pitch in the New York Business Directory and the City Telephone Book. It runs along, as I recall it, something after this fashion:

And first indeed oh, yes, was the ship of Homistogetes, the Spartan, long and swift, having both its masts covered with cowhide and two banks of oars. And he, Homistogetes, was born of Hermogenes and Ophthalmia, and was at home in Syncope beside the fast-flowing Paresis. And after him came the ship of Preposterus, the Eurasian, son of Oasis and Hysteria,

—and so on, endlessly.

Instead of this I substitute, with the permission of the New York Central Railway, a more modern example, the official catalogue of their locomotives, taken almost word for word from the list compiled by their Chief Superintendent of Rolling Stock and rendered into Homeric verse. I admit that he wrote it in hot weather.

Out in the yard and steaming in the sun
Stands locomotive engine number forty-one;
Seated beside the windows of its cab
Are Pat McGraw and Peter James McNab.
Pat comes from Troy and Peter from Cohoes,
And when they pull the throttle, off she goes;
And as she vanishes there comes to view
Steam locomotive engine number forty-two.
Observe her mighty wheels, her easy roll,
With William J. McArthur in control.
They say her engineer some time ago
Lived on a farm outside of Buffalo,
Whereas her fireman, Henry Edward Foy,
Attended school in Springfield, Illinois.
Thus does the race of men decay and rot—
SOME MEN CAN HOLD THEIR JOBS AND SOME CAN NOT.

Please, observe that if Homer had actually written that last line, it would have been quoted for nearly three thousand years as one of the deepest sayings ever said. Orators would still be rounding out their speeches with the majestic phrase (in Greek), “Some men can hold their jobs”; essayists would open their most scholarly dissertations with the words, “It has been finely said by Homer that some men can hold their jobs”; and the clergy in the mid-pathos of a funeral sermon would lift an eye skyward and echo, “and some can not.”



This is what I should like to do; I'd like to take a large stone and write on it—

"The classics are only primitive literature. They belong in the same class as primitive machinery, primitive music, and primitive medicine."

—and then throw it through the windows of a UNIVERSITY and hide behind a fence to see the professors buzz!

Novels read to order. First aid for the busy millionaire
NO BRAINS NEEDED. NO TASTE REQUIRED. NOTHING BUT MONEY. SEND IT TO US.

By STEPHEN LEACOCK
With drawings by John Leach of "Punch"

We have lately been struck, of course not dangerously, by a new idea. A recent number of a well-known magazine contains an account of an American multimillionaire who on account of the pressure of his brain-power and the rush of his business found it impossible to read the fiction of the day for himself. He therefore caused his secretaries to look through any new and likely novel and make a rapid report on its contents, indicating for his personal perusal the specially interesting parts.

Realizing the possibilities coiled up in this plan, we have opened a special agency, or bureau, for work of this sort. Any overbusy multimillionaire or superman who becomes our client may send us novels, essays, or books of any kind, and will receive a report explaining the plot and pointing out such parts as he may with propriety read. If he can once find time to send us a post-card or a postal cablegram, night or day, we undertake to assume all the further effort of reading. Our terms for ordinary fiction are one dollar per chapter; for works of travel ten cents per mile; and for political or other essays two cents per page, or ten dollars per idea, and for theological and controversial work seven dollars and fifty cents per cubic yard extracted. Our clients are assured of prompt and immediate attention.

Through the kindness of the editor of the "In Lighter Vein," we are enabled to insert here a sample of our work. It was done to the order of a gentleman of means engaged in silver-mining in Colorado, who wrote us that he was anxious to get "a holt" on modern fiction, but that he had no time actually to read it. On our assuring him that this was now unnecessary, he caused to be sent to us the monthly parts of a serial story, on which we duly reported as follows:



Miss Plynllymmon converses with her grandmother.

January Instalment

Theodolite Gulch,
The Dip, Cañon County, Colorado.

Dear Sir:

We beg to inform you that the scene of the opening chapter of the "Fortunes of Barbara Plynllymmon" is laid in Wales. The scene is laid, however, very carelessly and hurriedly, and we suspect that it will shortly be removed. We cannot, therefore, recommend it to your perusal. As there is a very fine passage describing the Cambrian Hills by moonlight, we inclose herewith a condensed table showing the mean altitude of the moon for the month of December in the latitude of Wales. The character of Miss Plynllymmon we find to be developed in conversation with her grandmother, which we think you had better not read. Nor are we prepared to indorse your reading the speeches of the Welsh peasantry that we find in this chapter, but we forward herewith in place of them a short glossary of Welsh synonyms which may aid you in this connection.

February Instalment



They meet at sunrise on the slopes at Snowdon.

We regret to state that we find nothing in the second chapter of the "Fortunes of Barbara Plynlimmon" which need be reported to you at length. We think it well, however, to apprise you of the arrival of a young Oxford student in the neighborhood of Miss Plynlimmon's cottage who is apparently a young man of means and refinement. We inclose a list of the principal Oxford colleges.

We may state that from the conversation and manner of this young gentleman there is no ground for any apprehension on your part; but if need arises, we will report by cable to you instantly.

The young gentleman in question meets Miss Plynlmmon at sunrise on the slopes of Snowdon. As the description of the meeting is very fine, we send you a recent photograph of the sun.

March Instalment



She is overwhelmed by a strange feeling of isolation.

Our surmise was right. The scene of the story that we are digesting for you is changed. Miss Plynlmmon has gone to London. You will be gratified to learn that she has fallen heir to a fortune of £100,000, which we are happy to compute for you at \$486,666 and 66 cents less exchange. On Miss Plynlmmon's arrival at Charing Cross Station, she is overwhelmed with that strange feeling of isolation felt in the surging crowds of a modern city. We therefore inclose a timetable showing the arrival and departure of all trains at Charing Cross.

April Instalment



Her first appearance in evening dress was gratifying.

We beg to bring to your notice the fact that Miss Barbara Plynlimon has, by an arrangement made through her trustees, become the inmate, on a pecuniary footing, in the household of a family of title. We are happy to inform you that her first appearance at dinner in evening-dress was most gratifying. We can safely recommend you to read in this connection lines four and five and the first half of line six on page 100 of the book, as inclosed. We regret to say that the Marquis of Slush and his eldest son Viscount Fitz-Busé

(courtesy title) are both addicted to drink. They have been drinking throughout the chapter. We are pleased to state that apparently the second son, Lord Radnor of Slush, who is away from home, is not so addicted. We send you under separate cover a bottle of Radnor water.



They have been drinking throughout the chapter.

May Instalment

We regret to state that the affairs of Miss Barbara Plynlmmon are in a very unsatisfactory position. We inclose three pages of the novel, with the urgent request that you will read them at once. The old Marquis of Slush has made approaches toward Miss Plynlmmon of such a scandalous nature that we think it best to ask you to read them in full. You will note also that young Viscount Slush, who is tipsy through the whole of pages 121-125, 128-133, and part of page 140, has designs upon her fortune. We are sorry to see also that the Marchioness of Busé under the guise of friendship, has insured Miss Plynlmmon's life and means to do away with her. The sister of the marchioness, the lady dowager, also wishes to do away with her. The second housemaid, who is tempted by her jewels, is also planning to do away with her. We feel that, if this goes on, she will be done away with.



The housemaid, tempted by her jewels, is planning to do away with her.

June Instalment

We beg to advise you that Viscount Fitz-Busé, inflamed by the beauty and innocence of Miss Plynlimmon, has gone so far as to lay his finger on her (read page 170 lines six and seven). She resisted his approaches. At the height of the struggle, a young man, attired in the costume of a Welsh tourist, but wearing the stamp of an Oxford student, and yet carrying himself with the unmistakable hauteur (we knew it at once) of an aristocrat, burst into the room. With one blow he felled Fitz-Busé to the floor; with another he clasped the girl to his heart.



The Marquis of Slush.

“Barbara!” he exclaimed.

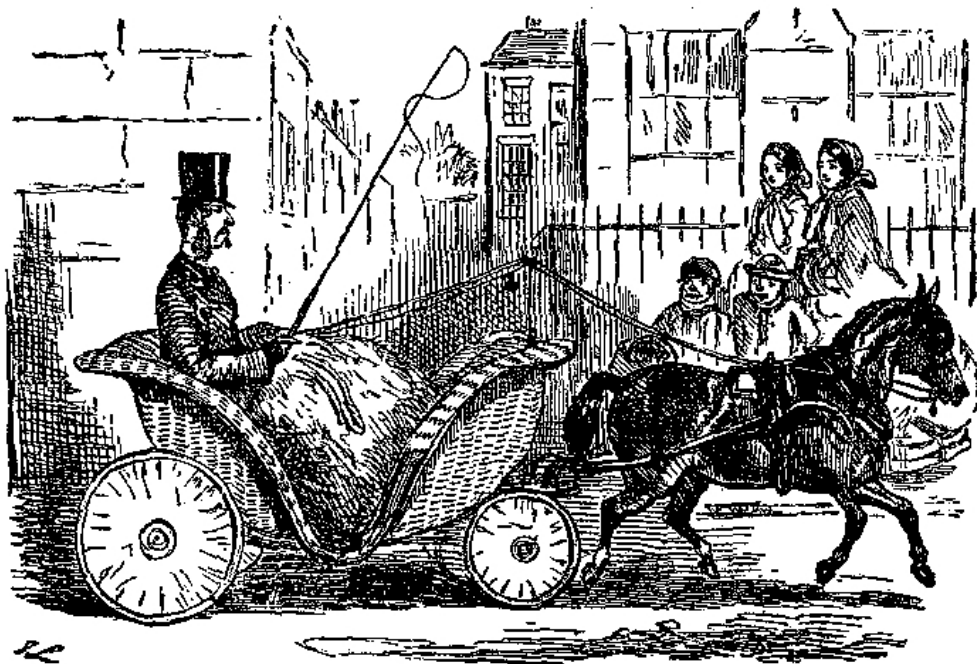
“Radnor!” she murmured.

You will be pleased to learn that this is the second son of the Marquis, Viscount Radnor, just returned from a reading tour in Wales.

P.S. We do not know what he read, so we inclose a file of Welsh newspapers.

July Instalment

We regret to inform you that the Marquis of Slush has disinherited his son. We grieve to state that Viscount Radnor has sworn that he will never ask for Miss Plynlimon’s hand till he has a fortune equal to her own. Meantime, we are sorry to say, he purposes to work.



Viscount Radnor hunts a job.

August Instalment

The viscount is seeking employment.

September Instalment

The viscount is looking for work.

October Instalment

The viscount is hunting for a job.

November Instalment

We are most happy to inform you that Miss Plynlimon has saved the situation. Determined to be worthy of the generous love of Viscount Radnor, she has arranged to convey her entire fortune to the old family lawyer who acts as her trustee. She will thus become as poor as the viscount, and they can marry. The scene with the old lawyer who breaks into tears on receiving the fortune, swearing to hold and cherish it as his own, is very touching. Meantime, as the viscount is hunting for a job, we inclose a list of advertisements under the heading "Help Wanted—Males."

December Instalment

You will be very gratified to learn that the fortunes of Miss Barbara Plynlimon have come to a most pleasing termination. Her marriage with the Viscount Radnor was celebrated very quietly on page 231. (We inclose a list of the principal churches in London.) No one was present except the old family lawyer, who was moved to tears at the sight of the bright,

trusting bride, and the clergyman, who wept at the sight of the check given him by the viscount. After the ceremony the old trustee took Lord and Lady Radnor to a small wedding breakfast at a hotel (we inclose a list). During the breakfast a sudden faintness (for which we had been watching for ten pages) overcame him. He sank back in his chair, gasping. Lord and Lady Radnor rushed to him and sought in vain to tighten his necktie. He expired under their care, having just time to indicate in his pocket a will leaving them his entire wealth.



During the breakfast a certain faintness overcame him.



The viscount's brother had been killed in the hunting-field.

This had hardly happened when a messenger brought news to the viscount that his brother Lord Fitz-Busé had been killed in the hunting-field, and that he (meaning him, himself) had now succeeded to the title. Lord and Lady Fitz-Busé had hardly time to reach the town house of the family when they learned that owing to the sudden death of the old marquis (also, we believe, in the hunting-field), they had become the Marquis and the Marchioness of Slush.



The old Marquis of Slush meets with a sudden death.

The Marquis and the Marchioness of Slush are still living in their ancestral home in London. Their lives are an example to all their tenantry in Piccadilly, the Strand, and elsewhere.



Their lives are an example to all the tenantry.

Concluding Note

Dear Mr. Gulch:

We beg to acknowledge with many thanks your check for one thousand dollars.

We regret to learn that you have not been able to find time to read our digest of the serial story placed with us at your order. But we note with pleasure that you propose to have the “essential points” of our digest “boiled down” by one of the business experts of your office.

Awaiting your commands,

We remain,
OUR LITERARY BUREAU.



THE DE VINNE PRESS, NEW YORK

AN EVERY-DAY EXPERIENCE

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

He came across to me in the semi-silence room of the club.

"I had a rather queer hand at bridge last night," he said.

"Had you?" I answered, and picked up a newspaper.

"Yes. It would have interested you, I think," he went on.

"Would it?" I said, and moved to another chair.

"It was like this," he continued, following me: "I held the king of hearts—"

"Half a minute," I said; "I want to go and see what time it is." I went out and looked at the clock in the hall. I came back.

"And the queen and the ten—" he was saying.

"Excuse me just a second; I want to ring for a messenger."

I did so. The waiter came and went.

"And the nine and two small ones," he went on.

"Two small what?" I asked.

"Two small hearts," he said. "I don't remember which. Anyway, I remember very well indeed that I had the king and the queen and the jack, the nine, and two little ones."

"Half a second," I said, "I want to mail a letter."

When I came back to him, he was still murmuring:

"My partner held the ace of clubs and the queen. The jack was out, but I didn't know where the king was—"

"You didn't?" I said in contempt.

"No," he repeated in surprise, and went on murmuring:

"Diamonds had gone round once, and spades twice, and so I suspected that my partner was leading from weakness—"

"I can well believe it," I said—"sheer weakness."

"Well," he said, "on the sixth round the lead came to me. Now, what should I have done? Finessed for the ace, or led straight into my opponent—"

"You want my advice," I said, "and you shall have it, openly and fairly. In such a case as you describe, where a man had led out at me repeatedly and with provocation, as I gather from what you say, though I myself do not play bridge, I should lead my whole hand at him. I repeat, I do not play bridge. But in the circumstances I should think it the only thing to do."

ARISTOCRATIC ANECDOTES OR LITTLE STORIES OF GREAT PEOPLE

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

Author of "Nonsense Novels," "Literary Lapses," etc.



I have lately been much struck by the many excellent little anecdotes of celebrated people that have appeared in recent memoirs and found their way thence into the columns of the daily press. There is something about them so deliciously pointed, their humor is so exquisite, that I think we ought to have more of them. To this end I am trying to circulate on my own account a few anecdotes which somehow seem to have been overlooked.

Here, for example, is an excellent thing from the vivacious memoirs of Lady Ranelagh de Chit Chat.

STORY OF THE DUKE OF STRATHYTHAN

LADY RANELAGH writes: "The Duke of Strathythan (I am writing of course of the seventeenth duke, not of his present Grace) was, as everybody knows, famous for his hospitality. It was not perhaps generally known that the duke was as witty as he was hospitable. I recall a most amusing incident that happened the last time but two that I was staying at Strathythan Towers. As we sat down to lunch (we were a very small and intimate party, there being only forty-three of us), the duke, who was at the head of the table, looked up from the roast of beef that he was carving, and, running his eye about the guests, murmured, 'I'm afraid there isn't enough beef to go round.'

"There was nothing to do, of course, but to roar with laughter, and the incident passed off with perfect savoir-faire."

Here is another story that I think has not had all the publicity that it ought to have, I found it in the book “Shot, Shell, and Shrapnel; or, Sixty Years as a War Correspondent,” recently written by Mr. Maxim Gatling, whose exploits are familiar to all readers.

ANECDOTE OF LORD KITCHENER

“I was standing,” writes Mr. Gatling, “immediately between Lord Kitchener and Lord Wolseley, with Lord Roberts a little to the rear of us, and we were laughing and chatting as we always did when the enemy were about to open fire on us. Suddenly we found ourselves the object of the most terrific hail of bullets. For a few moments the air was black with them. As they went past, I could not refrain from exchanging a quiet smile with Lord Kitchener and another with Lord Wolseley. Indeed, I have never, except perhaps on twenty or thirty occasions, found myself exposed to such an awful fusillade.

“Kitchener, who habitually uses an eyeglass (among his friends), watched the bullets go singing by, and then, with that inimitable sang-froid which he reserves for his intimates, said:

“ ‘I’m afraid, if we stay here, we may get hit.’ We moved away laughing heartily.

“Lord Roberts’s aide-de-camp was shot in the pit of the stomach as we went.”



Drawing by Birch
“‘LORD ROBERTS’S AIDE WAS SHOT IN THE PIT OF THE STOMACH’”

The next anecdote that I reproduce may be already too well known to my readers. The career of Baron Snorch filled so large a page in the history of European diplomacy that the publication of his recent memoirs was awaited with profound interest by half the chancelleries

of Europe. Even the other half were half excited over them. The tangled skein in which the politics of Europe are enveloped was perhaps never better illustrated than in this fascinating volume. Even at the risk of repeating what is already familiar, I offer the following for what it is worth, or even less.

NEW LIGHT ON THE LIFE OF CAVOUR

“I have always regarded Count Cavour,” writes the baron, “as one of the most impenetrable diplomatists it has been my lot to meet. I distinctly recall an incident in connection with the famous Congress of Paris of 1856 that rises before my mind as vividly as if it were yesterday. I was seated in one of the large salons of the Elysée Palace (I often used to sit there) playing vingt-et-un with Count Cavour, the Duc de Magenta, the Marchesi di Casa Mombasa, the Conte di Piccolo Pochito, and others whose names I do not recollect. The stakes had been, as usual, very high, and there was a large pile of gold on the table. No one of us, however, paid any attention to it, so absorbed were we all in the thought of the momentous crises that were impending. At intervals the Emperor Napoleon III passed in and out of the room, and paused to say a word, with well-feigned *éloignement*, to the players, who replied with such *dégagement* as they could.

“While the play was at its height a servant appeared with a telegram on a tray. He handed it to Count Cavour. The count paused in his play, opened the telegram, read it, and then, with the most inconceivable nonchalance, put it into his pocket. We stared at him in amazement for a moment, and then the duke, with the wonderful ease of a trained diplomat, quietly resumed his play.



Drawing by Birch
COUNT CAVOUR AND THE TELEGRAM

“Two days afterward, meeting Count Cavour at a reception of the Empress Eugenie, I was able unobserved to whisper in his ear, ‘What was in the telegram?’

“‘Nothing of consequence,’ he answered. From that day to this I have never known what it contained. My readers,” concludes Baron Snorch, “may believe this or not, as they like, but I give them my word that it is true.”

I cannot resist appending to these anecdotes a charming little story from that well-known book, “Sorrows of a Queen.” The writer, Lady de Weary, was an English gentlewoman who was for many years mistress of the robes at one of the best-known German courts. Her affection for her royal mistress is evident on every page of her memoirs.

TENDERNESS OF A QUEEN

Lady de Weary writes: “My dear mistress, the late Queen of Saxe-Covia-Slitz-in-Mein, was of a most tender and sympathetic disposition. The goodness of her heart broke forth on all occasions. I well remember how one day, on seeing a cabman in the Poodel Platz kicking his horse in the stomach, she stopped in her walk and said: ‘Oh, poor horse! If he goes on kicking it like that, he’ll hurt it.’ ”



Drawing by Birch
“ ‘THE GOODNESS OF HER HEART BROKE FORTH’ ”

I may say in conclusion that I think, if people would only take a little more pains to resuscitate anecdotes of this sort, there might be a lot more of them found.

My Tailor A Study in Still Life

By STEPHEN LEACOCK

He always stands there, and has stood these thirty years, in the back part of his shop, his tape woven about his neck, a smile of welcome on his face, waiting to greet me.

"Something in a serge," he says, "or perhaps in a tweed?"

There are only these two choices open to us. We have had no others for thirty years. It is too late to alter now.

"A serge, yes," continues my tailor; "something in a dark blue, perhaps."

He says it with all the gusto of a new idea, as if the thought of dark blue had sprung up as an inspiration. "A dark blue, Mr. Jennings,"—this is his assistant,— "kindly take down some of those dark blues."

"Ah!" he exclaims, "now here is an excellent thing." His manner as he says this is such as to suggest that by sheer good fortune and blind chance he has stumbled upon a thing among a million.

He lifts one knee and drapes the cloth over it, standing upon one leg. He knows that in this attitude it is hard to resist him. Cloth to be appreciated as cloth must be viewed over the bended knee of a tailor, with one leg in the air.

My tailor can stand in this way indefinitely, on one leg in a sort of ecstasy, a kind of local paralysis.

"Would that make up well?" I ask him.

"Admirably," he answers.

I have no real reason to doubt it. I have never seen any reason why cloth should not make up well. But I always ask the question as I know that he expects it and it pleases him. There ought to be a fair give and take in such things.

"You don't think it at all loud?" I say. He always likes to be asked this.

"Oh, no; very quiet indeed. In fact, we always recommend serge as extremely quiet."

I have never had a wild suit in my life; but it is well to ask.

Then he measures me, round the chest; nowhere else. All the other measures were taken years ago. Even the chest measure is only done, and I know it, to please me. I do not really grow.

"A *little* fuller in the chest," my tailor muses. Then he turns to his assistant. "Mr. Jennings, a little fuller in the chest; half an inch on to the chest, please."

It is a kind fiction. Growth around the chest is flattering even to the humblest of us.

"Yes," my tailor goes on—he uses "yes" without any special meaning—"yes, and shall we say a week from Tuesday? Mr. Jennings, a week from Tuesday, please."

"And will you please," I say, "send the bill to—"

But my tailor waves this aside. He does not care to talk about the bill. It would only give pain to both of us to speak of it.

The bill is a matter we deal with solely by correspondence, and that only in a decorous and refined style never calculated to hurt.

I am sure from the tone of my tailor's letters that he would never send the bill, or ask for the amount, were it not that from time to time he is himself, unfortunately, "pressed," owing to "large consignments from Europe." But for these heavy consignments I am sure I should never need to pay him. It is true that I have sometimes thought to observe that these consignments are apt to arrive when I pass the limit of owing for two suits and order a third. But this can only be a mere coincidence.

Yet the bill, as I say, is a thing that we never speak of. Instead of it, my tailor passes to the weather. Ordinary people always begin with this topic. Tailors, I notice, end with it. It is only broached after the suit is ordered, never before.

"Pleasant weather we are having," he says. It is never other, so I notice, with him. Perhaps the order of a suit itself is a little beam of sunshine. Then we move together toward the front of the store on the way to the outer door.

"Nothing to-day, I suppose," says my tailor, "in shirtings?"

"No, thank you."

This is again a mere form. In thirty years I have never bought any shirtings from him. Yet he asks the question with the same winsomeness as he did thirty years ago.

"And nothing, I suppose, in collaring or in hosiery?"

This again is futile. Collars I buy elsewhere, and hosiery I have never worn.

Thus we walk to the door in friendly colloquy. Somehow, if he failed to speak of shirtings and of hosiery, I should feel as if a familiar cord had broken.

At the door we part.

"Good afternoon," he says. "A week from Tuesday—yes,—good afternoon."

Such is, or was, our calm, unsullied intercourse, unvaried, or at best broken only by consignments from Europe.

I say it *was*; that is, until just the other day.

And then, coming to the familiar door for my customary summer suit, I found that he was there no more. There were people in the store unloading shelves and piling cloth and taking stock. And they told me that he was dead. It came to me with a strange shock. I had not thought it possible. He seemed, he should have been, immortal.

They said the worry of his business had helped to kill him. I could not have believed it. It always seemed so still and tranquil, wearing his tape about his neck and marking measures and holding cloth against his leg beside the sunlight of the window in the back part of the shop. Can a man die of that? Yet he had been "going behind," they said (however that is done), for years. His wife, they told me, would be left badly off. I had never conceived him as having a wife. But it seemed that he had, and a daughter, too,—at a conservatory of music,—yet he never spoke of her; and that he himself was musical and played the flute, and was the sidesman of a church, yet he never referred to it to me. In fact, in thirty years we never spoke of religion. Now it was hard to connect him with the idea of it.

As I went out I seemed to hear his voice still saying, "And nothing to-day in shirtings?"

I was sorry I had never bought any.

There is, I am certain, a deep moral in this; but I will not try to draw it. It might appear too obvious.

Our “Shorter Still” Stories

Specially edited by STEPHEN LEACOCK



The public of to-day urgently demands shorter and shorter stories. The only thing to do is to meet this demand at the source and check it. Any of the stories below, if left to soak overnight in a barrel of rain-water, will swell to the dimensions of a dollar-fifty novel.

I

Our Irreducible Detective-story

Hanged by a Hair: or,
a Murder Mystery Minimized

The mystery had now reached its climax. First, the man had been undoubtedly murdered; secondly, it was absolutely certain that no conceivable person had done it. It was therefore time to call in the great detective.

He gave one searching glance at the corpse. In a moment he whipped out a microscope.

“Ha! ha!” he said as he picked a hair off the lapel of the dead man’s coat. “The mystery is now solved.”

He held up the hair.

“Listen!” he said. “We have only to find the man who lost this hair, and the criminal is in our hands.”

The inexorable chain of logic was complete.

The detective set himself to the search.

For four days and nights he moved, unobserved, through the streets of New York, scanning closely every face he passed, looking for a man who had lost a hair.

On the fifth day he discovered a man disguised as a tourist, his head enveloped in a steamer cap that reached below his ears. The man was about to go on board the *Gloritania*.

The detective followed him on board.

“Arrest him!” he said, and then drawing himself to his full height, he brandished aloft the hair.

“This is his,” said the great detective. “It proves his guilt.”

“Remove his hat!” said the ship’s captain, sternly.

They did so.

The man was entirely bald.

“Ha!” said the great detective without a moment of hesitation. “He has committed not *one* murder, but about a million.”

II

Our Compressed Old English Novel

Swearword, the Unpronounceable

Chapter One and Only

“Ods-bodikins!” exclaimed Swearword, the Saxon, wiping his mailed brow with his iron hand, “a fair morn withal! Me-thinks ’twert lithlier to rest me in yon green glade than to foray me forth in yon fray. Wert it not?”

But there happened to be a real Anglo-Saxon standing by.

“Where, in Heaven’s name,” he said in sudden passion, “did you get that line of English?”

“Churl,” said Swearword, “it is Anglo-Saxon.”

“You’re a liar!” shouted the Saxon. “It is not. It is Harvard College, Sophomore Year, Option No. 6.”

Swearword, now in like fury, threw his haubeck, his baldric, and his needlework on the grass.

“Lay on!” said Swearword.

“Have at you!” cried the Saxon.

They laid on and had at one another.

Swearword was killed.

Thus luckily the whole story was cut off on the first page and ended.

III

Our Interminable Novel

From the Cradle to the Grave: or,
a Thousand Pages for a Dollar

This story was sent to us still wet from the pens of that gifted group of modern writers, Messrs. — but, no, we must not mention their names. As it reached us, the story contained two hundred and fifty thousand words; but by a marvelous feat of condensation our staff has reduced it, without the slightest loss, to a hundred and six words.

Chapters 1 to 100

Edward Endless lived during his youth
in Maine,

in New Hampshire,

in Vermont,

in Massachusetts,

in Rhode Island,

in Connecticut.

Chapters 101 to 1000

Then the lure of the city lured him. His fate took him to New York, to Chicago, and to Philadelphia.

In Chicago he lived
in a boarding-house on Lasalle Avenue,
then he boarded
in a living house on Michigan Avenue.
In New York he
had a room in an eating-house on Forty-first Street,
and then
ate in a rooming-house on Forty-second Street.
In Philadelphia he
used to sleep on Chestnut Street,
and then
slept on Maple Street.

During all this time women were calling on him. He knew and came to be friends with
Margaret Jones,
Elizabeth Smith,
Arabella Thompson,
Jane Williams,
Maud Taylor.
And he also got to know pretty well
Louise Quelquechose,
Antoinette Alphabette,
and Estelle Etcetera.
And during this same time art began to call him,
Pictures began to appeal to him,
Statues beckoned to him,
Music maddened him,
and any form of recitation or
elocution drove him beside himself.

Chapters 1001 to 10,000

Then one day he married Margaret Jones.
As soon as he had married her he was disillusioned.
He now hated her.
Then he lived with Elizabeth Smith.
He had no sooner sat down with her than
He hated her.
Half mad, he took his things over to Arabella Thompson's flat to live with her.
The moment she opened the door of the apartment he loathed her.
He saw her as she was.
Driven sane with despair, he then—

Our staff here cut the story off. There are hundreds and hundreds of pages after this. They show Edward Endless grappling in the fight for clean politics. The last hundred pages deal with religion. Edward finds it after a big fight, but no one reads these pages. There are no women in them. Our staff cut them out and merely show at the end

Edward purified,
Uplifted,
Transluted.

The whole story is perhaps the biggest thing ever done on this continent. Perhaps!

Politics From Within

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Further Foolishness," "Nonsense Novels," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys

To avoid all error as to the point of view, let me say in commencing that I am a Liberal-Conservative, or, if you will, a Conservative-Liberal with a strong dash of sympathy with the socialist idea, a friend of labor, and a believer in progressive radicalism. I do not desire office but would take a seat in the Senate at five minutes' notice.

I believe there are ever so many people of exactly this way of thinking.

Let me say further that in writing of "politics" I am only dealing with the lights and shadows that flicker over the surface, and am not trying to discuss, still less to decry, the deep and vital issues that lie below.

Yet I will say that, vital though the issues may be below the surface, there is more clap-trap, insincerity, and humbug on the surface of politics than over any equal area on the face of any institution.

The candidate, as such, is a humbug. The voters, as voters—not as fathers, brothers or sons—are humbugs. The committees are humbugs. And the speeches, to the extent of about ninety per cent., are pure buncombe. But, oddly enough, out of the silly babel of talk that accompanies popular government, we get, after all, pretty good government—infinitely better than the government of an autocratic king. Between democracy and kingship lies all the difference between genial humbug and black sin.

For the candidate for popular office I have nothing but sympathy and sorrow. It has been my fortune to walk round at the heels of half a dozen of them in different little Canadian towns, watching the candidate try in vain to brighten up his face at the glad sight of a party voter.

One, in particular, I remember. Nature had meant him to be a sour man, a hard man, a man with but little joy in the company of his fellows. Fate had made him a candidate for the House of Commons. So he was doing his best to belie his nature.

"Hullo, William!" he would call out as a man passed driving a horse and buggy. "Got the little sorrel out for a spin, eh?"

Then he would turn to me and say in a low rasping voice:

"There goes about the biggest skunk in this whole constituency."



The biggest skunk in this whole constituency

A few minutes later he would wave his hand over a little hedge in friendly salutation to a man working in a garden.

“Hullo, Jasper! That’s a fine lot of corn you’ve got there.”

Jasper would reply in a growl. And when we were well past the house the candidate would say between his teeth:

“That’s about the meanest whelp in the riding.”



Our conversation all down the street was of that pattern.

“Good morning, Edward! Giving the potatoes a dose of Paris green, eh?”

And in an undertone:

“I wish to Heaven he’d take a dose of it himself.”

And so on from house to house.

I counted up, from one end of the street to the other, that there were living in it seven skunks, fourteen low whelps, eight mean hounds and two dirty skin-flints. And all of these merely among the Conservative voters. It made me wish to be a Liberal. Especially as the Liberal voters, by the law of the perversity of human affairs, always seemed to be the finer lot. As they were not voting for our candidate, they were able to meet him in a fair and friendly way, whereas William and Jasper and Edward and our “bunch” were always surly and hardly deigned to give more than a growl in answer to the candidate’s greeting without even looking up at him.

But a Liberal voter would stop him in the street and shake hands and say in a frank, cordial way:

“Mr. Grouch, I’m sorry indeed that I can’t vote for you, and I’d like to be able to wish you success, but, of course, you know I’m on the other side and always have been and can’t change now.”

Whereupon the candidate would say: “That’s all right, John. I don’t expect you to. I can respect a man’s convictions all right, I guess.”

So they would part excellent friends, the candidate saying as we moved off:

“That man, John Winter, is one of the straightest men in this whole county.”

“Now we’ll just go into this house for a minute. There’s a dirty pup in here that’s one of our supporters.”

My opinion of our own supporters went lower every day, and my opinion of the Liberal voters higher, till it so happened that I went one day to an old friend of mine who was working on the Liberal side. I asked him how he liked it.

“Oh, well enough!” he said. “As a sort of game. But in this constituency you’ve got all the decent voters, our voters are the lowest bunch of skunks I ever struck.”

Just then a man passed in a buggy, and looked sourly at my friend the Liberal worker.

“Hullo, John!” he called, with a manufactured hilarity, “Got the mare out for a turn, eh?” John grunted.

“There’s one of them,” said my friend, “the lowest pup in this country, John Winter.”

“Come along,” said the candidate to me one morning, “I want you to meet my committee.”

“You’ll find them,” he said confidently, as we started down the street towards the committee rooms, “an awful bunch of mutts.”

“Too bad,” I said. “What’s wrong with them?”

“Oh, I don’t know—they’re just a pack of simps. They don’t seem to have any punch in them. The one you’ll meet first is the chairman—he’s about the worst dub of the lot; I never saw a man with so little force in my life. He’s got no magnetism. That’s what’s wrong with him—no magnetism.”



"The trouble is he has no magnetism, no personal magnetism."

A few minutes later the candidate was introducing me to a roomful of heavy-looking committee men. Committee men in politics, I notice, have always a heavy bovine look. They are generally in a sort of daze, or doped from smoking free cigars.



A roomful of heavy-looking committee men.

"Now I want to introduce you first," said the candidate, "to our chairman, Mr. Frog. Mr. Frog is our old battle-horse in this constituency. And this is our campaign secretary, Mr. Bughouse, and Mr. Dope, and Mr. Mudd, *et cetera*."

Those may not have been their names.

It is merely what the names sounded like when one was looking into their faces.

The candidate introduced them all as battle-horses, battle-axes, battle-leaders, standard-bearers, flag-holders, and so forth. If he had introduced them as hatracks or cigar holders, it would have been nearer the mark.

Presently the candidate went out and I was left with the battle-axes.

"What do you think of our chances?" I asked.

The battle-axes shook their heads with dubious looks.

"Pretty raw deal," said the chairman, "the Convention wishing *him* on us." He pointed with his thumb over his shoulder to indicate the departed candidate.

"What's wrong with him?" I asked.

Mr. Frog shook his head again.

"No *punch*," he said.

"None at all," agreed all the battle-horses.

"I'll tell you," said the campaign secretary, Mr. Bughouse, a voluble man, with wandering eyes, "the trouble is he has no magnetism, no personal magnetism."

"I see," I said.

"Now, you take this man, Shortis, that the Liberals have got hold of," continued Mr. Bughouse, "he's full of *magnetism*. He appeals."

All the other committee men nodded.

"That's so," they murmured, "magnetism. Our man hasn't a damned ounce of it."

"I met Shortis the other night in the street," went on Mr. Bughouse, "and he said, 'Come on up to my room in the hotel.' 'Oh,' I said, 'I can't very well.' 'Nonsense,' he said. 'You're on the other side but what does that matter?' Well, we went up to his room, and there he had whiskey, and gin, and lager—everything. 'Now,' he says, 'name your drink—what is it?' There he was right in his room, breaking the law without caring a hang about it. Well, you know the voters like that kind of thing. It appeals to them."

"Well," said another of the committee men—I think it was the one called Mr. Dope—"I wouldn't mind that so much. But the chief trouble about our man, is that he can't speak."

"He can't?" I exclaimed.

All the committee shook their heads.

"Not for sour apples!" asserted Mr. Dope positively. "Now, in this riding that won't do. Our people here are used to first-class speaking. They expect it. I suppose there has been better speaking in this constituency than anywhere else in the whole Dominion. Not lately, perhaps; not in the last few elections. But I can remember, and so can some of the boys here, the election when Sir John A. spoke here, when the old Mackenzie government went out."

He looked around at the circle. Several nodded.

"Remember it well," assented Mr. Mudd, "as if it were yesterday."

"Well, sir," continued Mr. Dope, "I'll never forget Sir John A. speaking here in the Odd Fellows' Hall, eh?"

The committee men nodded and gurgled in corroboration.

"My! but we were *plastered*. I remember I was so pickled myself I could hardly escort Sir John up the steps of the platform. So were you, Mudd, do you remember?"

"I certainly was!" said Mr. Mudd proudly. Committee men, who would scorn to drink lager beer in 1917, take a great pride, I have observed, in having been "pickled" in 1878.

"Yes, sir," continued Mr. Dope, "you certainly were pickled. I remember, just as well as anything, when they opened the doors and let the crowd in: all the boys had been bowling up and were pretty well soused. You never saw such a crowd. Old Dr. Greenway (boys, you remember the old Doc) was in the chair, and he was pretty well spiflicated. Well, sir, Sir John A. got up in that hall and made the finest, most moving speech I ever listened to. Do you remember when he called old Trelawney an ash-barrel? And when he made that appeal for a union of hearts and said that the sight of McGuire (the Liberal candidate) made him sick? I tell you those were great days. You don't get speaking like that now; and you don't get audiences like that now either. Not the same calibre."

All the committee shook their heads.

"Well, anyway, boys," said the chairman, as he lighted a fresh cigar, "to-morrow will decide, one way or the other. We've certainly worked hard enough"—here he passed the box

of cigars round to the others—"I haven't been in bed before two any night since the work started."

"Neither have I," said another of the workers, "I was just saying to the wife when I got up this morning that I begin to feel as if I never wanted to see the sight of a card again."

"Well, I don't regret the work," said the secretary, "so long as we carry the riding. You see," he added in explanation to me, "we're up against a pretty hard proposition here. This riding really is Liberal; they've got the majority of voters though we *have* once or twice swung it Conservative. But whether we can carry it with a man like Grouch is hard to say. One thing is certain, boys, if he *does* carry it, he doesn't owe it to himself."

All the battle-horses agreed on this.

A little after that we dispersed.

And twenty-four hours later the vote was taken and to my intense surprise the riding was carried by Grouch, the Conservative candidate.

I say, to *my* surprise. But apparently not to anybody else's.

For it appeared (this was in conversations after the election) that Grouch was a man of extraordinary magnetism. He had, so they said, "punch." Shortis, the Liberal, it seemed, lacked punch absolutely. Even his own supporters admitted that he had no personality whatever. Some wondered how he had the nerve to run.

But my own theory of how the election was carried is quite different.

I feel certain that all the Conservative voters despised their candidate so much that they voted Liberal. And all the Liberals voted Conservative.

That carried the riding.

Meantime Grouch left the constituency by the first train next day for Ottawa. Except for paying taxes on his house, he will not be back in it till they dissolve Parliament again.

Inside the Tank

An Allegory for the New Year

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Further Foolishness," "Nonsense Novels," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys

Don't ask me how I recognized it as a tank when I was myself inside it. I really do not know. I admit that I was never inside a tank before, and yet somehow I was certain, the moment I looked about me, that a tank it was.

To begin with, it was dark and gloomy, only lighted with a dim electric bulb here and there. It seemed, moreover, filled with complicated machinery, like the mental picture that we all have of the inside of a submarine.

I confess that I was amazed at the size of it. It seemed five times as large, ten times as large, as any tank that I had ever imagined. And apparently it held more people and of more diverse kinds than I had ever supposed to congregate in such a war machine. But all this may have been merely the effect of the gloom, and the little moving lights, and of the perpetual clatter of machinery.

Nor could I give an intelligent answer if I were asked how I came to get inside the tank. Perhaps it was that the Familiar Spirit who attends upon our dreams had beckoned to me in the watches of the night. Or it may have been that the Oriental rug which adorns the study where I sit working of an evening had converted itself, as it is apt to do, into the flying carpet of Bagdad, and had borne me with it to Flanders. Or it may have been by sheer force of ink and imagination that I had made my way there. But never mind how I got into the tank. There I was.

At first sight the entire aspect of the gloomy machine puzzled and perplexed me. To begin with, it was possessed with such a trembling vibration, and consumed with such a puffing of its machinery, and with such an apparent activity of its inhabitants, that it seemed at first impression to be moving with extraordinary rapidity, but, whether backwards or forwards, it would have been impossible to say.

The people in the tank, too, seemed, as I said, of the most diverse character and occupation. Some in a soldierly uniform of khaki were quietly busied with the machinery and the armament and paid no heed to those about them. Others in civilian dress, some even in frock coats and tall silk hats, appeared to move restlessly up and down in the gloom, with a perpetual babel of talk, the greater part of which, however, was lost in the surrounding din.

I was staring about in the darkness, endeavoring to interpret the scene around me when I was accosted by a quiet-looking man in uniform who emerged, as it were, out of the darkness.

"You seem puzzled," he said.

"I am," I answered. "Surely this place is a tank, is it not? Though it seems perfectly enormous. What tank is it?"

"It is *The Canada*, or if you prefer it, *Le Canada*," said the officer.

"Has it two names?" I asked.

"Yes, it has to have. It's a bilingual tank. Everything has to be in the two languages. That's the rule. *C'est un tank bi-lingual. Tout est dans les deux langues. . .*"

“Ah!” I answered. “That must be why it’s so hard to understand what all these people are shouting out to one another.”

“Exactly. It is hard. In fact it is particularly hard when we go into action as we have to fire first in English from one side, and then in French from the other. But, of course, without it there’d be an end of all brotherhood in the tank.”

The clatter of the machinery and the babel of voices grew so loud at this moment that I could scarcely hear what my companion said.

“Brotherhood?” I shouted.

“Yes,” he yelled back. “Brotherhood! Internal harmony! Using two languages unites the whole tank in a single confederation of brothers.”

I waited till the noise seemed to subside a little.

“I suppose you mean brotherhood and harmony among the soldiers there. . .” I pointed as I spoke to the little group of uniformed men that were seen in the dim distances of the great tank, working quietly at their tasks.

“Oh, no,” said the officer, “not them. They don’t seem to need it. I mean among the crowd here.” He indicated the motley groups of civilians running to and fro.

“Aren’t they frightfully in the way?” I asked.

My companion laughed. “You must hardly ask me that,” he said. “You see I’m a soldier myself and not allowed to express opinions. But I understand that according to the regulations, these civilians supply the driving power, or the inspiration or something or other, that keeps us all going.”

At this moment the whole tank was shaken with a fearful concussion. A blinding flash of light seemed to come through an opening in the top. Then all was darkness again and hubbub.

“Great Heavens!” I exclaimed. “Was that a German shell that struck us?”

“No fear!” laughed my companion. “We are still three miles behind the lines. No, they merely opened the top of the tank and threw in a barrellful of election pamphlets. The civilians are scrambling for them. They’ll begin making speeches in a moment.”

“Is that all?” I said. “And you say we are still three miles behind the lines?”

“Come,” said my companion. “I can give you a look out.”



"Let me exhort you to control your food."

We made our way as best we could towards the side of the great machine. The civilians, jostling for the pamphlets, shouldered rudely against us. One or two, seeing me in civilian

dress, even plucked me by the arm. "Have you eaten anything to-day?" asked one in a nervous, hysterical manner. "Are you controlling your food? Let me beg, sir, let me exhort you, let me adjure you, to control your food!" Another took me by the sleeve on the other side. "Are you subscribing any money towards the cost of this tank?" he pleaded, fawning upon me in a sort of ingratiating, subservient way. "Let me beg you, sir, let me exhort you! It will be so noble of you if you do."

"Never mind them," whispered my companion in my ear, "they're only the Exhorters. They're paid to run round and do that. Come along through here."

We passed down a dark passageway, between gun carriages and piles of munitions, towards the side of the tank. I noticed that the soldiers as we passed merely fell back with a salute to my companion, but without a word.

"Don't they exhort, too?" I asked.

"They can't; they're too busy," he answered. "But, here we are. Now look through this hole."

As he spoke he opened a sort of trap or slot in the side of the huge structure. The sunlight streamed brightly through. We put our faces to the little aperture and looked out. There beside us lay the wide and deeply trodden fields of Flanders, mile upon mile of trampled mud flecked with snow, of scattered bushes and thick grass beaten down by the tramp of countless regiments. Over it all lay the still illumination of early dawn. But what held my eye most was the long line of tanks, of which our huge machine must evidently form a part, drawn up, side by side, at spaces of about fifty yards, and reaching miles away till lost on the horizon.

"Great sight, isn't it!" said the officer at my side. "They're waiting the word to go into action. Notice the little bannerets astern of each tank that mark them. That is New Zealand's next to us. The one beyond is full of Irish—listen and you'll hear them arguing inside. But you notice they're moving off first all the same. That next is from Aberdeen. See the crew walking alongside! They do that for the first two miles (the enemy is about three miles away) to save coal. There further yet, is a whole row of London tanks—hear the racket inside? They're holding a music hall show as they go. And there away down the line, Cornishmen, Welshmen, Australians, South Africans—the whole British Empire . . . miles and miles of them."

"They're all starting to move!" I exclaimed.

"So they are," said my companion. "The word of command must have come. That means that we must close up this trap. It's forbidden to open it in action."

"Then are we starting, too?" I asked, with a thrill of excitement.

"Not yet," said the officer with a grim smile. "They're going to take a vote first. Listen!"

As he spoke a great shouting arose from the civilians gathered in the central aisles and passages of the tank.

"Are they cheering for the battle?" I shouted into the officer's ear.

"No," he called back, "they're cheering for Sir Gil——, the great leader; he's passing down the tank."

"Sir who?" I called.

He shouted the name again. But the din was too great to permit of my hearing. At any rate, as my guide spoke, I caught sight of a statesmanlike figure, moving down the centre of the tank, amid the shouts of the Exhorters, and the civilians. His noble features seemed, even in the half darkness, strangely familiar.

“Wonderful, isn’t he?” said my companion, raising his hand in a salute to the passing figure of the leader. “He goes up and down the tank like that ten times every day.”

“What good does it do?” I asked.

“None. But think of the marvellous energy and vitality that he must have to do it.”

“Has he any work to do here?” I inquired.

“Oh, rather. Notice that wheel and crank right at the back of the machine (see he’s walking towards it)? It’s his business to turn that round, or at least to try to. It makes the tank go backward. There’s other machinery away up in front that makes it go forward. The idea is (I’m only quoting the civilians—it’s not my business to know anything about it) that if we can move the tank backwards and forwards at the same time we shall get a perfect equilibrium—an absolute harmony. But stop, listen, listen!”

hurry? This cursed talking—talking. They're fighting now for life or death out there, and we stand here, stuck like this."

He gripped a little iron railing beside him, forcing himself to self-control. But as he still spoke I could hear from the dark corners and sides of the tank where the soldiers were, low angry mutterings and growls of protest.

"Steady, men, steady," the officer called into the dark. "Remember it's our first duty to obey."

"But if he's the leader," I said, making myself heard as best I could, "why doesn't he order the tank forward with the rest?"

"Leader of nothing!" exclaimed my companion, in disgust. "That's only a nickname. The real leaders are up in front, working like the soldiers, too busy for this silly babel of talking and voting. But they've got some kind of fool compact with him. . . It's more than I understand."

Here a renewed shouting interrupted us. I turned and looked toward the leader, and saw that he had now mounted upon a little iron platform, beside which a few dim electric lights illuminated his handsome, statesmanlike face. About him there seemed to be formed a special group of civilians, dressed in frock coats and evidently, themselves, persons of importance.

"Who are they?" I asked.

The officer shrugged his shoulders. "Search me!" he said. "They're only politicians. I've been away from Canada three years now and have forgotten the names of them. We ran this show ourselves, you know, we soldiers, till last autumn. Then this bunch came butting in, and the orders were to take them all into the tank. But listen to this!"

A burly-looking man with a megaphone in his hand had mounted on to the platform beside Sir Gilbert. He began calling out into the crowd. But such was the general hubbub and so loud and audible had become the detonation of great guns out on the plain beyond us, that it was almost impossible to hear what he said. But the discourse, as far as I could catch it, ran something like this:

"Gentlemen and citizens of Canada" (loud cheering from the civilians) "we are now about to go into action. . . But before doing so, it is necessary and proper that we should take a vote. Ballot papers will be handed round among you, and you will kindly mark them with a cross in order to indicate whether you wish to go into action forwards or backwards . . ." (prolonged shouting).

The tumult became greater at every moment. I could see groups of angry-looking men in khaki turning towards the platform and shaking their clenched fists as they called out: "What in —— are we waiting for? Turn her loose! Let's get at them." Meantime the Exhorters and Persuaders ran to and fro distributing little papers, and saying, "Gentlemen, may we beg you, may we exhort you, let us adjure you; will you please kindly mark your ballots."

The din and hubbub grew at every moment, the angry voices of the soldiers, the cries of the Exhorters, and the bellowing of the megaphones.

How long it lasted or how it would have ended, I cannot say. But all of a sudden a wide trap door in the ceiling of the tank opened and admitted a great flood of sunshine that penetrated to the darkest recesses of the huge machine. Round the rim of the opening appeared a circle of merry-looking Cockney faces, under steel caps, all grimy with powder, but joyous as the faces of boys on a big holiday.

"I say, you chaps down there," called an unmistakably London voice, "where the blooming Hydes have you been? The whole bally show's over. Come out and look."

There was a rush towards the sides and openings of the tank. I could see the soldiers everywhere opening up the little apertures and peering out. My companion and I raised again the slot through which we had looked before.

The whole plain lay before us, a mass of moving and cheering men, among which the great tanks, now decked with flags and surrounded by their shouting crews, crunched their way homeward. Here and there one could see long lines of German prisoners tramping through the mud, dull and dispirited. From the moving file of the London tanks went up the gay songs of the music hall and the merry music of the accordion. Even the Aberdonians were singing solemnly and rhythmically "*Auld Lang Syne*" and wiping the mud off their tank as they went along.

"Great Heavens!" gasped my companion. "It's all over. The trenches are taken and the thing is done while we were held up here with our silly voting. By the Lord," he continued, as our ears caught an angry shouting that arose all around us, "watch out for trouble now!"

We turned from the window. The soldiers of our tank had left their places. With angry cries and with upraised fists and some with iron bars or bayoneted rifles, they were moving on to the civilians.

"Clean them out!" they shouted. "Out with them! We've had enough of them!"

All was confusion.

I could see the Exhorters in frock coats making impossible leaps through the narrow windows. One was calling out: "In the interests of harmony, gentlemen, in the general interest of harmony," as they heaved him out through the top.

My companion turned to me. "I don't know how you got in here," he said, quietly, "but I have just one piece of advice to give you. Beat it! And when you get to Canada tell them to let us run this tank ourselves."

I shook his hand, seated myself upon my flying carpet, and was back again in Canada in less than nothing . . . in fact in lots of time to read the morning papers of the same day, explaining precisely how the war could be won, but omitting to state how it could be lost.

May Time in Mariposa

The First of a New Series

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," "Further Foolishness," etc.

Illustrated by Lou Skuce

If you do not know Mariposa, my dear reader, the loss is yours, and the fault lies at your own door. For it means that you have failed to see it by not having the eyes to see. There is no doubt that if you live in Ontario at all you have driven, numberless times, in your motor through the wide streets of that beautiful town; that you have drawn up outside of the Continental Hotel, and have drunk two per cent. beer, foaming over the bar; you have admired, or at least have had the opportunity to admire, the striking architecture of the Carnegie Library (OPENED 1902: THE GIFT OF A. CARNEGIE. J. MELVILLE, MAYOR); you have seen the imposing front of the new Y.M.C.A. building (ANNO DOMINI, MCMXIX), even if your urban indolence has prevented you from inspecting the inside of it and viewing the swimming tank, which is said to be the largest of its size in North America, and is deep enough to drown any man under eight feet high.

If you have not seen these things the fault, I repeat, is all your own. It means that you have crawled wearily away in your motor after eating dinner at the Continental and have started back on your journey to the sordid city with the reflection, "How absolutely alike all these little towns are." You have perhaps applied to it the brutal and degrading epithet "one-horse"; and you may have said to your companions, "How awful it would be to live in a town like that all winter!" Such a man as you could hardly realize that in the winter time—when the Mariposa Shakespeare Society is in full swing (meeting once every five weeks), when the Chess Club (over Hillis's store in the Oddfellows' Block) is a blaze of light every third Saturday evening, and when the Mariposa Opera House presents, every month or so, such features as *Muggs Landing*, the *Marks Brothers* in *East Lynne*, and things admitted even on the handbills to be big New York attractions—that, in short, in point of intellectual life the winter time is *the* season in Mariposa, just as June is the season in London, or March on the Riviera.

But let it pass. If you do not appreciate your own country it is not for me to tell you how.



Trying to read the thermometer which has shrunk discouraged into its bulb.

In any case I had not meant to talk of things in general in Mariposa or in any of the two hundred towns that are just like it, but to write of Mariposa as it is in May. The spring time when it comes in Mariposa comes as the fitting and appropriate reward of the peculiar optimism that has carried its inhabitants through the rigors of winter. There never were such

people as the Mariposans for persisting in the belief that the winter is not really cold, and that it is at any given moment about to “break.” At New Year’s time the Mariposan hugs his fur coat about his ears as he stands on the creaking sidewalk in the flying blizzard—outside of Elliott’s drug store—trying to read the thermometer, which has shrunk discouraged into its bulge, and talks of the “January thaw,” which he feels to be imminent. This “January thaw” is an obstinate tradition which fifty years of meteorological records have been unable to break. In February, though the mercury stands at twenty-five below zero and the farmers’ horses on market day move in a cloud of frosted vapor, there is a rumor in the town that crows have been seen in Smith’s hardwood bush—TRESPASSERS PROSECUTED: PICNIC PARTIES KINDLY APPLY AT THE HOUSE—and the winter is felt to be breaking up. In March, though the ice on the lake beside the town is two feet thick, the winter is declared to be “on its last legs,” and there is an organizing meeting of the Mariposa Tennis Club which gives a touch of summer itself to the season. April blows wild with great gusts of flying snow that come whirling down from the Hudson Bay. But the Mariposans sneer at it. Already they are planting beans under the snow and patching up hen houses with an eagerness which means that the brief winter is over all too quickly and spring may be upon them, unprepared, at any moment.

Then all of a sudden comes the First of May and the winter is understood to be over. On which there is an immediate and peculiar change of opinion, a sort of right-about-face. All the people declare that it was the longest and hardest winter that they ever remember: that such a winter was never seen before: that their health is shattered by the severity of it: that the fall crops are destroyed: that the lambs are dead and that the fruit trees will never bear again. The farmers, it is freely claimed, are ruined—a fact admitted by all the farmers themselves.

Still at any rate it is spring time. This is a known fact, provable by the calendar. It is the first of May, and May is spring. Everybody tells everybody else as they walk down for the early morning mail (eleven o’clock) at the post office that they are glad that the spring has come: that they “feel it in the air”; that the days are ever so much longer than they were a week ago. The livery man at Johnson’s Livery (MOTOR CARS A SPECIALTY) who meets the four-thirty from the north every morning, says that it is broad daylight now at five o’clock. Hence it is known to be, absolutely and beyond a doubt, spring. To a person ignorant of Mariposa there might be some doubt or hesitation about admitting it. The wind blows raw and cold: the nights are sharp and bitter as zero: the ice still lies thick upon the surface of the lake: there is ragged snow along the sides of Main Street: the Mariposa *Newspacket* states that it was fifteen below up at White Fish River yesterday, and that the trains out of the Soo have been stalled in a blizzard: and the proof of it comes to Mariposa two days later in the wild whirling of a storm that sends the powdered snow dancing in eddies along Main Street.

All this, I say, an outsider might falsely call winter. But it seems that it is not. The Mariposans explain it all away as a pure exception, an absolutely unaccountable thing, a straight violation of the usual and normal course of nature. The fact that the same thing happens every year makes no manner of difference to them. It is declared to be a “caution,” the way the ice hangs on in the lake below the town. But it is stated that in any case the ice must be so “honey-combed,” so “sun-cheeked,” and so “eaten into” that it is absolutely rotten. The bartender at the Continental says he’d hate to drive a team of horses over it. So, too, the snow storm at the Soo merely moves the Mariposans to compassion: the Soo they say must be an awful place to live in in winter time: their own snow storm is explained away by the *Newspacket* as a “snow flurry.”

Besides, the visible signs are all around. George Popley, manager of the bank, is wearing his bronze straw hat: the spring opening at Northrup's store is announced in the window: and at McTab's hardware they are already advertising fishing lines, hooks, sinkers and a full line of fishermen's supplies (COME IN AND SEE US) for the opening of the bass season. Oh, yes, it's spring!



You'll see the Mariposan crawling around on his hands and knees on the cold earth.

But most of all as *the* sign of the month, par excellence, the gardening season has begun. Every other man in Mariposa is at it. Look over, or through, the fence of any backyard in Mariposa and you'll see the Mariposan crawling round on his hands and knees on the cold earth with a packet of lettuce seed in one hand, trying to keep the wind away from it while he picks the seeds out with his finger and thumb. Look more closely still and you will see the lettuce seed flying in little clouds: in fact, all through the first two weeks in May, lettuce seed blows round in Mariposa like thin mist. But if you want to watch a Mariposan gardening, it must be done surreptitiously and by stealth. If you call out to a man and he hears you, he will rise up from his hands and knees and lie about it: he will say that he is just having a look at the ground to see how it is and when it will be ready: he will report that it is in no shape yet to be worked: there is "no growth in it": there is still frost in it, a great deal of frost: he advises you, very strongly, if you are planting a garden this summer to wait at least two weeks longer: in fact, his own opinion is that a late garden does better, and that June is quite early enough: all

this he says with brazen hardihood, for he has by this time hidden his lettuce seed in his pocket.

A stranger would find this conduct peculiar. Everybody in Mariposa understands it perfectly and passes on the same kind of lie to everybody else. The reason is that each man in Mariposa wants to be first with his garden. He wants, later on, in the first week in June when you are planting your potatoes, to tell you very quietly that his are already in flower: he wants, further on in the season, to meet you with a box of sickly little tomato plants under your arm and to tell you that his are already climbing up a stick five feet high, and that he and his wife had the first ripe ones last Sunday. Thus everybody in Mariposa wants to be first with his garden, and everybody lies about it to keep the rest out. Men go out after dusk and plant beans under the snow, and then remove the traces of the mud from their clothes as carefully as if it were the evidence of a crime. Nobody says a word about his vegetables till the moment comes when he announces that he and his wife had a “mess” of them last Sunday. After that let envy rage as it will and the more the better.

But did I say the ice has not gone out of the lake? That must be an error. There is a mistake somewhere. Certainly the ice was there, when May began, all covered with dirty snow and rutted here and there with sleigh tracks. Yet lo and behold! All of a sudden it is gone! One looks down the main street of Mariposa, which slopes right down to the water, and there all of a sudden is the open lake, glittering and sparkling in the sunshine, with little waves lapping upon its surface. Where is the ice? No one knows. Where has it gone? How did it get out? No one can tell.

It is, and it remains, a standing mystery what happens to the ice in our little lakes such as the one beside Mariposa. One day it is there, still solid enough, though said to be honey-combed and unfit to bear a team of horses, and reaching away for miles. The next it is gone. It can't get out of the lake for there is only one little river, sixty feet wide, leading out of it, and a dozen angry creeks pouring broken ice into it. Where does the ice go? There are many theories. One is that it evaporates; another that it sinks; another, that it is waterlogged: and another view, held on *both* sides of the lake, that it blows away over to the other side of the lake and is lost from sight.

But certain it is that once the ice is gone there is a real and notable change in the season. The heart of faith reaps its reward. Boats are seen on the dimpled water of the lake. Motor launches, with their passengers in overcoats, go splashing along in the chill water. In the main street there is cold bright sunshine with the thin promise of summer in it. The gardeners throw off something of their secrecy and are seen openly carrying hoes and shovels, unabashed.

Readers of the ignorant sort might easily be mistaken by my reference to the bar. They are under the impression that there is prohibition in Mariposa. In one sense there is: but in another and larger sense there is not. The little town, like all its fellows, has passed through the successive phases of restrictive legislation—it has been in turn wet, half dry, dry, and now bone-dry. Virtue has gripped it like a coiling snake and holds it tighter and tighter. But all of this makes no difference to the habits or to the heart of the place. There is still a bar at the Continental Hotel, and at the Mariposa House, and, in fact, at all the hotels in the town: and in each a bartender, still in his wicker sleeves, with his bar pump, and his row of bottles and a group of Mariposan disciples drinking at the bar. The change is one merely of percentages. Here you may still have, if you will, spring beer (two and a half per cent. alcohol), or fine old

Sherry (one per cent. of it straight from Spain), or old Tawny Port (guaranteed one and a quarter per cent. genuine spirit). In the old time the beer was ten per cent. alcohol: now it is two and a half. A man must drink now four glasses to do the business that was done by one. But the Mariposans are a kindly, law-abiding people. And, in any case, the thing is a war measure; a man who won't drink four glasses of beer to help to win the war is a poor lot.



A man who won't drink four glasses of beer to help to win the war is a poor lot.

So the Mariposans line up still in front of the bar, and call for Old Sherry (young enough to be ashamed of itself) and pale ale (pale enough to blush for itself), and they treat one another to rounds of drinks and five-cent cigars as if nothing had happened. Law, it is often said, is powerless against a determined public opinion.

And then, lo and behold, while they are still standing drinking and talking of the advancing season, somehow, by a sort of transformation as it seems, spring time—the real spring time—and the month of May—the real month beginning about May the twentieth—comes all with a rush.

The grass that had been but a few poor shoots under the mud has changed over night to a luxuriant carpet of verdant green. The eager dandelions burst out into a waving mass of yellow, swinging on their stems. The hard maples along the main street that shivered thin and bare in the wind last week burst into such heavy and luxuriant foliage that there is nothing to equal it this side of Sumatra. The lilacs are heavy with blossom and the ten million bees that

have lain hidden somewhere in Mariposa during the winter fill the air with drowsy murmurings. The green peas of the Mariposan gardens hear the sound and peep up above the earth to have a look. The birds sing in every bush. The oriole is back. The raucous crow calls resonant from the hardwood bush. The Queen's birthday comes with flags down the main street and a firemen's excursion that arrives in Mariposa in seventeen cars with banners on the side of them. There are ten bands playing all together.

So ends the month and passes in such a blaze of the glory of opening summer that every Mariposan swears that May is, after all, the only month of the year.

Better Dead
The Silly World of the Spiritualists

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys



In old days—nor yet so very long ago—the dead slept quietly under the elm trees of the church yard. All about them was silence, broken only by the twittering of the birds. The morning sunlight fell undisturbed upon the long grass about their graves.

Of the hope of meeting with them again, upon this earth and through the medium of our poor senses, there was none. Only in the promise of a dim eternity where soul should meet again with soul, might the stricken heart of bereavement find its consolation.

All this is changed to-day, rudely and vociferously. The dead are all about us, wide awake, unseen, at our very sides. They rap on tables. They thump with chairs. They push a little ouija board obligingly to and fro. They ring bells. They wave luminous hands through darkened rooms. And from the pallid lips of an entranced medium, ghastly in her hysteria, come to us, so we are assured, the very words and thoughts of the departed.

The whole civilized world to-day (I leave out Germany and Turkey) seems to be passing through a wave of spiritualism—much as our globe is said to plunge every now and then through the nebulous tail of a lost comet. The thing is everywhere. It fills our magazines. It runs riot in our newspapers. We are back again, though we do not admit it, in the days of the astrologers. We keep away from the old words and the ancient terms. We speak of seances and mediums and psychic telepathy. We do not care to talk of witches and wizards. But it is all one and the same thing. We should see things in a better historical perspective if we applied the phrases and forms of the past. Instead of having an advertisement that reads: “Grand Opera House, Tuesday Evening, Spiritualistic Seance” and so forth, we should have the announcement, “GRAND OPERA, TUESDAY EVENING, GENTLEMAN POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL. WILL BE ON THE PLATFORM, accompanied by Miss X, CHILD OF BEELZEBUB, who will RAISE HELL FOR THE AUDIENCE.”

Will the reader kindly observe that I am speaking above in all plain seriousness, the statement being mere fact and neither for nor against spiritualism. A medium is a “witch.” A clairvoyant is an “astrologer.” Telepathy is the “Black Art.” A seance is “raising the dead.” Sir Oliver Lodge is a “wizard.” A ouija board that runs back and forward under the fingers of the assembled enquirers is “possessed by the devil.” A “psychic phenomenon” is nothing more or less than a “ghost.”

All this, I repeat, is no argument whatever against spiritualism. It only shows that the whole business is a good deal older than many of its modern practitioners take it to be. The fact that “witches” and “ghosts” and “haunted houses” were ruled out of court a hundred years or so ago is neither here nor there.

They were ruled out and they have come back. That is all. So have many other things, both better and worse.

The fact is that spiritualism is quite as old as the human race, and probably older. The uncanny behaviour of certain of the higher animals in the presence of their dead, the strange fear that is said at times to seize upon dogs and horses—fear of no living visible things—these might suggest to the mind of the evolutionist a twilight form of spiritualistic belief older than man himself. But there is no need to probe far for a reason or basis for belief in spiritualism. Whether the belief is true or false it explains itself. The passionate desire for survival, the protest against the inexorable decree, the longing of an aching heart for the presence that is lost—these things in all ages have fostered, if not compelled, a belief in the reality of an

Unseen World. And in our time the suffering, the sorrow and the bereavement of the war invest the subject with a poignant pathos that must at least command respect.

But the spiritualism of our own time has certain features which distinguish it sharply from all the different “spiritualisms” that have preceded it. For one thing it has called in to its aid the powerful support of modern science. This a hundred years ago, or even fifty years ago, seemed its worst enemy. Our modern science entered upon its pretentious career in the character of light dispelling darkness, of truth driving out falsehood, of hard fact bruising the head of superstition. Thomas Huxley gave the ghosts and the haunted houses but a short shrift. A ghost was a piece of phosphorus shining in a dim corner and a haunted house needed nothing but a dose of rat poison. Very solid and angular and consolatory it all seemed at the time. Modern science, based upon such firm concepts as solid matter, weight, motion and so on, explained everything to its own satisfaction. Such small mysteries as remained outside—little things like life, death, etc.—were left out of consideration. Huxley locked them up in a cupboard, wrote on the door of it, “I do not know,” and put the key in his pocket, satisfied.

But all this is changed now. Modern science, as the ultimate explanation of things, has gone bankrupt. Everybody who follows its progress, even at a respectful distance, is aware of the profound gulf that lies between the triumphant agnosticism of Huxley and the scientific attitude of such men, let us say, as Sir William Osier or Sir Ernest Rutherford. The new investigations in radio-activity and such have caused solid matter to dissolve into something as thin and impalpable and self-contradictory as the theories of the astrologers themselves. So much so that the modern scientist no more attempts, as a scientist, to give an ultimate explanation of the world about us than does a gardener or plumber or a hydraulic engineer. He takes things as they are. What they are, he does not know. The moment he begins to explain them he speaks no longer as a scientist, but as a Presbyterian, or a Plymouth Brother or a Unitarian, or a spiritualist or whatever else he may be.

Thus science, with no fixed basis left, becomes in a certain sense occult, or at any rate is unable any longer to contradict occultism flat in the mouth. If a telepathist asserts that he has been communicating with John Smith from Washington to Hong Kong, science feebly answers, “Perhaps he has.” If he says that he has called up John Smith from the dead, science can only answer, “He may have for all I know.”

This favors spiritualism enormously. Spiritualism seizes hold of all the practical apparatus of science, its electric wires and its chemicals, and uses them to magnify the intricacy and the mystery of its seances. It lays hold too of all its terms, fortified by a hundred years of material belief, and annexes the lot of them. It talks of its “experiments” and its “phenomena,” its “waves” and its “currents.” Its spirits move on “planes” like the figures in Euclid. They answer to a “control” like the machinery of a power house.

Meantime the scientist merely sits and looks on, wringing his hands at the folly and superstition of mankind, or else, like Sir Oliver Lodge or Sir William Barrett, triumphantly announces himself a scientist and a spiritualist as well.

Here then is one great difference between our spiritualism and that of the past. It can fortify itself from the vast arsenal prepared by the Huxleys and the Tyndalls for its own defeat. But there is another. Modern spiritualism falls heir to all the wonderful facilities afforded by modern commerce. It can preach itself, advertise itself, boom itself and in short “sell itself”—the supreme end and aim of the modern product, the Nirvana of Happiness towards which our

every commercial effort is directed. Hence there has sprung up about us the vast babel of the commercial spiritualists, giving readings and seances at one dollar for ten minutes, calling up for fifty cents the souls of little children to talk to their stricken parents. Even the spiritualists themselves—the men of probity, I mean, like Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle—admit and deplore the fake and falsity of the great mass of these. The war has set them springing up like putrid funguses in rotten wood. Let them but go a little further, and outraged humanity will turn upon them, vengeful and fierce. The fate of the witches will be theirs.

But to come back. We are saying that in point of mere weight of authority we can no longer rule spiritualism out of court. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who has just published for us his *New Revelation* in spiritualism is not a fool. Sir Oliver Lodge knows more about physical science than I do; more than I want to. Sir William Barrett has a reputation that you and I cannot shake. So that we can no longer turn aside from the “messages” and “revelations” and “communications with the dead” as the mere product of ignorance.

I for one do not do so. But my quarrel with them lies on other grounds. If I take their revelations as they are and accept them, I stand appalled at the dreary and comfortless world which they open to us after death, peopled by enfeebled intellects, incapable of serious effort or purpose, devoid apparently of all power of sustained thought and of all real memory, and with no other visible purpose than a childish and inquisitive observation of the little happenings of our poor ephemeral world. So at least I see them. And I base my information not upon the babble of the fifty cent fakirs but upon the “revelations” of Lodge and Doyle and Barrett and the voluminous talk of Mrs. Piper and Podmore and Myers and the other investigators whose good faith is commonly held to be beyond a doubt.

The spirits, so they tell us, live and move, all about us. They live in houses and they wear clothes just as we do—this last, about the clothes, being from Conan Doyle: though I forget, for the moment, who told it to him. They spend their time largely in listening to what we say and observing what we do. They know all about our politics and follow our elections with interest. They differ in opinion just as we do; some spirits are free traders and some are protectionists. Some believe in free silver; others stand firm for a currency built on a tangible gold standard as the proper basis of a banking reserve. Some spirits say that Canada should develop her internal resources with borrowed American capital and some say absolutely no. Some think that Henry Ford made a fool of himself and others point to the motor industry of Detroit and ask if a fool could do that. They differ, just as we do, about prohibition and woman suffrage, and they have the same bitter discussion of the Toronto Street Car question that we do. In fact some spirits object to the pay-as-you-enter car in any form. These things, or at least the equivalent of these, are what the spirits think and talk about.

I confess that I for one find it infinitely dreary. I do not deny for a moment that it may be true—there is so much authority behind it that I cannot do that—but I merely say that, if it is true, I am, deeply and humbly, very sorry for it. It is hard enough to have to take what is called an intelligent interest in these things during our little stay in the sunlight; if we must continue to prattle on about them in the long darkness, it is infinitely sad.

Still more am I perplexed by the life of the spirits among themselves. If it is true that they have houses and food and clothes, then they must have housemakers and farmers and tailors and business and money. They must have office hours and offices, successes and failures, embezzlements and penitentiaries and the whole weary round of work and sorrow from which, we had thought, tired nature might at three score and ten lie down to rest. For there is no

escape from the logic of it. Once you say “clothes” and mean “clothes,” all the rest follows. *Ex pede Herculem*, as our classical friends say, which being interpreted means that from any one item you can construct the rest.

Nor is there any refuge in saying that the whole thing is “on another plane.” “Clothes” either means “clothes” or it doesn’t. If we are told that “clothes” in the spirit plane are not made by tailors and do not wear out and do not imply a warehouse full of fall cheviots and a spring buyer being entertained by the salesmanager of a jobbing house, then the clothes become mere cobwebs and mean nothing in the way of a revelation whatever. I can understand wearing pants, but before I put on “astral pants” I want to know something about them.



They wave luminous hands through darkened rooms.

But there are worse difficulties still. Perplexing as is the life of the spirit bodies it is as nothing compared to the peculiar state of their minds. They talk with a volubility that knows no stop. Lay but the medium on a chair and they will “babble” and divulge and communicate to your heart’s content. And with it all they say nothing, absolutely nothing. Their minds apparently have been so obliterated, so obfuscated by the conditions under which they dwell that there is nothing left of them. Take the meanest peasant that ever hoed a clod and shut him up in a dark cupboard and talk to him through the door and you will get some sense out of

him. Take the brightest spirit that ever talked from “the other side” and you get from him nothing but sheer vacuity. Let us suppose that a group of miners are by an accident entombed in a tunnel. A party of rescuers are at work. They dig into the wall. At length the voices of the men within can be heard by those without: they speak back and forward. How clear and unmistakable is the communication and the identity. There is no doubt for a moment as to who they are and where they are. If any one doubted the identity of the speakers they could prove it in a moment.



They must have . . . tailors.

“We’re in number three tunnel,” call the miners, or if they cannot call it they signal it, let us say, with taps, “There are six of us here. All in good shape except John Henry Smith. His foot was crushed when the roof fell. The air is bad but we can hang on all right. Be careful in digging to make an angle to the left.”

But if the miners were a group of departed spirits they would signal: “It is all bright and beautiful in here. J.H.S. is with us. Tell his wife to go on living upwards. The best things are the things that come after. Life is all what we make it for ourselves. Virtue is its own reward. A thing of beauty is a joy forever. Tell W. H.’s uncle to cheer up.”

I think it incontestable that, if the miners did talk that way, it would be held that they were all asphyxiated. Yet that is the way the spirits, more is the pity, talk to us. If they want to identify themselves they never take a plain straightforward way of doing so. They ought to be able to name straight off a string of persons and things and places that would prove beyond all doubt who they are. But they won’t. Some perversity has come over them that shuts them off from the most obvious devices. A spirit conversation through a medium runs after this fashion.

“Is Clara there?”

“Yes.”

“And is Henry there?”

“Yes, yes, Henry too.”

“And is William there?”

“William is.”

So far the spirit runs along like a streak. But note what happens if the form of the question is changed.

“And who else is there?”

A pause:

“Who else is there?” repeats the questioner.

Then the spirit answers: “I see a figure, but it’s dim, I can see it lift its arm. It’s not quite clear.”

“Is it Peter?”

“Yes, that’s it, Peter. It’s clear now.”

“Tell Peter to speak.”

“All right, this is Peter speaking now.”

Notice in this the strange mixture of dullness and of singular rapidity on the part of the spirits. Clara and William and Henry are all right on the spot in a moment. Speak? They’ll speak volumes. They’ll go on for ever saying how bright it all is, and telling everybody that virtue is its own reward. But do they, or rather will they, ever really say anything? No.

It is, as I gather it from a conscientious reading of all the best revelations, the melancholy truth that the soul of a dead mathematician cannot work out a proposition in Euclid; that the soul of a classical scholar cannot name the cities of ancient Greece; that the soul of a clergyman cannot name the books of the Old Testament; and the soul of a New York bartender cannot indicate the ingredients of a Manhattan cocktail. So much apparently does all that is best in us die with us.

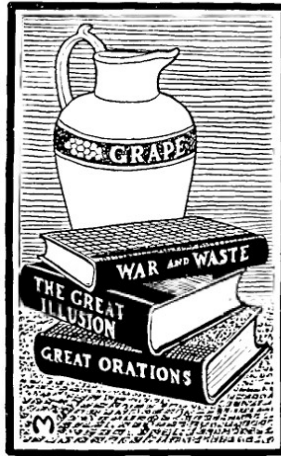
Thinking it all over I cannot but regret that the spirits have come to life again. They were better dead. It is but an unkind service to plague them with the poor sorrows of our daily lives, our sufferings and our bereavements which they can share but not alleviate. They have had their lot of sorrow. It were better to let them go. They seem to me to make but mournful and

pathetic figures, flitting about us in the dark, murmuring their trite inanities. We would sooner see them asleep in the churchyard and at peace.

My grandfather, as I remember him dimly, was a worthy man. He died full of years and honor and if he is now in the heaven where he thought to go, I am proud to think that he is there. But if, on the other hand, he is haunting round the summer cottage where I write this article, hiding behind the wainscot and rattling things in the summer-kitchen in the dead of night, I tell him straight that I do not want him. He may go. I give him warning through this magazine (which of course he reads) that some night I may mistake him for a rat and put his existence out of all doubt.

The Peace Makers

By STEPHEN LEACOCK



CHARACTERS OF THE PIECE

MR. JENNINGS BRYAN	LORD HALDANE
MISS JADDAMS	DR. LYTTLETON of ETON
DR. DAVID JORDAN	MR. NORMAN ANGELL
A NEGRO PRESIDENT	A PHILANTHROPIST
THE GENERAL PUBLIC	THE MAN ON THE STREET
AND OTHERS	



“War,” said the Negro President of Haiti, “is a sad spectacle. It shames our polite civilization.”

As he spoke he looked about him at the assembled company around the huge dinner table, glittering with cut glass and white linen, and brilliant with hot-house flowers.

"A sad spectacle," he repeated, rolling his big eyes in his black and yellow face that was melancholy with the broken pathos of the African race.

The occasion was a notable one. It was the banquet of the Peace Makers' Conference of 1916, and the company gathered about the board was as notable as it was numerous.

At the head of the table the genial Mr. Jennings Bryan presided as host, his broad countenance beaming with amiability, and a tall flagon of grape juice standing beside his hand. The eye of an observer would have been at once caught (and arrested) by the chiselled features of Miss Jaddams. A little further down the table one saw the benevolent head and placid physiognomy of Mr. Norman Angell, bowed forward as if in deep calculation. Within earshot of Mr. Bryan, but not listening to him, one recognized without the slightest difficulty the great ichthyologist, Dr. David Starr Jordan, while the bland features of a gentleman from China, and the presence of a yellow delegate from the Mosquito Coast, gave ample evidence that the company had been gathered together without reference to color, race, religion, education, or other prejudices whatsoever.

Nor were the older, and less valuable, civilizations unrepresented. One's eye saw with delight, indeed with genuine, if Christian, pleasure, the mild ecclesiastical face of good Dr. Lyttleton, head master of Eton, so entirely Christian in its expression as to be almost devoid of expression altogether, while beside him and engaged in earnest if quiet colloquy was the broad brow and still broader lineaments that could not have belonged (or at least not without protest) to any other than Lord Haldane. The conversation of the ex-Lord Chancellor was pitched too low to reach the ear, but one detected at intervals the word *Sittlichkeit*, or at least fragments and parts of it, repeated so persistently, that it was evident there must be in it a profound meaning, or perhaps even such profundity as to require no meaning to accompany it.

But it would be out of the question to indicate by name the whole of the notable company. Indeed, certain of the guests, while carrying in their faces and attitudes something strangely and elusively familiar, seemed in a certain sense to be nameless, and to represent rather types and attractions than actual personalities. Such was the case, for instance, with a member of the company seated in a place of honor near to the host, whose benign countenance made it clear that the designation of "philanthropist" was sufficient for him, without any closer indication of his identity. In front of this guest, doubtless with a view of indicating his extreme wealth and the consideration in which he stood, was placed a floral decoration representing a broken bank, with the figure of a ruined depositor entwined among the debris.

Of these nameless guests, two individuals alone, from the very insignificance of their appearance, from their plain dress, unsuited to the occasion, and from the puzzled expression of their faces, seemed out of harmony with the galaxy of distinction which surrounded them. They seemed to speak only to one another, and even that somewhat after the fashion of an appreciative chorus to what the rest of the company were saying; while the manner in which they rubbed their hands together and hung upon the words of the other speakers in humble expectancy seemed to imply that they were present in the hope of gathering rather than shedding light. To these two humble and obsequious guests no attention whatever was paid, though it was understood, by those who knew, that their names were The General Public and the Man on the Street.

"A sad spectacle," said the Negro President, and he sighed as he spoke, "one wonders if our civilization, if our moral standards themselves, are slipping from us." Then, half in

reverie, or as if overcome by the melancholy of his own thought, he lifted a spoon from the table and slid it gently into the bosom of his faded uniform.

"Put back that spoon!" called Miss Jaddams sharply.

"Pardon!" said the Negro President humbly, as he put it back. The humiliation of generations of servitude was in his voice.

"Come, come," exclaimed Mr. Jennings Bryan cheerfully, "try a little more of the grape juice?"

"Does it intoxicate?" asked the President.

"Never," answered Mr. Bryan. "Rest assured of that. I can guarantee it. The grape is picked in the dark. It is then carried, still in the dark, to the testing room. There, every particle of alcohol is removed. Try it."

"Thank you," said the President, "I am no longer thirsty."

"Will anybody have some more of the grape juice?" asked Mr. Bryan, running his eye along the ranks of the guests.

No one spoke.

"Will anybody have some more ground peanuts?"

No one moved.

"Or does anybody want any more of the shredded tan bark? No? Or will somebody have another spoonful of sunflower seeds?"

There was still no sign of assent.

"Very well, then," said Mr. Bryan, "the banquet, as such, is over, and we now come to the more serious part of our business. I need hardly tell you that we are here for a serious purpose. We are here to do good. That I know is enough to enlist the ardent sympathy of everybody present."

There was a murmur of assent.

"Personally," said Miss Jaddams, "I do nothing else."

"Neither do I," said the guest who has been designated The Philanthropist, "whether I am building motor cars,—"

"Does he build motor cars?" whispered the humble person called The Man in the Street to his fellow, The General Public.

"All great philanthropists do," answered his friend. "They do it as a social service, so as to benefit humanity; any money they make is just an accident. They don't really care about it a bit. Listen to him. He's going to say so."

"Indeed, our motor itself," the Philanthropist continued, while his face lighted up with unselfish enthusiasm, "Our motor itself——"

"Hush, hush!" said Mr. Bryan gently, "We know——"

"Our motor itself," persisted the Philanthropist, "is one great piece of philanthropy." Tears gathered in his eyes. "Only yesterday, while I was looking at our new stripped model of 1917——"

"Hush, hush!" said Mr. Bryan.

"Let him speak," said the Negro President. "Let him tell us about his new stripped model."

"No," said Mr. Bryan firmly, "we must get to business. Our friend here," he continued, turning to the company at large and indicating the Negro President on his right, "has come to us in great distress. His beautiful island of Haiti is and has been for many years overwhelmed in civil war. Now he learns that not only Haiti, but also Europe is engulfed in conflict. He has

heard that we are making proposals for ending the war—indeed, I may say are about to declare that the war in Europe *must stop*—I think I am right, am I not, Miss Jaddams?”

Miss Jaddams with her lips tightly pursed up, nodded assent.

“Look at her,” whispered the General Public to his companion. “Isn’t she just splendid, like that, when she keeps her mouth shut!”

“Naturally then,” continued Mr. Bryan, “our friend the President of Haiti, who is overwhelmed with grief at what has been happening in his island, has come to us for help. That is correct, is it not?”

“That’s it, gentleman,” said the Negro President, in a voice of some emotion, wiping the sleeve of his faded uniform across his eyes. “The situation is quite beyond my control. In fact,” he added, shaking his head pathetically as he relapsed into more natural speech, “dis hyah chile, gen’l’m, is clean done beat with it. Dey aint doin’ nuffin’ on the island but shootin’, burnin’, and killin’ somethin’ awful. Lawd a massy! it’s just like a real civilized country, all right, now. Down in our island we colored people is feeling just as bad as youse did when all them poor white folks was murdered on the Lusitania!”

But the Negro President had no sooner used the words, “Murdered on the Lusitania,” than a chorus of dissent and disapproval broke out all down the table.

“My dear sir, my dear sir,” protested Mr. Bryan, “pray moderate your language a little, if you please. Murdered? Oh, dear, dear me, how can we hope to advance the cause of peace if you insist on using such terms?”

“Aint it that? Wasn’t it murder?” asked the President perplexed.

“We are all agreed here,” said Miss Jaddams, “that it is far better to call it an incident. We speak of the ‘Lusitania Incident,’ ” she added didactically, “just as one speaks of the Arabic Incident, and the Cavell Incident, and other episodes of the sort. It makes it so much easier to forget.”

“True, quite true,” murmured good Dr. Lyttleton, “and then one must remember that there are always two sides to everything. There are two sides to murder. We must not let ourselves forget that there is always the murderer’s point of view to consider.”

“A clear case of what one might call *Sittlichkeit*,” added Lord Haldane. “Shall I explain to our friend from Haiti what the word means?”

But by this time the Negro President was obviously confused and out of his depth. The conversation had reached a plane of civilization which was beyond his reach.

The genial Mr. Bryan saw fit to come to his rescue.

“Never mind,” said Mr. Bryan soothingly, “Our friends here will soon settle all your difficulties for you. I’m going to ask them, one after the other, to advise you. They will tell you the various means that they are about to apply to stop the war in Europe, and you may select any that you like for your use in Haiti. We charge you nothing for it, except of course your fair share of the price of this grape juice and the shredded nuts.”

The President nodded.

“I am going to ask Miss Jaddams to speak first,” said Mr. Bryan.

There was a movement of general expectancy and the two obsequious guests at the foot of the table, of whom mention has been made, were seen to nudge one another and whisper, “Isn’t this splendid?”

"You are not asking me to speak first merely because I am a woman?" asked Miss Jaddams.

"Oh no," said Mr. Bryan with charming tact.

"Very good," said Miss Jaddams, adjusting her glasses. "As for stopping the war, I warn you, as I have warned the whole world, that it may be too late. They should have called me in sooner. That was the mistake. If they had sent for me at once and had put my picture in the papers both in England and Germany with the inscription 'Miss Jaddams, the True Woman of To-day,' I doubt if any of the men who looked at it would have felt that it was worth while to fight. But, as things are, the only advice I can give is this. Everybody is wrong, (except me). The Germans are a very naughty people. But the Belgians are worse. It was very, very wicked of the Germans to bombard the houses of the Belgians. But how naughty of the Belgians to go and sit in their houses while they were bombarded. It is to that that I attribute,—with my infallible sense of justice,—the dreadful loss of life. So you see the only conclusion that I can reach is that everybody is very naughty and that the only remedy would be to appoint me a committee,—me and a few others, though the others don't really matter,—to make a proper settlement. I hope I make myself clear."

The Negro President shook his head and looked mystified.

"Us colored folks," he said, "wouldn't quite understand that. We done got the idea that sometimes there's such a thing as a quarrel that is right and just." The President's melancholy face lit up with animation and his voice rose to the sonorous vibration of the negro preacher. "We learn that out of the Bible, we colored folks,—we learn to smite the ungodly,—"

"Pray, pray," said Mr. Bryan soothingly, "don't introduce religion, let me beg of you. That would be fatal. We peacemakers are all agreed that there must be no question of religion raised."

"Exactly so," murmured the bland Dr. Lyttleton, "my own feelings exactly. The name of—of—the Deity, should never be brought in. It inflames people. Only a few weeks ago I was pained and grieved to the heart to hear a woman in one of our London streets raving that the German Emperor was a murderer—her child had been killed that night by a bomb from a Zeppelin,—she had its body in a cloth hugged to her breast as she talked,—Thank heaven, they keep these things out of the newspapers,—and she was calling down God's vengeance on the Emperor. Most deplorable! Poor creature, unable, I suppose, to realize the Emperor's exalted situation, his splendid lineage, the wonderful talent with which he can draw pictures of the apostles with one hand while he writes an appeal to his Mahommedan comrades with the other. I dined with him once," added Dr. Lyttleton, in modest afterthought.

"So did I," said Lord Haldane. "In fact I dined with him again and again. I may say I dined with him every time he asked me."

"I dined with him too," said Dr. Jordan. "I shall never forget the impression he made. As he entered the room accompanied by his staff, the Emperor looked straight at me and said to one of his aides, 'Who is this?' 'This is Dr. Jordan,' said the officer. The Emperor put out his hand. 'So this is Dr. Jordan,' he said. I never witnessed such an exhibition of brain power in my life. He had seized my name in a moment and held it for three seconds with all the tenaciousness of a Hohenzollern."

"But may I," continued the ex-University President, "add a word to what Miss Jaddams has said to make it still clearer to our friend. I will try to make it as simple as one of my lectures in Ichthyology. I know of nothing simpler than that."

Everybody murmured assent. The President put his hand to his ear.

“Theology?” he said.

“Ichthyology,” said Dr. Jordan. “It is better. But just listen to this. War is waste. It destroys the tissues. It is exhausting and fatiguing and may in extreme cases lead to death. Read my book ‘War and Waste,’ which you can get anywhere for fifty cents brand new, or in all second-hand stores for ten cents, practically undamaged.”

The learned gentleman sat back in his seat and took a refreshing drink of rain water from a glass beside him, while a murmur of applause ran round the table. It was known and recognized that the speaker had done more than any living man to establish the fact that war is dangerous, that gunpowder, if heated, explodes, that fire burns, that fish swim, and other great truths without which the work of a college president would appear futile.

“And now,” said Mr. Bryan, looking about him with the air of a successful toastmaster, “I am going to ask our friend here to give us his views.”

Renewed applause bore witness to the popularity of the Philanthropist, whom Mr. Bryan had indicated with a wave of his hand.

The Philanthropist cleared his throat.

“Our Motor,” he began.

Mr. Bryan plucked him gently by the sleeve. “Never mind the motor just now,” he whispered.

The Philanthropist bowed in assent.

“Very good,” he said. “Though I should like to tell the company something about our new sparkless generator. Publicity, we find, is never so good as when mixed in accidentally with philanthropy. But I will come at once to the subject. My own feeling is that the true way to end war is to try to spread abroad in all directions goodwill and brotherly love.”

“Hear, hear!” cried the assembled company.

“And the great way to inspire brotherly love all round is to keep on getting richer and richer till you have so much money that everyone loves you. Money, gentlemen, is a glorious thing.”

At this point Mr. Norman Angell, who had remained silent hitherto, raised his head from his chest and murmured drowsily:

“Money, money, there isn’t anything but money. Money is the only thing there is. Money and property, property and money. If you destroy it, it is gone; if you smash it, it isn’t there. All the rest is a great illus——”

And with this he dozed off again into silence.

“Our poor Angell is asleep again,” said Miss Jaddams.

Mr. Bryan shook his head. “He’s been that way ever since the war began,—sleeps all the time, and keeps muttering that there isn’t any war, that people only imagine it, in fact that it is all an illusion. But I fear we are interrupting you,” he added, turning to the Philanthropist.

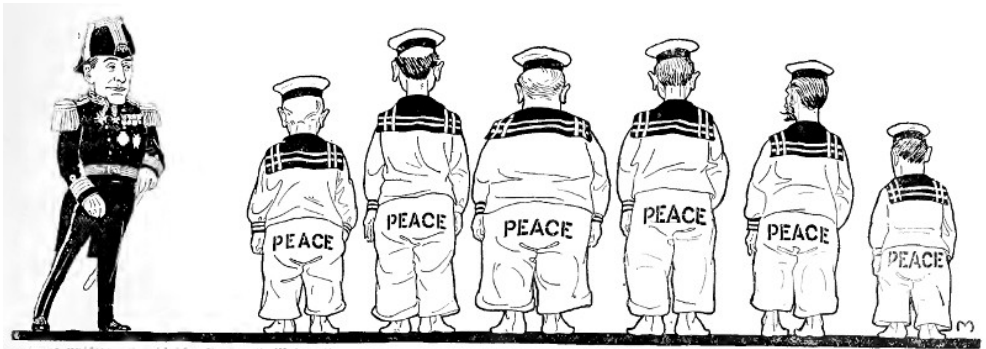
“I was just saying,” continued that gentleman, “that you can do anything with money. You can stop a war with it if you have enough of it, in ten minutes. I don’t care what kind of war it is, or what the people are fighting for, whether they are fighting for conquest or fighting for their homes and their children, I can stop it, stop it absolutely by my grip on money, without firing a shot or incurring the slightest personal danger.”

The Philanthropist spoke with the greatest emphasis, reaching out his hand and clutching his fingers in the air.

“Yes, gentlemen,” he went on, “I am speaking here not of theories but of facts. This is what I am doing and what I mean to do. You’ve no idea how amenable people are, especially poor people, struggling people, those with ties and responsibilities, to the grip of money. I went the other day to a man I know, the head of a bank, where I keep a little money,—just a fraction of what I make gentlemen, a mere nothing to me but everything to this man because he is still not rich and is only fighting his way up. ‘Now,’ I said to him, ‘you are English, are you not?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ he answered. ‘And I understand you mean to help along the loan to England with all the power of your bank.’ ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘I mean it and I’ll do it.’ ‘Then I’ll tell you what,’ I said, ‘you lend one penny, or help to lend one penny, to the people of England or the people of France, and I’ll break you, I’ll grind you into poverty—you and your wife and children and all that belongs to you.’ ”

The Philanthropist had spoken with so great an intensity that there was a deep stillness over the assembled company. The Negro President had straightened up in his seat, and as he looked at the speaker there was something in his erect back and his stern face and the set of his faded uniform that somehow turned him, African though he was, into a soldier.

“Sir,” he said, with his eye riveted on the speaker’s face, “what happened to that banker man?”



“The uniforms,” said Mr. Bryan, “will be all the same, a plain white blouse with blue insertions and white duck trousers with the word Peace stamped across the back of them.”

“The fool!” said the Great Philanthropist, “he wouldn’t hear—he defied me—he said that there wasn’t money enough in all my business to buy the soul of a single Englishman. I had his directors turn him from his bank that day, and he’s enlisted, the scoundrel, and is gone to the war. But his wife and family are left behind: they shall learn what the grip of the money power is—learn it in misery and poverty.”

“My good sir,” said the Negro President slowly and impressively, “do you know why your plan of stopping war wouldn’t work in Haiti?”

“No,” said the Philanthropist.

“Because our black people there would kill you. Which ever side they were on, whatever they thought of the war—they would take a man like you and lead you out into the town square, and stand you up against the side of an adobe house, and they’d shoot you. Come down to Haiti, if you doubt my words, and try it.”

“Thank you,” said the Great Philanthropist, resuming his customary manner of undisturbed gentleness, “I don’t think I will. I don’t think somehow that I could sell my

motors in Haiti.”

The passage at arms between the Negro President and the Philanthropist had thrown a certain confusion into the hitherto agreeable gathering. Even Lord Haldane and Dr. Lyttleton were seen to be slowly shaking their heads from side to side, an extreme mark of excitement which they never permitted themselves except under stress of passion. The two humble guests at the foot of the table were visibly perturbed. “Say: I don’t like that about the banker,” squeaked one of them. “That aint right, eh what? I don’t like it.”

Mr. Bryan was aware that the meeting was in danger of serious disorder. He rapped loudly on the table for attention. When he had at last obtained silence, he spoke.

“I have kept my own views to the last,” he said, “because I cannot but feel that they possess a peculiar importance. There is, my dear friends, every prospect that within a measurable distance of time I shall be able to put them into practice. I am glad to be able to announce to you the practical certainty that I shall be president of the United States.”

At this announcement the entire company broke into spontaneous and heartfelt applause. It had long been felt by all present that Mr. Bryan was certain to be president of the United States if only he ran for the office often enough, but that the glad moment had actually arrived seemed almost too good for belief.

“Yes, my friends,” continued the genial host, “I have just had a communication from my dear friend Wilson, in which he tells me that he, himself, will never contest the office again. The presidency, he says, interferes too much with his private life. In fact, I am authorized to state in confidence that his wife forbids him to run.”

“But my dear Jennings,” interposed Dr. Jordan thoughtfully, “what about Colonel Roosevelt?”

“In that quarter my certainty in the matter is absolute. I have calculated it out mathematically that I am bound to obtain, in view of my known principles, the entire German vote,—which carries with it all the great breweries of the country,—the whole Austrian vote, all the Hungarians of the sugar refineries, the Turks,—in fact, my friends, I am positive that Roosevelt, if he dares to run, will carry nothing but the American vote!”

Loud applause greeted this announcement.

“And now let me explain my plan, which I believe is shared by a great number of sane, and other, pacifists in the country. All the great nations of the world will be invited to form a single international force consisting of a fleet so powerful and so well equipped that no single nation will dare to bid it defiance.”

Mr. Bryan looked about him with a glance of something like triumph. The whole company, and especially the Negro President, were now evidently interested. “Say,” whispered the General Public to his companion, “this sounds like the real thing? Eh, what? Isn’t he a peach of a thinker?”

“What flag will your fleet fly?” asked the Negro President.

“The flags of all nations,” said Mr. Bryan.

“Where will you get your sailors?”

“From all the nations,” said Mr. Bryan, “but the uniform will be all the same, a plain white blouse with blue insertions, and white duck trousers with the word PEACE stamped across the back of them in big letters. This will help to impress the sailors with the almost sacred character of their functions.”

“But what will the fleet’s functions be?” asked the President.

“Whenever a quarrel arises,” explained Mr. Bryan, “it will be submitted to a Board. Who will be on this Board, in addition to myself, I cannot as yet say. But it’s of no consequence. Whenever a case is submitted to the Board it will think it over for three years. It will then announce its decision—if any. After that, if any one nation refuses to submit, its ports will be bombarded by the Peace Fleet.”

Rapturous expressions of approval greeted Mr. Bryan’s explanation.

“The great thing,” said Lord Haldane, “will be to get the right men for the Board. So far I can only think of one. They must be men trained in the law,—”

“Or perhaps, better, taken from the Church,” suggested Dr. Lyttleton.

“Or better still,” said Dr. Jordan, “men from the Universities—”

“Or do you not think,” said Miss Jaddams, “that the members of the board ought to be fifty per cent. women?”

“But I don’t understand,” said the Negro President, turning his puzzled face to Mr. Bryan. “Would some of these ships be British ships?”

“Oh certainly. In view of the dominant size of the British Navy about one-quarter of all the ships would be British ships.”

“And the sailors British sailors?”

“Oh, yes,” said Mr. Bryan, “except that they would be wearing international breeches,—a most important point.”

“And if the Board, made up of all sorts of people, were to give a decision against England, then these ships,—British ships with British sailors,—would be sent to bombard England itself.”

“Exactly,” said Mr. Bryan. “Isn’t it beautifully simple? And to guarantee its working properly,” he continued, “just in case we have to use the fleet against England, we’re going to ask Admiral Jellicoe himself to take command.”

The Negro President slowly shook his head.

“Marse Bryan,” he said, “you notice what I say. I know Marse Jellicoe. I done see him lots of times when he was just a lieutenant, down in the harbor of Port au Prince. If youse folks put up this proposition to Marse Jellicoe, he’ll just tell the whole lot of you to go plumb to——”

But the close of the sentence was lost by a sudden interruption. A servant entered with a folded telegram in his hand.

“For me?” said Mr. Bryan, with a winning smile.

“For the President of Haiti, sir,” said the man.

The President took the telegram and opened it clumsily with his finger and thumb amid a general silence. Then he took from his pocket and adjusted a huge pair of spectacles with a horn rim and began to read:

“Well, I ’clare to goodness!” he said.

“Who is it from?” said Mr. Bryan. “Is it anything about me?”

The Negro President shook his head “It’s from Haiti,” he said, “from my military secretary.”

“Read it, read it,” cried the company.

“*Come back home right away,*” read out the Negro President, word by word. “*Everything is all right again. Joint British and American Naval Squadron came into harbor yesterday, landed fifty blue jackets and one midshipman. Perfect order. Banks open. Bars open. Mule*

cars all running again. Things fine. Going to have big dance at your palace. Come right back."

The Negro President paused.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a voice of great and deep relief. "This lets me out. I guess I wont stay for the rest of the discussion. I'll start for Haiti. I reckon there's something in this Armed Force business after all."

More About GERMANY FROM WITHIN

By STEPHEN LEACOCK

Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY C. W. JEFFERYS



I had never seen a Bolshevik before, but I knew at sight that he must be one.

Two years ago as my readers will remember, but of course they don't, I made a secret visit to Germany during the height of the war. It was obviously quite impossible at that time to disclose the means whereby I made my way across the frontier, I therefore adopted the familiar literary device of professing to have been transported to Germany in a dream. In that state I was supposed to be conducted about the country by my friend Count Boob von

Boobenstein, whom I had known years before as a waiter in Toronto, to see GERMANY FROM WITHIN, and to report upon it in the Allied press.

What I wrote attracted some attention. So the German Government feeling, perhaps, that the prestige of their own spy system was at stake, published a white paper, or a green paper, I forget which, in denial of all my adventures and disclosures. In this they proved (1) that all entry into Germany by dreams had been expressly forbidden of the High General Command; (2) that astral bodies were prohibited and (3) that nobody else but the Kaiser was allowed to have visions. They claimed therefore (1) that my article was a fabrication and (2) that for all they knew it was humorous. There the matter ended until it can be taken Up at the General Peace Table.

But as soon as I heard that the People's Revolution had taken place in Berlin I determined to make a second visit.

This time I had no difficulty about the frontier whatever. I simply put on the costume of a British admiral and walked in.

"Three cheers for the British Navy," said the first official whom I met. He threw his hat in the air and the peasants standing about raised a cheer. It was my first view of the marvellous adaptability of this great people.

I noticed that many of them were wearing little buttons with pictures of Jellicoe and Beatty.

At my own request I was conducted at once to the nearest railway station.

"So your Excellency wishes to go to Berlin?" said the stationmaster.

"Yes," I replied, "I want to see something of the People's Revolution."

The stationmaster looked at his watch.

"That Revolution is over," he said.

"Too bad!" I exclaimed.

"Not at all. A much better one is in progress, quite the best Revolution that we have had. It is called—Johann, hand me that proclamation of yesterday—the Workmen and Soldiers' Revolution.

"What's it about?" I asked.

"The basis of it," said the stationmaster, "or what we Germans call the Fundamental Ground Foundation, is universal love. They hanged all the leaders of the Old Revolution yesterday."

"When can I get a train?" I inquired.

"Your Excellence shall have a special train at once. Sir," he continued with a sudden burst of feeling, while a tear swelled in his eye. "The sight of your uniform calls forth all our gratitude. My three sons enlisted in our German Navy. For four years they have been at Kiel, comfortably fed, playing dominoes. They are now at home all safe and happy. Had your brave navy relaxed its vigilance for a moment these boys might have had to go out on the sea, as they had never done. Please God," concluded the good, old man, removing his hat a moment, "no German sailor now will ever have to go to sea."

I pass over my journey to Berlin. Interesting and varied as were the scenes through which I passed they gave me but little light upon the true situation of the country: indeed I may say without exaggeration that they gave me as little, or even more so, as the press reports of our talented newspaper correspondents. The food situation seemed particularly perplexing. A

well-to-do merchant from Bremen who travelled for some distance in my train assured me that there was plenty of food in Germany, except of course for the poor. Distress, he said, was confined entirely to these. Similarly a Prussian gentleman who looked very like a soldier but who assured me with some heat that he was a commercial traveller, told me the same thing. There were no easements of starvation, he said, except among the very poor.

The aspect of the people too, at the stations and in the towns we passed, puzzled me. There were no uniforms, no soldiers. But I was amazed at the number of commercial travellers, Lutheran ministers, photographers and so forth, and the odd resemblance they presented, in spite of their innocent costumes, to the arrogant and ubiquitous military officers whom I had observed on my former visit.

But I was too anxious to reach Berlin to pay much attention to the details of my journey.

Even when I at last reached the capital, I arrived, as I had feared, too late.

"Your Excellence," said a courteous official at the railway station, to whom my naval uniform acted as a sufficient passport. "The Revolution of which you speak is over. Its leaders were arrested yesterday. But you shall not be disappointed. There is a better one. It is called the Comrades' Revolution of the Bolsheviks. The chief Executive was installed yesterday."

"Would it be possible for me to see him?" I asked.

"Nothing simpler, Excellency," he continued as a tear rose in his eye, "my four sons—"

"I know," I said, "your four sons are in the German Navy. It is enough. Can you take me to the Leader?"

"I can and will," said the official. "He is sitting now in the Free Palace of all the German People, once usurped by the Hohenzollern Tyrant. The doors are guarded by machine guns. But I can take you direct from here through a back way. Come."

We passed out from the station, across a street and through a maze of little stairways and passages into the heart of the great building that had been the offices of the Imperial Government.

"Enter this room. Do not knock," said my guide. "Good bye."

In another moment I found myself face to face with the chief comrade of the Bolsheviks.

He gave a sudden start as he looked at me, but instantly collected himself.

He was sitting with his big boots up on the mahogany desk, a cigar at an edgewise angle in his mouth. His hair under his sheepskin cap was shaggy and his beard stubbly and unshaven. His dress was slovenly and there was a big knife in his belt. A revolver lay on the desk beside him. I had never seen a Bolshevik before but I knew at sight that he must be one.

"You say you were here in Berlin once before?" he questioned, and he added before I had time to answer: "When you speak don't call me 'Excellency' or 'Sereneness' or anything of that sort; just call me 'brother' or 'comrade.' This is the era of freedom. You're as good as I am, or nearly."

"Thank you," I said.

"Don't be so damn polite," he snarled. "No good comrade ever says thank you. So you were here in Berlin before?"

"Yes," I answered, "I was here in the interests of MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE, writing up *Germany from Within* in the middle of the war."

"The war, the war!" he murmured, in a sort of wail or whine. "Take notice, comrade, that I weep when I speak of it. If you write anything about me be sure to say that I cried when the

war was mentioned. We Germans have been so misjudged. When I think of the devastation of France and Belgium I weep.”

He drew a greasy, red handkerchief from his pocket and began to sob. . . “and the loss of all the English merchant ships!”

“Oh, you needn’t worry,” I said, “It’s all going to be paid for.”

“Oh I hope so, I do hope so,” said the Bolshevik chief. “What a regret it is to us Germans to think that unfortunately we are not able to help pay for it; but you English—you are so generous—how much we have admired your noble hearts—so kind, so generous to the vanquished. . .”

His voice had subsided into a sort of whine.

But at this moment there was a loud knocking at the door. The Bolshevik hastily wiped the tears from his face and put away his handkerchief.

“How do I look?” he asked, anxiously. “Not humane, I hope? Not soft?”

“Oh no,” I said, “quite tough.”

“That’s good,” he answered, “that’s good. But am I tough *enough*?”

He hastily shoved his hands through his hair.

“Quick,” he said, “hand me that piece of chewing tobacco. Now then. Come in!”



"I never see that uniform without it giving me the jumps," said Von Tirpitz.

The door swung open.

A man in a costume, much like the leader's, swaggered into the room. He had a bundle of papers in his hands, and seemed to be some sort of military secretary.

"Ha! Comrade!" he said, with easy familiarity. "Here are the death warrants!"

"Death warrants!" said the Bolshevik. "Of the leaders of the late Revolution? Excellent! And a good bundle of them! One moment while I sign them."

He began rapidly signing the warrants, one after the other.

"Comrade," said the secretary in a surly tone, "you are not chewing tobacco!"

"Yes, I am, yes, I am," said the leader. "Or, at least, I was just going to."

He bit a huge piece out of his plug with what seemed to me an evident distaste and began to chew furiously.

"It is well," said the other. "Remember, comrade, that you are watched. It was reported last night to the Executive Committee of the Circle of the Brothers that you chewed no tobacco all day yesterday. Be warned, comrade. This is a free and independent republic. We will stand for no aristocratic nonsense. But whom have you here?" he added, breaking off in his speech, as if he noticed me for the first time. "What dog is this?"

"Hush," said the leader, "he is a representative of the Foreign press, a newspaper reporter."

"Your pardon," said the secretary. "I took you by your dress for a prince. A representative of the great and enlightened press of the Allies, I presume. How deeply we admire in Germany the press of England! Let me kiss you."

"Oh, don't trouble," I said. "It's not worth while."

"Say, at least, when you write to your paper, that I offered to kiss you, will you not?"

Meantime, the leader had finished signing the papers. The secretary took them and swung on his heels with something between a military bow and a drunken swagger. "Remember, comrade," he said in a threatening tone as he passed out, "you are watched."

The Bolshevik leader looked after him with something of a shudder.

"Excuse me a moment," he said, "while I go and get rid of this tobacco."

He got up from his chair and walked away towards the door of an inner room. As he did so, there struck me something strangely familiar in his gait and figure. Conceal it as he might, there was still the stiff wooden movement of a Prussian general beneath his assumed swagger. The poise of his head still seemed to suggest the pointed helmet of the Prussian. I could without effort imagine a military cloak about his shoulders instead of his Bolshevik sheepskin.

Then, all in a moment, as he re-entered the room, I recalled exactly who he was.

"My friend," I said, reaching out my hand, "pardon me for not knowing you at once. I recognize you now. . . ."

"Hush," said the Bolshevik. "Don't speak! I never saw you in my life."

"Nonsense," I said. "I knew you years ago in Canada when you were disguised as a waiter. And you it was who conducted me through Germany two years ago when I made my war visit. You are no more a Bolshevik than I am. You are General Count Boob von Boobenstein."

The general sank down in his chair, his face pale beneath his plaster of rouge.

"Hush!" he said. "If they learn it, it is death."

"My dear Boob," I said, "not a word shall pass my lips."

The general grasped my hand. "The true spirit," he said. "The true English comradeship; how deeply we admire it in Germany!"

"I am sure you do," I answered. "But tell me, what is the meaning of all this? Why are you a Bolshevik?"

"We all are," said the Count, dropping his assumed rough voice, and speaking in a tone of quiet melancholy. "It's the only thing to be. But come," he added, getting up from his chair, "I took you once through Berlin in war time. Let me take you out again and show you Berlin under the Bolsheviks."

"I shall be only too happy," I said.

"I shall leave my pistols and knives here," said Boobenstein, "and if you will excuse me I shall change my costume a little. To appear as I am would excite too much enthusiasm. I shall walk out with you in the simple costume of a gentleman. It's a risky thing to do in Berlin but I'll chance it."

The Count retired and presently returned, dressed in the quiet bell-shaped purple coat, the simple scarlet tie, the pea-green hat and the white spats that mark the German gentleman all the world over.

"Bless me, Count," I said. "You look just like Bernstorff."

"Hush," said the Count. "Don't mention him. He's here in Berlin."

"What's he doing?" I asked.

"He's a Bolshevik; one of our leaders; he's just been elected president of the Scavengers' Union. They say he's the very man for it. But come along and, by the way, when we get into the street talk English and only English. There's getting to be a prejudice here against German."

We passed out of the door and through the spacious corridors and down the stairways of the great building. All about were little groups of ferocious looking men, dressed like stage Russians, all chewing tobacco and redolent of alcohol.

"Who are all these people?" I said to the Count in a low voice.

"Bolsheviks," he whispered. "At least they aren't really. You see that group in the corner?"

"The ones with the long knives?" I said.

"Yes. They are, or at least they were, the orchestra of the Berlin Opera. They are now the Bolshevik Music Commission. They are here this morning to see about getting their second violinist hanged."

"Why not the first?" I asked.

"They had him hanged yesterday. Both cases are quite clear. The men undoubtedly favored the war: one, at least, of them openly spoke disparagement of President Wilson. But come along. Let me show you our new city."

We stepped out upon the street.

How completely it was changed from the Berlin that I had known!

My attention was at once arrested by the new and glaring signboards at the shops and hotels and the streamers with mottoes suspended across the street. I realized as I read them the marvellous adaptability of the German people and their magnanimity towards their enemies. Conspicuous in huge lettering was HOTEL PRESIDENT WILSON, and close beside it CABARET QUEEN MARY: ENGLISH DANCING. The street itself, which I remembered as the Kaiserstrasse, was now renamed on huge sign boards THE AVENUE OF THE BRITISH NAVY. Not far off one noticed the RESTAURANT MARSHAL FOCH side by side with the ROOSEVELT SALOON and the BEER GARDEN GEORGE V.

But the change in the appearance and costume of the men who crowded the streets was even more notable. The uniforms and the pointed helmets of two years ago had vanished utterly. The men that one saw retained indeed their German stoutness, their flabby faces and their big spectacles. But they were now dressed for the most part in the costume of the Russian moujik, while some of them appeared in American wideawakes and Kentucky frock coats, or in English stovepipe hats and morning coats. A few of the stouter were in Highland costume.

"You are amazed," said Boobenstein as we stood a moment, looking at the motley crowd.

"What does it mean?" I asked.

"One moment," said the Count. "I will first summon a taxi. It will be more convenient, to talk as we ride." He whistled and there presently came lumbering to our side an ancient and decrepit vehicle which would have excited my laughter but for the seriousness of the Count's face. The top of the conveyance had evidently long since been torn off leaving only the frame; the copper fastenings had been removed; the tires were gone; the doors were altogether missing.

"Our new 1919 model," said the Count. "Observe the absence of the old-fashioned rubber tires, still used by the less progressive peoples. Our chemists found that riding on rubber was bad for the eye-sight. Note, too, the time saved by not having any doors."

"Admirable," I said.



It was merely a further proof of German adaptability.

We seated ourselves in the crazy conveyance, the Count whispered to the chauffeur an address which my ear failed to catch and we started off at a lumbering pace along the street.

"And now tell me, Mr. Boobenstein," I said, "what does it all mean, the foreign signs and the strange costumes?"

"My dear sir," he replied, "it is merely a further proof of our German adaptability. Having failed to conquer the world by war we now propose to conquer it by the arts of peace. Those people, for example, that you see in Scotch costumes are members of our Highland Mission about to start for Scotland to carry to the Scotch the good news that the war is a thing of the past, that the German people forgive all wrongs and are prepared to offer a line of manufactured goods as per catalogue sample."

"Wonderful," I said.

"Is it not?" said Von Boobenstein. "We call it the *From Germany Out* movement. It is being organized in great detail by our *Step from Under* Committee. They claim that already four million German voters are pledged to forget the war and to forgive the Allies. All that we now ask is to be able to put our hands upon the villains who made this war, no matter how humble their station may be, and execute them after a fair trial, or possibly before."

The Count spoke with great sincerity and earnestness. "But come along," he added, "I want to drive you about the city and show you a few of the leading features of our new national reconstruction. We can talk as we go."

"But Von Boobenstein," I said, "you speak of the people who made the war; surely you were all in favor of it?"

"In favor of it! We were all against it."

"But the Kaiser," I explained.

"The Kaiser, my poor master! How he worked to prevent the war! Day and night; even before anybody else had heard of it. 'Boob,' he said to me one day with tears in his eyes, 'this war must be stopped.' 'Which war, Your Serenity?' I asked. 'The war that is coming next month,' he answered. 'I look to you, Count Boobenstein,' he continued, 'to bear witness that I am doing my utmost to stop it a month before the English Government has done anything.'"

While we were thus speaking our taxi had taken us out of the roar and hubbub of the main thoroughfare into the quiet of a side street. It now drew up at the door of an unpretentious dwelling, in the window of which I observed a large printed card with the legend REVEREND MR. TIBBITS: *Private Tuition, English, Navigation and other Branches*. We entered and were shown by a servant into a little front room when a venerable looking gentleman, evidently a Lutheran minister, was seated in a corner at a writing table. He turned on our entering and at the sight of the uniform which I wore, jumped to his feet with a vigorous and unexpected oath.

"It is all right, Admiral," said Count Von Boobenstein, "my friend is not really a sailor."

"Ah!" said the other. "You must excuse me. The sight of that uniform always gives me the jumps."

He came forward to shake hands and, as the light fell upon him, I recognized that grand old seaman, perhaps the greatest sailor that Germany has ever produced or ever will, Admiral Von Tirpitz.

"My dear Admiral!" I said, warmly. "I thought you were out of the country. Our papers said that you had gone to Switzerland for a rest."

"No," said the Admiral. "I regret to say that I find it impossible to get away."

"Your Allied press," interjected the Count, "has greatly maligned our German patriots by reporting that they have left the country. Where better could they trust themselves than in the bosom of their own people? You noticed the cabman of our taxi? He was the former chancellor, Von Bethman-Hollweg. You saw that stout woman with the apple cart at the street

corner? Frau Bertha Krupp Von Bohlen. All are here, helping to make the new Germany. But come, Admiral, our visitor here is much interested in our plans for the reconstruction of the Fatherland. I thought that you might care to show him your designs for the new German navy.”

“A new navy!” I exclaimed, while my voice showed the astonishment and admiration that I felt. Here was this gallant old seaman, having just lost an entire navy, setting vigorously to work to make another. “But how can Germany possibly find the money in her present state for the building of new ships?”

“There are not going to be any ships,” said the great Admiral. “That was our chief mistake in the past, in insisting on having *ships* in the navy. Ships, as the war has shown us, are quite unnecessary to the German plan, they are not part of what I may call the German idea. The new navy will be built inland and elevated on piles and will consist—”

Buy at this moment a great noise of shouting and sudden tumult could be heard as if from the street.

“Some one is coming,” said the Admiral hastily. “Reach me my Bible.” “No, no,” said the Count, seizing me by the arm. “The sound comes from the Great Square. There is trouble. We must hasten back at once.” He dragged me from the house.

We perceived at once, as soon as we came into the main street again, from the excited demeanour of the crowd and from the anxious faces of people running to and fro, that something of great moment must be happening.

Everybody was asking of the passerby: “What is loose? What is it?”

Ramshackle taxis, similar to the one in which we had driven, forced their way as best they could through the crowded thoroughfare, moving evidently in the direction of the Government buildings.

“Hurry, hurry!” said Von Boobenstein, clutching me by the arm, “or we shall be too late. It is as I feared.”

“What is it?” I said. “What’s the matter?”

“Fool that I was,” said the Count, “to leave the building. I should have known. And in this costume I am helpless.”

We made our way as best we could through the crowd of people who all seemed moving in the same direction, the Count, evidently a prey to the gravest anxiety, talking as if to himself and imprecating his own carelessness.

We turned the corner of a street and reached the edge of the great square. It was filled with a vast concourse of people. At the very moment in which we reached it a great burst of cheering rose from the crowd. We could see over the heads of the people that a man had appeared on the balcony of the Government Building, holding a paper in his hand. His appearance was evidently a signal for the outburst of cheers, accompanied by the waving of handkerchiefs. The man raised his hand in a gesture of authority. German training is deep: silence fell instantly upon the assembled populace. We had time in the momentary pause to examine, as closely as the distance permitted, the figure upon the balcony. The man was dressed in the blue overall suit of a workingman. He was bareheaded. His features, so far as we could tell, were those of a man well up in years, but his frame was rugged and powerful. Then he began to speak.

“Friends and comrades!” he called out in a great voice that resounded through the square. “I have to announce that a New Revolution has been completed.”

A wild cheer broke from the people.

"The Bolsheviks' Republic is overthrown. The Bolsheviks are aristocrats. Let them die!"

"Thank Heaven for this costume," I heard Count Boobenstein murmur at my side. Then he seized his pea-green hat and waved it in the air shouting: "Down with the Bolsheviks!"

All about us the cry was taken up.

One saw everywhere in the crowd men pulling off their sheepskin coats and tramping them under-foot with the shout: "Down with Bolshevism." To my surprise I observed that most of the men had on blue overalls beneath their Russian costumes. In a few moments the crowd seemed transformed into a vast mass of mechanics.

The speaker raised his hand again. "We have not yet decided what the new Government will be."

A great cheer from the people.

"Nor do we propose to state who will be the leaders of it."

Renewed cheers.

"But this much we can say. It is to be a free, universal, Pan-German Government of love."

Cheers.

"Meantime, be warned! Whoever speaks against it will be shot; anybody who dares to lift a finger will be hanged. A proclamation of Brotherhood will be posted all over the city. If anybody dares to touch it, or to discuss it, or to look at or to be seen reading it, he will be hanged to a lamp post."

Loud applause greeted this part of the speech while the faces of the people, to my great astonishment, seemed filled with genuine relief and beamed with unmistakable enthusiasm.

"And now," continued the speaker. "I command you, you dogs, to disperse quietly and go home. Move quickly, swine that you are, or we shall open fire upon you with machine guns."

With the last outburst of cheering the crowd broke and dispersed, like a vast theatre audience. On all sides were expressions of joy and satisfaction. "Excellent, Wunderschön," "He calls us dogs! That's splendid. Swine! Did you hear him say 'Swine'? This is true German Government again at last."

Then just for a moment the burly figure reappeared on the balcony.

"A last word!" he called to the departing crowd. "I omitted to say that all but one of the leaders of the late Government are already caught. As soon as we can lay our thumb on the Chief Executive rest assured that he will be hanged."

"Hurrah!" shouted Boobenstein, waving his hat in the air. Then in a whisper to me: "Let us go," he said, "while the going is still good."

We hastened as quickly and unobtrusively as we could through the dispersing multitude, turned into a side street and, on a sign from the Count, entered a small cabaret or drinking shop, newly named as its sign showed. THE GLORY OF THE BRITISH COLONIES CAFE.

The Count with a deep sigh of relief ordered wine.

"You recognized him, of course," he said.

"Who?" I asked. "You mean the big workingman who spoke. Who is he?"

"So you didn't recognize him," said the Count. "Well, well, but of course all the rest did. Workingman! It is Field Marshal Hindenburg. It means of course that the same old crowd are back again. That was Ludendorff standing below. I saw it all at once. Perhaps it is the only way. But as for me I shall not go back. I am too deeply compromised; it would mean death."

Boobenstein remained for a time in deep thought, his fingers beating a tattoo in the little table. Then he spoke.

“Do you remember,” he said, “the old time of long ago when you first knew me?”

“Very well, indeed,” I answered. “You were one of the German waiters, or rather, one of the German officers disguised as waiters at McKonkey’s Restaurant in Toronto.”

“I was,” said the Count. “I carried the beer on a little tray and opened oysters behind a screen. It was a wunderschön life. Do you think, my good friend, you could get me that job again?”

“Boobenstein,” I exclaimed, “I can get you reinstated at once. It will be some small return for your kindness to me in Germany.”

“Good,” said the Count. “Let us sail at once for Canada.”

“One thing, however,” I said, restraining him. “You may not know that since you left there are no longer beer waiters in Toronto because there is no beer. All is forbidden.”

“Let me understand myself,” said the Count in astonishment. “No beer!” “None whatever.”

“Wine then?”

“Absolutely not. All drinking, except of water, is forbidden.”

The Count rose and stood erect. His figure seemed to regain all its old-time Prussian rigidity. He extended his hand.

“My friend,” he said. “I bid you farewell.”

“Where are you going to?” I asked.

“My choice is made,” said Von Boobenstein. “There are worse things than death. I am about to surrender myself to the German authorities.”

The LECTURER AT LARGE
A Few Painful Reminiscences of the Platform

By STEPHEN LEACOCK
Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," etc.
ILLUSTRATED BY C. W. JEFFERYS



"We are trying the experiment of cheaper talent."

It has been my lot to speak and to lecture in all sorts of places, under all sorts of circumstances and before all sorts of audiences. I say this not in boastfulness, but in sorrow. Indeed I only mention it to establish the fact that when I talk of lecturers and speakers, I talk of what I know.

Few people realize how arduous and how disagreeable public lecturing is. The public see the lecturer step out onto the platform in his little white waistcoat and his long tailed coat and with a false air of a conjurer about him, and they think him happy. After about ten minutes of his talk, they are tired of him. Most people tire of a lecture in ten minutes; clever people can do it in five. Sensible people never go to lectures at all. But the people who do go to a lecture and who get tired of it, presently hold it as a sort of grudge against the lecturer personally. In reality his sufferings are worse than theirs. In fact the whole business of being a public lecturer is one long variation of boredom and fatigue.

So I propose to set down here some of the many trials which the lecturer has to bear.

The first of the troubles which anyone who begins giving public lectures meets at the very outset is the fact that the audience won't come to hear him.

The Society That Won't Turn Out

This happens invariably and constantly, and not through any fault or shortcoming of the speaker.

The city in which I live, and I suppose for the matter of that, all Canadian cities, is overrun with little societies, clubs and associations, always wanting to be addressed. So at least it is in appearance. In reality the societies are chiefly composed of presidents, secretaries, and officials, who want the conspicuousness of office, a few members who hope to succeed to office, and a large list of other members who won't come to the meetings. For such an association, the invited speaker carefully prepares his lecture on "*Indo-Germanic Factors in the Current of History*." If he is a professor, he takes all winter at it. You may drop in at his house at any time and his wife will tell you that he is upstairs "working at his lecture." If he comes down at all it is in carpet slippers and dressing gown.

His mental vision of his meeting is that of a huge gathering of keen people with Indo-Germanic faces, hanging upon every word.

The Meeting of the Owl's Club

Then comes the fated night. There are seventeen people present. The lecturer refuses to count them. He refers to them afterwards as "about a hundred." To this group he reads his paper on Indo-Germanic Factors. It takes him two hours. When he is over the chairman invites discussion. There is *no* discussion. The audience is willing to let the Indo-Germanic factors go unchallenged. Then the chairman makes this speech. He says:

"I am very sorry indeed that we should have had such a very poor 'turn out' to-night. I am sure that the members who were not here have missed a real treat in the delightful paper that we have listened to. I want to assure the lecturer that if he will come to the Owl's Club *again* we can guarantee him next time a capacity audience. And will any members, please, who haven't paid their dollar this winter, pay it either to me or to Mr. Sibley as they pass out."

I have heard this speech (in the years when I had to listen to it) so many times that I know it by heart. I have made the acquaintance of the Owl's Club under so many names that I recognize it at once. I am aware that its members refuse to turn out in cold weather; that they do not turn out in wet weather; that when the weather is really fine, it is impossible to get them together; that the slightest counter attraction—a hockey match, a sacred concert—goes to their heads at once.



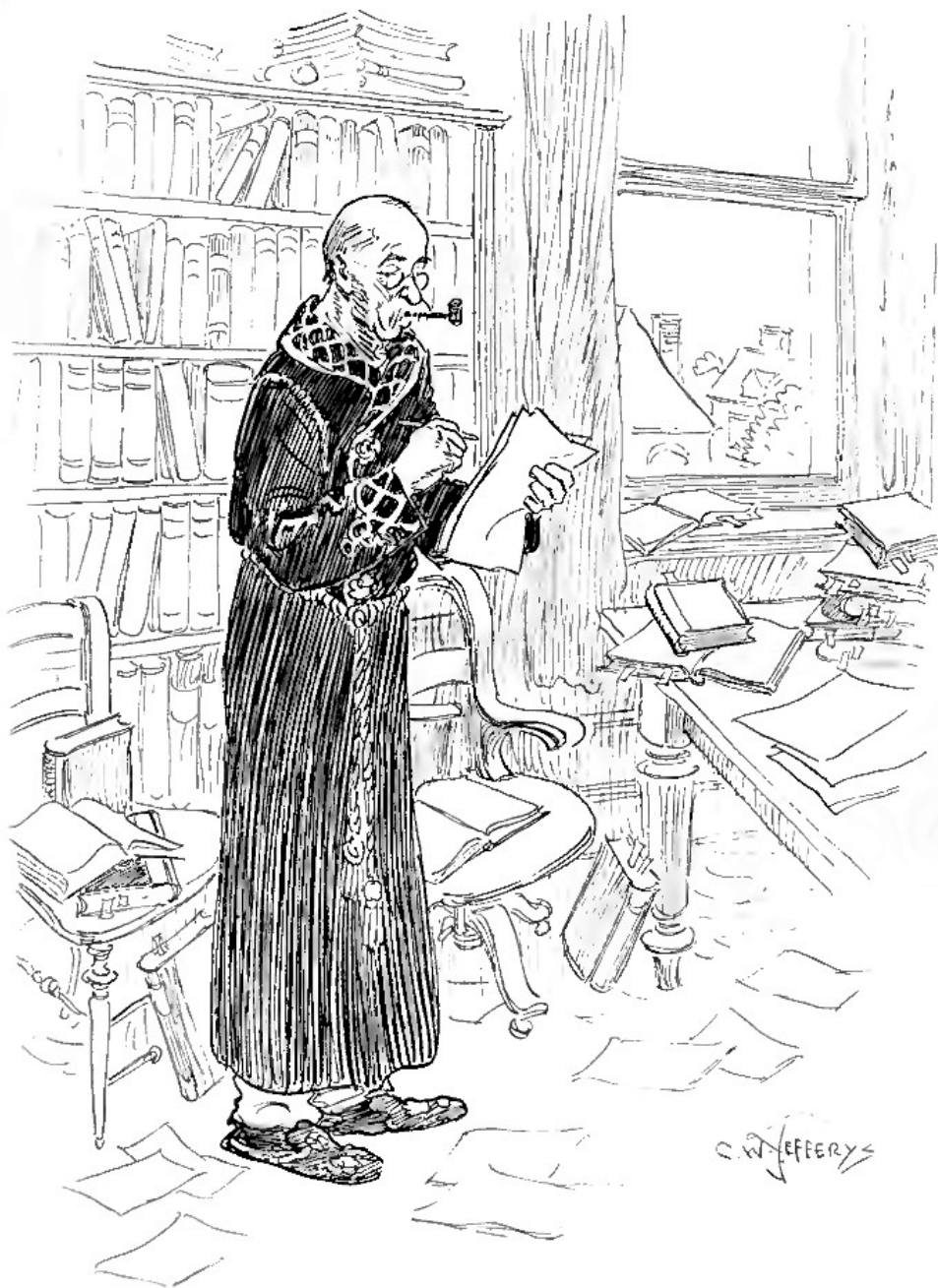
"The Lord will forgive anyone who laughs at the professor."

There was a time when I was the newly appointed occupant of a college chair and had to address the Owl's Club. It is a penalty that all new professors pay; and the Owls batten upon them like bats. It is one of the compensations of age that I am free of the Owl's Club forever. But in the days when I still had to address them I used to take it out of the Owls in a speech, delivered, in imagination only and not out loud, to the assembled meeting of seventeen Owls, after the chairman had made his concluding remarks. It ran as follows:

"Gentlemen—if you *are* such, which I doubt. I realize that the paper that I have read on '*Was Hegel a Deist?*' has been an error, I spent all the winter on it and now I realize that not one of you pups know who Hegel was or what a Deist is. Never mind. It is over now, and I am glad. But just let me say *this*, only this, which won't keep you a minute. Your Chairman has been good enough to say that if I come again you will get together a capacity audience to hear me. Let me tell you that if your society waits for its next meeting till I come to address you again, you will wait indeed. In fact, gentlemen,—I say it very frankly,—it will be in another world."

An Ideal Chairman

But pass over the audience. Suppose there is a *real* audience, and suppose them all duly gathered together. Then it becomes the business of that evil-minded villain—facetiously referred to in the newspaper reports as the genial chairman—to put the lecturer to the bad. In nine cases out of ten he can do so. Some chairmen, indeed, develop a great gift for it.



Upstairs working at his lecture.

Here are one or two actual samples from my own experience:

“Gentlemen,” said the chairman of a society in a little village town in Western Ontario, to which I had come as a paid (a very humbly paid) lecturer, “we have with us to-night a

gentleman” (here he made an attempt to read my name on a card, failed to read it, and put the card back in his pocket)—“a gentleman who is to lecture to us on” (here he looked at his card again) “on Ancient—Ancient—I don’t very well see what it is—Ancient—Britain? Thank you, on Ancient Britain. Now, this is the first of our series of lectures for this winter. The last series, as you all know, was not a success. In fact, we came out at the end of the year with a deficit. So this year we are starting a new line and we’re trying the experiment of *cheaper talent*.”

Here the chairman gracefully waved his hand toward me and there was a certain amount of applause. “Before I sit down,” the chairman added, “I’d like to say that I am sorry to see such a poor turn-out to-night and to ask any of the members who haven’t paid their dollar, to pay it either to me or to Mr. Wallace, as they pass out.”

Let anybody who knows by experience the discomfiture of coming out before an audience on any terms, judge how it feels to crawl out in front of them labelled *Cheaper Talent*.



A huge gathering of keen people with Indo-Germanic faces.

Letters of Regret

Another charming way in which the chairman endeavors to put forth the speaker of the evening, and the audience into an entirely good humor, is by reading out letters of regret from persons unable to be present. This, of course, is only for grand occasions when the speaker has been invited to come under very special auspices. It was my fate, not long ago, to “appear” (this is the correct word to use in this connection) in this capacity when I was going about Canada trying to raise some money for the relief of the Belgians. I travelled in great glory

with a pass on the Canadian Pacific Railway (not since extended; officials of the road kindly note this) and was most kindly entertained wherever I went.

It was, therefore, the business of the chairman at such meetings as these to try and put a special distinction or cachet on the gathering. This is how it was done:

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said the chairman, rising from his seat on the platform with a little bundle of papers in his hand, “before I introduce the speaker of the evening, I have one or two items that I want to read to you.” Here he rustles his paper and there is a deep hush in the hall while he selects one.

“We had hoped to have with us to-night Sir Robert Borden, the Prime Minister of this Dominion. I have just received a wire from Sir Robert in which he says that he will not be able to be here.”

Great applause.

Presently the chairman puts up his hand for silence, picks up another telegram and continues:

“Our committee, ladies and gentlemen, telegraphed an invitation to Sir Wilfrid Laurier very cordially inviting him to be with us to-night. I have here Sir Wilfrid’s answer in which he says that he will not be able to be with us.”

Renewed applause.

The chairman again puts his hand up for silence and goes on, picking up one document after the other. “The Minister of Finance regrets that he will be unable to come” (applause)—“Mr. Rodolphe Lemieux—(applause) will not be here (great applause)—the Mayor of Toronto (applause) is detained on business (wild applause)—the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese (applause)—the Principal of the University College, Toronto (great applause)—the Minister of Education (applause)—none of them are coming.” Great clapping of hands and enthusiasm, after which the meeting is called to order with a very distinct and palpable feeling that it is one of the most distinguished audiences ever gathered in the hall.

Humor Under Difficulties

Here is another experience of the same period while I was pursuing the same exalted purpose:

I arrived in a little town in Eastern Ontario, and found to my horror that I was billed to “appear” *in a church*. I was to give readings from my works and my books are supposed to be of a humorous character. A church hardly seemed to be the right place to get funny in. I explained my difficulty to the pastor of the church, a very solemn-looking man. He nodded his head, slowly and gravely, as he grasped my difficulty. “I see,” he said, “I see, but I think I can introduce you to our people in such a way as to make that all right.”

When the time came, he led me up on to the pulpit platform of the church, just beside and below the pulpit itself, with a reading desk with a big bible and a shaded light beside it. It was a big church, and the audience, sitting in half darkness, as is customary during a sermon, reached away back into the gloom. The place was packed full and absolutely silent.

Then the chairman spoke:

“Dear friends,” he said, “I want you to understand that to-night it will be all right to laugh. Let me hear you laugh heartily, laugh right out, just as much as ever you want to. Because,”—and here his voice assumed the deep sepulchral tone of the preacher, “when we think of the noble object for which the professor appears to-night, we may be assured that the Lord will forgive anyone who laughs at the professor.”

I am sorry to say, however, that none of the audience, even with the plenary absolution in advance, were inclined to take a chance upon it.

The Chairman With the Afterthought

I recall in this same connection the chairman of a meeting at Burlington, Vermont. He represented the type of chairman who turns up so late at the meeting that the committee in charge have no time to explain to him properly what the meeting is about, or who the speaker is. I noticed on this occasion that he introduced me very guardedly by name (from a little card) and said nothing about the Belgians, and nothing about my being (supposed to be) a humorist. This last was a great error. The audience for want of guidance remained very silent and decorous, and well behaved during my talk. Then, somehow, at the end, while somebody was moving thanks, the chairman discovered his error. So he tried to make it good. Just as the audience were getting up to put on their wraps, he rose and knocked on his desk and said:

“Just a minute, please, ladies and gentlemen, just a minute. I have just found out—I should have known it sooner, but I was late in coming to this meeting—that the speaker who has just addressed you has done so in behalf of the Belgian Relief Fund. I understand that he is a well-known Canadian humorist (ha! ha!) and I am sure that we have all been immensely amused (ha! ha!). He is giving his delightful talks (ha! ha!) though I didn’t know this till just this minute—for the Belgian Relief Fund, and he is giving his services for nothing. I am sure when we realize this, we shall all feel that it has been well worth while to come. I am only sorry that we didn’t have a better turn-out to-night. But I can assure the speaker that if he will come to Burlington *again*, we shall guarantee him a capacity audience. And may I say, that if there are any members of this association who have not paid their dollar this season, they can give it either to myself or to Mr. Whittan, as they pass out.”

RECONSTRUCTION *in* TURKEY

By Stephen Leacock

ILLUSTRATED BY C. W. JEFFERYS



... Some of the most skilled labor in Turkey.

In a recent issue of this magazine I described my visit to Berlin as it is under the Bolsheviks. On the very day following the events there related, I was surprised and delighted to receive a telegram which read "Come on to Constantinople and write us up too." From the signature I saw that the message was from my old friend, Abdul Aziz the Sultan.

I had visited him—as of course my readers will instantly recollect—during the height of the war, and the circumstances of my departure had been such that I should have scarcely ventured to repeat my visit without this express invitation. But on receipt of it, I set out at once by rail for Constantinople.

I was delighted to find that under the new order of things in going from Berlin to Constantinople it was no longer necessary to travel through the barbarous and brutal populations of Germany, Austria and Hungary. The way now runs, though I believe the actual railroad is the same, through the Thuringian Republic, Czecho-Slovakia and Magyaria. It was a source of deep satisfaction to see the scowling and hostile countenances of Germans, Austrians and Hungarians replaced by the cheerful and honest faces of the Thuringians, the

Czecho-Slovaks and the Magyarians. Moreover I was assured on all sides that if these faces are not perfectly satisfactory, they will be altered in any way required.

It was very pleasant, too, to find myself once again in the flagstoned halls of the Yildiz Kiosk, the Sultan's palace. My little friend, Abdul Aziz, rose at once from his cushioned divan under a lemon tree and came shuffling in his big slippers to meet me, a smile of welcome on his face. He seemed, to my surprise, radiant with happiness. The disasters attributed by the Allied press to his unhappy country appeared to sit lightly on the little man.

"How is everything going in Turkey?" I asked as we sat down side by side on the cushions.

"Splendid," said Abdul. "I suppose you've heard that we're bankrupt?"

"Bankrupt!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," continued the Sultan, rubbing his hands together with positive enjoyment, "we can't pay a cent: isn't it great? Have some champagne?"



"We can't pay a cent. Isn't it great?"

He clapped his hands together and a turbaned attendant appeared with wine on a tray which he served into long-necked glasses.

“I’d rather have tea,” I said.

“No, no, don’t take tea,” he protested. “We’ve practically cut out afternoon tea here. It’s part of our Turkish thrift movement. We’re taking champagne instead. Tell me, have you a Thrift Movement like that where you come from—Canada, I think it is, isn’t it?”

“Yes,” I answered, “we have one just like that.”

“This war finance is glorious stuff, isn’t it?” continued the Sultan. “How much do you think we owe?”

“I haven’t an idea,” I said.

“Wait a minute,” said Abdul.

He touched a bell and at the sound of it there came shuffling into the room my venerable old acquaintance, Toomuch Koffi, the Royal Secretary. But to my surprise he no longer wore his patriarchal beard, his flowing robe and his girdle. He was clean shaven and close cropped and dressed in a short jacket like an American bell boy.

“You remember Toomuch, I think,” said Abdul. “I’ve reconstructed him a little, as you see.”



"I've reconstructed him a little, you see."

"The Peace of Allah be upon thine head," said Toomuch Koffi to the Sultan, commencing a deep salaam; "what wish sits behind thy forehead that thou shouldst ring the bell for this humble creature of clay to come into the sunlight of thy presence? Tell me, Oh Lord, if perchance—"

"Here, here," interrupted the Sultan impatiently, "cut all that stuff out, please. That ancient courtesy business won't do, not if this country is to reconstruct itself and come abreast of the great modern democracies. Say to me simply 'What's the trouble?'"

Toomuch bowed, and Abdul continued. "Look in your tablets and see how much our public debt amounts to in American dollars."

The Secretary drew forth his tablets, and bowed his head a moment in some perplexity over the figures that were scribbled on them. "Multiplication," I heard him murmur, "is an act of the grace of heaven; let me invoke a blessing on five, the perfect number, whereby the Pound Turkish is distributed into the American dollar."

He remained for a few moments with his eyes turned, as if in supplication, towards the vaulted ceiling.

"Have you got it?" asked Abdul.

"Yes."

"And what do we owe, adding it all together?"

"Forty billion dollars," said Toomuch.

"Isn't that wonderful!" exclaimed Abdul, with delight radiating over his countenance. "Who would have thought that before the war! Forty billion dollars! Aren't we the financiers? Aren't we the bulwark of monetary power? Can you touch that in Canada?"

"No," I said, "we can't. We don't owe two billion yet."

"Oh, never mind, never mind," said the little man in a consoling tone. "You are only a young country yet. You'll do better later on. And in any case I am sure, you are just as proud of your one billion as we are of our forty."

"Oh, yes," I said, "we certainly are."

"Come, come, that's something anyway. You're on the right track, and you must not be discouraged if you're not up to the Turkish standard yet. You must remember, as I told you before, that Turkey leads the world in all ideas of government and finance. Take the present situation. Here we are, bankrupt—pass me the champagne, Toomuch, and sit down with us—the very first nation of the lot. It's a great feather in the cap of our financiers. It gives us a splendid start for the new era of reconstruction that we are beginning on. As you perhaps have hard we are all hugely busy about it. You notice my books and papers, do you not?" the Sultan added very proudly, waving his hand towards a great pile of blue books, pamphlets and documents that were heaped upon the floor beside him.

"Why! I never knew before that you ever read anything!" I exclaimed in amazement.

"Never did. But everything's changed now, isn't it, Toomuch? I sit and work here for hours every morning. It's become a delight to me. After all," said Abdul, lighting a big cigar and sticking up his feet on his pile of papers with an air of the deepest comfort, "what is there like work? So stimulating, so satisfying. I sit here working away, just like this, most of the day. There's nothing like it."

"What are you working at?" I asked.

"Reconstruction," said the little man, puffing a big cloud from his cigar, "reconstruction."

"What kind of reconstruction?"

"All kinds—financial, industrial, political, social. It's great stuff. By the way," he continued with great animation, "would you like to be my Minister of Labor? No? Well, I'm sorry. I half hoped you would. We're having no luck with them. The last one was thrown into

the Bosphorus on Monday. Here's the report on it—no, that's the one on the shooting of the Minister of Religion—ah! here it is—Report on the Drowning of the Minister of Labor. Let me read you a bit of this: I call this one of the best reports, of its kind, that has come in."

"No, no," I said, "don't bother to read it. Just tell me who did it and why."

"Workingmen," said the Sultan, very cheerfully, "a delegation. They withheld their reasons."

"So you are having labor troubles here too?" I asked.

"Labor troubles!" exclaimed the little Sultan, rolling up his eyes. "I should say so. The whole of Turkey is bubbling with labor unrest like the rosewater in a narghile. Look at your tablets, Toomuch, and tell me what new strikes there have been this morning."

The aged Secretary fumbled with his notes and began to murmur—"Truly will I try, with the aid of Allah—"

"Now, now," said Abdul warningly, "that won't do. Say simply 'Sure.' Now tell me."

The Secretary looked at a little list and read: "The strikes of to-day comprise—the wigmakers, the dog fanciers, the conjurers, the snake charmers, and the soothsayers."

"You hear that," said Abdul proudly. "That represents some of the most skilled labor in Turkey."

"I suppose it does," I said, "but tell me, Abdul—what about the really necessary trades, the coal miners, the steel workers, the textile operatives, the farmers, and the railway people. Are they working?"

The little Sultan threw himself back on his cushions in a paroxysm of laughter, in which even his ancient Secretary was feign to join.

"My dear sir, my dear sir!" he laughed. "Don't make me die of laughter. Working! Those people working! Surely you don't think we are so behindhand in Turkey as all that! All those workers stopped absolutely months ago. It is doubtful if they'll ever work again. There's a strong movement in Turkey to abolish all necessary work altogether."

"But who then," I asked, "is working?"

"Look on the tablets, Toomuch, and see."

The aged Secretary bowed, and turned over the leaves of his "tablets," which I now perceived, on a closer view, to be merely an American ten cent memorandum book. Then he read:

"The following, oh All Highest, still work—the beggars, the poets, the missionaries, the Salvation Army, and the instructors of the Youths of Light in the American Presbyterian College."

"But, dear me, Abdul," I exclaimed, "Surely this situation is desperate? What can your nation subsist on in such a situation?"

"Pooh, pooh," said the Sultan. "The interest on our debt alone is two billion a year. Everybody in Turkey, great or small, holds bonds to some extent. At the worst they can all live fairly well on the interest. This is finance, is it not, Toomuch Koffi?"

"The very best and latest," said the aged man with a profound salaam.

"But what steps are you taking," I asked, "to remedy your labor troubles?"

"We are appointing commissions," said Abdul. "We appoint one for each new labor problem. How many yesterday, Toomuch?"

"Forty-three," answered the secretary.

"That's below our average, is it not?" said Abdul a little anxiously. "Try to keep it up to fifty if you can. We must not fall behind you in Canada."

"And these commissions, what do they do?"

"They make Reports," said Abdul, beginning to yawn as if the continued brain exercise of conversation were fatiguing his intellect, "excellent reports. We have had some that are said to be perfect models of the very best Turkish."

"And what do they recommend?"

"I don't know," said the Sultan. "We don't read them for that. We like to read them simply as Turkish."

"But what," I urged, "do you do with them? What steps do you take?"

"We send them all," replied the little man, puffing at his pipe and growing obviously drowsy as he spoke, "to Woodrow Wilson. He can deal with them. He is the great conciliator of the world. Let him have—how do you say it in English, it is a Turkish phrase?—let him have his stomach full of conciliation."

Abdul dozed on his cushions for a moment. Then he reopened his eyes. "Is there anything else you want to know," he asked, "before I retire to the inner harem?"

"Just one thing," I said, "if you don't mind. How do you stand internationally? Are you coming into the new League of Nations?"

The Sultan shook his head.

"No," he said, "we're not coming in. We are starting a new league of our own."

"And who are in it?"

"Ourselves, and the Armenians—and let me see—the Irish, are they not, Toomuch?—and the Bulgarians—are there any others, Toomuch?"

"There is talk," said the secretary, "of the Yuko-Hebrovians and the Scarooovians—"

"Who are they?" I asked.

"We don't know," said Abdul, testily. "They wrote to us. They seem all right. Haven't you got a lot of people in your league that you never heard of?"

"I see," I said. "And what is the scheme that your league is formed on?"

"Very simple," said the Sultan. "Each member of the league gives word to all the other members. Then they all take an oath together. Then they all sign it. That is absolutely binding."

He rolled back on his cushions in an evident state of boredom and weariness.

"But surely," I protested, "you don't think that a league of that sort can keep the peace?"

"Peace!" exclaimed Abdul waking into sudden astonishment. "Peace! I should think not! Our league is for war. Every member gives its word that at the first convenient opportunity it will knock the stuffing out of any of the others that it can."

The little Sultan again subsided. Then he rose, with some difficulty, from his cushions.

"Toomuch," he said, "take our inquisitive friend out into the town; take him to the Bosphorus; take him to the island where the dogs are; take him anywhere." He paused to whisper a few instructions into the ear of the Secretary. "You understand," he said, "well, take him. As for me,"—he gave a great yawn as he shuffled away, "I am about to withdraw into my inner harem. Good-bye. I regret that I cannot invite you in."

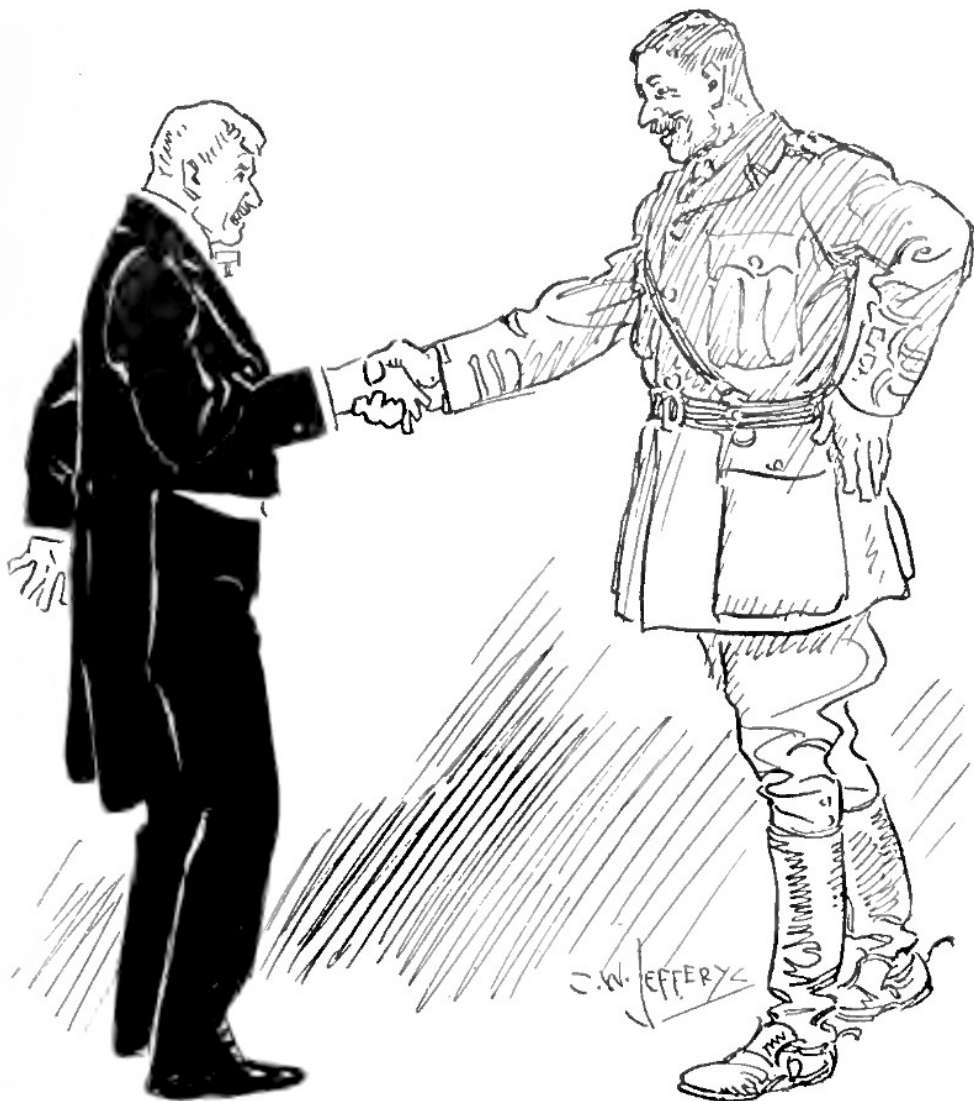
"So do I," I said. "Good-bye."

MY MEMORIES *and* MISERIES *As a* SCHOOLMASTER

By STEPHEN LEACOCK

Author of "The Hohenzollerns in America," "Further Foolishness," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY C. W. JEFFERYS



"You licked me at Upper Canada College."

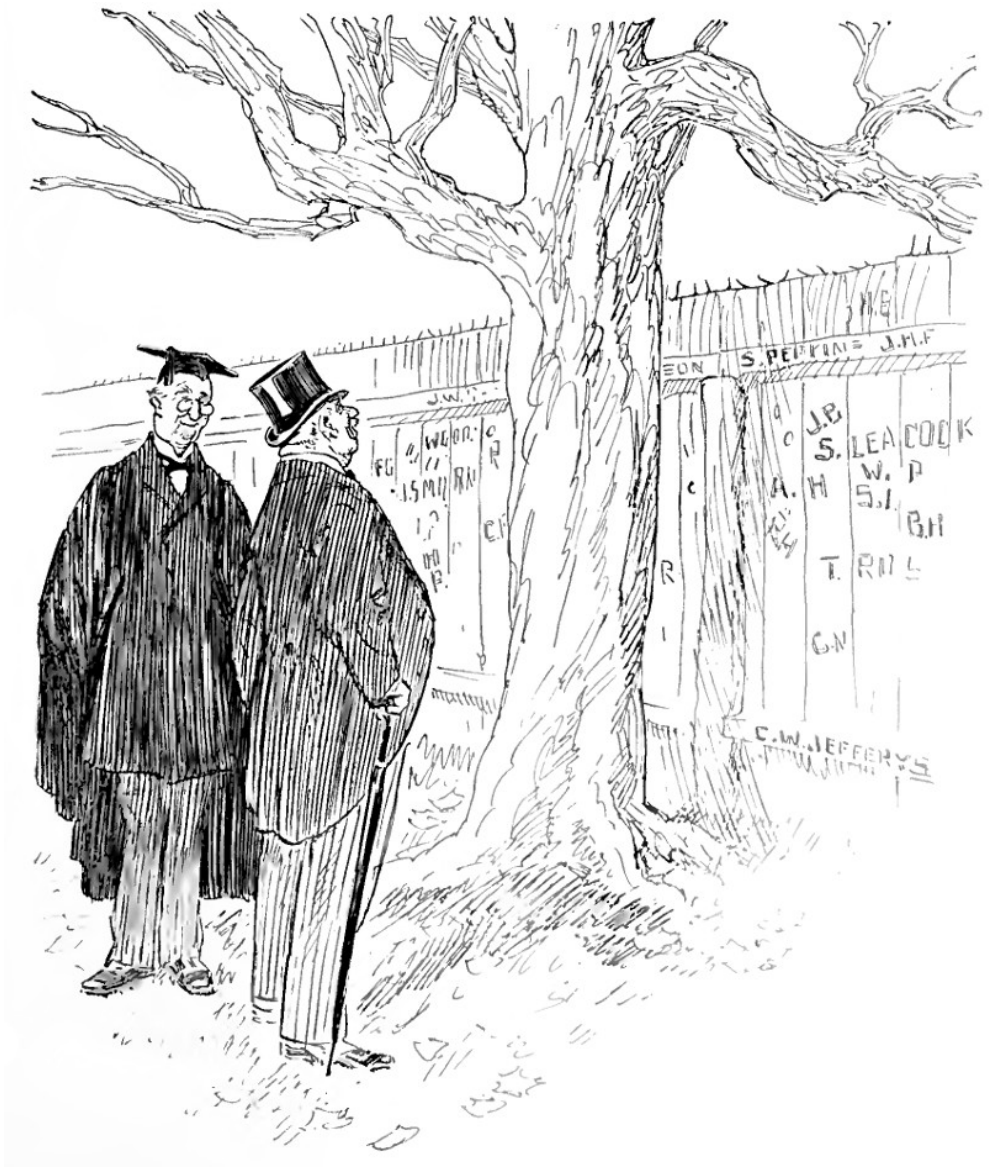
For ten years I was a schoolmaster. Just thirty years ago I was appointed on to the staff of a great Canadian school. It took me ten years to get off it. Being appointed to the position of a

teacher is just as if Fate passed a hook through one's braces and hung one up against the wall. It is hard to get down again.

From those ten years I carried away nothing in money and little in experience; indeed, no other asset whatever, unless it be, here and there, a pleasant memory or two and the gratitude of my former pupils. There was nothing really in my case for them to be grateful about. They got nothing from me in the way of intellectual food, but a lean and perfunctory banquet; and anything that I gave them in the way of sound moral benefit I gave gladly and never missed.

But school boys have a way of being grateful. It is the decent thing about them. A school boy, while he is at school, regards his masters as a mixed assortment of tyrants and freaks. He plans vaguely that at some future time in life he will "get even" with them. I remember well, for instance, at the school where I used to teach, a little Chilian boy who kept a stiletto in his trunk with which he intended to kill the second mathematical master.

But somehow a schoolboy is no sooner done with his school and out in the business of life, than a soft haze of retrospect suffuses a new color over all that he has left behind. There is a mellow sound in the tones of the school bell that he never heard in his six years of attendance. There is a warmth in the color of the old red bricks that he never saw before; and such a charm and such a sadness in the brook or in the elm trees beside the school playground that he will stand beside them with a bowed and reverent head as in the silence of a cathedral. I have seen an "Old Boy" gaze into the open door of an empty class room and ask, "And those are the same old benches?" with a depth of meaning in his voice. He has been out of school perhaps five years and the benches already seem to him infinitely old. This, by the way, is the moment and this the mood in which the "Old Boy" may be touched for a subscription to the funds of the school. This *is* the way in fact, in which the sagacious head master does it. The foolish head master, who has not yet learned his business, takes the "Old Boy" round and shows him all the *new* things, the fine new swimming pool built since his day and the new gymnasium with up-to-date patent apparatus. But this is all wrong. There is nothing in it for the "Old Boy" but boredom. The wise head master takes him by the sleeve and says "Come"; he leads him out to a deserted corner of the playground and shows him an old tree behind an ash house and the old boy no sooner sees it than he says:



He takes him out to a deserted corner of the playground.

“Why, Great Caesar! that’s the same old tree that Jack McEwen and I used to climb up to hook out of bounds on Saturday night! Old Jimmy caught us at it one night and licked us both. And look here, here’s my name cut on the boarding at the back of the ash house. See? They used to fine us five cents a letter if they found it. Well, Well!”

The “Old Boy” is deep in his reminiscences examining the board fence, the tree and the ash house.

The wise head master does not interrupt him. He does not say that he knew all along that the “Old Boy’s” name was cut there and that that’s why he brought him to the spot. Least of

all does he tell him that the boys still “hook out of bounds” by this means and that he licked two of them for it last Saturday night. No, no, retrospect is too sacred for that. Let the “Old Boy” have his fill of it and when he is quite down and out with the burden of it, then as they walk back to the school building, the head master may pick a donation from him that falls like a ripe thimbleberry.

And most of all, by the queer contrariety of things, does this kindly retrospect envelop the person of the teachers. They are transported in the alchemy of time into a group of profound scholars, noble benefactors through whose teaching, had it been listened to, one might have been lifted into higher things. Boys who never listened to a Latin lesson in their lives look back to the memory of their Latin teacher as the one great man that they have known. In the days when he taught them they had no other idea than to put mud in his ink or to place a bent pin upon his chair. Yet they say now that he was the greatest scholar in the world and that if they’d only listened to him they would have got more out of his lessons than from any man that ever taught. He wasn’t and they wouldn’t—but it is some small consolation to those who have been schoolmasters to know that after it is too late this reward at least is coming to them.

Hence it comes about that even so indifferent a vessel as I should reap my share of schoolboy gratitude. Again and again it happens to me that some unknown man, well on in middle life, accosts me with a beaming face and says: “You don’t remember me. You licked me at Upper Canada College,” and we shake hands with a warmth and heartiness as if I had been his earliest benefactor. Very often if I am at an evening reception or anything of the sort, my hostess says, “Oh, there is a man here so anxious to meet you,” and I know at once why. Forward he comes, eagerly pushing his way among the people to seize my hand. “Do you remember me?” he says. “You licked me at Upper Canada College.” Sometimes I anticipate the greeting. As soon as the stranger grasps my hand and says, “Do you remember me?” I break in and say, “Why, let me see, surely I licked you at Upper Canada College.” In such a case the man’s delight is beyond all bounds. Can I lunch with him at his Club? Can I dine at his home? He wants his wife to see me. He has so often told her about having been licked by me that she too will be delighted.

I do not like to think that I was in any way brutal or harsh, beyond the practice of my time, in beating the boys I taught. Looking back on it, the whole practice of licking and being licked, seems to me mediaeval and out of date. Yet I do know that there are, apparently, boys that I have licked in all quarters of the globe. I get messages from them. A man says to me, “By the way, when I was out in Sumatra there was a man there that said he knew you. He said you licked him at Upper Canada College. He said he often thought of you.” I have licked, I believe, two Generals of the Canadian Army, three Cabinet Ministers, and more Colonels and Mayors than I care to count. Indeed all the boys that I have licked seem to be doing well.

I am stating here what is only simple fact, not exaggerated a bit. Any schoolmaster and every “Old Boy” will recognize it at once; and indeed I can vouch for the truth of this feeling on the part of the “Old Boys” all the better in that I have felt it myself. I always read Ralph Connor’s books with great interest for their own sake, but still more because, thirty-two years ago, the author “licked me at Upper Canada College.” I have never seen him since, but I often say to people from Winnipeg, “If you ever meet Ralph Connor—he’s Major Charles Gordon, you know—tell him that I was asking about him and would like to meet him. He licked me at Upper Canada College.”

But enough of “licking.” It is, I repeat, to me nowadays a painful and a disagreeable subject I can hardly understand how we could have done it. I am glad to believe that at the present time it has passed or is passing out of use. I understand that it is being largely replaced by “moral suasion.” This, I am sure, is a great deal better. But when I was a teacher moral suasion was just beginning at Upper Canada College. In fact I saw it tried only once. The man who tried it was a tall, gloomy-looking person, a university graduate in psychology. He is now a well-known Toronto lawyer, so I must not name him. He came to the school only as a temporary substitute for an absent teacher. He was offered a cane by the College janitor whose business it was to hand them round. But he refused it. He said that a moral appeal was better: he said that psychologically it set up an inhibition stronger than the physical. The first day that he taught—it was away up in a little room at the top of the old college building on King street—the boys merely threw paper wads at him and put bent pins on his seat. The next day they put hot bees-wax on his clothes and the day after that they brought screw drivers and unscrewed the little round seats of the class room and rolled them down the stairs. After that day the philosopher did not come back, but he has since written, I believe, a book called “Psychic Factors in Education”; which is very highly thought of.

But the opinion of the “Old Boy” about his teachers is only a part of his illusionment. The same peculiar haze of retrospect hangs about the size and shape and kind of boys who went to school when he was young as compared with the boys of to-day.

“How small they are!” is always the exclamation of the “Old Boy” when he looks over the rows and rows of boys sitting in the assembly hall. “Why, when I went to school the boys were ever so much bigger.”

After which he goes on to relate that when he first entered the school as a youngster (the period apparently of maximum size and growth), the boys in the sixth form had whiskers! These whiskers of the sixth form are a persistent and perennial school tradition that never dies. I have traced them, on personal record from eye-witnesses, all the way from 1829 when the college was founded until to-day. I remember well, during my time as a schoolmaster, receiving one day a parent, an “Old Boy” who came accompanied by a bright little son of twelve whom he was to enter at the school. The boy was sent to play about with some new acquaintances while I talked with his father.

“The old school,” he said in the course of our talk, “is greatly changed, very much altered. For one thing the boys are very much younger than they were in my time. Why, when I entered the school—though you will hardly believe it—the boys in the sixth form had whiskers!”

I had hardly finished expressing my astonishment and appreciation when the little son came back and went up to his father’s side and started whispering to him. “Say, dad,” he said, “there are some awfully big boys in this school. I saw out there in the hall some boys in the sixth form with whiskers.”

From which I deduced that what is whiskers to the eye of youth fades into fluff before the disillusioned eye of age. Nor is there need to widen the application or to draw the moral.

The parents of the boys at school naturally fill a broad page in the schoolmaster’s life and are responsible for many of his sorrows. There are all kinds and classes of them. Most acceptable to the schoolmaster is the old-fashioned type of British father who enters his boy at the school and says:

“Now I want this boy well thrashed if he doesn’t behave himself. If you have any trouble with him let me know and I’ll come and thrash him myself. He’s to have a shilling a week pocket money and if he spends more than that let me know and I’ll stop his money altogether.” Brutal though this speech sounds, the real effect of it is to create a strong prejudice in the little boy’s favor and when his father curtly says, “Good-bye, Jack,” and he answers, “Good-bye, father,” in a trembling voice, the schoolmaster would be a hound indeed who could be unkind to him.



"I've just given Jimmy fifty dollars."

But very different is the case of the up-to-date parent. "Now I've just given Jimmy fifty dollars," he says to the schoolmaster with the same tone as he would to an inferior clerk in his office, "and I've explained to him that when he wants more he's to tell you to go to the bank and draw for him what he needs." After which he goes on to explain that Jimmy is a boy of very peculiar disposition, requiring the greatest nicety of treatment; that they find if he gets in tempers the best way is to humor him and presently he'll come round. Jimmy, it appears can be led, if led gently, but never driven. During all of which time the schoolmaster, insulted by being treated as an underling, (for the iron bites deep into the soul of every one of them), has already fixed his eye on the undisciplined young pup called Jimmy with a view to trying out the problem of seeing whether he can't be driven after all.



But the greatest nuisance of all to the schoolmaster is the parent who does his boy's home exercises and works his boy's sums. I suppose they mean well by it. But it is a disastrous thing to do for any child. Whenever I found myself correcting exercises that had obviously been done for the boys in their homes I used to say to them quite grandly:

"Paul, tell your father that he *must* use the ablative after pro."

"Yes, sir," says the boy.

"And Edward, you tell your grandmother that her use of the dative case simply won't do. She's getting along nicely and I'm well satisfied with the way she's doing, but I cannot have her using the dative right and left on every occasion. Tell her it won't do."

"Yes, sir," says little Edward.

I remember one case in particular of a parent who did not do the boy's exercise but, after letting the boy do it himself, wrote across the face of it a withering comment addressed to me and reading: "From this exercise you can see that my boy, after six months of your teaching, is completely ignorant. How do you account for it?"

I sent the exercise back to him with the added note: "I think it must be hereditary."

In the whole round of the school year, there was, as I remember it, but one bright spot—the arrival of the summer holidays. Somehow as the day draws near for the school to break up for holidays, a certain touch of something human pervades the place. The masters lounge round in cricket flannels smoking cigarettes almost in the corridors of the school itself. The boys shout at the play in the long June evenings. At the hour when, on the murky winter nights, the bell rang for night study, the sun is still shining upon the playground and the cricket match between House and House is being played out between daylight and dark. The masters—good fellows that they are—have cancelled evening study to watch the game. The headmaster is there himself. He is smoking a briar-wood pipe and wearing his mortar-board sideways. There is wonderful greenness in the new grass of the playground and a wonderful fragrance in the evening air. It is the last day of school but one. Life is sweet indeed in the anticipation of this summer evening.

If every day in the life of a school could be the last day but one, there would be little fault to find with it.

Abdul Aziz Has His
The Adventures of a Canadian Professor in the Yildiz Kiosk

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," "Literary Lapses," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys



None of the rude Turkish soldiers had offered to lay a hand on me.

"Come, come, Abdul," I said, putting my hand, not unkindly on his shoulder, "tell me all about it."

But he only broke out into renewed sobbing.

"There, there," I said, soothingly. "Don't cry, Abdul. Look! Here's a lovely narghileh for you to smoke, with a gold mouthpiece. See! Wouldn't you like a little latakia, eh! And here's a little toy Armenian—look! See his head comes off, snick! There, it's on again, snick! Now it's off! Look, Abdul!"

But still he sobbed.

His fez had fallen over his ears and his face was all smudged with tears.

It seemed impossible to stop him.

I looked about, in vain from the little alcove of the hall of the Yildiz Kiosk where we were sitting on a Persian bench under a lemon tree. There was no one in sight. I hardly knew what to do.

In the Yildiz Kiosk—I think that was the name of the place—I scarcely as yet knew my way about. In fact, I had only been in it a few hours. I had come there—as I should have explained in commencing—in order to try to pick up information as to the exact condition of things in Turkey. For this purpose I had assumed the character and disguise of an English governess. I had long since remarked that an English governess is able to go anywhere, see everything, penetrate the interior of any royal palace and move to and fro as she pleases without hindrance and without insult. No barrier can stop her. Every royal court, however splendid or however exclusive, is glad to get her. She dines with the King or the Emperor as a matter of course. All state secrets are freely confided to her and all military plans are submitted to her judgment. Then, after a three weeks' residence, she leaves the court and writes a book of disclosures.

This was now my plan.

And up to the moment of which I speak, it had worked perfectly.

I had found my way through Turkey to the royal capital without difficulty. The poke bonnet, the spectacles and the long black dress which I had assumed had proved an ample protection. None of the rude Turkish soldiers among whom I had passed had offered to lay a hand on me. This tribute I am compelled to pay to the splendid morality of the Turks. They wouldn't touch me.

Access to the Yildiz Kiosk and to the Sultan had proved equally easy. I had merely to obtain an interview with Codfish Pasha, the Secretary of War, whom I found a charming man of great intelligence, a master of three or four languages (as he himself informed me) and able to count up to seventeen.

"You wish," he said, "to be appointed as English, or rather Canadian governess to the Sultan?"

"Yes," I answered.

"And your object?"

"I propose to write a book of disclosures."

"Excellent," said Codfish.

An hour later I found myself, as I have said, in a flagstoned hall of the Yildiz Kiosk, with the task of amusing and entertaining the Sultan.

Of the difficulty of this task I had formed no conception. Here I was at the outset, with the unhappy Abdul bent and broken with sobs which I found no power to check or control.

Naturally, therefore, I found myself at a loss. The little man as he sat on his cushions, in his queer costume and his long slippers, with his fez fallen over his lemon colored face, presented such a pathetic object that I could not find the heart to be stern with him.

“Come, now, Abdul,” I said, “Be good!”

He paused a moment in his crying:

“Why do you call me, Abdul?” he asked. “That isn’t my name.”

“Isn’t it?” I said. “I thought all you Sultans were called Abdul. Isn’t the Sultan’s name always Abdul?”

“Mine isn’t,” he whimpered, “but it doesn’t matter.” And his face began to crinkle up with renewed weeping. “Call me anything you like. It doesn’t matter. Anyway I’d rather be called Abdul than be called a W-W-War Lord and a G-G-General when they wont let me have any say at all——”



"Majestät!" he said, "Salaam! I kiss the floor at your feet."

And with that the little Sultan burst into unrestrained crying.

"Abdul," I said firmly, "if you don't stop crying I'll go and fetch one of the Bashi Bazooks to take you away."

The little Sultan found his voice again. "There aren't any Bub-bub-bashi bazooks left," he sobbed.

"None left?" I exclaimed. "Where are they gone?"

“They’ve t-t-taken them all aw-w-way—”

“Who have?”

“The G-G-G-Germans,” sobbed Abdul. “And they’ve sent them all to P-P-P-Poland.”

“Come, come, Abdul,” I said, straightening him up a little as he sat “Brace up! Be a Turk! Be a Mohammedan! Don’t act like a Christian.”

This seemed to touch his pride. He made a great effort to be calm. I could hear him muttering to himself: “Allah, Illallah, Mahommed rasoul Allah!” He said this over a good many times, while I took advantage of the pause to get his fez a little straighter and wipe his face.

“How many times have I said it?” he asked presently.

“Twenty.”

“Twenty? That ought to be enough, shouldn’t it?” said the Sultan, regaining himself a little. “Isn’t prayer helpful, eh? Give me a smoke?”

I filled his narghileh for him, and he began to suck blue smoke out of it with a certain contentment, while the rose water bubbled in the bowl below.

“Now, Abdul,” I said, as I straightened up his cushions and made him a little more comfortable, “what is it? What is the matter?”

“Why,” he answered, “they’ve all g-g-gone—”

“Now, don’t cry! Tell me properly.”

“They’ve all gone b-b-back on me! Boo! hoo!”

“Who have? Who’ve gone back on you?”

“Why, everybody. The English and the French and everybody.”

“What *do* you mean?” I asked with increasing interest. “Tell me exactly what you mean. Whatever you say I will hold sacred, of course.”

I saw my way already to a volume of interesting disclosures.

“They used to treat me so differently,” Abdul went on, and his sobbing ceased as he continued. “They used to call me the Bully Boy of the Bosphorus. They said I was the Guardian of the Golden Gate. They used to let me kill all the Armenians I liked, and nobody was allowed to collect debts from me and every now and then they used to send me the nicest ultimatums—Oh! you don’t know,” he broke off, “how nice it used to be here in the Yildiz in the old days! We used to all sit round here, in this very hall, me and the Diplomats—and play games, such as ‘Ultimatum, ultimatum, who’s got the Ultimatum.’ Oh, say, it was so nice and peaceful! And we used to have big dinners and conferences, especially after the military manoeuvres and the autumn massacres—me and the diplomats all with stars and orders, and me in my white fez with a copper tassel—and hold discussions about how to reform Macedonia.”

“But you spoilt it all, Abdul,” I protested.

“I didn’t, I didn’t!” he exclaimed almost angrily. “I’d have gone on for ever. It was all so nice. They used to present me—the diplomats did—with what they called their Minimum, and then we (I mean Codfish Pasha and me) had to draft in return our Maximum—see?—and then we all had to get together again and frame a *status quo*.”

“But that couldn’t go on for ever,” I urged.

“Why not,” said Abdul. “It was a great system. We invented it, but everybody was beginning to copy it. In fact, we were leading the world, before all this trouble came. Didn’t you have anything of our system in your country—what do you call it—in Canada?”

“Yes,” I admitted, “now that I come to think of it, we were getting into it. But the war has changed it all—”

“Exactly,” said Abdul, “there you are! All changed! The good old days, gone forever!”

“But surely,” I said, “you still have friends—the Bulgarians.”

The Sultan’s little black eyes flashed with anger as he withdrew his pipe a moment from his mouth.

“The low scoundrels!” he said between his teeth. “The traitors!”

“Why, they’re your Allies!”

“Yes, Allah destroy them! They are. They’ve come over to our side. After centuries of fighting they refuse to play fair any longer. They’re on *our* side! Who ever heard of such a thing. Bah! But, of course,” he added more quietly, “we shall massacre them just the same. We shall insist, in the terms of peace, on retaining our rights of massacre. But then, of course, all the nations will.”

“But you have the Germans”—I began.

“Hush, hush,” said Abdul, laying his hand on my arm, “some one might hear.”

“You have the Germans,” I repeated.

“The Germans,” said Abdul, and his voice sounded in a queer sing-song like that of a child repeating a lesson, “the Germans are my noble friends, the Germans are my powerful allies, the Kaiser is my good brother, the Reichstag is my foster sister; I love the Germans; I hate the English; I love the Kaiser; the Kaiser loves me—”

“Stop, stop, Abdul,” I said, “Who taught you all that?”

Abdul looked cautiously around.

“*They* did,” he said in a whisper. “There’s a lot more of it. Would you like me to recite some more. Or, no, no, no, what’s the good! I’ve no heart for reciting any longer.” And at this Abdul fell to weeping again.

“But Abdul,” I said, “I don’t understand. Why are you so distressed just now. All this has been going on for over two years. Why are you so worried just now?”

“Oh,” exclaimed the little Sultan in surprise, “you haven’t heard! I see—you’ve only just arrived. Why, to-day is the last day. After to-day it is all over.”

“Last day for what?” I asked.

“For intervention. For the intervention of the United States. The only thing that can save us. It was to have come to-day, by the end of this full moon—our astrologers had predicted it—Smith Pasha, Minister under Heaven of the United States, had promised to send it to us at the earliest moment. How do they send it, do you know, in a box, or in a paper?”

“Stop,” I said as my ear caught the sound of footsteps. “There’s someone coming now.”

The sound of slippared feet was distinctly heard on the stones in the outer corridor.

Abdul listened intently a moment.

“I know his slippers,” he said.

“Who is it?”

“It is my chief secretary, Toomuch Koffi. Yes, here he comes.”

As the Sultan spoke the doors swung open and there entered an aged Turk, in a flowing gown and colored turban, with a melancholy yellow face, and a long white beard that swept to his girdle.

“Who do you say he is?” I whispered to Abdul.

"My chief secretary," he whispered back. "Toomuch Koffi."

"He looks like it," I murmured.

Meantime, Toomuch Koffi had advanced a little further across the broad flagstones of the hall where we were sitting. With hands lifted he salaamed four times, east, west, north, and south.

"What does that mean?" I whispered.

"It means," said the Sultan, with visible agitation, "that he has a communication of the greatest importance and urgency, which will not brook a moment's delay."

"Well, then, why doesn't he get a move on?" I whispered.

"Hush," said Abdul.

Toomuch Koffi now straightened himself from his last salaam and spoke:

"Allah is great!" he said.

"And Mohammed is his prophet," rejoined the Sultan.

"Allah protect you! And make your face shine," said Toomuch.

"Allah lengthen your beard," said the Sultan; and he added aside to me in English, which Toomuch Koffi evidently did not understand, "I'm all eagerness to know what it is—it's something big, for sure." The little man was quite quivering with excitement, as he spoke. "Do you know what I think it is? I think it must be the American Intervention. The United States is going to intervene. Eh? What? Don't you think so?"

"Then hurry him up," I urged.

"I can't," said Abdul. "It is impossible in Turkey to do business like that. He must have some coffee first and then he must pray and then there must be an interchange of presents."

I groaned, for I was getting as impatient as Abdul himself.

"Do you not do public business like that in Canada?" the Sultan continued.

"We used to. But we have got over it," I said.

Meanwhile a slippered attendant had entered and placed a cushion for the Secretary, and in front of it a little Persian stool on which he put a quaint cup filled with coffee black as ink.

A similar cup was placed before the Sultan.

"Drink!" said Abdul.

"Not first, until the lips of the Commander of the Faithful——"

"He means 'after you,' " I said. "Hurry up, Abdul."

Abdul took a sip. "Allah is good," he said.

"And all things are of Allah," rejoined Toomuch.

Abdul unpinning a glittering jewel from his robe and threw it to the feet of Toomuch: "Take this poor bauble," he said.

Toomuch Koffi in return took from his wrist a solid bangle of beaten gold. "Accept this mean gift from your humble servant," he said.

"Right!" said Abdul, speaking in a changed voice as the ceremonies ended. "Now, then, Toomuch, what is it? Hurry up. Be quick, what is the matter?"

Toomuch rose to his feet, lifted his hands high in the air with palms facing the Sultan.

"One is without," he said.

"Without what?" I asked, eagerly, of the Sultan.

"Without—outside, don't you understand Turkish? What you call in English—a gentleman to see me."

“And did he make all that fuss and delay over that?” I asked in disgust. “Why with us in Canada at one of the public departments at Ottawa all that one would have to do would be to send in a card, get it certified, wait in an anteroom, read a newspaper, send in another card, wait a little, send in a third, and then——”

“Pshaw!” said Abdul. “The cards might be poisoned. Our system is best. Speak on, Toomuch. Who is without? Is it perchance a messenger from Smith Pasha, Minister under Heaven of the United States?”

“Alas, no!” said Toomuch. “It is HE. It is THE LARGE ONE!”

As he spoke he rolled his eyes upward with a gesture of despair.

“HE!” cried Abdul, and a look of terror convulsed his face. “The Large One! Shut him out! Call the Chief Eunuch and the Major Domo of the Harem! Let him not in!”

“Alas,” said Toomuch. “He threw them out of the window. Lo! He is here. He enters.”

As the Secretary spoke a double door at the end of the hall swung noisily open, at the blow of an imperious fist and, with a rattle of arms and accoutrements, a man of gigantic stature, wearing full military uniform and a spiked helmet, strode into the room.

As he entered, an attendant, also with a uniform and a spiked helmet, who accompanied him, called in a loud strident voice that resounded to the arches of the hall.

“His High Excellenz Feld Marechal von der Doppelbauch, Spezial Representät of His Majestät William II., Deutschen Kaiser and King of England!”

Abdul collapsed into a little heap. His fez fell over his face. Toomuch Koffi had slunk into a corner.

Von der Doppelbauch strode noisily forward and came to a stand in front of Abdul with a click and rattle after the Prussian fashion.

“Majestät,” he said in a deep thunderous voice. “I greet you. I bow low before you. Salaam! I kiss the floor at your feet.”

But in reality he did nothing of the sort. He stood to the full height of his six feet six and glowered about him.

“Salaam!” said Abdul, in a feeble voice.

“But who is this?” added the Feld Marechal, looking angrily at me. My costume, or rather my disguise, for, as I have said, I was wearing a poke bonnet with a plain black dress—seemed to puzzle him.

“My new governess,” said Abdul. “She came this morning. She is a professor——”

“Bah!” said the Feld Marechal. “A *woman* a professor! Bah!”

“No, no,” said Abdul in protest, and it seemed decent of the little creature to stick up for me. “She’s all right. She is interesting and knows a great deal. She’s from Canada!”

“What!” exclaimed von der Doppelbauch. “From Canada! But stop! It seems to me that Canada is a country that we are at war with. Let me think, Canada? I must look at my list.” He pulled out a little set of tablets as he spoke. “Let me see—Britain, Great Britain, British North America, British Guiana, British Algeria—Ha! Of course, under “K”—Kandahar, Korfu—no, I don’t seem to see it. Fritz,” he called to the aide-de-camp who had announced him. “Telegraph at once to the Topographical Staff at Berlin and find out if we are at war with Canada. If we are”—he pointed at me—“throw her into the Bosphorus. If we are not, treat her with every consideration, with every distinguished consideration. But see that she doesn’t get

away. Keep her tight, till we *are* at war with Canada, as no doubt we shall be, wherever it is, and *then* throw her into the Bosphorus.”

The aide clicked his heels and withdrew.

“And now, your Majesty, now,” continued the Field Marshall turning abruptly to the Sultan. “I bring you good news.”

“More good news,” groaned Abdul miserably, winding his clasped fingers too and fro. “Alas! Good news again!”

“First,” said von der Doppelbauch, “the Kaiser has raised you to the order of the Black Cock. Here is your feather.”

“Another feather,” moaned Abdul. “Here! Toomuch, take it and put it among the feathers!”

“Secondly,” went on the Field Marshall, checking off his items as he spoke. “Your contribution, your personal contribution, to His Majesty’s Twenty-third Imperial Loan is accepted.”



"Notify Fatima and Falloola. These two alone shall go. Two wives, I understand, is the limit!"

"I didn't make any!" sobbed Abdul.

"No difference," said von der Doppelbauch. "It is accepted anyway. The telegram has just arrived accepting all your money. My assistants are packing it outside."

Abdul collapsed still further into his cushions.

"Third—and this will rejoice your Majesty's heart. Your troops are again victorious!"

"Victorious!" moaned Abdul. "Victorious again! I knew they would be! I suppose they are all dead as usual?"

"They are," said the Marshall. "Their souls," he added reverently with a military salute, "are in Heaven!"

"No, no," gasped Abdul, "not in Heaven! Don't say that! Not in Heaven! Say that they are in Nirhvâna, our Turkish paradise!"

"I am sorry," said the Field Marshall, gravely. "This is a Christian war. The Kaiser has insisted on their going to Heaven."

The Sultan bowed his head. "Ishmillah!" he murmured. "It is the will of Allah."

"But they did not die without glory," went on the Field Marshall. "Their victory was complete. Set it out to yourself——" And here his eyes glittered with soldierly passion. "There stood your troops—ten thousand! In front of them the Russians—a hundred thousand. What did your men do? Did they pause? No, they charged!"

"They charged!" cried the Sultan in misery. "Don't say that! Have they charged again! Just Allah!" he added, turning to Toomuch. "They have charged again! And we must pay, we shall have to pay—we always do when they charge—Alas, alas, they have charged again. Everything is charged!"

"But how nobly," rejoined the Prussian. "Imagine it to yourself! Here, beside this stool, let us say, were your men. There, across the cushion were the Russians. All the ground between was mined. We knew it. Our soldiers knew it. Even our staff knew it. Even Prinz Rattelwitz Halfstuff, our commander, knew it. But your soldiers did not. What did our Prinz do? The Prinz called for volunteers to charge over the ground. There was a great shout—from our men, our German regiments. He called again. There was another shout. He called still again. There was a third shout. Think of it! And again Prinz Halfstuff called and again they shouted."

"Who shouted?" asked the Sultan, gloomily.

"Our men, our Germans."

"Did my Turks shout?" asked Abdul.

"They did not. They were too busy tightening their belts and fixing their bayonets. But our generous fellows shouted for them. Then Prinz Halfstuff called out, 'The place of honor is for our Turkish brothers. Let them charge!' And all our men shouted again."

"And they charged?"

"They did—and were all gloriously blown up. A magnificent victory. The blowing up of the mines blocked all the ground, checked the Russians and enabled our men—by a pre-arranged rush—to advance backwards—taking up a new strategic——"

"Yes, yes," said Abdul. "I know—I have read of it, alas! only too often. And they are dead! Toomuch," he added, quietly, drawing a little pouch from his girdle. "Take this pouch of rubies and give them to the wives of the dead general of our division—one to each. He had, I think, but seventeen. Allah give him peace."

"Stop," said von der Doppelbauch, "I will take the rubies. I myself will charge myself with the task and will myself see that I do it myself. Give me them."

"Be it so, Toomuch," assented the Sultan humbly. "Give them to him."

"And now," continued the Field Marshall, "there is yet one other thing further still more." He drew a roll of paper from his pocket. "Toomuch," he said, "bring me yonder little table, with ink, quills and sand. I have here a manifesto for His Majesty to sign."

"No, no," cried Abdul in renewed alarm. "Not another manifesto. Not that! I signed one only last week."

"This is a new one," said the Field Marshall, as he lifted the table that Toomuch had brought, into place in front of the Sultan, and spread out the papers on it. "This is a better one. This is the best yet."

"What does it say?" said Abdul, peering at it miserably. "I can't read it. It's not in Turkish."

"It is your last word of proud defiance to all your enemies," said the Marshall.

"No, no," whined Abdul. "Not defiance. They might not understand."

"Here you declare," went on the Field Marshall, with his big finger on the text, "your irrevocable purpose. You swear that rather than submit you will hurl yourself into the Bosphorus."

"Where does it say that?" screamed Abdul.

"Here beside my thumb."

"I can't do it, I can't do it," moaned the little Sultan.

"More than that, further," went on the Prussian, quite undisturbed. "You state hereby your fixed resolve, rather than give in, to cast yourself from the highest pinnacle of the topmost minaret of this palace."

"Oh, not the highest, don't make it the highest," moaned Abdul.

"Your purpose is fixed. Nothing can alter it. Unless the Allied Powers withdraw from their advance on Constantinople you swear that within one hour you will fill your mouth with mud and burn yourself alive."

"Just Allah!" cried the Sultan. "Does it say all that?"

"All that," said von der Doppelbauch. "All that within an hour. It is a splendid defiance. The Kaiser himself has seen it and admired it. 'There,' he said, 'are the words of a man!'"

"Did he say that?" said Abdul, evidently flattered. "And is he too about to hurl himself off his minaret?"

"For the moment, no," replied von der Doppelbauch, sternly.

"Well, well," said Abdul, and to my surprise he began picking up the pen and making ready. "I suppose if I must sign it, I must"—then he marked the paper and sprinkled it with sand. "For one hour? Well, well," he murmured. "Von der Doppelbauch Pasha," he added with dignity, "you are permitted to withdraw. Commend me to your Imperial Master, my brother. Tell him that when I am gone, he may have Constantinople, provided only"—and a certain slyness appeared in the Sultan's eye—"that he can get it. Farewell."

The Field Marshall, majestic as ever, gathered up the manifesto, clicked his heels together and withdrew.

As the door closed behind him, I had expected the little Sultan to collapse.

Not at all. On the contrary, a look of peculiar cheerfulness spread over his features.

He refilled his narghileh and began quietly smoking at it.

"Toomuch," he said, quite cheerfully. "I fear there is no hope."

"Alas!" said the secretary.

"I have now," went on the Sultan, "apparently but sixty minutes in front of me. I had hoped that the intervention of the United States might have saved me. It has not. Instead of it, I meet my fate. Well, well, it is Kismet. I bow to it."

He smoked away quite cheerfully.

Presently he paused.

"Toomuch," he said. "Kindly go and fetch me a sharp knife, double-edged if possible, but sharp, and a stout bowstring."

Up to this time I had remained a mere spectator of what had happened. But now I feared that I was on the brink of an awful tragedy.

"Good Heavens, Abdul!" I said, "what are you going to do?"

"Do? Why kill myself, of course," the Sultan answered, pausing for a moment in an interval of his cheerful smoking. "What else should I do? What else is there to do? I shall first stab myself in the stomach and then throttle myself with the bowstring. In half an hour I shall be in paradise. Toomuch, summon hither from the inner harem Fatima and Falloola. They shall sit beside me and sing to me at the last hour, for I love them well and later they too shall voyage with me to Paradise. See to it that they are both thrown a little later into the Bosphorus, for my heart yearns towards the two of them."

"And," he added thoughtfully, "especially perhaps towards Fatima, but I have never quite made up my mind."

The Sultan sat back with a little gurgle of contentment, the rose water bubbling soothingly in the bowl of his pipe.

Then he turned to his secretary again.

"Toomuch," he said, "you will at the same time send a bowstring to Codfish Pasha, my Chief of War. It is our sign, you know," he added in explanation to me. "It gives Codfish leave to kill himself. And, Toomuch, send a bowstring also to Beefhash Pasha, my Vizier—good fellow, he will expect it—and the Macpherson Effendi, my financial adviser—let them all have bowstrings."

"Stop, stop," I pleaded. "I don't understand."

"Why surely," said the little man, in evident astonishment. "It is plain enough. What would you do in Canada? When your ministers—as I think you call them—fail and no longer enjoy your support—do you not send them bowstrings?"

"Never," I said. "They go out of office but——"

"And they do not disembowel themselves on their retirement? Have they not that privilege?"

"Never!" I said. "What an idea!"

"The ways of the infidel," said the little Sultan, calmly resuming his pipe, "are beyond the compass of the true intelligence of the Faithful. Yet I thought it was so even as here. I had read in your newspapers that after one of your last elections your ministers were buried alive—buried under a landslide, was it not? We thought it—here in Turkey—a noble fate for them."

"They crawled out," I said.

"Ishmillah!" ejaculated Abdul. "But go, Toomuch. And listen—thou also—for, in spite of all, you have served me well—shalt have a bowstring."

"Oh! Master, master!" cried Toomuch, falling on his knees in gratitude and clutching the sole of Abdul's slipper. "It is too kind."

"Nay, nay," said the Sultan. "Thou hast deserved it. And I will go further. This stranger, too, my governess, this professor, bring also for the professor a bowstring, and a two-bladed knife! All Canada shall rejoice to hear of it. The students shall leap up like young lambs at the honor that will be done. Bring the knife, Toomuch, bring the knife!"

"Abdul," I said. "Abdul, this is too much. I refuse. I am not fit. The honor is too great."

"Not so," said Abdul. "I am still Sultan. I insist upon it. For listen, I have long penetrated your disguise and your kind design. I saw it from the first. You knew all and came to die with

me. It was kindly meant. But you shall die no common death. Yours shall be the honor of the double knife—let it be extra sharp, Toomuch—and the bowstring.”

“Abdul,” I urged. “It cannot be. You forget. I have an appointment to be thrown into the Bosphorus.”

“The death of a dog! Never!” cried Abdul. “My will is still law. Toomuch, kill him on the spot. Hit him with the stool, throw the coffee at him——”

But at this moment there were heard loud cries and shouting as in tones of great gladness, in the outer hall of the palace; doors swinging to and fro and the sound of many running feet. One heard above all the call: “It has come! It has come!”

The Sultan looked up quickly.

“Toomuch,” he said eagerly and anxiously, “quick, see what it is. Hurry! Hurry! Do not stay on ceremony. Drink a cup of coffee, give me five cents—fifty cents, anything—and take leave and see what it is.”

But, before Toomuch could reply, a turbaned attendant had already burst in through the door unannounced and thrown himself at Abdul’s feet.

“Master! Master!” he cried. “It is here. It has come.” As he spoke he held out in one hand a huge envelope, heavy with seals. I could detect in great letters stamped across it the words WASHINGTON and OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Abdul seized and opened the envelope with trembling hands.

“It is it!” he cried. “It is sent by Smith Pasha, Minister under the Peace of Heaven of the United States. It is the Intervention. I am saved.”

Then there was silence among us, breathless and anxious, as he read it.

Abdul glanced down the missive, reading it in silence to himself.

“Oh, noble,” he murmured. “Oh, generous! It is too much. Too splendid a lot!”

“What does it say?”

“Look,” said the Sultan. “The United States has used its good offices. It has intervened! All is settled. My fate is secure.”

“Yes, yes,” I said. “But what is it?”

“Is it believable?” exclaimed Abdul. “It appears that none of the belligerents cared about *me* at all. None had designs upon me. The war was *not* made, as we understand, Toomuch, as an attempt to seize my person. All they wanted was Constantinople. Not *me* at all!”

“Powerful Allah!” murmured Toomuch. “Why was it not so said?”

“For me,” said the Sultan, still consulting the letter, “great honors are prepared! I am to leave Constantinople—that is the sole condition. It shall then belong to whoever can get it. Nothing could be fairer. It always has. I am to have a safe conduct—is it not noble?—to the United States. No one is to attempt to poison me—is it not generosity itself—neither on land—nor even—mark this especially, Toomuch—on board ship. Nor is anyone to throw me overboard or otherwise transport me to Paradise.”

“It passes belief!” murmured Toomuch Koffi. “Allah is indeed good.”

“In the United States itself,” went on Abdul, “or, I should say, themselves, Toomuch—for are they not innumerable?—I am to have a position of the highest trust, power and responsibility.”

“Is it really possible?” I said, greatly surprised.

“It is so written,” said the Sultan. “I am to be placed at the head—as the sole head or sovereign of—how is it written?—a *Turkish Bath Establishment* in New York. There I am to

enjoy the same freedom and to exercise just as much—it is so written—exactly as much political power as I do here. Is it not glorious?”

“Allah! Illallah!” cried the Secretary.

“You, Toomuch, shall come with me, for there is a post of great importance placed at my disposal—so it is written—under the title of ‘Rubber Down.’ Toomuch, let our preparations be made at once. Notify Fatima and Falloola. Those two alone shall go. For it is a Christian country and I bow to its prejudices. Two, I understand, is the limit. But we must leave at once.”

The Sultan paused a moment and then looked at me.

“And our good friend here,” he added, “we must leave to get out of this Yildiz Kiosk by whatsoever magic means he came into it.”

Which I did.

And I am assured by those who know that the intervention was made good and that Abdul and Toomuch may be seen to this day, or to any other day, moving to and fro in their slippers and turbans in their Turkish Bath Emporium at the corner of Broadway and——

But stop, that would be saying too much. Especially as Fatima and Falloola occupy the upstairs.

And it is said that Abdul has developed a very special talent for heating up the temperature for his Christian customers.

Moreover, it is the general opinion that whether or not the Kaiser and such people will get their deserts, Abdul Aziz has his.

In Dry Toronto As Told by a Montreal Man

Stephen Leacock

Who wrote "Abdul Aziz Has His," "Germany From Within," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jeffreys

It may have been, for aught I know, the change from a wet to a dry atmosphere. I am told that, biologically, such things profoundly affect the human system.

At any rate I found it impossible that night—I was on the train from Montreal to Toronto—to fall asleep.

A peculiar wakefulness seemed to have seized upon me, which appeared, moreover, to afflict the other passengers as well. In the darkness of the car I could distinctly hear them groaning at intervals.

"Are they ill?" I asked, through the curtains, of the porter as he passed.

"No, sir," he said, "they're not ill. Those is the Toronto passengers."

"All in this car?" I asked.

"All except that gen'lman you may have heard singing in the smoking compartment. He's booked through to Chicago."

But, as is usual in such cases, sleep came at last with unusual heaviness. I seemed obliterated from the world, till, all of a sudden, I found myself, as it were, up and dressed and seated in the observation car at the back of the train, awaiting my arrival.

"Is this Toronto?" I asked of the Pullman conductor, as I peered through the window of the car.

The conductor rubbed the pane with his finger and looked out. "I think so," he said.

"Do we stop here?" I asked.

"I think we do this morning," he answered. "I think I heard the conductor say that they had a lot of milk cans to put off here this morning. I'll just go and find out, sir."

"Stop here!" broke in an irascible-looking gentleman in a grey tweed suit who was sitting in the next chair to mine. "Do they *stop* here? I should say they did indeed. Don't you know," he added, turning to the Pullman conductor, "that any train is *compelled* to stop here. There's a by-law, a municipal by-law of the City of Toronto, *compelling* every train to stop!"

"I didn't know it," said the conductor, humbly.

"Do you mean to say," continued the irascible gentleman, "that you have never read the by-laws of the City of Toronto?"

"No, sir," said the conductor.

"The ignorance of these fellows!" said the man in grey tweed, swinging his chair round again towards me. "We ought to have a by-law to compel them to read the by-laws. I must start an agitation for it at once." Here he took out a little red notebook and wrote something in it, murmuring: "We need a new agitation anyway."

Presently he shut the book up with a snap. I noticed that there was a sort of peculiar alacrity in everything he did.

"You, sir," he said, "have, of course, read our municipal by-laws?"

“Oh, yes,” I answered. “Splendid, aren’t they? They read like a romance.”

“You are most flattering to our city,” said the irascible gentleman with a bow. “Yet you, sir, I take it, are not from Toronto.”

“No,” I answered, as humbly as I could. “I’m from Montreal.”

“Ah!” said the gentleman, as he sat back and took a thorough look at me. “From Montreal? Are you drunk?”

“No,” I replied, “I don’t think so.”

“But you are *suffering* for a drink,” said my new acquaintance, eagerly. “You need it, eh? You feel already a kind of craving, eh, what?”

“No,” I answered. “The fact is it’s rather early in the morning.”

“Quite so,” broke in the irascible gentleman. “But I understand that in Montreal all the saloons are open at seven, and even at that hour are crowded, sir, crowded.”

I shook my head. “I think that has been exaggerated,” I said. “In fact, we always try to avoid crowding and jostling as far as possible. It is generally understood, as a matter of politeness, that the first place in the line is given to the clergy, the Board of Trade, and the heads of the universities.”



"Is it conceivable!" said the gentleman in grey. "One moment, please, till I make a note. 'All clergy' (I think you said *all*, did you not?) 'drunk at seven in the morning.' Deplorable! But here we are at the Union Station—commodious, is it not? Justly admired, in fact, all over the known world. Observe," he continued as we alighted from the train and made our way into the station, "the upstairs and the downstairs, connected by flights of stairs—quite unique and most convenient—if you don't meet your friends downstairs all you have to do is to look upstairs. If they are not there, you simply come down again. But stop, you are going to walk up the street? I'll go with you."

At the outer door of the station—just as I had remembered it—stood a group of hotel busmen and porters.

But how changed!

They were like men blasted by a great sorrow. One, with his back turned, was leaning against a post, his head buried on his arm.

"Prince George Hotel," he groaned at intervals, "Prince George Hotel."

Another was bending over a little handrail, his head sunk, his arms almost trailing to the ground.

"King Edward," he sobbed, "King Edward."

A third, seated on a stool, looked feebly up, with tears visible in his eyes.

"Walker House," he moaned. "First-class accommodation for——" Then he broke down and cried.

"Take this handbag," I said to one of the men, "to the Prince George."

The man ceased his groaning for a moment and turned to me with something like passion.

"Why do you come to *us*?" he protested. "Why not go to one of the others. Go to *him*," he added, as he stirred with his foot a miserable being who lay huddled on the ground murmuring at intervals, "Queen's! Queen's Hotel."

But my new friend, who stood at my elbow, came to my rescue.

"Take his bag," he said, "you've got to. You know the by-law. Take it or I'll call a policeman. You know *me*. My name's Narrowpath. I'm on the council."

The man touched his hat and took the bag with a murmured apology.

"Come along," said my companion, whom I now perceived to be a person of dignity and civic importance. "I'll walk up with you, and show you the city as we go."

We had hardly got well upon the street before I realized the enormous change that total prohibition had effected. Everywhere were the bright smiling faces of working people, laughing and singing at their tasks and, early though it was, cracking jokes and asking one another riddles as they worked.

I noticed one man, evidently a city employee, in a rough white suit, busily cleaning the street with a broom and singing to himself:

"How does the little busy bee improve the shining hour."

Another employee who was handling a little hose was singing:

“Little drops of water, little grains of sand.
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, Prohibition’s grand.”

“Why do they sing?” I asked. “Are they crazy?”

“Sing?” said Mr. Narrowpath. “They cannot help it. They haven’t had a drink of whiskey for four months.”

A coal cart went by with a driver, no longer grimy and smudged, but neatly dressed with a high white collar and a white silk tie.

My companion pointed at him as he passed. “Hasn’t had a glass of beer for four months,” he said. “Notice the difference? That man’s work is now a pleasure to him. He used to spend all his evenings sitting round the back parlours of the saloons beside the stove. Now what do you think he does?”

“I have no idea.”

“Loads up his cart with coal and goes for a drive—out in the country. Ah, sir, you who live still under the curse of the whisky traffic, little know what a pleasure work itself becomes when drink and all that goes with it is eliminated. Do you see that man, on the other side of the street, with the tool bag?”

“Yes,” I said. “A plumber, is he not?”

“Exactly, a plumber—used to drink heavily—couldn’t keep a job more than a week. Now, you can’t drag him from his work—came to my house to fix a pipe under the kitchen sink—wouldn’t quit at six o’clock—got in under the sink and begged to be allowed to stay—said he hated to go home. We had to drag him out with a rope. But here we are at your hotel.”

We entered. But how changed the place seemed. Our feet echoed on the flagstones of the deserted rotunda.

At the office desk sat a clerk, silent and melancholy, reading the bible. He put a marker in the book and closed it, murmuring, “Leviticus Two.”

Then he turned to us.

“Can I have a room,” I asked, “on the first floor?”

A tear welled up into the clerk’s eye.

“You can have the whole first floor,” he said. And he added, with a half sob, “and the second, too, if you like.”

I could not help contrasting his manner with what it was in the old days, when the mere mention of a room used to throw him into a fit of passion, and when he used to tell me that I could have a cot on the roof till Tuesday, and after that, perhaps, a bed in the stable.

Things had changed indeed.

“Can I get breakfast in the grill room?” I inquired of the melancholy clerk.

He shook his head sadly.

“There is no grill room,” he answered. “What would you like?”

“Oh, some sort of eggs,” I said, “and—”

The clerk reached down below his desk and handed me a hard-boiled egg with the shell off.

“Here’s your egg,” he said. “And there’s ice water there at the end of the desk.”

He sat back in his chair and went on reading.

“You don’t understand,” said Mr. Narrowpath, who still stood at my elbow. “All that elaborate grill room breakfast business was just a mere relic of the drinking days—sheer waste

of time and loss of efficiency. Go on and eat your egg. Eaten it? Now, don't you feel efficient? What more do you want? Comfort, you say? My dear sir: More men have been ruined by comfort—Great Heavens, comfort! the most dangerous, deadly drug that ever undermined the human race. But, here, drink your water. Now, you're ready to go and do your business, if you have any."



They were like men blasted by a great sorrow.

"But," I protested, "it's still only half-past seven in the morning—no offices will be open _____"

"Open!" exclaimed Mr. Narrowpath. "Why! they all open at daybreak now."

I had, it is true, a certain amount of business before me, though of no very intricate or elaborate kind—a few simple arrangements with the head of a publishing house such as it falls to my lot to make every now and then. Yet in the old and unregenerate days it used to take all day to do it. The wicked thing that we used to call a comfortable breakfast in the hotel grill room somehow carried one on to about ten o'clock in the morning. Breakfast brought with it the need of a cigar for digestion's sake and with that, for very restfulness, a certain perusal of the *Toronto Globe*, properly corrected and rectified by a look through the *Toronto Mail*. After that it had been my practice to stroll along to my publisher's office at about eleven-thirty,

transact my business, over a cigar, with the genial gentleman at the head of it, and then accept his invitation to lunch, with the feeling that a man who has put in a hard and strenuous morning's work is entitled to a few hours of relaxation.

I am inclined to think that, in those reprehensible by-gone times, many other people did their business in this same way.

"I don't think," I said to Mr. Narrowpath musingly, "that my publisher will be up as early as this. He's a comfortable sort of man."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Narrowpath. "Not at work at half-past seven! In Toronto? The thing's absurd. Where is the office? Richmond Street? Come along, I'll go with you. I've always a great liking for attending to other people's business."

"I see you have," I said.

"It's our way here," said Mr. Narrowpath with a wave of his hand. "Every man's business, as we see it, is everybody else's business. Come along, you'll be surprised how quickly your business will be done."

Mr. Narrowpath was right.

My publisher's office, as we entered it, seemed a changed place. Activity and efficiency was stamped all over it. My good friend the publisher was not only there, but there with his coat off, inordinately busy, bawling orders (evidently meant for a printing room) through a speaking tube. "Yes," he was shouting, "put WHISKEY in black letter capitals, old English, double size, set it up to look attractive, with the legend *Made in Toronto* in long clear type underneath——"

"Excuse me," he said, as he broke off for a moment. "We've got a lot of stuff going through the press this morning—a big distillery catalogue that we are rushing through. We're doing all we can, Mr. Narrowpath," he continued, speaking with the deference due to a member of the City Council, "to boom Toronto as a Whiskey Centre."

"Quite right, quite right!" said my companion, rubbing his hands.

"And now, professor," added the publisher, speaking with rapidity, "your contract is all here—only need's signing—I won't keep you more than a moment—write your name here—Miss Sniggins will you please witness this so help you God how's everything in Montreal good morning."



As a matter of politeness the first place in the line is given to the clergy, the Board of Trade and the heads of the universities.

"Pretty quick, wasn't it?" said Mr. Narrowpath, as we stood in the street again.

"Wonderful!" I said, feeling almost dazed. "Why, I shall be able to catch the morning train back again to Montreal—"

"Precisely. Just what everybody finds. Business done in no time. Men who used to spend whole days here, clear out now in fifteen minutes. I knew a man whose business efficiency has so increased under our new regime that he says he wouldn't spend more than five minutes in Toronto if he were paid to."

"But what is this?" I asked as we were brought to a pause in our walk at a street crossing by a great block of vehicles. "What are all these drays? Surely, those look like barrels of whiskey!"

"So they are," said Mr. Narrowpath, proudly. "Export whiskey. Fine sight, isn't it? Must be what?—twenty—twenty-five?—loads of it. This place, sir, mark my words, is going to prove,

with its new energy and enterprise, one of the greatest seats of the distillery business. In fact, *the* whiskey capital of the North——”

“But I thought,” I interrupted, much puzzled, “that whiskey was prohibited here since last September?”

“Export whiskey—*export*, my dear sir,” corrected Mr. Narrowpath. “We don’t interfere, we have never, so far as I know, proposed to interfere with any man’s right to make and export whiskey. That, sir, is a plain matter of business; morality doesn’t enter into it.”

“I see,” I answered. “But will you please tell me what is the meaning of this other crowd of drays coming in the opposite direction? Surely, those are beer barrels, are they not?”

“In a sense they are,” admitted Mr. Narrowpath. “That is, they are *import* beer. It comes in from some other province. It was, I imagine, made in this city (our breweries, sir, are second to none), but the sin of *selling* it——” here Mr. Narrowpath raised his hat from his head and stood for a moment in a reverential attitude——“rests on the heads of others.”

The press of vehicles had now thinned out and we moved on, my guide still explaining in some detail the distinction between business principles and moral principles, between whiskey as a curse and whiskey as a source of profit, which I found myself unable to comprehend.

At length I ventured to interrupt.

“Yet it seems almost a pity,” I said, “that, with all this beer and whiskey around, an unregenerate sinner like myself should be prohibited from getting a drink.”

“A drink!” exclaimed Mr. Narrowpath. “Well, I should say so. Come right in here. You can have anything you want.”

We stepped through a street door into a large long room.

“Why!” I exclaimed in surprise. “This is a bar!”

“Nonsense!” said my friend. “The *bar* in this province is forbidden. We’ve done with the foul thing, forever. This is an Import Shipping Company’s Delivery Office.”

“But this long counter——”

“It’s not a counter, it’s a desk.”

“And that bar-tender in his white jacket——”

“Tut! Tut! He’s not a bar-tender. He’s an Import Goods Delivery Clerk.”

“What’ll you have, gents?” said the Import Clerk, polishing a glass as he spoke.

“Two whiskeys and sodas,” said my friend. “Long ones.”

The Import Clerk mixed the drinks and set them on the desk.

I was about to take one but he interrupted. “One minute, sir,” he said.

Then he took up a desk telephone that stood beside him and I heard him calling up Montreal. “Hello. Montreal. Is that Montreal? Well, say, I’ve just received an offer here for two whiskeys and sodas at sixty cents, shall I close with it? All right, gentlemen, Montreal has effected the sale. There you are.”

“Dreadful, isn’t it?” said Mr. Narrowpath. “The sunken, depraved condition of your City of Montreal; actually *selling* whiskey. Deplorable!” And with that he buried his face in the bubbles of the whiskey and soda.

“Mr. Narrowpath,” I said, “would you mind telling me something? I fear I am a little confused, after what I have seen here, as to what your new legislation has been. You have *not* then, I understand, prohibited the making of whiskey?”

“Oh, no, we see no harm in that.”

“Nor the sale of it.”

“Certainly not,” said Mr. Narrowpath, “not if sold *properly*.”

“Nor the drinking of it?”

“Oh, no, that least of all. We attach no harm whatever, under our law, to the mere drinking of whiskey.”

“Would you tell me, then,” I asked, “since you have not forbidden the making, nor the selling, nor the buying, nor the drinking of whiskey—just what it is that you have prohibited? What is the difference between Montreal and Toronto?”

Mr. Narrowpath put down his glass on the “desk” in front of him. He gazed at me with open-mouthed astonishment.

“Toronto?” he gasped. “Montreal and Toronto! The difference between Montreal and Toronto—my dear sir—Toronto—Toronto——”

I stood waiting for him to explain. But as I did so I seemed to become aware that a voice—not Mr. Narrowpath’s, but a voice close to my ear was repeating, “Toronto—Toronto—Toronto.”

I sat up with a start—still in my berth in the Pullman car—with the voice of the porter calling through the curtains, “Toronto—Toronto.”

So! It had only been a dream. I pulled up the blind and looked out of the window and there was the good old city, with the bright sun sparkling on its church spires and on the bay spreading out at its feet. It looked quite unchanged, just the same pleasant old place, as cheerful, as self-conceited, as kindly, as hospitable, as quarrelsome, as wholesome, as moral and as loyal and as disagreeable as it always was.

“Porter,” I said, “is it true that there is prohibition here now?”

The porter shook his head.

“I ain’t heard of it,” he said.

In Merry Mexico

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Sunshine Sketches of a Small Town," "Literary Lapses," "Nonsense Novels," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys

EDITOR'S NOTE.—*Stephen Leacock has been traveling for MacLean's Magazine. First, on the magic carpet of his whimsical imagination he visited Germany and "Germany From Within" was the result. Next he went to Turkey, right to the Yildiz Kiosk. Then he came nearer home and "In Dry Toronto" resulted. Finally he has been to Mexico.*

I stood upon the platform of the little deserted railway station of the frontier and looked around at the wide prospect.

"So this," I said to myself, "is Mexico!"

About me was the great plain rolling away to the Sierras in the background. The railroad track traversed it in a thin line. There were no trees—only here and there a clump of cactus or chapparal, a tuft of dog-grass or a few patches of dogwood. At intervals in the distance one could see a hacienda standing in a majestic solitude in a cup of the hills. In the blue sky floated little banderillos of white cloud, while a graceful hidalgo appeared poised on a crag on one leg with folded wings, or floated lazily in the sky on one wing with folded legs.

There was a drowsy buzzing of cicadas half asleep in the cactus cups, and, from some hidden depth of the hills far in the distance, the tinkling of a mule bell.

I had seen it all so often in moving pictures that I recognized the scene at once.

"So this is Mexico!" I repeated.

The station building beside me was little more than a wooden shack. Its door was closed. There was a sort of ticket wicket opening at the side, but it too was closed.

But as I spoke thus aloud, the wicket opened. There appeared in it the head and shoulders of a little wizened man, swarthy and with bright eyes and pearly teeth.

He wore a black velvet suit with yellow facings, and a tall straw hat running to a point. I seemed to have seen him a hundred times in comic opera.

"Can you tell me when the next train—" I began.

The little man made a gesture of Spanish politeness.

"Welcome to Mexico!" he said.

"Could you tell me—" I continued.

"Welcome to our sunny Mexico!" he repeated, "our beautiful, glorious Mexico. Her heart throbs at the sight of you."

"Would you mind—" I began again.

"Our beautiful Mexico, torn and distracted as she is, greets you. In the name of the *de facto* government, thrice welcome. *Su casa!*" he added with a graceful gesture indicating the interior of his little shack. "Come in and smoke cigarettes and sleep. *Su casa!* You are capable of Spanish, is it not?"

"No," I said, "it is not. But I wanted to know when the next train for the interior——"

"Ah!" he rejoined more briskly. "You address me as a servant of the *de facto* government. *Momentino!* One moment!"

He shut the wicket and was gone a long time. I thought he had fallen asleep.

But he reappeared. He had a bundle of what looked like railway time tables, very ancient and worn, in his hand.

“Did you say,” he questioned, “the interior or the exterior?”

“The interior, please.”

“Ah, good, excellent—for the interior——” the little Mexican retreated into his shack and I could hear him murmuring—“for the interior, excellent”—as he moved to and fro.

Presently he reappeared, a look of deep sorrow on his face. “Alas!” he said, shrugging his shoulders. “I am *desolado*. It has gone! The next train has gone!”

“Gone! When?”

“Alas! Who can tell? Yesterday, last month? But it has gone.”

“And when will there be another one?” I asked.

“Ha!” he said, resuming a brisk official manner. “I understand. Having missed the next you propose to take another. Excellent! What business enterprise you foreigners have! You miss your train! What do you do? Do you abandon your journey? No. Do you sit down—do you weep? No. Do you lose time? You do not.”



"Magnifico! Is it not?" said my companion.

"Excuse me," I said. "But when *is* there another train?"

"That must depend" said the little official and as he spoke he emerged from his house and stood beside me on the platform fumbling among his railway guides. "The first question is, do you propose to take a *de facto* train or a *de jure* train?"

"When do they go?" I asked.

"There is a *de jure* train," continued the station master, peering into his papers, "at two p.m.—very good train—sleepers and diners—one at four, a through train—sleepers, observation car, dining car, corridor compartments—that also is a *de jure* train—"

"But what is the difference between the *de jure* and the *de facto*?"

"It's a distinction we generally make in Mexico; the *de jure* trains are those that ought to go; that is, in theory, they go. The *de facto* trains are those that actually do go. It is a distinction clearly established in our correspondence with Huedro Huilson."

“Do you mean Woodrow Wilson?”

“Yes, Huedro Huilson, president—*de jure*—of the United States.”

“Oh,” I said. “Now I understand. And when will there be a *de facto* train?”

“At any moment you like,” said the little official with a bow.

“But I don’t see——”

“Pardon me—I have one here behind the shed on that side track—excuse me—one moment and I will bring it.”

He disappeared and I presently saw him energetically pushing out from behind the shed a little railroad lorry or hand truck.

“Now then,” he said as he shoved his little car on to the main track, “this is the train. Seat yourself. I, myself, will take you.”

“And how much shall I pay? What is the fare to the interior?” I questioned.

The little man waved the idea aside with a polite gesture.

“The fare,” he said, “let us not speak of it. Let us forget it. How much money have you?”

“I have here,” I said, taking out a roll of bills, “fifty dollars.”

“And that is all you have?”

“Yes.”

“Then let that be the fare! Why should I ask more? Were I an American, I might; but in our Mexico, no. What you have we take; beyond that we ask nothing. Let us forget it. Good. And, now, would you prefer to travel first, second or third class?”

“First class, please,” I said.

“Very good. Let it be so.” Here the little man took from his pocket a red label marked FIRST CLASS and tied it on the edge of the hand car. “It is more comfortable,” he said. “Now seat yourself, seize hold of these two handles in front of you. Move them back and forward, thus. Beyond that you need do nothing. The working of the car other than the mere shoving of the handles, shall be my task. Consider yourself, in fact, senor, as my guest.”

We took our places. I applied myself, as directed, to the handles and the little car moved forward across the plain.

“A glorious prospect,” I said, as I gazed at the broad panorama.

“Magnifico! Is it not?” said my companion. “Alas! my poor Mexico. She wants nothing but water to make her the most fertile country of the globe! Water and soil, those only and she would excel all others. Give her but water, soil, light, heat, capital and labor, and what could she not be! And what do we see; distraction, revolution, destruction—pardon me, will you please stop the car a moment? I wish to tear up a little of the track behind us.”

I did as directed. My companion descended and with a little bar that he took from beneath the car, unloosed a few of the rails of the light track and laid them beside the road.

“It is our custom,” he explained, as he climbed on board again. “We Mexicans when we move to and fro, always tear up the track behind us. But what was I saying? Ah, yes—destruction, desolation, alas, our Mexico!”

He looked sadly up at the sky.

“You speak,” I said, “like a patriot. May I ask your name?”

“My name is Raymon,” he answered, with a bow. “Raymon Domenico y Miraflores de las Gracias.”

“And may I call you simply Raymon?”

"I shall be delirious with pleasure if you will do so," he answered. "And dare I ask you in return, your business in our beautiful country?"

The car, as we are speaking, had entered upon a long and gently down grade across the plain, so that it ran without great effort on my part.

"Certainly," I said. "I'm going into the interior to see General Villa!"

At the shock of the name, Raymon nearly fell off the car.

"Villa! General Francesco Villa! It is not possible!"

The little man was shivering with evident fear.

"See him! See Villa! Not possible. Let me show you a picture of him instead? But approach him—it is not possible! He shoots everybody at sight!"

"That is all right," I said. "I have a written safe conduct that protects me."

"From whom?"

"Here," I said. "Look at them—I have two."

Raymon took the documents I gave him and read aloud.

"The bearer is on an important mission connected with American rights in Mexico. If any one shoots him he will be held to a strict accountability.—W.W."

"Ah! Excellent! He will be compelled to send in an itemized account. Excellent! And this other, let me see."

"If anybody interferes with the bearer, I will knock his face in.—T.R."



His head was bowed over the books in front of him.

“Admirable! This is, if anything, better than the other for use in our country. It appeals to our quick Mexican natures. It is, as we say, *simpatico*. It touches us.”

“It is meant to,” I said.

“And may I ask,” said Raymon, “the nature of your business with Villa?”

“We are old friends,” I answered. “I used to know him years ago when he kept a Mexican cigar store in Montreal. It occurred to me that I might be able to help the cause of peaceful intervention. I have already had a certain experience in Turkey. I am commissioned to make General Villa an offer.”

"I see," said Raymon. "In that case, if we are to find Villa let us make all haste forward. And first we must direct ourselves yonder"—he pointed in a vague way towards the mountains—"where we must presently leave our car and go on foot, to the camp of General Carranza."

"Carranza!" I exclaimed. "But he is fighting Villa!"

"Exactly. It is *possible*—not certain—but possible, that he knows where Villa is. In our Mexico when two of our generalistas are fighting in the mountains, they keep coming across one another. It is hard to avoid it."

It was two days later that we reached Carranza's camp in the mountains. We found him just at dusk seated at a little table beneath a tree.

His followers were all about picketing their horses and lighting fires.

The General, buried in a book before him, noticed neither the movements of his own men nor our approach.

I must say that I was surprised beyond measure at his appearance.

The popular idea of General Carranza as a rude bandit chief is entirely erroneous.

I saw before me a quiet, scholarly-looking man, bearing every mark of culture and refinement. His head was bowed over the book in front of him, which I noticed with astonishment was *Todhunter's Algebra*. Close at his hand I observed a work on *Decimal Fractions*, while, from time to time, I saw the General lift his eyes and glance keenly at a multiplication table that hung on a bough beside him.

"You must wait a few moments," said an aide-de-camp, who stood beside us. "The General is at work on a simultaneous equation!"

"Is it possible?" I said in astonishment.

The aide-de-camp smiled. "Soldiering to-day, my dear Senor," he said, "is an exact science. On this equation will depend our entire food supply for the next week."



In the thick of the press a leader of ferocious aspect mounted upon a gigantic black horse, waved a sombrero above his head.

"When will he get it done?" I asked anxiously.

"Simultaneously," said the aide-de-camp. The general looked up at this moment and saw us.

"Well?" he asked.

"Your Excellency," said the aide-de-camp, "there is a stranger here on a visit of investigation to Mexico."

"Shoot him!" said the General, and turned quickly to his work.

The aide-de-camp saluted.

"When?" he asked.

"As soon as he likes," said the General.

"You are fortunate, indeed," said the aide-de-camp in a tone of animation, as he led them away, still accompanied by Raymon. "You might have been kept waiting round for days. Let us get ready at once. You would like to be shot, would you not, smoking a cigarette, and standing beside your grave? Luckily, we have one ready. Now if you will wait a moment, I will bring the photographer and his machine. There is still light enough, I think. What would you like it called? *The Fate of a Spy*? That's good, isn't it? Our syndicate can always work up that into a two-reel film. All the rest of it—the camp, the mountains, the general, the funeral and so on—we can do to-morrow without you."

He was all eagerness as he spoke.

"One moment," I interrupted. "I am sure there is some mistake. I only wished to present certain papers and get a safe conduct from the General to go and see Villa."

The aide-de-camp stopped abruptly.

"Ah!" he said. "You are not here for a picture. A thousand pardons. Give me your papers—one moment—I will return to the General and explain."

He vanished, and Raymon and I waited in the growing dusk.

"No doubt the General supposed," explained Raymon, as he lighted a cigarette, "that you were here for *las machinas*, the moving pictures."

In a few minutes the aide-de-camp returned.

"Come," he said, "the General will see you now."

We returned to where we had left Carranza.

The General rose to meet me with outstretched hand and with a gesture of simple cordiality.

"You must pardon my error," he said.

"Not at all," I said.

"It appears you do not desire to be shot."

"Not at present."

"Later, perhaps," said the General. "On your return, no doubt, provided," he added with grave courtesy that sat well on him, "that you do return. My aide-de-camp shall make a note of it. But at present you wish to be guided to Francesco Villa?"

"If it is possible."

"Quite easy. He is at present near here, in fact much nearer than he has any right to be."

The General frowned. "We found this spot first. The light is excellent and the mountains, as you have seen, are wonderful for our pictures. This is, by every rule of decency, our scenery. Villa has no right to it. This is our revolution"—the General spoke with rising

animation—"not his. When you see the fellow, tell him for me—or tell his manager—that he must either move his revolution further away—or, by Heaven, I'll—I'll use force against him. But stop," he checked himself. "You wish to see Villa. Good. You have only to follow the straight track over the mountain there. He is just beyond, at the little village in the hollow, El Corazon de las Quertas."

The General shook hands and seated himself again at his work. The interview was at an end. We withdrew.

The next morning we followed without difficulty the path indicated. A few hours' walk over the mountain pass brought us to a little straggling village of adobe houses, sleeping drowsily in the sun.

There were but few signs of life in its one street—a mule here and there tethered in the sun—and one or two Mexicans drowsily smoking in the shade.

One building only, evidently newly made, and of lumber, had a decidedly American appearance. Its doorway bore the sign "GENERAL OFFICES OF THE COMPANY," and under it the notice "KEEP OUT," while on one of its windows was painted "GENERAL MANAGER," and below it the legend, "NO ADMISSION," and on the other, "SECRETARY'S OFFICE: GO AWAY."

We therefore entered at once.

"General Francesco Villa?" said a clerk, evidently American. "Yes, he's here all right. At least, this is the office."

"And where is the General?" I asked.

The clerk turned to an assistant at a desk in a corner of the room.

"Where's Frank working this morning?" he asked.

"Over down in the gulch," said the other, turning round for a moment. "There's an attack of American cavalry this morning."

"Oh, yes, I forgot," said the chief clerk. "I thought it was the Indian Massacre, but I guess that's for to-morrow. Go straight to the end of the street and turn left about a half a mile and you'll find the boys down there."

We thanked him and withdrew.

We passed across the open plaza, and went down a narrow side road, bordered here and there with adobe houses, and so out into the open country. Here the hills rose again and the road that we followed wound sharply round a turn into a deep gorge, bordered with rocks and sage brush. We had no sooner turned the curve of the road than we came upon a scene of great activity. Men in Mexican costume were running to and fro apparently arranging a sort of barricade at the side of the road. Others seemed to be climbing the rocks on the further side of the gorge, as if seeking points of advantage. I noticed that all were armed with rifles and machetes and presented a formidable appearance. Of Villa himself I could see nothing. But there was a grim reality about the glittering knives, the rifles and the maxim guns that I saw concealed in the sage brush beside the road.

"What is it?" I asked of a man who was standing idle, watching the scene from the same side of the road as ourselves.

"Attack of American cavalry," he said nonchalantly.

"Here!" I gasped.

"Yep, in about ten minutes: soon as they are ready."

“Where’s Villa?”

“It’s him they’re attacking. They chase him here, see! This is an ambush. Villa rounds on them right here, and they fight to a finish!”

“Great Heavens!” I exclaimed. “How do you know that?”

“Know it? Why, because I *seen* it. Ain’t they been trying it out for three days? Why, I’d be in it myself only I’m off work—got a sore toe yesterday—horse stepped on it.”

All this was, of course, quite unintelligible to me.

“But it’s right here where they’re going to fight?” I asked.

“Sure,” said the American, as he moved carelessly aside “as soon as the boss gets it all ready.”

I now noticed for the first time a heavy-looking man in an American tweed suit and a white plug hat, moving to and fro calling out directions with an air of authority.

“Here!” he shouted, “what in h——I are you doing with that machine gun! You’ve got it clean out of focus. Here, José, come in closer—that’s right—steady there now, and don’t forget, at the second whistle you and Pete are dead. Here, you, Pete, how in thunder do you think you can die there? You’re all out of the picture hidden by that there sage bush. That’s no place to die. And, boys, remember one thing, now, *die slow*. Ed.”—he turned and called apparently to some one invisible behind the rocks—“when them two boys is killed, turn her round on them, slew her round good and get them centre focus. Now then, are you all set? Ready?”

At this moment the speaker turned and saw Raymon and myself. “Here, youse,” he shouted, “get further back; you’re in the picture. Or, say, no, stay right where you are. You,” he said, pointing to me, “stay right where you are and I’ll give you a dollar to just hold that horror; you understand; just keep on registering it. Don’t do another thing; just register that face.”

His words were meaningless to me. I had never known before that it was possible to make money by merely registering my face.

“No, no,” cried out Raymon, “my friend here is not wanting work. He has a message, a message of great importance for General Villa.”

“Well,” called back the boss, “he’ll have to wait. We can’t stop now. All ready, boys? One—two—now!”

And with that he put a whistle to his lips and blew a long shrill blast.

Then in a moment the whole scene was transformed. Rifle shots rang out from every crag and bush that bordered the gully.

A wild scamper of horses’ hoofs was heard and in a moment there came tearing down the road a whole troop of mounted Mexicans, evidently in flight, for they turned and fired from their saddles as they rode. The horses that carried them were wild with excitement and flecked with foam. The Mexican cavalry men shouted and yelled, brandishing their machetes and firing their revolvers. Here and there a horse and rider fell to the ground in a great whirl of sand and dust. In the thick of the press, a leader of ferocious aspect, mounted upon a gigantic black horse, waved his sombrero about his head.

“Villa—it is Villa!” cried Raymon, tense with excitement; “is he not *magnifico*? But look! Look—the *Americanos*! They are coming!”

It was a glorious sight to see them as they rode madly on the heels of the Mexicans—a whole company of American cavalry, their horses shoulder to shoulder, the men bent low in their saddles, their carbines gripped in their hands. They rode in squadrons and in line, not like the shouting, confused mass of the Mexicans—but steady, disciplined, irresistible.

On the right flank in front a grey-haired officer steadied the charging line.

The excitement of it was maddening.

“Go it,” I shouted in uncontrollable emotion. “Your Mexicans are licked, Raymon, they’re no good!”

“But look!” said Raymon; “see—the ambush, the ambushade!”

For as they reached the centre of the gorge in front of us the Mexicans suddenly checked their horses, bringing them plunging on their haunches in the dust, and then swung round upon their pursuers, while from every crag and bush at the side of the gorge the concealed riflemen sprang into view—and the sputtering of the machine guns swept the advancing column with a volley.

We could see the American line checked as with the buffet of a great wave, men and horses rolling in the road. Through the smoke one saw the grey-haired leader, dismounted, his uniform torn, his hat gone, but still brandishing his sword and calling his orders to his men, his face as one caught in a flash of sunlight, steady and fearless. His words I could not hear, but one saw the American cavalry, still unbroken, dismount, thrown themselves behind their horses, and fire with steady aim into the mass of Mexicans. We could see the Mexicans in front of where we stood falling thick and fast, in little huddled bundles of color, kicking the sand. The man Pete had gone down right in the foreground and was breathing out his soul before our eyes.

“Well done,” I shouted. “Go to it, boys! You can lick ’em yet! Hurrah for the United States. Look Raymon, look! They’ve shot down the crew of the machine guns. See, see—the Mexicans are turning to run—at ’em, boys!—they’re waving the American flag! There it is in all the thick of the smoke! Hark! There’s the bugle call to mount again! They’re going to charge again! Here they come!”

As the American cavalry came tearing forward, the Mexicans leaped from their places with gestures of mingled rage and terror as if about to break and run.

The battle, had it continued, could have but one end.

But at this moment we heard from the town behind us the long sustained note of a steam whistle blowing the hour of noon.

In an instant the firing ceased.

The battle stopped. The Mexicans picked themselves up off the ground and began brushing off the dust from their black velvet jackets. The American cavalry reined in their horses. Dead Pete came to life. General Villa and the American leader and a number of others strolled over towards the boss, who stood beside the fence vociferating his comments.

“That won’t do!” he was shouting. “That won’t do! Where in blazes was that infernal Sister of Mercy? Miss Jenkinson!” and he called to a tall girl, whom I now noticed for the first time among the crowd, wearing a sort of khaki costume and a short skirt and carrying a water bottle in a strap. “You never got into the picture at all. I want you right in there among the horses, under their feet.”

“Land sakes!” said the Sister of Mercy. “You ain’t got no right to ask me to go in there among them horses and be trampled.”

“Ain’t you *paid* to be trampled?” said the manager angrily. Then as he caught sight of Villa he broke off and said: “Frank, you boys done fine. It’s going to be a good act, all right. But it ain’t just got the right amount of ginger in it yet. We’ll try her over again, anyway.”

“Now, boys,” he continued, calling out to the crowd with a voice like a megaphone, “this afternoon at three-thirty—Hospital scene. I only want the wounded, the doctors and the Sisters of Mercy. All the rest of youse is free till ten to-morrow—for the Indian Massacre. Everybody up for that.”

It was an hour or two later that I had my interview with Villa in a back room of the little *posada*, or inn, of the town. The General had removed his ferocious wig of straight black hair, and substituted a check suit for his war-like costume. He had washed the darker part of the paint off his face—in fact, he looked once again the same Frank Villa that I used to know when he kept his Mexican cigar store in Montreal.

“Well, Frank,” I said, “I’m afraid I came down here under a misunderstanding.”

“Looks like it,” said the General, as he rolled a cigarette.

“And you wouldn’t care to go back even for the offer that I am commissioned to take—your old job back again, and half the profits on a new cigar to be called the Francesco Villa?”

The General shook his head.

“It sounds good, all right,” he said, “but this moving picture business is better.”

“I see,” I said. “I hadn’t understood. I thought there really was a revolution here in Mexico.”

“No,” said Villa, shaking his head, “been no revolution down here for years not since Diaz. The picture companies came in and took the whole thing over: they made us a fair offer—so much a reel straight out, and a royalty, and let us divide up the territory as we liked. The last film we done was the bombardment of Vera Cruz—say, that was a dandy—did you see it?”

“No,” I said.

“They had us all in that,” he continued, “I done an American Marine. Lots of people think it all real when they see it.”

“Why,” I said, “nearly everybody does. Even the President——”

“Oh, I guess he knows,” said Villa, “but, you see, there’s tons of money in it and it’s good for business, and he’s too decent a man to give it away. Say, I heard the boys saying there’s a war in Europe. I wonder what company got that up, eh? But I don’t believe it’ll draw. There ain’t the scenery for it that we have in Mexico.”

“Alas!” murmured Raymon. “Our beautiful Mexico. To what is she fallen! Needing only water, air, light and soil to make her——”

“Come on, Raymon,” I said, “let’s go home.”

Ten Million Dollars for the Asking An Offer to the Government of Canada

By Stephen Leacock

Who wrote "In Dry Toronto," "In Merry Mexico," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys

It is a well known fact that throughout his later life Mark Twain was constantly harassed and distressed by the fact that people refused to take him in earnest. Like all persons of a so-called humorous temperament, his true interest lay in the underlying realities of life, and not in the lights and shadows that flicked across its surface. Hence from time to time he was moved to violent outbursts of feeling, to fierce denunciations of wrong and to expressions of passionate sympathy with the oppressed. All of these the public, who thought of him only as the author of *Tom Sawyer* and the *Innocents Abroad*, insisted on treating as first class jokes. When he said that he sympathized with the Filipinos, the remark was regarded as screamingly funny. When, in a passion of indignation at European cruelty in China, at the time of the "Boxer" troubles, Twain exclaimed, "*I am a Boxer*," everybody roared. Men repeated to one another over their newspapers, "I see Mark says he's a Boxer!" and then held their sides to prevent bursting. When he wrote a beautiful and sympathetic account of the Martyrdom of Joan of Arc, people shook their heads—"Mark's going a little too far," they said; they admitted that it was funny, gloriously funny, but doubted whether any man had a right to poke fun at religion. Mark Twain lived and died misunderstood, regretting wistfully that he had not been born a Presbyterian minister or something real.

What happens to a great man in any line of activity, may well happen to the small ones.

In any degree, I have found it so. I have so often been fortunate in pleasing the humorous fancy of an indulgent public as a writer of mere meaningless foolishness, that it is becoming difficult for me to persuade any readers that I am capable of trying to think seriously.

This I found to be the case when, a month or two ago, I submitted to the Government of Canada an offer to make ten million dollars for them as a Christmas present, by calling in our silver currency and substituting nickel for it. I embodied the proposal in a memorandum that in point of language was as serious as political economy and as sober as Toronto on Saturday night.

But the thing went wrong.

The answer that I received from the members of the Government, courteous and friendly as they were, showed me that somehow they had taken it up wrongly.

"Sir Robert Borden"—so wrote the secretary of the Premier—"has been immensely amused by your delightful burlesque on the theory of silver money. He expressly desires me to state that he read the first page of your memorandum with such pleasure that he afterwards read it aloud to his cabinet, who greeted it with bursts of uncontrollable laughter. They even propose, at a later opportunity, to read the rest of it."

These may not have been the exact words of the letter. But they reproduce the substance of it as far as one dare violate the confidence of an official communication.

In the same way a letter from the Finance Department informed me that Sir Thomas White had no sooner read my proposal for coining nickel money in place of silver, than he fell into a paroxysm of laughter that threatened to pass into hysteria. He was only saved from an actual syncope by reaching for the public accounts and adding up figures three columns at a time—his one form of mental relaxation.



Crooked kings made crooked money by taking out more of the silver in the shillings.

My memorandum, I suppose, might easily have passed into political oblivion but for the singular acumen of the editor of this magazine. The editor—like all other successful men in Canada—is partly Scotch.^[1] (The other parts, in these cases, are a mere hindrance. It is the Scotch that counts.) Being Scotch, the editor is accustomed to consider nothing amusing until it is proved so. The presumption is always against it. It is thought better, in Scotland, that a hundred jokes should go unrecognized rather than that a man should be betrayed into hasty and indecorous laughter which he afterwards bitterly regrets.



“Sir Robert Borden read the first page of your memorandum with such pleasure that he afterwards read it aloud to his cabinet, who greeted it with bursts of uncontrollable laughter.”

The Editor, therefore, had no sooner read my memorandum over six times than he said, “I believe there is something in this.”

He has, therefore, invited me to reproduce the substance of the memorandum for this magazine. To my regret he tells me that he cannot reproduce the document in its original form. It was, he said, too full. In fact he feared that it was so full that his readers would not stand for it. This, in Toronto, is quite natural.

I am, therefore, compelled to omit all the first part—some fifty pages—called, “A Brief Disquisition on the Origins and Development of the Use of Certain Articles, or Commodities, as *Media* or *Medii*, of Exchange.” I regret very much the necessity of suppressing this. It went back to ancient times and came down, slowly and reluctantly as every scholarly history does, to our own day. It began with the words: “The earliest form of money known in ancient times was the goat.” I fear that this sentence may have been what misled Sir Robert Borden. Perhaps he read no further. Yet it only states a well known economic fact. Goats and cattle, the flocks and herds of the pastoral days of Abraham and Isaac, were the earliest form of money. Even to-day when we talk of a man’s *capital* the word really means, in its origin, his head of cattle. And when we speak of a doctor’s *fee*, the word recalls to those who know its meaning the goat, or cow, that the grateful patient (an institution older than history) paid to the “medicine man” of the tribe.

But I admit I should have done better to leave out the goat altogether. And I only made things worse by going on—“The goat was at best indifferent money. Lacking, as he was, in divisibility, in homogeneity and in durability, incapable of receiving and retaining a stamp or punch on both the upper and the reverse side, the goat, as money, failed to command esteem.”

On looking that over, I think I can see just how it was that my memorandum lacked conviction. It would have been better, like most other state documents, without the introduction.

Yet the suggestion that I should confine myself to the essential substance or gist of my proposal comes with a peculiar cruelty. The gist of it, and indeed of anything, if stated truthfully, appears so pitifully small. Consider, for example, what would be the gist of a sermon, or the gist of a speech from the throne, or the gist of Woodrow Wilson’s notes to Germany. The whole lot of them would go nicely inside a walnut.

But if gist it has to be, here it is, written at as great length as I dare put it.

My proposal itself, to state it in all seriousness, is a very simple matter. What is suggested is that the government of Canada should call in all its existing silver coins—fifty cent, twenty-five cent, ten cent and five cent pieces—and substitute nickel coins in place of them. The point of it lies in the enormous profit that could be made on this transaction without inconvenience or loss to anybody.

Our use of silver coins is a purely historic matter. It comes down from the time when a silver shilling or a silver dollar circulated on its own value. That is to say, when the actual silver metal that it contained, if sold in the bullion market as metal, would be worth in gold the twentieth part of a gold sovereign, or the full value of a gold dollar. This is no longer the case. At the present time silver is worth about 75 cents for an ounce troy (480 grains). The American silver dollar, which contains $371\frac{1}{4}$ grains of pure silver, with $41\frac{1}{4}$ grains of copper added as an alloy, is worth to-day as metal a trifle more than 58 cents. A Canadian dollar in silver—two fifty cent pieces or four quarters—is worth rather less—about 52 cents.

Anybody can prove for himself that silver money is not intrinsically worth its face value by melting it down and trying to sell it as silver.

The silver coin circulates only as a token. It is a mere representative of the gold coin for which it can be exchanged and of which it is only a humble substitute. As far as its value goes it might as well be made of tin, or rubber, or celluloid or of anything that would carry writing on it, and act as a token. In fact it is on exactly the same footing economically as the paper dollar. Were it not for the obvious inconvenience of trying to handle it in small sums, the

whole of our currency might be made of paper with no disturbance of its circulating power. A silver coin is a mere promise to pay, inscribed, with quite unnecessary wastefulness, upon a bit of silver.

The absurdity of using silver for such a purpose would be perfectly apparent if it were being introduced as a new thing and judged upon its merits. But it is not. It belongs among a whole cupboardful of absurdities—such as the House of Lords, and the Canadian Senate and William Jennings Bryan—which are difficult to get rid of, because they are a legacy of the past.

Time was when silver money was not only real money, but was practically the only money of Western Europe. All through the dark and middle ages this was the case. Our English pound meant originally a pound weight of silver coined up into 240 silver pennies, and later, into 20 silver shillings. These circulated on their own value, dependent like every other economic object, on the difficulty and cost of producing them. In the time of William the Conqueror a bushel of wheat sold for two and a quarter silver pennies; a cow was worth about seventy pennies, while eggs, in those bright days, sold at one penny for two dozen, or thereabouts. These prices represented the real value of the silver in terms of other products. There was no gold. Not until the reign of Henry the Third were a few gold coins made, their value being expressed in terms of silver money.

This remained the case for centuries. Silver was the standard. True, it was not coined up at the original rate of twenty shillings to the pound. Crooked kings made crooked money by taking out more of the silver in the shillings and putting in more and more alloy. Wiser kings in fits of repentance straightened the money out again. But with all its ups and downs silver was the standard. It circulated on its own value—such as it was. By the end of the reign of Elizabeth the mint was making sixty shillings out of a pound weight troy of silver. With the new cheap silver from America and with coins containing less silver per shilling, prices had risen enormously. But silver, such as it was, remained the standard of English money till the reign of Charles the Second. After that for over a hundred years—till well into the reign of George the Third—the standard was double. Both gold and silver could be brought to the mint, by whosoever would, and coined into silver shillings or into gold sovereigns.

And then a rather peculiar thing happened, fateful as it proved for the financial greatness of England. By a series of lucky accidents England, a century before the other industrial countries, blundered into the monometallic gold standard, which proved in the sequel to be the only possible basis of the world commerce of our time. But the thing, like so much else in our history, was a lucky accident. The silver coins of the eighteenth century contained too much metal. They were worth more as bullion than as coin. They would not circulate. People melted them or exported them. Only the bad silver coins—clipped, punched, or sweated—could stay in circulation. This did well enough for small change. For large payments it would not do. To save perpetual quarrelling over the money the government, in 1778, removed from silver its legal tender quality. It was to be henceforth, and has remained, valid in law only for payment of forty shillings. At the same time the mint was closed to the coinage of silver by and for the government. This made no apparent difference to anybody. Silver was, in any case, too valuable to coin at the existing ratio. Finally in 1816, in order to be sure of having a proper supply of small change, the government, since full weight good silver coins would not circulate, deliberately coined bad ones. Sixty-six shillings were made, as they still are, out of a

pound troy. These new coins circulated admirably. They could not do anything else. Melt them or export them and they lost about ten per cent. of their value. They stayed in circulation. They are there still. Quite unconsciously a great monetary invention—that of token money—had been made.

All the other great nations followed, some of them with reluctance, the same path. The United States for nearly a hundred years (1792-1873) attempted to use a double standard, with unlimited coinage of both metals. It failed. First one metal and then the other ran away from the coinage. As the value of silver in terms of gold—or gold in terms of silver (it is the same thing)—rose and fell, either the gold dollar was too valuable to stay in the coinage, or the silver dollar was. There was no peace. In 1853, in order to ensure the circulation of small change, the American government coined underweight silver—dimes, quarters and halves—made, like the English coins, with less silver than their face value, and limited in their legal tender. Many Congressmen sneered at the proposal. “If these coins can circulate,” they said, “then we have discovered the Philosopher’s Stone.” But the coins *did* circulate. The silver dollar, too valuable to coin or to use as money (these were the days before the fall of silver) dropped out. The bad coins had nowhere to go. They stayed. Presently (in 1873) the law cut out the coinage of the silver dollar. The United States, like England, stood and has remained on the basis of a gold standard with silver only as token money.

	4728	
	53762	
	8903	
	1674	8259
3168	5768	4306
4926	7043	7825
7541	5902	4201
6075	7439	6193
3298	8254	5805
5391	6183	4977
349	4206	2805
7250	3112	7443
4097	7893	6092
6218	5620	<u>4834</u>
8340		
5074		
3687		
9002		
<u>7356</u>		



C.W. JEFFERYS

Sir Thomas White was only saved from an actual syncope by reaching for the public accounts and adding up figures three columns at a time—his one form of mental relaxation.

France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Russia, Japan—all the industrial countries—have had the same experience.

Yet the situation has been such that silver has left behind it a sort of lingering regret. Silver states, mine owners, populists, inflationists and cheap-moneymen of all stamps and degrees had shed tears over its fate. "This country," said Mr. Bryan, as the boy orator of the Chicago Convention of 1896, "is being crucified upon a cross of gold."

Very naturally there has been a general hesitation to give silver its *coup de grace* by refusing it even its present status as the material of token coins.

Yet for any nation that will undertake the change, the profit is enormous. Take our own case in Canada.

If we were to call in our silver money and if it all actually came back, we could sell the metal in the market to-day for about \$12,000,000. No doubt it would not all come back. A part of it is presumably lost. But the great bulk of it is still with us—circulating from hand to hand and in the vaults of the banks. The mechanism of calling it in offers no difficulty. The government need only pass a law terminating the legal tender power of silver, and making it exchangeable at all banks and post offices for the new coins and it would practically all come back in a week. Silver is worth at present 76 cents a Troy ounce and nickel is worth 55 cents a pound avoirdupois. A dollar in Canadian silver uses up 52 cents worth of silver. Nickel would cost about 3 cents. Thus in 1914 Canada coined half dimes to the value of \$210,108. If these had been made of nickel there would have been a profit, on this one year's coinage of one kind of coin of about \$92,400.

Ignorant people might fear that the whole plan would be upset by the danger of counterfeiting. This is not so. The profit on counterfeiting, even now would be enormous. Successful counterfeiting would turn 52 cents into a dollar even at the present price of silver. A few years ago when silver was worth less than 50 cents an ounce, the process would have turned 35 cents into a dollar. But successful counterfeiting, under modern conditions, is not possible. It requires a plant and premises that cannot long be concealed. This is what hinders it—not the value of the silver. Let those who fear it as an objection consider the case of the paper dollar and be silent.

But it is needless to speculate on whether nickel money can exist and circulate. It is doing so already. France and Italy each have nickel pieces of 25, 10 and 5 centimes; Switzerland a 20 centime piece; Austria has coins of 20 and 10 hellers; Hungary of 20 and 10 hellers; Siam coins ten-satang pieces of pure nickel and Turkey goes so far as to coin pieces of 40 paras. If there is any reader so ignorant as not to know what a satang or a para is, he may appreciate at least the fact that Hayti, as bold as it is black, coins fifty-cent pieces out of nickel.

Cheaper, dark money—made of bronze or copper—one dare not use for fear of confusion with the cents and pennies. But many countries use an amalgam of nickel and copper that is still bright enough to avoid mistake. The familiar "nickel" of the United States is 75 per cent. copper. Germany has for years coined 10 pfennig pieces of nickel mixed with an alloy. Jamaica and many other British dependencies are using money of the same sort.

But there is no need to cumulate examples. The thing is easy and obvious. The question is, will our government do it? Of course not—or not now.

[1] An error. The editor is a Manxman. Colonel MacLean, however, is all Highlander.

Frenzied Fiction *for the* Dog Days
(Done by the Dipperful)

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Further Foolishness," "Moonbeams of the Larger Lunacy," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jeffrys

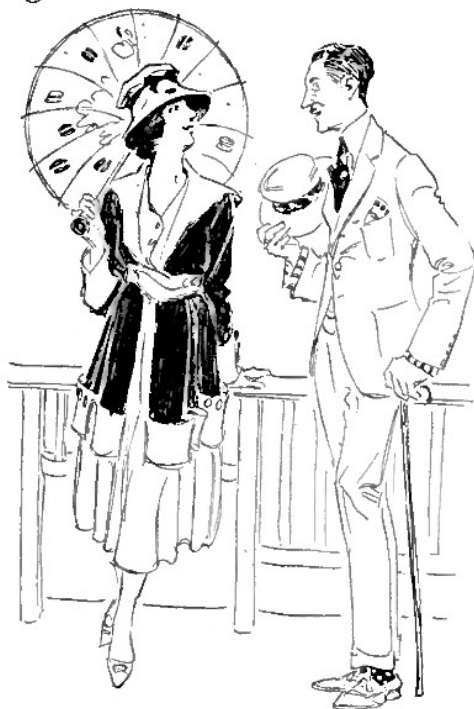
These are the Dog Days. It is too hot to read. It is too hot even to write. It is almost too hot for the magazine staff to draw their pay. But not quite.

Yet at the same time there is a persistent, if artificial, demand for reading matter. The reading public is now betaking itself to the country, to the lakes and to the woods. It is out camping in Algonquin Park, it is summering in the Thousand Islands or simmering at Scarboro, wearing old clothes at Gohome Bay or new ones at the Royal Muskoka. And wherever it goes it insists on taking its magazines with it. It cannot do without them. How else could it light a fire at a picnic, paper the bedroom of a bungalow or stop the leaks in a canoe?

Wearing old clothes
at Go-Home Bay .



or new ones at the
Royal Muskoka



Wearing old clothes at Go-Home Bay or new ones at the Royal Muskoka

This demand then has got to be met. There is great need for summer fiction and yet nobody wants to be bothered with actually reading the magazines in this awful heat. I have, therefore, suggested to the *Editor* of MACLEAN's that he should let me find a way out of this dilemma. With his consent I present herewith a *Magazine in Miniature* suitable for the Dog

Days. It contains all the usual parts and items of the best magazines, or at least as much of them as any reasonable person would want to read in AWFUL AUGUST.

I don't mind admitting that most, if not all, of the stuff is stolen. In fact, I may as well indicate straight out in each case where it comes from.

Let us begin then with the first item, the Great Summer Serial. The scene of this has to be laid in Italy. So we will call it *The Vendetta of the Vendiglia*. This title gives the summer reader the chance to call out from his hammock, to his sister, "Say, Agnes, what the —— does vendetta mean?"

However, here it is, or the few lines of it that are enough for the hot weather. The full original text can be found, any month, in the *Petropolitan*, or in *Somebody's*, or *Anybody's* or any other of the popular magazines.

THE VENDETTA OF THE VENDIGLIA.

Chapter LLLXXXXXVIII. Ring Two.

Synopsis of Preceding Chapters. Pasquale Pasqualo, a condottiere, is in reality a noble scion of the house of Vermicelli, but is unaware of his own birth. He has fallen madly in love with Teresa della ——

[There, that's all the synopsis of any story that anybody needs. *His* name is Pasquale, and *hers* is Teresa. Now we begin.]

"Zitto!" exclaimed Teresa between her closed teeth. "Zitto! Hush!"

She took Pasquale by the hand and led him down the dark passagio till their further progress was stopped by a barred door. "Harko!" she said. "Listen!"

The condottiere leaned forward in an attentive attitude, his head against the door, his ear intent, his eye bright, his body alert, his mind active, his whole being tense—and the rest of him on the *qui vive*.

There! He's on the *qui vive*; let us leave him there! That's enough, more than enough. Nobody could want to read more of a Summer Serial than that. Nobody ever does. What they do is to take the serial out to a hammock for a long afternoon's read and fall asleep over the first page. Or take it in a canoe to be read aloud in some sheltered place under the deep foliage that lines a river's bank. Such at least is the proposal by an idle man in flannels to a distracting girl. But not a line of it do they read; or at best the little scrap above will amply suffice. It will set them talking about the characters of Pasquale and Teresa and from that they can drift off into talking of their own characters, hers and his; and the magazine has done its work and is needed no more.

But after all some people do read, more or less, seriously in the summer. On a wet day especially—let us say in a wooden house in Muskoka, or on the side verandah of a hotel, in a corner well out of the wind—there are always women reading. And they prefer best to read something about *men and women*, their one topic of interest. And they like it best if it has a dash of spite in it against the men. Even they don't need very much as they are constantly interrupted and only too willing to quit if some one says "Bridge." Here is our sample of what they need, taken almost verbally from the pages of the *Ladies Own Journal*, and *Woman's Some Companion* and such.

HOW I NEARLY LOST MY HUSBAND.

(Continued, apparently, from somewhere
in the middle.)

Well, from that time on the miserable conviction began to dawn upon my mind that John was drinking. I don't mean to say that he was drunk, or that he was cruel to me. It was not that. It showed itself in small things. He would come up to breakfast looking fagged and heavy as if he had not slept well. I say "up" because by this time John, like any other well trained husband such as those, no doubt, of countless of my readers, slept in the cellar. But I would notice often as he brought up the coal to light the fire in my bedroom in the morning that his hand shook and the scuttle rattled. He endeavored to pass it off by saying that it was the cold in the cellar that made his hand shake; but I knew better. Especially as Fido had always slept in the cellar, at any rate in the milder weather, till I had given him a little rug at the foot of my bed.

But I began to notice in John, as I say, especially in the morning while he was moving about the house getting my breakfast before going out to his work, signs of sullenness that I could only connect with drinking. At times he broke out into bursts of temper. Once when he accidentally burnt his finger at the electric stove in making my toast, he let the toast fall, in a fit of demoniacal rage—I can only call it so—and said: "Gee! I've burnt myself!" "John!" I said. "How can you! How dare you! How wicked of you to give way like that!" I think he saw by my sobs how deeply I was bruised and for a day or so things were better.

Then the old troubles began again. Often in the evenings instead of staying quietly in his own den he would wander into the house in a queer, restless way. I should say that I had fitted John up a den, out in the coal shed, so that he could have a place where he could smoke in the evenings. Once we heard him—by we, I mean my mother and I and two lady friends who were with us that evening—apparently moving about in the pantry. I should explain that we were in the upstairs sitting room playing cards.

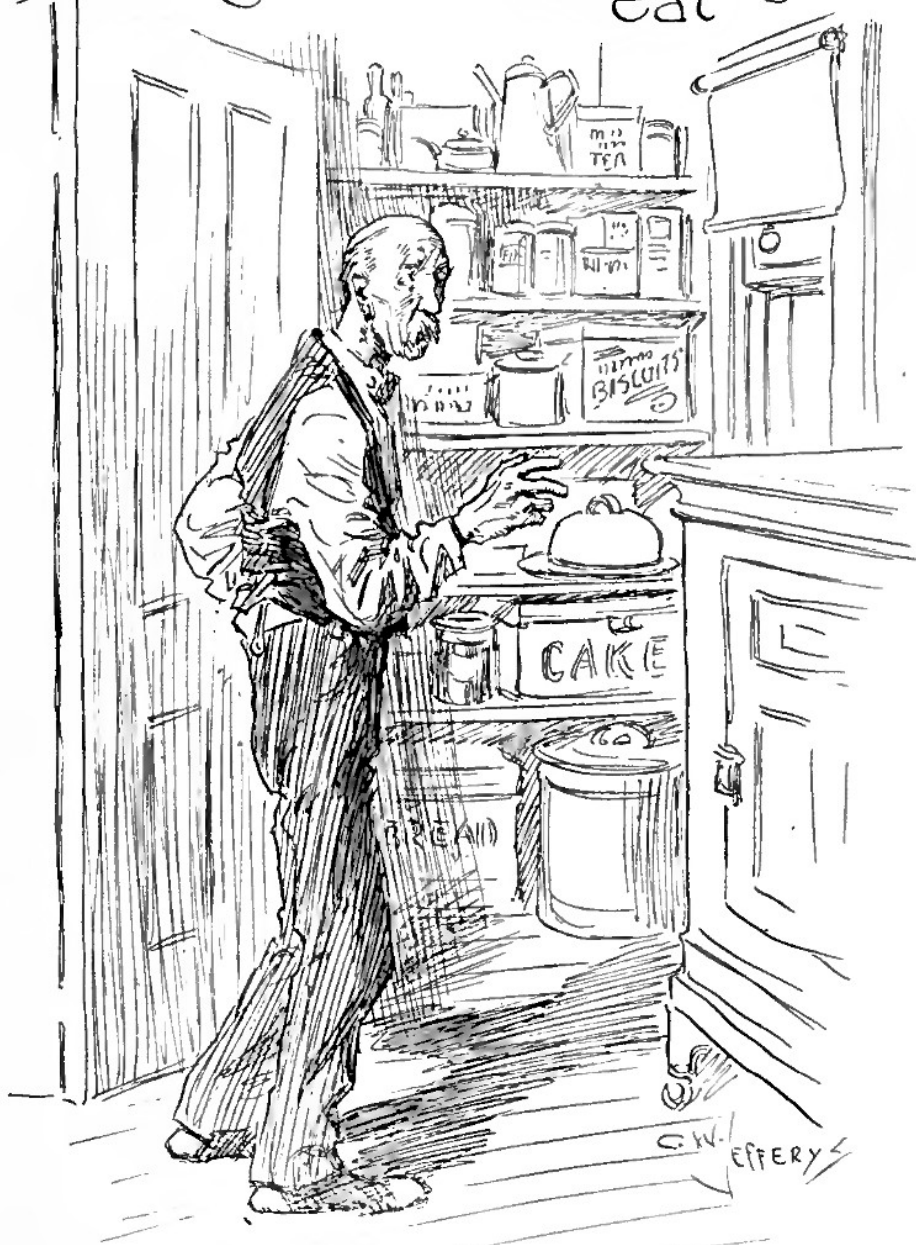
"John!" I called down. "Is that you?"

"Yes, Emily," he answered—quietly enough, I admit.

"What are you doing there?" I asked.

"Looking for something to eat," he answered.

"Looking for something to eat"



"Looking for something to eat"

“John,” I said, “you are forgetting what is due to *me* as your wife. You were fed at six. Go back to your den.”

We heard him groan, but he went.

These little signs kept multiplying. What could be the cause?

Sometimes I felt as if John’s love for me was dwindling. I asked myself, what is the matter? Is it that I am doing too much for him? Do I make myself too cheap? Perhaps I am letting my heart run away with my head!

I thought it all over, wearily enough, and went over to myself all the things that I had done, vainly as it seemed now, to hold John’s love. I had kept him in at nights. I had stopped his playing cards. I had cut his smoking down to four cigarettes a week.

What more could there be? What else could I cut off? And if the only result was to be that John has started drinking——

Enough! The reader has fallen asleep, but would admit before doing so that one page of this sort of thing is as good as fifty. Better.

That is quite as much pure fiction as the reader ever attempts to read. For the other stories nothing is needed except the title and one or two opening sentences. The reader looks at them, shudders, and passes on.

Thus, the inevitable French-Canadian story. Let us call it.

L’ANGE GARDIEN DU PETITE
MARIE.

[Quite so, it ought to be “de la.” But it isn’t.]

It begins like this:

On the threshold of the *fermerie*, Mère Floquet—for every one in Le Petit Anse called her *mère* Floquet—kneeled idly scrubbing the steps like the *bonne ménagère* that she was. On the opposite side of the long *rue* that ran through the *village*, the *horloge* of the *presbytère* had just struck three o’clock.

The Magazine has done its work



The Magazine has done its work.

“Trois heures!” murmured Mère Floquet to herself, as she counted the chiming strokes.
[Well done, Mère Floquet. Lucky it wasn’t eleven.]

But, as I say, no one needs more than that on a summer afternoon.
Next!

Every reader likes an article
with a "punch" in it.



Let me see. After that we have to supply our readers with something a little more solid. Something with *facts* sticking out in it like plums in a cake. Facts and what has come to be called “punch.” Every reader likes an article with a “punch” in it. Tell a thing to a modern reader in a quiet gentlemanly fashion and he is bored to death. What he likes is to have it “punched” into him. So we have to insert an article, at least one, dealing with some kind of facts, big ones, noisy ones—some subject such as, shall we say, the grain crop of Canada. Only it musn’t be called that. It has to be labelled

JOHNNY CANUCK’S BREAD BASKET.

The article should, properly speaking, be written by Miss Ag—— but, no, let us not mention names. We’ll have to write it ourselves. And in the summer time a very little of it will do. It has to run like this:

A million cars a month! Think of it. With thirty billion bushels of grain in them! Set them end to end and they reach from Toronto to Talahassee! Multiply them by a million and they will reach over the same distance a million times! Imagine it? You can’t! Ha! Then imagine, if you dare, the whole of this boundless crop loaded in a single oil steamer, on a single afternoon!

[Ha! That beat you! Then quit reading.]

There is practically nothing needed now to complete the miniature magazine, except a few loose columns of “Hearth and Home” stuff, useful hints, that would be of inestimable benefit if one could remember them overnight. We will head up this column

HOME HINTS FOR THE SUMMER BUNGALOW

and will put in just one sample of what is needed.

HOW TO LIGHT A FIRE IN FIVE MINUTES.

Take an old newspaper. Select one that is thoroughly dry, such as—but it would be unfair to mention. Crumple the sheets well and sprinkle freely with kerosene. Lay the paper in the fireplace, or stove, with the kerosene spots turned towards the sun, or moon. Get a basketful of dry pine shavings—they may be had at any carpenter’s—and heap them up on the paper. Wet the shavings with kerosene. Then get an armful of old dry pine shingles and, with a knife, split each one into four. Lay the shingles carefully on the shavings in layers, across and across. Sprinkle freely with gunpowder and lay two large sticks of dynamite across the top.

Then touch a match to the kerosened paper at the bottom.

That fire—so you would at least think—will light.

But if you think so it only shows that you have never been out camping, or summering, among the northern lakes of this, our beautiful country, after three days’ rain. That fire will *not* light. Try it. The match will flare up feebly, the kerosene will flicker into a little flame and go out, the gunpowder will give a feeble sizzle and send out a little wet smoke, then a large drop of rain will fall through the roof of your tent or bungalow and the whole thing will go out with a biff.

Except perhaps the dynamite. That might explode all right. But try it, try it. The only way is to try it.

Even in a summer magazine, it is just as well to end up with a few answers to correspondents. These are easily provided for. The Editor merely looks up something in an encyclopedia and then writes a letter to himself to find out about it. We might arrange it thus:

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

To the Editor.—I am most anxious to find out the relation of the earth's diameter to its circumference. Can you, or any of your readers, assist me in it?

Yours, etc.,
CAREWORN MOTHER.

Answer.—The earth's circumference is estimated to be three decimal one four one five nine of its diameter, a fixed relation indicated by the Greek letter *pi*. If you like we will tell you what *pi* is. Shall we?

Yours, etc.,
EDITOR.

On the other hand real questions sometimes come in to be answered, which prove embarrassing to the uninitiated. To a trained editor they give no trouble. Here is one that happened to be sent in while this very article was being prepared.

Editor, Queries and Answers,

Dear Sir.—Can you, will you, tell me what is the Sanjak of Novi Bazar?

Yours,
BRINK OF SUICIDE.

Answer.—The Sanjak of Novi Bazar is bounded on the north by its northern frontier, cold and cheerless, and covered during the winter with deep snow. The east of the Sanjak occupies a more easterly position. Here the sun rises—at first slowly, but gathering speed as it goes. After having traversed the entire width of the whole Sanjak, the magnificent orb, slowly and regretfully sinks into the west. On the south, where the soil is more fertile and where the land begins to be worth occupying, the Sanjak is, or will be, bounded by the British Empire.

The Old, Old Story of How Five Men Went Fishing

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Further Foolishness," "Moonbeams of the Larger Lunacy," etc.

Illustrated by F. Horsman Varley

But there was good fishing in the bars—all Winter



But there was good fishing in the bars—all Winter

This is a plain account of a fishing party. It is not a story. There is no plot. Nothing happens in it and nobody is hurt. The only point of this narrative is its peculiar truth. It not only tells what happened to us,—the five people concerned in it—but what has happened and is happening to all the other fishing parties that at this time of year from Halifax to Vancouver, go gliding out on the unruffled surface of Canadian lakes in the still cool of early summer morning.

We decided to go in the early morning because there is a popular belief that the early morning is the right time for bass fishing. The bass is said to bite in the early morning. Perhaps it does. In fact the thing is almost capable of scientific proof. The bass does *not* bite between eight and twelve. It does *not* bite between twelve and six in the afternoon. Nor does it bite between six o'clock and midnight. All these things are known facts. The inference is that the bass bites furiously at about daybreak.

At any rate our party were unanimous about starting early. "Better make an early start," said the Colonel when the idea of the party was suggested. "Oh yes," said George Popley, the Bank Manager, "We want to get right out on the shoal while the fish are biting."



When he said this all our eyes glistened. Everybody's do. There's a thrill in the words. To "get out right on the shoal at daybreak when the fish are biting," is an idea that goes to any man's brain.

If you listen to the men talking in a Pullman car, or a hotel corridor, or better still, at the little tables in a first-class bar, you will not listen long before you hear one say—"Well, we got

out early, just after sunrise, right on the shoal.” . . . And presently, even if you can’t hear him you will see him reach out his two hands and hold them about two feet apart for the other man to admire. He is measuring the fish. No, not the fish they caught; this was the big one that they lost. But they had him right up to the top of the water: Oh, yes, he was up to the top of the water all right. The number of huge fish that have been heaved up to the top of the water in our Canadian lakes is almost incredible. Or at least it used to be when we still had bar rooms and little tables for serving that vile stuff Scotch whiskey and such foul things as gin rickies and John Collinses. It makes one sick to think of it, doesn’t it? But there was good fishing in the bars, all winter.

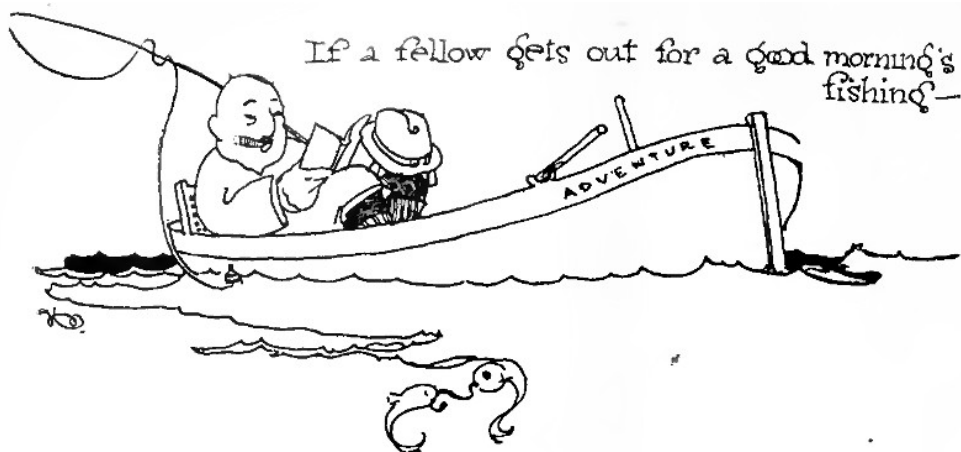
But, as I say, we decided to go early in the morning. Charlie Jones, the railroad man, said that he remembered how when he was a boy, round Bobcaygeon, they used to get out at five in the morning,—not get up at five but be on the shoal at five. It appears that there is a shoal near Bobcaygeon where the bass lie in thousands. Kernin, the lawyer, said that when he was a boy,—this was on Lake Rosseau—they used to get out at four. It seems there is a shoal in Lake Rosseau where you can haul up the bass as fast as you can drop your line. The shoal is hard to find,—very hard, Kernin can find it, but it is doubtful—so I gather,—if any other living man can. The Bobcaygeon shoal, too, is very difficult to find. Once you find it, you are alright, but its hard to find. Charlie Jones can find it. If you were in Bobcaygeon right now he’d take you straight to it, but probably no other person now alive could reach that shoal. In the same way Colonel Morse knows of a shoal in Lake Simcoe where he used to fish years and years ago and which, I understand, he can still find.

I have mentioned that Kernin is a lawyer, and Jones a railroad man and Popley a banker. But I needn’t have. Any reader would take it for granted. In any Canadian fishing party there is always a lawyer. You can tell him at sight. He is the one of the party that has a landing net and a steel rod in sections with a wheel that is used to wind the fish to the top of the water.

And there is always a banker. You can tell him by his good clothes. Popley, in the bank, wears his banking suit. When he goes fishing he wears his fishing suit. It is much better, because his banking suit has ink marks on it, and his fishing suit has no fish marks on it.

As for the Railroad Man,—quite so, the reader knows it as well as I do,—you can tell him because he carries a pole that he cut in the bush himself, with a ten cent line wrapped round the end of it. Jones says he can catch as many fish with this kind of line as Kernin can with his patent rod and wheel. So he can, too. Just the same number.

But Kernin says that with his patent apparatus if you get a fish on you can *play* him. Jones says to Hades with *playing* him: give him a fish on his line and he’ll haul him in alright. Kernin says he’d lose him. But Jones says *he* wouldn’t. In fact he *guarantees* to haul the fish in. Kernin says that more than once (in Lake Rosseau) he has played a fish for over half an hour. I forget now why he stopped; I think the fish quit playing.



If a fellow gets out for a good morning's fishing—

I have heard Kernin and Jones argue this question of their two rods, as to which rod can best pull in the fish, for half an hour. Others may have heard the same question debated. I know no way by which it could be settled.

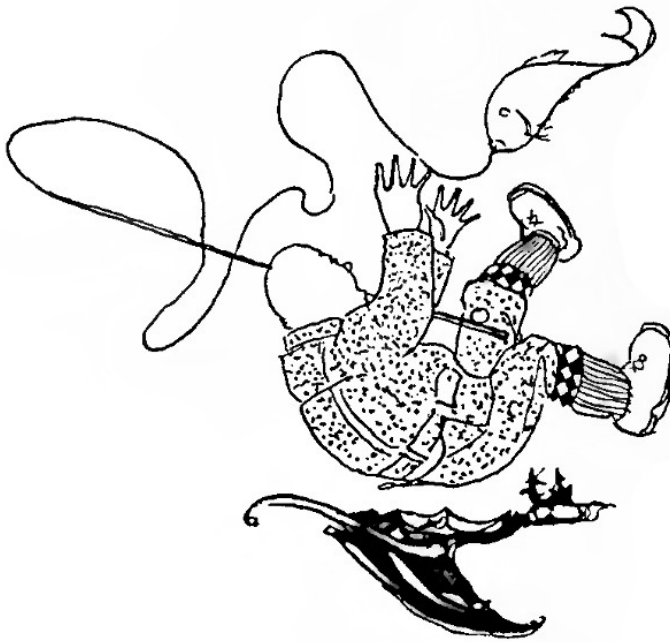
Our arrangement to go fishing was made at the little golf club of our summer town on the verandah where we sit in the evening. Oh, its just a little place, nothing pretentious: the links are not much good for *golf*; in fact we don't play much *golf* there, so far as golf goes, and of course we don't serve meals at the club, its not like that, and no, we've nothing to drink there because of prohibition. But we go and *sit* there. It is a good place to *sit*, and, after all, what else can you do in Ontario?

So it was there that we arranged the party.

The thing somehow seemed to fall into the mood of each of us. Jones said he had been hoping that some of the boys would get up a fishing party. It was apparently the one kind of pleasure that he really cared for. For myself I was delighted to get in with a crowd of regular fishermen like these four. Especially as I hadn't been fishing for nearly ten years: though fishing is a thing I am passionately fond of. I know no pleasure in life like the sensation of getting a four pound bass on the hook and hauling him up to the top of the water, to weigh him. But, as I say, I hadn't been out for ten years: Oh, yes, I live right beside the water every summer, and yes, certainly,—I am saying so,—I am passionately fond of fishing, but still somehow I hadn't been *out*. Every fisherman knows just how that happens. The years have a way of slipping by. Yet I must say I was surprised to find that so keen a sport as Jones hadn't been out,—so it presently appeared,—for eight years. I had imagined he practically lived on the water. And Colonel Morse and Kernin,—I was amazed to find,—hadn't been out for twelve years, not since the day (so it came out in conversation) when they went out together in Lake Rosseau and Kernin landed a perfect monster, a regular corker, five pounds and a half, they said: or no, I don't think he *landed* him. No, I remember, he didn't *land* him. He caught him,—and he *could* have landed him,—he should have landed him,—but he *didn't* land him. That was it. Yes, I remember Kernin and Morse had a slight discussion about it,—Oh, perfectly friendly,—as to whether Morse had fumbled with the net—or whether Kernin—the whole argument was perfectly friendly—had made an ass of himself by not “striking” soon

enough. Of course the whole thing was so long ago, that both of them could look back on it without any bitterness or ill nature. In fact it amused them. Kernin said it was the most laughable thing he ever saw in his life to see poor old Jack (that's Morse's name) shoving away with the landing net wrong side up. And Morse said he'd never forget seeing poor old Cronyn yanking his line first this way and then that and not knowing where to try to haul it. It made him laugh to look back at it.

They might have gone on laughing for quite a time but Charlie Jones interrupted by saying that in his opinion a landing net is a piece of darned foolishness. Here Popley agrees with him. Kernin objects that if you don't use a net you'll lose your fish at the side of the boat. Jones says no: give him a hook well through the fish and a stout line in his hand and that fish has *got* to come in. Popley says so too. He says let him have his hook fast through the fish's head with a short stout line, and put him (Popley) at the other end of that line and that fish will come in. It's *got* to. Otherwise Popley will know why. That's the alternative. Either the fish must come in or Popley must know why. There's no escape from the logic of it.



—The
alternative—

—The alternative—

But perhaps some of my readers have heard the thing discussed before.

So as I say we decided to go the next morning and to make an early start. All of the boys were at one about that. When I say "boys" I use the word as it is used in fishing to mean people from say forty-five to sixty-five. There is something about fishing that keeps men

young. If a fellow gets out for a good morning's fishing, forgetting all business worries, once in a while,—say once in ten years—it keeps him fresh.

We agreed to go in a launch, a large launch,—to be exact the largest in the town. We could have gone in row boats, but a row boat is a poor thing to fish from. Kernin said that in a row boat it is impossible properly to “*play*” your fish. The side of the boat is so low that the fish is apt to leap over the side into the boat when half “*played*.” Popley said that there is no *comfort* in a row boat. In a launch a man can reach out his feet and take it easy. Charlie Jones said that in a launch a man could rest his back against something and Morse said that in a launch a man could rest his neck. Young inexperienced boys, in the small sense of the word, never think of these things. So they go out and after a few hours their necks get tired. Whereas a group of expert fishers in a launch can rest their backs and necks and even fall asleep during the pauses when the fish stop biting.

Anyway all the “boys” agreed that the great advantage of a launch would be that we could get a *man* to take us. By that means the man could see to getting the worms, and the man would be sure to have spare lines, and the man could come along to our different places,—we were all beside the water,—and pick us up. In fact the more we thought about the advantage of having a “man” to take us the better we liked it.

As a boy gets old he likes to have a man about to do the work. Anyway Frank Rolls, the man we decided to get, not only has the biggest launch in town but what is more Frank *knows* the lake. We called him up at his boat house over the phone and said we'd give him five dollars to take us out first thing in the morning provided that he knew the shoal. He said he knew it.

I don't know, to be quite candid about it, who mentioned whiskey first. In these days everybody has to be a little careful. I imagine we had all been *thinking* whiskey for some time before anybody said it. But there is a sort of convention that when men go fishing they must have whiskey. Each man makes the pretence that the one thing he needs at six o'clock in the morning is cold raw whiskey. It is spoken of in terms of affection. One may say that the first thing you need if you're going fishing is a good “snort” of whiskey: another says that a good “snifter” is the very thing and the others agree. No man can fish properly without “a horn,” or a “bracer” or an “eye-opener.” Each man really decides that he himself won't take any. But he feels that in a collective sense, the “boys” need it.

So it was with us. The Colonel said he'd bring along “a bottle of booze.” Popley said, no, let *him* bring it; Kernin said let him: and Charlie Jones said no, he'd bring it. It turned out that the Colonel had some very good Scotch at his house that he'd like to bring: oddly enough Popley had some good Scotch in his house too; and, queer though it is, each of the boys had Scotch in his house. When the discussion closed we knew that each of the five of us was intending to bring a bottle of Scotch whiskey. Each of the five of us expected the others to drink one and a quarter bottles in the course of the morning. I suppose we must have talked on that verandah till long after one in the morning. It was probably nearer two than one when we broke up.

But we agreed that that made no difference. Popley said that for him three hours sleep, the right kind of sleep, was far more refreshing than ten. Kernin said that a lawyer learns to snatch his sleep when he can, and Jones said that in railroad work a man pretty well cuts out sleep.

So we had no alarms whatever about not being ready by five. Our plan was simplicity itself. Men like ourselves in responsible positions learn to organize things easily. In fact

Popley says it is that faculty that has put us where we are. So the plan simply was that Frank Rolls should come along at five o'clock and blow his whistle in front of our places, and at that signal each man would come down to his wharf with his rod and kit and so we'd be off to the shoal without a moment's delay.

The weather we ruled out. It was decided that even if it rained that made no difference. Kernin said that fish bite better in the rain. And everybody agreed that a man with a couple of snorts in him need have no fear of a little rain water.

So we parted, all keen on the enterprise, nor do I think even now that there was anything faulty or imperfect in that party as we planned it.

I heard Frank Rolls blowing his infernal whistle opposite my summer cottage at some ghastly hour in the morning. Even without getting out of bed, I could see from the window that it was no day for fishing. No, not raining exactly. I don't mean that, but one of those peculiar days; I don't mean *wind*, there was no wind but a sort of feeling in the air that showed anybody who understands bass fishing that it was a perfectly rotten day for going out. The fish, I seemed to know it, wouldn't bite.

When I was still fretting over the annoyance of the disappointment I heard Frank Rolls blowing his whistle in front of the other cottages. I counted thirty whistles altogether. Then I fell into a light doze—not exactly sleep, but a sort of *doze*,—I can find no other word for it. It was clear to me that the other “boys” had thrown the thing over. There was no use in my trying to go out alone. I stayed where I was, my doze lasting till ten o'clock.

When I walked up town later in the morning I couldn't help being struck by the signs in the butchers' shops and the restaurants, FISH, FRESH FISH, FRESH LAKE FISH.

Where in blazes do they get those fish anyway?



I counted thirty whistles altogether.

Back to the City!

This is the End of a Perfect Growing Season

By Stephen Leacock

Author of "Further Foolishness," "Germany from Within," etc.

Illustrated by C. W. Jefferys

I have just come back—now in the third week of September—to the city. I have hung up my hoe in my study, my spade is put away behind the piano. I have with me seven pounds of Paris Green that I had over. Anybody who wants it may have it. I didn't like to bury it for fear of its poisoning the ground. I didn't like to throw it away for fear of its destroying cattle. I was afraid to leave it in my summer place for fear that it might poison the tramps who generally break in in November. I have it with me now. I move it from room to room, as I hate to turn my back upon it. Anybody who wants it, I repeat, can have it.

I should like also to give away either to the Red Cross or to any thing else, ten packets of radish seed (the early curled variety, I think), fifteen packets of cucumber seed (the long succulent variety, I believe it says), and twenty packets of onion seed (the Yellow Danvers, distinguished, I understand, for its edible flavor and its nutritious properties). It is not likely that I shall ever, on this side of the grave, plant onion seed again. All these things I have with me. My vegetables are to come after me by freight. They are booked from Simcoe County to Toronto: at present they are, I believe, passing through Schenectady. But they will arrive later all right. They were seen going through Detroit last week, moving west. It is the first time that I ever sent anything by freight anywhere. I never understood before the wonderful organization of the railroads. But they tell me that there is a bad congestion of freight down South this month. If my vegetables get tangled up in that there is no telling when they will arrive.

In other words, I am one of the legion of men—quiet, determined, resolute men—who went out last spring to plant the land, and who are now back.

With me—and I am sure that I speak for all the others as well—it was not a question of mere pleasure; it was no love of gardening for its own sake that inspired us. It was a plain national duty. What we said to ourselves was: "This war has got to stop. The men in the trenches thus far have failed to stop it. Now let *us* try. The whole thing, we argued, is a plain matter of food production.

"If we raise enough food the Germans are bound to starve. Very good. Let us kill them."

I suppose there was never a more grimly determined set of men went out from the cities than those who went out last May, as I did, to conquer the food problem. I don't mean to say that each and every one of us actually left the city. But we all "went forth" in the metaphorical sense. Some of the men cultivated back gardens; others took vacant lots; some went out into the suburbs; and others, like myself, went right out into the country.

We are now back. Each of us has with him his Paris Green, his hoe and the rest of his radish seed.

The time has, therefore, come for a plain, clear statement of our experience. We have, as everybody knows, failed. We have been beaten back all along the line. Our potatoes are buried

in a jungle of autumn burdocks. Our radishes stand seven feet high, uneatable. Our tomatoes, when last seen, were greener than they were at the beginning of August, and getting greener every week. Our celery looked as delicate as a maiden hair fern. Our Indian corn was nine feet high with a tall feathery spike on top of that, but no sign of anything eatable about it from top to bottom.



Our radishes stand seven feet high, unbeatable.

I look back with a sigh of regret at those bright, early days in April when we were all buying hoes, and talking soil and waiting for the snow to be off the ground. The street cars, as we went up and down to our offices were a busy babel of garden talk. There was a sort of farmer-like geniality in the air. One spoke freely to strangers. Every man with a hoe was a friend. Men chewed straws in their offices, and kept looking out of windows to pretend to themselves that they were afraid it might blow up rain. "Got your tomatoes in?" one man would ask another as they went up in the elevator. "Yes, I got mine in yesterday," the other would answer, "but I'm just a little afraid that this east wind may blow up a little frost. What we need now is growing weather." And the two men would drift off together from the elevator door along the corridor, their heads together in friendly colloquy.



One spoke freely to strangers.

I have always regarded a lawyer as a man without a soul. There is one who lives next door to me to whom I have not spoken in five years. Yet when I saw him one day last spring

heading for the suburbs in a pair of old trousers with a hoe in one hand and a box of celery plants in the other I felt that I loved the man. I used to think that stock brokers were mere sordid calculating machines. Now that I have seen whole firms of them busy at the hoe wearing old trousers that reached to their armpits and were tied about the waist with a polka dot necktie, I know that they are men. I know that there are warm hearts beating behind those trousers.

Old trousers, I say. Where on earth did they all come from in such a sudden fashion last spring? Everybody had them. Who would suspect that a man drawing a salary of ten thousand a year was keeping in reserve a pair of pepper and salt breeches, four sizes too large for him, just in case a war should break out against Germany! Talk of German mobilization! I doubt whether the organizing power was all on their side after all. At any rate it is estimated that fifty thousand pairs of old trousers were mobilized in Toronto in one week.



But perhaps it was not a case of mobilization, or deliberate preparedness. It was rather an illustration of the primitive instinct that is in all of us and that will out in "war time." Any man worth the name would wear old breeches all the time if the world would let him. Any man will wind a polka dot tie round his waist in preference to wearing patent braces. The makers of the ties know this. That is why they make the tie four feet long. And in the same way if any manufacturer of hats will put on the market an old fedora, with a limp rim and a mark where the ribbon used to be but is not—a hat guaranteed to be six years old, well weathered, well rained on, and certified to have been walked over by a herd of cattle—that man will make and deserve a fortune.

These at least were the fashions of last May. Alas, where are they now? The men that wore them have relapsed again into tailor-made tweeds. They have put on hard new hats. They are shining their boots again. They are shaving again, not merely on Saturday night, but every day. They are sinking back into civilization.

Yet those were bright times and I cannot forbear to linger on them. Not the least pleasant feature was our rediscovery of the morning. My neighbor on the right was always up at five. My neighbor on the left was out and about by four. With the earliest light of day little columns of smoke rose along our street from the kitchen ranges where our wives were making coffee for us before the servants got up. By six o'clock the street was alive and busy with friendly salutations. The milkman seemed a late comer, a poor, sluggish fellow who failed to appreciate the early hours of the day. A man, we found, might live through quite a little Iliad of adventure before going to his nine o'clock office.

"How will you possibly get time to put in a garden?" I asked of one of my neighbors during this glad period of early spring just before I left for the country. "Time!" he exclaimed. "Why, my dear fellow, I don't have to be down at the warehouse till eight-thirty."

Later in the summer I saw the wreck of his garden, choked with weeds. "Your garden," I said, "is in poor shape." "Garden!" he said indignantly. "How on earth can I find time for a garden? Do you realize that I have to be down at the warehouse at eight-thirty?"

When I look back to our bright beginnings our failure seems hard indeed to understand. It is only when I survey the whole garden movement in melancholy retrospect that I am able to see some of the reasons for it.

The principal one, I think, is the question of the season. It appears that the right time to begin gardening is last year. For many things it is well to begin the year before last. For good results one must begin even sooner. Here, for example, are the directions, as I interpret them, for growing asparagus. Having secured a suitable piece of ground, preferably a deep friable loam rich in nitrogen, go out three years ago and plough or dig deeply. Remain a year inactive, thinking. Two years ago pulverize the soil thoroughly. Wait a year. As soon as last year comes set out the young shoots. Then spend a quiet winter doing nothing. The asparagus will then be ready to work at *this* year.

This is the rock on which we were wrecked. Few of us were men of sufficient means to spend several years in quiet thought waiting to begin gardening. Yet that is, it seems, the only way to begin. Asparagus demands a preparation of four years. To fit oneself to grow strawberries requires three years. Even for such humble things as peas, beans, and lettuce the

instructions inevitably read, “plough the soil deeply in the preceding autumn.” This sets up a dilemma. *Which* is the preceding autumn? If a man begins gardening in the spring he is too late for last autumn and too early for this. On the other hand if he begins in the autumn he is again too late; he has missed this summer’s crop. It is, therefore ridiculous to begin in the autumn and impossible to begin in the spring.

This was our first difficulty. But the second arose from the question of the soil itself. All the books and instructions insist that the selection of the soil is the most important part of gardening. No doubt it is. But if a man has already selected his own back yard before he opens the book, what remedy is there? All the books lay stress on the need of “a deep, friable loam full of nitrogen.” This I have never seen. My own plot of land I found on examination to contain nothing but earth. I could see no trace of nitrogen. I do not deny the existence of loam. There may be such a thing. But I am admitting now in all humility of mind that I don’t know what loam is. Last spring my fellow gardeners and I all talked freely of the desirability of “a loam.” My own opinion is that none of them had any clearer ideas about it than I had. Speaking from experience I should say that the only soils are earth, mud and dirt. There are no others.

But I leave out the soil. In any case we were mostly forced to disregard it. Perhaps a more fruitful source of failure even than the lack of loam was the attempt to apply calculation and mathematics to gardening. Thus, if one cabbage will grow in one square foot of ground, how many cabbages will grow in ten square feet of ground? Ten? Not at all. The answer is *one*. You will find as a matter of practical experience that however many cabbages you plant in a garden plot there will be only *one* that will really grow. This you will presently come to speak of as *the* cabbage. Beside it all the others (till the caterpillars finally finish their experience) will look but poor, lean things. But *the* cabbage will be a source of pride and an object of display to visitors; in fact it would ultimately have grown to be a *real* cabbage, such as you buy for ten cents at any market, were it not that you inevitably cut it and eat it when it is still only half-grown.



The cabbage will be a source of pride.

This always happens to the one cabbage that is of decent size, and to the one tomato that shows signs of turning red (it is really a feeble green-pink), and to the only melon that might have lived to ripen. They get eaten. No one but a practised professional gardener can live and sleep beside a melon three-quarters ripe and a cabbage two-thirds grown without going out and tearing it off the stem.

Even at that it is not a bad plan to eat the stuff while you can. The most peculiar thing about gardening is that all of a sudden everything is too old to eat. Radishes change over night from delicate young shoots not large enough to put on the table into huge plants seven feet high with a root like an Irish shillaleh. If you take your eyes off a lettuce bed for a week the lettuces, not ready to eat when you last looked at them, have changed into a tall jungle of hollyhocks. Green peas are only really green for about two hours. Before that they are young peas; after that they are old peas. Cucumbers are the worst case of all. They change overnight from delicate little bulbs obviously too slight and dainty to pick, to old cases of yellow leather filled with seeds.

If I were ever to garden again, a thing which is out of the bounds of possibility, I should wait until a certain day and hour when all the plants were ripe, and then go out with a gun and shoot them all dead, so they could grow no more.

But calculation, I repeat, is the bane of gardening. I knew among our group of food producers, a party of young engineers, college men, who took an empty farm north of Toronto as the scene of their summer operations. They took their coats off and applied college methods. They ran out, first, a base line AB, and measured off from it lateral spurs MN, OP, QR, and so on. From these they took side angles with a theodolite so as to get the edges of each of the separate plots of their land absolutely correct. I saw them working at it all through one Saturday afternoon in May. They talked as they did it of the peculiar ignorance of the so-called practical farmer. He never—so they agreed—uses his head. He never—I think I have their phrase correct—stops to think. In laying out his ground for use, it never occurs to him to try to get the maximum result from a given space. If the man would only realize that the contents of a circle represent the maximum of space enclosable in a given perimeter, and that any one circle is merely a function of its own radius, what a lot of time he would save.

These young men that I speak of laid out their field engineer-fashion with little white posts at even distances. They made a blue print of the whole thing as they planted it. Every corner of it was charted out. The yield was calculated to a nicety. They had allowed for the fact that some of the stuff might fail to grow by introducing what they called “a co-efficient of error.” By means of this and by reducing the variation of autumn prices to a mathematical curve those men not only knew already in the middle of May the exact yield of their farm to within half a bushel (they allowed, they said, a variation of half a bushel per fifty acres), but they knew before hand within a few cents the market value that they would receive. The figures, as I remember them, were simply amazing. It seemed incredible that fifty acres could produce so much. Yet there were the plain facts in front of one, calculated out. The thing amounted practically to a revolution in farming. At least it ought to have. And it would have if those young men had come back again to hoe their field. But it turned out, most unfortunately, that they were busy. To their great regret they were too busy to come. They had been working under a free and easy arrangement. Each man was to give what time he could every Saturday. It was left to every man’s honor to do what he could. There was no compulsion. Each man

trusted the others to be there. In fact the thing was not only an experiment in food production, it was also a new departure in social coöperation. The first Saturday that those young men worked there were, so I have been told, seventy-five of them driving in white stakes and running lines. The next Saturday there were fifteen of them planting potatoes. The rest were busy. The week after that there was one man hoeing weeds. After that silence fell upon the deserted garden, broken only by the cry of the chick-a-dee and the choo-choo feeding on the waving heads of the thistles.

Near to these young men in a similar field there operated, I am told, an assembled party of lawyers. They, too, failed. It was their claim that farming is done in too vague a fashion without a proper understanding of the legal rights of the parties concerned. They organized themselves into a corporation. Everything was on a business footing.

The time of those who worked with their hands was rated at fifty cents an hour and recorded. The time of those who gave advice was counted up at five dollars an hour—the lowest figure, they admitted, at which they could afford to do it. They failed. When the hot spell of weather came in June those who worked with their hands got out an injunction against anybody offering to give advice in the heat to a man working. The corporation ended.



Those who worked with their hands got an injunction against anyone offering advice.

But these are only two or three of the ways of failing at food production. There are ever so many more. What amazes me is, in returning to the city, to find the enormous quantities of produce of all sorts offered for sale in the markets. It is an odd thing that last spring, by a queer oversight, we never thought, any of us, of this process of increasing the supply. If every patriotic man would simply take a large basket and go to the market every day and buy all that he could carry away there need be no further fear of a food famine.

And, meantime, my own vegetables are on their way. They are in a soap box with bars across the top, coming by freight. They weigh forty-six pounds, including the box. They represent the result of four months' arduous toil in sun, wind, and storm. Yet it is pleasant to think that I shall be able to feed with them some poor family of refugees during the rigor of the winter. Either that or feed them to the hens. I certainly won't eat the rotten things myself.

STEPHEN INTERVIEWS LEACOCK
The Art of Being Interviewed in England, Canada and the United States

By STEPHEN LEACOCK

Yesterday morning I was interviewed by the London press eighteen times. I am not saying this in any spirit of elation or boastfulness. I am simply stating it as a fact—interviewed eighteen times—by sixteen men and four women.

But as I feel that the results of these interviews were not all that I could have wished I think it well to make some public explanation of what happened. The truth is that we do this thing so differently over in Canada, that I was for the time being entirely thrown off my bearings. The questions that I had every right to expect after many years of Canadian and American interviews, entirely failed to appear.

I pass over the fact that being interviewed for five hours is a fatiguing process. I lay no claim to exemption for that. But to that no doubt was due the singular discrepancies as to my physical appearance which I detect in London papers. The young man who interviewed me immediately after breakfast describes me as “a brisk energetic man, still on the right side of forty, with energy in every movement.” The lady who wrote me up at 11.30 reported that my hair was turning grey and that there was “a peculiar weariness” in my manner. And at the end the boy who took me over at a quarter to two said: “The old gentleman sank wearily upon a chair in the hotel lounge. His hair is almost white.”



Professor Leacock has applied for membership in the S. P. C. H.—the “H” for Humorists—after being interviewed eighteen times in one morning in England, where he is now lecturing. Mr. Jefferys makes it look as if his application should be rushed.

An “Extinct Volcano?”

The trouble is that I had not understood that London reporters are supposed to look at a man’s personal appearance. In Canada we never bother with that. We simply describe him as a “dynamo.” For some reason or other it always pleases everybody to be called a “dynamo,” and the readers, with us at least, like to read about people who are “dynamos” and hardly care for anything else. In the case of very old men we sometimes call them “battlehorses” or “extinct volcanoes” but beyond these three classes we hardly venture on description. So I was misled. I had expected that the reporter would say, “As soon as Mr. Leacock came across the floor we felt we were in the presence of a ‘dynamo’ (or an ‘extinct battlehorse’ as the case may be).” Otherwise I would have kept up those energetic movements all morning. But they fatigue me and I did not think them necessary. But I let that pass. The more serious trouble was with the questions put to me by the reporters. Over in our chief centres of population we use another set altogether. I am thinking here especially of the kind of interview that I have given out in Youngstown, Ohio, and Okotoks, Alberta, and Peterborough, Ontario. In all these places for example in Okotoks, Alberta—the reporter asks as his first question, “What is your impression of Okotoks?” In London they don’t. They seem indifferent to the fate of their city. Perhaps it is only English pride. For all I know they may have been burning to know this just

as the Okotoks, Alberta, people are and were too proud to ask. In any case I will insert here the answer which I had already written out in my pocket (one copy for each paper, the way we do it in Okotoks) and which reads:

“London strikes me as emphatically a city with a future. Standing as she does in the heart of a rich agricultural district with railroad connection in all directions and resting as she must on a bed of coal and oil, I prophesy that she will one day be a great city.”

The advantage of this is that it enables the reporter to get just the right kind of heading: **PROPHESIES BRIGHT FUTURE FOR LONDON**. Had that been used my name would have stood higher here than it does to-day; unless the London people are very different from the people in Okotoks, which I doubt. As it is they don’t know whether their future is bright or is dark as mud. But it’s not my fault. The reporters never asked me.

Pails, Buckets and Soaps

If that first question had been handled properly it would have led up by an easy and pleasant transition to question two, which always runs:

“Have you seen our factories?”

To which the answer is:—

“I have. I was taken out early this morning by a group of your citizens (whom I cannot thank enough) in a Ford car to look at your pail and bucket works. At eleven-thirty I was taken out by a second group in what was apparently the same car to see your soap works. I understand that you are the second nailmaking centre east of the Rockies and I am amazed and appalled.

“This afternoon I am to be taken out to see your wonderful system of disposing of sewerage, a thing which has fascinated me from childhood.”

Now I am not offering any criticism of the London system of interviewing but one sees at once how easy and friendly for all concerned this Okotoks method is; how much better it works than the London method of asking questions about literature and art, and difficult things of that sort. I am sure that there must be soap works and perhaps a pail factory here in London. But in three days no one has ever offered to take me to them. As for the sewerage—oh, well, I suppose, we are more hospitable in Canada. Let it go at that. I had my answer all written and ready saying: “I understand that London is the second greatest hop-consuming, the fourth hog-killing and the first egg-absorbing centre in the world.”

Okotoks and London Women

But what I deplore still more, and I think with reason, is the total omission of the familiar interrogation: “What is your impression of our women?” That’s where our reporter over on the other side hits the nail every time. That is the point at which we always nudge him in the ribs and buy him a cigar and at which youth and age join in a sly jest together. Here again the sub-heading comes in so nicely: **THINKS OKOTOKS WOMEN CHARMING**. And they are. They are everywhere. But I hate to think that I had to keep my impressions of London women unused in my pocket, while a young man asked me whether I thought modern literature owed more to observation and less to inspiration than some other kind of literature.

Now that’s exactly the kind of question, the last one, that the London reporters seem to harp on. They seem hipped about literature; and their questions are too difficult. One asked me yesterday whether the American drama was structurally inferior to the French. I don’t call that

fair. I told him I didn't know; that I used to know the answer to it when I was at college but that I had forgotten it and that anyway I am too well off now to need to remember it.

I don't want to speak in anger. But I say it frankly, the atmosphere of these young men is not healthy and I don't want to see them any more. If there is any young reporter of the kind that we have at home in Montreal or Toledo or Calgary, Alberta, I will welcome him at my hotel. If he will take me out in a Ford car and show me a factory and tell me how many cubic feet of water go down the Thames in an hour, I shall be glad of his society and he and I will together make up the kind of copy that people of his class and mine can read.

But if any young man comes along here to ask about the structure of the modern drama he had better go on to the British Museum.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Numerous mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

Inconsistency in hyphenation has been retained.

Illustrations have been relocated due to using a non-page layout.

Some illustrations may not have been related to their stories, but simply magazine filler.

Some photographs have been enhanced to be more legible, and to remove the age-related yellowing of the paper.

As stories came from different magazines, they may have had different editors. No attempt has been made to change the original editing style to be consistent between stories.

[The end of *The Original Stephen Leacock* by Stephen Leacock]