The Road to Literary Success

A Story For Those Who Are Ambitious to Write

By JAMES B. HANSON

Perhaps if a census of persons who are scribbling were taken it would be found that half the educated people of the United States are trying to write for the other half. If the careers of authors of fiction are looked into it will be found that those who have achieved any enduring success nearly all gained it under similar circumstances. They began young, usually in the employ of some magazine or newspaper. Many of them became readers of manuscripts submitted for publication. In this atmosphere of mingled literature and publication they pass years occasionally trying to do some work for themselves.

Melville Ostrander at twenty-five, having been graduated at college and taken a number of postgraduate courses, determined to devote himself to literature, confining himself to fiction. Possessing an income sufficient to support him, it was not essential that he at once make money out of his profession. He reasoned that he was in the same position as other professional men who must expect to wait a reasonable time for an income.

There are persons, especially literary persons, who claim that the highest grade of fiction is that in which there are no incidents. The characters are expected to talk their way into the interest of the readers. Ostrander first fell under the influence of this school. He wrote novels in admirable English, in which his characters told their own story—if they had any to tell, which they had not—indirectly in conversations and by giving their own thoughts. His novels were always returned by the publishers as unavailable, except in one instance in which the work appeared with a sale of only a thousand copies—not enough to pay the cost of publication.

Ostrander, hearing that while the retrospective novel was the highest form of literature—so considered by critics—if he wished to succeed pecuniarily he must enter upon a more lively school. Henceforth he made his characters love madly and go through fire and water for one another. After writing a number of these stories without success he became discouraged. Spring coming on about that time, he concluded to go south for a trip.

In Florida he met a middle aged lady—he had by this time arrived at middle age himself—who had come to the south to recuperate from overwork. Miss Easton was in the employ of a publishing house in New York. In other words, she was one of those persons, already mentioned, who read the manuscripts of other people submitted for publication, at the same time trying to turn an honest penny by doing a little scribbling for themselves.

Miss Easton happened to be one of those women whose personality appealed to Mr. Ostrander. A man always sympathizes with a woman who is obliged to work, and especially one who works so hard as to endanger her health. Together they took part in those out of door amusements that may be enjoyed in the south even in the dead of winter. They boated together and drove together, finding something in the palmy tropical winter atmosphere and luxurious plants to warm the emotions even of middle age.

When a practical man discovers that he wants a woman he begins at once to find good and sufficient reasons why he should marry her. Mr. Ostrander in thinking the matter over concluded that Miss Easton would be a helpmeet to him in more ways than one. She could be a reader for him, correcting his manuscripts, making suggestions here and there and giving him hints in the practical or business part of his profession.

So one day when they were sitting among the palms and the flowers and the other reminders of spring he told her that he would be glad to lift the burden from her delicate shoulders to his own stronger ones. He had just enough income to get on with, but had his time to devote to literature and was determined to succeed in it. When he did doubtless they would have money to spend, not in travel for recuperation from hard work, but for pleasure. They would go abroad where he would be able to draw from new scenes and other peoples what would give him still greater fame.

Miss Easton in accepting his offer fell into a practical vein herself—indeed, a more practical vein that that of her lover. She told him that in order to succeed an author must make a market for his wares. He must write what the public wish to read rather than what the critics approved. It was not impossible that he might make a sudden high flight, but it was not probable. Usually time was required.

In this way Mr. Ostrander, a highly educated man, learned from Miss Easton, who had but common school training, that in all things sold for money there are certain fixed business rules that—though brilliant exceptions may occur—are practically inexorable.

Soon after their return to the north they were married. Mrs. Ostrander then told her husband that the publishing house she had been with was getting out a simple little story of hers in book form. It turned out that this simple little story had a very large sale and made the author's reputation.

And the result. The man who had taken up literature as a profession became the publisher of the former drudge and fortune was achieved for both.

Missing

By JONATHAN C. MURRAY

Some persons of this generation do not know that, though one now seldom sees the American flag at the peak of an ocean vessel, just before the civil war we were fast absorbing the carrying trade of the world. Steam hadn't then displaced sails as it has almost entirely done today, and our clipper sailing ships were the finest and fastest on the seas.

In 1854 I was third mate on one of these ships. We were bound for Hongkong at the time of which I am speaking, having sailed from New York. There was no Suez canal in those days, and we were obliged to go around the Cape of Good Hope. We were approaching the South African coast when we overhauled a derelict.

A derelict is always an interesting object plunging helplessly about among the waves with no hand to even attempt to guide her. Then one's curiosity it always excited as to why and how she was left by those who were on her, and the imagination gets to work at once. Our captain hove to and said to me:

"Mr. Morton, take a boat, go aboard of her and investigate. Take tools to scuttle her and powder to blow her up, as the case may require."

I was much pleased at the order, and it was not long before I was aboard the derelict. I found a good deal of damage done on deck, evidently by a storm. A number of the lights had been broken, and the seas had drenched the cabin. Everything was in confusion as if those on board had been under great excitement. In one of the staterooms hanging against the wood partition was a daguerreotype of a girl evidently seventeen or eighteen years old. The happy young face was a great contrast with the wrecked condition of things about. I took it from its hook and put it in the pocket of my pea jacket.

I couldn't make out anything about the identity of the craft. Some of the boards of the stern where the name was painted had been knocked off apparently by the waves, while other letters were illegible. The letters left were:

ITA SIGO.

I made a copy of them, giving the proportionate spaces between them. But there was nothing else aboard to identify the ship. She had been knocked about by wind and waves so long that her inside was pretty well washed out. I put fifty pounds of powder in her, attached a fuse, lighted it and pulled away from her. Before we reached the ship there was an explosion and she sank.

As soon as I went off duty, choosing a secluded spot, I took the daguerreotype out of my pocket to have another look. There's nothing remarkable in a young sailor out at sea on a long voyage making a companion of a girl's picture and falling in love with it. At any rate, this is what I did.

On our way back I determined to hunt through the whole of North America to find the flesh and blood that corresponded with my likeness. We had a quick voyage, but not quick enough for me, though a hunt for her would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Nevertheless, as soon as we reached our home port I went to work, overhauling the records of all the ships reported lost. But I found so many of them that I despaired of hitting on the right one. If I could supply the missing letters to the ship's name I might get into communication with some one who could tell me about my girl. But this seemed impossible. I made a list of all ships reported missing and compared my letters with their names, but I must have been very stupid, for I couldn't make them fit with any of the names on my list.

Two years later, while on the New England coast, I went ashore with some of my mates to enjoy ourselves in a summer garden. We had hardly got seated when I saw at a neighboring table the original of my picture. She looked up and, seeing me staring at her with a singular expression, looked embarrassed; but when I arose, took the daguerreotype from my pocket—I always carried it with me—and handed her her own picture I thought she would faint.

"Where did you get that?" she asked, flushing and turning pale alternately.

"Is it your likeness?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Are you sure?"

"I know it by the dress and by the artist's name stamped upon the casing. It was taken four years ago. I gave it to my brother just before he sailed on his last voyage."

"In what ship?"

"The Martha Washington."

I took out my pocketbook and drew from it the original memorandum of the letters left on the derelict's stern. They fitted in exactly with the name the girl had given me.

"What became of her?" I asked.

"She was never heard from."

I told her of the derelict I had visited and of the finding of the daguerreotype in a stateroom that had doubtless been her brother's.

I was the means of publishing the fate of a ship that had been on the list of missing vessels for four years, thus giving the relatives of those lost on her the first and only information received by them.

My next voyage I made in a ship I commanded and took the original of the daguerreotype with me as my wife.

An Unfortunate Encomium

By EDWARD IGLEHART

I married an unconscious beauty.

Now, everybody knows that beauty if it is unconscious is a very nice thing, but as soon as it becomes conscious it breeds vanity, and vanity is the mother of a large brood of troubles. My wife and myself—we are both Vans—belong to the older aristocracy of New York. None of our ancestors would have thought of associating with the ancestors of persons who are now in the swim and to whose circle we were not admitted. They care nothing about our ancestors, though many of them have heard of my father, who was a distinguished commodore in the navy, and my wife's grandmother, who was a celebrated New York belle. The places once occupied by these worthy people are now filled with the descendants of those who sold them oysters and fish and whose wealth runs away up into the millions.

But my wife and I were happy until a certain remark was repeated to her. One of our old family connections who owns a box in the "diamond horseshoe"—so called from being that gallery of the Metropolitan Opera House occupied by the multimillionaires—gave us the use of it for one night. The favor nearly caused our ruin. Soon after that night at the opera Gertrude's cousin, who gave us the box, said to my wife:

"The Earl of Chipperton, recently from London, asked me who was the lady in my box on Thursday night, saying at the same time: 'She's the most beautiful woman I ever saw. London could not furnish anything equal to her?'"

The remark was not only repeated to my wife, but was talked about at every function held by the golden set. It finally came to Gertrude, added to in this wise: "What a pity that Mrs. Van Valkenburg doesn't take the position in society that half a century ago was occupied by her grandmother, the beautiful Betty Van Wyke."

From that moment my dear wife got the society bee in her bonnet. "Our family has always kept up in the world till the present generation," she said. "We have $30,000 a year, and on that we could get on in society. Connections of ours in the swim would introduce us, and our especial associates would be of the older aristocratic set who are not so rich as these new commercial people."

"My dear," I protested, "our $10,000 income would not keep us in the swim a month."

"Not with your management," she retorted, "but a woman can always make money go further than a man. Let me try. I will show you what I can do."

Like a fool I was persuaded. My wife had no trouble in penetrating the society skirmish line because of the remark of the Earl of Chipperton, which was on every one's lips. She received a number of invitations, but found that she must make considerable outlay for costumes before she could accept any of them. And since the costumes she must rival cost all the way from several hundred to several thousand dollars, and she must have a different costume for each function, the amount soon run up to a third of our total income. Since our ordinary necessary expenditures required the other two-thirds, it was evident we would soon run upon the rocks. But what is the one matter of a woman's costumes, expensive though they be, compared with the thousand and one other luxuries that must be provided by people of fashion. One dinner alone we felt obliged to give cost us $500, and it was considered plain at that.

We permeated the outer social line and were making some headway into the inner circle. We were both disappointed in discovering that we must be civil to a number of the wives of young multimillionaires who had married actresses, and my wife had discovered that society was not composed of such persons as her grandmother had shone among. Then something happened that called a halt to our advance.

A certain Mrs. Van Valkenburg, whose income was some $2,000,000 a year and who was as homely as a hedge fence, caused it to be given out—for a consideration, the price being invitations to certain social climbers to her soirees—that a mistake had been made in reporting Earl Chipperton's remark as to the most beautiful woman in New York. The Mrs. Van Valkenburg referred to was the lady with the $2,000,000 income.

Everybody sneered, but as all understood that to galvanize this edict would cost them the quality of one of the most powerful women in New York society no one dared to lisp a word to the contrary. The earl had returned to England and was not to be even questioned on the subject. The moment his lordship's compliment was appropriated by another my wife ceased to be an object of curiosity and, as she had no other claim to be admitted to society, was dropped. Besides, any further attention to her was sure to be resented by the other Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

When the battle was over I discovered that we had eaten upon our capital sufficiently to reduce our income one-half. I was thankful that we were beaten off before all was exhausted.

When my wife grumbles at the halving of our income I never mention the cause. I have a regard for the tuft of hair on the top of my head.

THE VILLAGE JACKASS

By M. QUAD

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The village jackass was the real thing—an animal instead of a man. He entered the village of Sandy Hill one night at 10 o'clock, and no resident has ever discovered where he came from. There were various theories put forth, but they were theories only. There weren't any theories, however, as to what happened when that jackass struck the town. There was a public square, and he stood on that square and made public proclamation of his arrival. He brayed a haw-haw-haw that woke every sleeper in the village. Men, women and children tumbled out of bed and into the street in fear and trembling.

There was little sleep in the town the remainder of that night. At regular intervals of ten minutes that jackass brayed.

That haw-haw-haw was not a mournful bray. On the contrary, it had a jovial ring. It seemed to the people of Sandy Hill to be saying:

"Hurrah for me! I've struck it at last! We won't go home till morning and maybe not then!"

When morning came the question was what to do with that animal. It was not easily answered. Drive him on toward Lansingburg and let that town welcome or reject him. The job was given to a gang of boys. The jackass protested, but the gang was too many for him. He was chubbed down the road for a mile and warned to keep moving on. One hour later he was back on the public square braying his joy at being home again. He was escorted toward Fishburg, but he returned again. He was escorted toward Edwardsville and toward Cranford, but he never reached those places. He put in the day at it and then returned to say how glad he was that he was in the hands of his friends once more.

That night the town emptor took charge of the animal and by tying a butter firkin to his tail prevented any braying. No jackass can bray with head and tail down. Next morning he was driven within a mile of three different towns and told that the inhabitants were waiting to welcome him, but before the last citizen of Sandy Hill had gone to bed that bray sounded in his ears. The rejected was back on the job.

Thousands of public meetings have been held for this or that reason, but it is doubtful if one was ever held before or since on account of a lone jackass. Sandy Hill held one, and the debate was spirited. A stray jackass had forced itself upon them. What was to be done in the case? All efforts to unload him on other towns had proved futile. No one had ever heard of a jackass without an owner. This beast must have one. He must call and pay damages and take his property. He must be advertised for. If he didn't show up in the legal time then the jack would be sold to the highest bidder.

That was the course pursued, but no owner came to make his claim.

The day came when the jackass was to be sold for his keep. He was to go to the highest bidder without reservation. That meant that his bray was to be thrown in. The auctioneer hollered in vain. Not a bid was made. No one offered even a dollar.

How much pounding can a jackass take and keep up with the procession? This one had more clubs, broom handles, hoe handles, ax helves and pitchforks broken over his back than would fill a freight car, but he came up to the scratch smiling. He was hit with clubs, stones, brickbats, old cans and bottles and picket fences, but he didn't grow weary of well doing. One night when he broke up a prayer meeting with his bray a good deacon rushed out and knocked him unconscious with a blow from a crowbar. It was believed that he was dead, but next morning saw him wandering about as gayly as ever.

Again, a young man was courting a girl. He was interrupted by that haw-haw-haw just as he was about to ask the girl to be his'n. He ran out and fired a dose of bird shot into the disturber. No use. The jack was frisking next day.

Nevertheless there must be a limit to all things. Even an owneriess jackass must draw the dead line somewhere. This one held on for two years before he drew. Then he decided that he hadn't been used square in the Christian community. It had sent cash to the heathen of Africa and left him to eat moldy straw. It had been kind to dogs and horses, but had bruised and battered him on various occasions. He would shake the dust of the town off his hoofs, but in going he would leave a memory behind.

A railroad was being run to the village. The grading contractor was doing much blasting, and half a mile from the village limits he had 500 pounds of dynamite in a shed. The jackass took his departure at night. His way lay past that shed. He stopped and backed up to the door and kicked it in, and kicked at the boxes piled up. Then Sandy Hill had an earthquake that tore things to pieces and created damages to the amount of $25,000. That was ten years ago, but it still shows the scars and still talks of that explosion. When you ask what became of the jackass the man will shake his head and drop his voice as he replies:

"That's what we have never found out, and we shouldn't be a bit surprised to see him come back any day. If he does we shall have to abandon the town!"

He Was Vanquished at Last

By WILLIAM CHANDLER

"You have heard of the Admirable Crichton, I presume," said Philip Aguenkidis of Havana.

No one knew anything about him.

"Crichton," explained Aguenaidis, "was so accomplished that he was called Admirable. Just before the Spanish-American war we had a man in Havana who I think would have killed him, at least in a fight. He was a Virginian and had come down thinking that the times in Cuba were propitious for a display of his accomplishments.

Naturally the sympathy of all Americans was with the Cubans. Fits Hugh—that was the Virginian's name—was outspoken in his advocacy of their cause and, being a citizen of the United States, was protected from arrest so long as he didn't commit any overt act against the government. He frequented public places, where he would meet Spanish officers, giving expression to his opinion of the butcheries of Captain General Weyler. Some Spaniard would take him to task for doing so, and there would be a challenge and a duel and one less officer of the Spanish army fit for duty.

Fits Hugh went out into the country one day and stopped at a hacienda belonging to a young widow. She being a sympathizer with the Cuban cause and Fits Hugh being of the same mind—he was a handsome dog—she entertained him royally. They were sitting at the table, just finishing an excellent dinner, when along came marching two companies of Spanish troops. There was a major in command, and he halted his men before the gate of the hacienda and, walking up to the house, called for Senora Vendes, the owner. He was invited into the dining room, where he informed the lady that, she being an avowed revolutionist, he proposed to take her and put her in commandero, or some other spread out Spanish word, which meant she was to be penned up with other rebel Cubans. The widow, being defenseless, signified that she would go with him, when Fits Hugh spoke up.

"Senor major," he said, "it is a very easy matter for you to commit this act of tyranny upon a woman with a battalion of men behind you, but neither you nor any man in your command could do it alone."

"What do you mean, senor?"

"I mean that if you will give me an opportunity I will defend the lady against you singly, and, after you, against any and all your officers, and, after that, against any and all your men, I to meet each adversary singly. If I put you all out of the fight the lady to remain where she is."

"Who are you, senor?"

"I am an American citizen."

"Ah! An American. We are having much trouble with you Americans exciting these Cubans to rebellion."

"You have a chance to punish one of them. Surely I cannot be expected to vanquish every man in your command."

The major swore a blue streak about interference, threatening to take Fits Hugh along with the widow, but at this Fits Hugh smiled, saying that only a coward would decline such a proposition as he had made. The major was the son of one of the most prominent grandees of Spain, and his ideas of chivalry would not permit him to brook the taunts Fits Hugh heaped upon him. He went out to his command and talked excitedly with his officers for awhile, then returned with every one of them—six in all—to the house. Rejoining Fits Hugh and the widow, he told the former that his challenge was accepted. He would fight the American first, and if he were killed or disabled the ranking captain would take his place, and so on to the junior second lieutenant.

The widow forbade Fits Hugh to enter upon so unequal a contest, but he only smiled that imperturbable smile o[illegible] the fra[illegible] he wen[illegible] major [illegible] for an[illegible] Hugh [illegible] out on [illegible] tourna[illegible] would [illegible] assura[illegible]

The [illegible] minute[illegible] American could have killed his adversary five times. Then he sent the major's sword flying in a circle in the air, and it came down fifty feet away, the point sticking in the ground. The senior captain was served the same way and the junior captain also. After that it was evident there was no need for any more officers to take a hand, but every one of them insisted on a trial, and all received the same treatment. Fits Hugh vanquished every one of the seven men without giving or receiving a scratch.

Well, the major and every one of his officers took Fits Hugh by the hand and swore he should have been a Spaniard in the days when Spanish gentlemen settled all their differences with the sword, as all gentlemen should settle them. Then they marched away, and Fits Hugh told the widow he would like to go back to the table and finish a bottle of wine that had been half emptied.

But Fits Hugh had met an enemy who was capable of vanquishing him. The widow was so infatuated with him that she wouldn't let him go. He married her and is running her hacienda today.

WINNIE AND FRANK

Mr. Scarborough and I are very good friends—very good friends indeed. The question is whether we shall be more than friends. We like each other pretty well, but for my part there is one other that I'm not sure I love better than I love him. One day Mr. Scarborough and I went out in a boat, and it was evident before we had been together long that our minds were on the great question, "Shall we be more than friends?" We were very practical about it, exchanging views with a frankness not usual in such cases.

"For my part," he said, "I feel that I love you better than any other person in the world excepting one. That person, I confess, I do not approve of—one whose intellect is not by any means of the highest and whose good intentions are often not carried out."

"How singular!" I exclaimed. "You have spoken my case as well as your own. There is one whom I prefer to you. But, gracious, how faulty! I confess I am often put to the blush on account of Frank's shortcomings."

"Selfish?"

"Selfish at times beyond measure."

"That's just the way with my Winnie."

"How is it, then, that we prefer these unworthy persons to each other?" I asked.

There was a brief silence, at the end of which he asked:

"How long have you known this person?"

"Many years."

"I have noticed that the longer I have known Frank the greater selfishness I find."

"Same here. We have been companions since we were wee little things. My theory is that it is propinquity. I have known my Winnie and you have known your Frank so long that association has begotten love."

"But love is blind. If this is love we feel for those persons how is it that we see their faults so plainly?".

"Are what we see in them really faults?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I will explain. I snatched a kiss from you. You are angry and blame me. In other words, you consider that I have committed a fault, whereas I have simply been following a natural instinct. Now, your Frank may place you in an embarrassing position without any intention to do so, yet you consider him at fault."

"That may apply to your Winnie, but not to my Frank. I confess you are much more worthy of my love than Frank. My love for Frank I admit is inexcusable, and yet I can't help it."

"And I will admit that my Winnie's thoughts and acts are gross in comparison with yours."

"How can you love such a person?"

"I would rather call it preference than love."

"There again we agree; it is preference in my case too."

While we were talking a cloud had been gathering behind us. Our backs being turned toward it, we did not see it. We were sitting in the stern of the boat, while I held the main sheet in my hand. Suddenly a squall struck us and capsized the boat, which sank. Three of us were in the water together, Mr. Scarborough, I and one life preserver. Mr. Scarborough could not swim at all, I'm very little. A few strokes took me to the corks. Mr. Scarborough could not reach them, though they were not a man's length from him. He went down, and when he came up, by a desperate effort, I reached him with the life preserver.

"Take hold of it," I cried.

"No; it will bear but one of us."

"I can swim."

"Not enough to save yourself."

He went down a second time. When he came up I fought to get the preserver around him. He was unconscious, and I partly succeeded. Then a boat's nose poked itself against us. The rain and the wind beating up the waves had concealed it from us. A hand grasped each one of us and dragged us into the boat.

I hung over him anxiously until we got him to shore, where we applied the usual restoratives in such cases. After awhile he showed signs of life and finally came to himself.

The same evening, after having been revived, we resumed the talk that had been interrupted by the squall. But we now chatted under very different conditions. We had been dumped in the water with—so far as we knew at the time—a chance for but one to be saved. Each had preferred that the other have that chance. We sat locked in each other's arms.

"It has been proved conclusively today," he said, "that these other lovers of ours must take a back seat. I would not have done for Winnie what I did for you."

"Nor I for Frank."

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good! The squall blew us into the water, but it blew away at the same time our indecision between each other and these two other lovers."

"Thank heaven for that. I was awfully tired of it. But tell me who is [illegible] my rival?"

[illegible], is Edward [illegible] is not Winnie [illegible]t Winslaw. [illegible] better than [illegible]

[illegible]nces Boyn[illegible]yself better [illegible]

ONE MORE BATTLE.

That Was What General Lee Wanted Before Yielding.

HIS TALK WITH LONGSTREET.

Major Ranson's Interesting Account of the Scene in the Confederate Commander's Cheerless Tent the Night Before the Surrender.

An interesting account of the dramatic scene at General Lee's headquarters the night before the surrender, when the Confederate commander was still determined to strike one more blow for the cause for which he was fighting, is given by Major A. R. H. Ranson in Harper's Magazine. Major Ranson writes:

"When I arrived at headquarters General Lee was in a tent, sitting with General Longstreet on some bundles of rye straw, the ground being wet from the rain, at the upper side of the tent, with one candle for a light. I made my report, and the general told me to wait, as he wished to see me. He asked me if I had had anything to eat, and I told him no. He said he was sorry he had nothing to offer me. He gave me a bundle of straw and told me to sit near the door.

"It had been raining all afternoon, and I was quite wet. I was also very tired, so I put my foot through the bridle rein of my mare standing outside and, lying down on the bundle of straw, was soon asleep.

"I was awakened by voices and looking up, saw the colonel I had left in charge of the troops at the bridge standing in the tent. He reported that the rations had not arrived, and the starving and discouraged troops had all deserted in the darkness, leaving their arms in the trenches.

"General Lee heard him to the end of his account, and then with a wave of his hand dismissed him. Turning to General Longstreet, he said: 'This is very bad. That man is whipped. It is the first time I have seen one of my officers who had been whipped. It is very bad.'

"The conversation between the generals was then resumed in low tones, and I again fell asleep. I must have slept for some length of time when I was awakened by General Lee's voice, speaking in loud tones, louder than I had ever heard from him. He was saying, 'General Longstreet, I will strike that man a blow in the morning.' General Lee sometimes spoke of General Grant as 'that man' and of the Federal army as 'those people.'

"General Longstreet replied in low tones, giving the strength and condition of his command and the strength and position of the enemy, and concluded by saying, 'But you have only to give me the order and the attack will be made in the morning.' Again the conversation was resumed in low tones, and I fell asleep.

"I must have slept for an hour at least when again I was awakened by the loud, almost fierce, tones of General Lee, saying, 'I tell you, General Longstreet, I will strike that man a blow in the morning.' General Longstreet again recounted the difficulties, ending as before, 'General, you know you have only to give the order and the attack will be made, but I must tell you I think it will be a useless waste of brave lives.'

"Thinking I had been present long enough at such an interview, I coughed and got up from the straw and, drawing back the flaps of the tent, looked out into the darkness. General Lee said: 'Captain Ranson, I beg your pardon. I had forgotten you. Go now and get something to eat and some rest. I will see you in the morning.'

"I found my poor mare lying flat on her side in the rain and fast asleep. It was past midnight and very dark, but I reached our camp, though neither I nor my mare got anything to eat that night.

"The morning came, and I listened for the sound of our attack, but all was still. There was no attack. Our fighting days were over."

The Art of Embalming.

The modern embalmers have not recovered the secret of the art as practiced by the old Egyptians and probably never will. Some of the bodies known to us as "mummies" buried 3,000 or 4,000 years ago are still in a state of perfect preservation. Back of the ancient art lay a religious creed. The ancient Egyptian believed that after many thousands of years the soul came back to find its body and that if it was not found the soul wandered forever in misery and wretchedness; hence it was absolutely necessary to preserve the body, and hence, finally, the embalmer's art.—New York American.

It Fitted the Case.

The girl asked the polite salesman if he had good cheese.

"We have some lovely cheese," was the smiling answer.

"You should not say lovely cheese," she corrected.

"Why not? It is," he declared.

"Because"—with a boarding school dignity—"lovely should be used to qualify only something that is alive."

"Well," he retorted, "I'll stick to lovely."

He Told Her.

"Why did I ever leave home and mother?" sobbed his wife.

"Chiefly because your family was too stingy to take us in," he answered bitterly.—Life.

After crosses and losses men grow humbler and wiser.—Franklin.

The Stage and Society.

Blobbs—Society women are still going on the stage. Slobbs—But the stage is overcrowded now. Blobbs—So is society.—Philadelphia Record.

Sage That Last.

"The young chap whose morals I tremble for just now is my nephew," the city salesman remarked. "He has a position as errand boy in a banking house. He is a bright lad and as steady as they make 'em, but since he got that job in the bank his women relations are urging him into crime. They do not advise him to pick his employers' pockets or run away with the day's deposits, but the principle involved is just as reprehensible. They ask him to abstract a few bags that the silver money is carried in. The women want those bags for sofa pillow covers. They are made of material that will never wear out and feathers and down simply cannot sift through. By boldly asking for what he wanted the boy has secured enough bags to incase his mother's sofa pillows, but if he supplies the rest of the family I see nothing ahead of him but a career of crime."—New York Sun.

Complied With the Conditions.

The monotony of the London postal official's daily routine is frequently broken by the peculiar whims and caprices of eccentric members of the public with whom he is from time to time brought in contact.

A lady once sent to her son a pair of trousers by book post, which is cheaper than parcel post. The postal officials wrote to her: "Clothes cannot be sent by book post. If you will refer to the Postoffice Guide you will see under what conditions articles may be sent by book post." After a few days the lady replied, "I have looked in the Postoffice Guide and find that articles which are open at both ends may be sent by book post, and if trousers are not open at both ends I should like to know what is."—London Answers.

Fear of the Tree.

The first experiments at tree planting in London were sternly discouraged. A. D. Webster tells us in Town Planting that when London built his house in Porchester terrace, Bayswater—this was in the thirties—he planted a sumac by the side of the path opposite. The action was met by prompt and triumphant opposition on the part of the district surveyor, whose complaint was that it was "likely to shade the pathway and keep it damp." In the end the tree had to go.

Proper Chills.

"I've had cold chills running over me all day," the thin man complained.

"You ought to be glad of that," said his heartless friend.

"I don't think I understand you. Why should I be glad?"

"Oh, well, you know, it is quite an ordinary thing to have cold chills. There's no cause for alarm. Just think what an extraordinary thing it would be if you should have hot chills running over you."—New York Press.

In the Blood.

Willis—Are those Kentucky horses you bought scared of autos? Gillis—No, indeed. They never notice a train, either, but I can't get them used to a sprinkling cart to save my life!—Puck.

Pushing and Pulling.

It has been wisely observed that most operations can be more efficiently performed by drawing them along through their proper course than by attempting to push and jam them through, just as it is much easier to pull a rope than it is to push it. There are probably not many persons who have tried to push a rope, but very many have attempted things almost as perverse. In many manufacturing establishments, for example, there may be seen numerous examples of men wasting a large part of their energy endeavoring to move heavy pieces of work upon small trucks, pushing and laboring in the exertion of effort, a small fraction of which goes to cause the actual progression. Even when such an effective aid to transport as an industrial railway is installed it is often used at less than its proper efficiency because there is too much pushing and not enough pulling.—Cassier's Magazine.

Willing to Divide.

An American newspaper correspondent who followed the government army in a revolution in a Latin American country tells a story about an experience that he had with the general commanding the division. The correspondent observed that in every town that the troops invaded they would help themselves to everything that was not nailed, screwed or anchored down. This did not appeal to the American's ideas of the rules of war, and he reported the misdoings of the soldiers to the commander.

"That is selfish," said the latter indignantly. "I will see to it that when we reach the next town you will have the first chance."

The correspondent confined himself thereafter to the writing of "copy."—New York Tribune.

Getting the Particulars.

Nellie—Hasn't Mr. Fulewalley proposed yet? Nora—No, but he has gone as far as to ask what time we have breakfast and whether mother is a good cook.—Exchange.

The highest liberty is in harmony with the highest law.—Giles.

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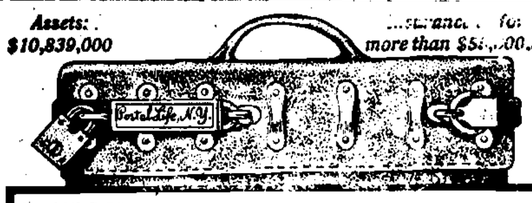

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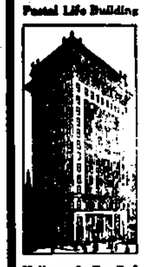

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