

THE VALUE OF EXPERIENCE

By JOHN K. WETHERELL

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"My son," said Mr. Fairchild of the great publishing house of Fairchild & Co., "I think I see in you a very dangerous tendency."

"In what respect, father?"

"I fear you have literary tastes."

"But, father, I thought you were very proud of my literary success at college."

"Proud of it—yes, but since you are to take my place in this business I consider it a dangerous gift."

"I don't believe it."

"Unfortunately," said people about the young man, "you will have to learn what I tell you, just as you will have to pay for books containing in themselves large advertisements."

The next day Mr. Fairchild died of apoplexy, and his son who had had six months' experience in the business, took his place. The young publisher determined to test his "readers." While in college he had written a novel of university life, calling his manager of the department for examining manuscripts into his private office; he handed him a package and said:

"Mr. Burton, there is a manuscript written by myself. Give it to the readers, keeping the authorship a secret, and when the reports are all in, let me have them."

Mr. Burton took the manuscript and retired. In a week he laid the reports before the head of the firm. Fairchild read them, threw them in the wastebasket, tapped a bell and recalled Burton.

"Mr. Burton," he said, "we must reorganize our corps of readers. I find it impossible to get an honest opinion on my own manuscript. If I as head of the firm can't do this, how can I expect to get at the merit of the manuscripts of others? That novel of mine is a juvenile production of a water-writer; send it out a single reader has condemned it."

There was trouble among the readers, most of them receiving their discharge a year passed, and the circumstance, though not forgotten, ceased to be a terrible remembrance. All was running smoothly in the publishing house of Fairchild & Co. when one day a manuscript novel was sent by express. It was started through the readers' mill, but got no further than the "wrecker," whose duty it was to eliminate all manuscripts that were not worth serious consideration. It was returned to the author, who again expressed it to the firm with a note stating that the name attached to it was a fiction and hinting that it was by an author of reputation. This insured its being thoroughly examined, but it was again returned, notwithstanding the hint, the readers assuming that the author had used a very commonplace device to secure attention. A few days after the second return the chief of readers was called into Mr. Fairchild's office. The rejected manuscript lay on the desk.

"Mr. Burton," said the head of the firm, "the manuscript was prepared expressly under my direction. It is one of Edgar Allan Poe's longest stories, with names and incidents substituted so as to partly conceal the authorship and not in the least to detract from its literary value. You will please discharge all your readers who have engaged an old woman who doesn't know the meaning of the word literature. She will thereafter read the manuscripts of fiction, and we will be guided by her reports. My father before he died told me that I must learn by experience. I am learning, but I still feel that I have a great deal to learn."

The firm of Fairchild & Co. continued to publish fiction with varying success. One day the head of the firm called for Mr. Burton and said to him:

"This manuscript novel was left here by Agnes Darlington, whose 'Deserted Wife' we published last season and which has had, as you know, a very large sale. It was not the best seller of the season, but came very near being such. This manuscript is by Miss Darlington's grandmother, who has been bedridden for twenty years. I have looked it over and found it worth less. But we cannot afford to offend Miss Darlington, who is to give us another novel in a few months and which the Clymers are endeavoring to get away from us. This thing, 'A Life of Ease,' must be published to prevent the Clymers getting ahead of us. We will lose something on it, but make a large sum on Miss Darlington's new story."

Mr. Burton retired with the manuscript. "A Life of Ease" was issued in an inexpensive form as the Fairchild's dared publish it without giving offense to its invalid author and her granddaughter. The first edition was exhausted and another put forth. This failed to satisfy the growing interest in the book, and one edition after another was given to the dealers. At the end of the season when the records of sales were figured up "A Life of Ease" was found to be the second best seller. When this fact was announced to the head of the firm he tapped his heel for Mr. Burton and when that gentleman arrived said to him:

"Mr. Burton, you will discharge our regular reader and put the matter in her place."

"But the reader can't read, sir."

"So much the better. She cannot read to read the manuscripts to him."

PLATINIZED GLASS.

It Produces an Odd and a Truly Kind of Mirror.

Platinized glass consists of a piece of glass coated with an exceedingly thin layer of a liquid charged with platinum and then raised to a red heat. The platinum becomes united to the glass in such a way as to form an odd kind of mirror.

The glass has not really lost its transparency, and yet in one place it appears to be a wall and looks at it as though his image as in an ordinary looking glass. But when light is allowed to come through the glass from the other side, as when it is placed in a window, it appears perfectly transparent like ordinary glass.

By constructing a window of platinized glass one could stand behind the pane in an unilluminated room and behold clearly everything going on outside while passersby looking at the window would behold only a fine mirror or set of mirrors in which their own figures would be reflected while the person inside remained invisible.

In France various tricks have been contrived with the aid of this glass. In one person seeing what appears to be an ordinary mirror approaches it to gaze upon himself. A sudden change in the mechanism sends light through the glass from the back, whereupon it instantly becomes transparent and the startled spectator finds himself confronted by some grotesque face that had been hidden behind the glass. —Harper's Weekly

ORIGIN OF LLOYD'S.

Mysterious Beginning of Europe's Great Maritime Agency.

Two centuries ago a man who had a cargo to send to the Mediterranean contrived to get rid of some of the risk by inducing a friend to take an interest with him. It was necessary to write out a statement of contract to which the guarantors subscribed. This was the first underwriting.

These two men happened to be frequenters of Lloyd's coffee house in London, which was a favorite place for the merchants of the town to gather to discuss business or to gossip. Others immediately saw the advantage of the scheme, and their colleagues had devised, and on the next voyage the risk was parceled out among a large number of the patrons of the coffee house.

Out of this small beginning has grown the great European maritime agency, still bearing the name of the humble coffee house proprietor and which not only writes risks on vessels but rates them and publishes their arrivals at every port the world over, no matter how small or how remote. —Annals of the American Academy

When Abraham Flashed.

Mrs. Victoria de Bonaventura in "The Soul of a Turk" relates a legend concerning Abraham which will be new to many readers. She learned of it while at Edessa, the traditional birthplace of the Chaldees. She was shown there a large oblong tank of water so filled with fishes resting just below the surface of the water that their fins and backs seemed almost wedged together so as to form "an almost solid layer of silvery life."

"The guardian of the mosque throws some meal into the water, and the fish jump high to catch it, a great living pyramid, of which those which jump the highest form the pinnacle. The tradition is that Abraham as a child fished in the tank; hence the fish were considered sacred. No single one has been caught or killed to this day. Indeed, death would overtake the man who transgressed this law."

Protection From Lightning.

Sir Oliver Lodge stated that the problem of securing protection from lightning consisted in finding the best method of dissipating the enormous energy of the flash, but that it was not wise to get rid of the energy too quickly. A thin iron wire is considered the best lightning conductor from the electrical point of view, but it is almost impossible to protect a building from lightning unless it is completely enveloped in a metal cage. It is by no means true that a building is safe when provided with a conductor reaching up to the highest part of the building.

The Origin of Grocers.

Grocer appears in Holinshed's Chronicle, 1580, as "groser," and in other medieval records it is sometimes written "engrosser" and was applied to the spice and pepper who were wholesale dealers in various articles, who dealt in gross—in large quantities, as distinguished from retailers, who were retail dealers. The grocer's company first adopted the word grocer in 1571 when the spices and peppers allied themselves into a single corporation—London Express.

Agreed With Her.

Tramp (at the door)—If you please, lady—Mrs. Muggs (sternly)—There, that will do. I am tired of this everlasting whine of "lady, lady." I am just a plain woman, and—Tramp (in awe, madam, one of the plainest women I've ever seen as' one of the housewives to swa up to it.

Cry.

Mrs. Debanham—Every time I sing to the baby he cries. Debanham—His gut is aching as a usual critic from my side of the house.—New York Times

Propriety.

Propriety consists of an ever-provision and collection then afterwards.

THE WHITE WASH.

In Presence on the Hudson Bay Company's Boat Explained.

It is or was a rule of the Hudson Bay company that no woman be allowed passage on its boats. One day some years ago as a steamer of the company started one of the northernmost ports a string of white garments was seen stretched across the deck.

The watchers were amazed, for there the wash line suggested only the presence of a woman aboard the boat.

Comment was freely made of the scandal that would ensue and the shakedown that would follow. When the boat docked the line of washing had disappeared—still another proof of the scandal.

Later one of the landmen said to the captain:

"Why, how did it happen that you carried a woman passenger this trip?"

"There was never a woman on the whole voyage," was the indignant answer. "What do you mean?"

"If there was no woman aboard, where did all that white wash come from?" was the triumphant reply.

The captain looked puzzled for a moment and then he laughed.

"Oh," he said, "and didn't we have Lord Stratthorne, the governor himself, along with us on this trip? And every day doesn't he insist on having his clean white shirt, no matter how far north we are? That's the white wash you saw 'strung along' deck. And, what's more, doesn't his lordship insist upon having his London paper laid beside his plate every morning, no matter if it is a year old?"—Pearson's

A MASTER OF METAPHOR.

It Must Have Relieved Him to Get This Out of His System.

A water consumer in a certain city, whose supply had been turned off because he wouldn't pay, wrote to the department as follows:

"In the matter of shutting off the water on unpaid bills your company is fast becoming a regular crystallized Russian bureaucracy running in a groove and deaf to the appeals of reform. There is no use of your trying to impugn the verity of this indictment by shaking your official heads in the teeth of your own deeds.

"If you will persist in this kind of thing, widespread indignation of the populace will be so imminent that it will require only a spark to let loose the dogs of war in our midst. Will you persist in burrowing the cornerstones of our personal liberty to our wretched hounds of collectors thirsting for its blood? If you persist the first thing you know you will have the chariot of a justly indignant revolution rolling along in our midst and gnashing its teeth as it rolls.

"If your rascally collectors are permitted to continue coming to our doors with unblushing footsteps, with cloaks of hypocritical compunction in their smooth, and compel payment from your patrons this policy will result in cutting the wool off the sheep that pumps it dry, and then farewell, a long farewell, to our vaunted prosperity."—Everybody's

When to Eat Fruit.

To obtain the most benefit from the succulent fruits they should be eaten at the end of the chief meal. Bananas are an exception and may be eaten with any meal. They are very acceptable bread in thin slices and eaten with cut and butter. Stewed fruits often have their virtues wasted through being eaten at the wrong time. Six or eight stewed prunes half an hour before breakfast are beneficial. Apples or stewed apples, or orange or apple cut into thin slices so that the juice is set free, with sugar stirred over the slices, are not unlike pickle and form a highly efficacious aid to digestion. Grapes should never be eaten except after the chief meal of the day. Taken when the stomach is comparatively empty, they are a specially harmful fruit.—Family Doctor

Rules of Russia's Tits.

The general allusion to the ruler of Russia as the czar is, strictly speaking, incorrect. His official title is "emperor and autocrat." Czar is the old Russian word for lord or prince and was abandoned by Peter the Great on his triumphant return from Poltava, his crowning victory over Charles XII. of Sweden. Since then the Russian monarch has been officially entitled emperor, and at the congress of Vienna in 1815 his right to the imperial term was admitted by the powers, with the proviso that, though he was emperor, he had no precedence over the kings of western Europe.—St. James' Gazette

The Modern Idea.

Roman Guide (impressively)—The ruins of the Coliseum! Seattle Man (astonished)—Well, what do you think of that? Why, I saw photographs of that heap twenty years ago. Roman Guide (jolly)—Quite likely, sir. Seattle Man—But why in thunder aren't those ruins cleared away and a modern Coliseum erected?—New Orleans Picayune

Unless.

Boys—Can a man live on \$1 a day? Townsend—Certainly, unless he's so proud as to lay something aside for a rainy day, keep up his insurance, eat when he's hungry, buy clothes and pay his bills.—Chicago News

Flight.

"Would you like \$10,000 to fly from Albany to New York?" "Why not? Our carrier got only \$1,000 to fly to Europe."

HIS FRIENDS

He Entertained Them last Once

By DANIEL K. VON TROMP

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Having occasion to visit a little town nestled among the green hills of Vermont one autumn on a matter of business, I was walking, satchel in hand, from the station to the hotel of the place when I was accosted by a cheery man, who asked me if I were going to stop overnight in the town. Upon my telling him that such was my intention he said to me:

"I sometimes receive guests in my home and if you like will entertain you."

Not relishing a stay in the average country hotel, I concluded to go with the man. He led me to the handsome, two-story house in the place. It had no appearance of being a hotel. Indeed, there was nothing public about it. I was shown to a bedroom containing every comfort and convenience. I arrived near the dinner hour and when I went down into the dining room found there only three guests and his family about the table at which they were sitting. My host introduced me to his wife and daughter, and motioned me to the vacant chair.

Never was I more puzzled. I had been solicited, I supposed, by either a hotel runner or a landlord, yet I seemed to be in a private house. The conversation was general and was continued by a bottle of wine. This embarrassed me, for landlords are not used to furnishing wine unless duly ordered to be paid for. I had ordered no wine and did not know whether I would be permitted to return the host's civility by doing so. After dinner I spent a very pleasant evening with him and his family and at bed time retired to my room.

I was given my breakfast the next morning alone and, as nothing was said about remaining longer after I had eaten, I took up my satchel for departure. Each one of the family cordially bade me goodby, not one of them expressing a desire to see me again, though the eldest daughter's eyes said to the floor at a pressure of the hand I gave her. I could not bring myself to call for a bill. I contented myself with expressing my thanks.

Going straight to the office of a man with whom I had business, I informed him of my adventure and asked if he could give me an explanation. He smiled and said:

"Have you read in the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainment' the story of the man who, disgusted with the selfishness of humanity, every evening invited a stranger to sup and remain the night with him and turned him away in the morning?"

"I have."

"You have been entertained by such a man?"

"And I will not be admitted under his roof again?"

"No."

"We shall see about that. But tell me the story."

"Evan Thompson inherited the wealth of his father and grandfather. Evan was always very tender hearted. As soon as he came into his property he began to give it to any one who needed it. He never wasted a penny of it. Every cent was a blessing to whomsoever it was given. To conduct his story, he gave away his whole patrimony, including the house in which he now lives. Not being satisfied to refrain a poor man among those who had been his associates in prosperity, he went away and was not seen again here for ten years. Then he appeared one day ragged and forlorn looking. There was scarcely a person in the town who had not at some time been assisted by him. He applied to one after another for help. What assistance was given him was so trifling that it served him but for a brief period. Some of those he had helped to prosperity made him small loans, making it so that they were paid he would not trouble them again. Some paid no attention whatever to his solicitations. And so, after he had asked for help from everybody and all had either refused him or put him down, he could not well ask for more, he discovered that his former friends when they saw him coming would turn down a cross street before meeting him. Indeed, everybody wished he would go away again and stay away.

"He disappeared one morning, his absence being made manifest by his failing to call on a man who had promised to lend him a quarter. The man told others of the circumstance, and it soon got abroad that 'Seedy' Thompson, as he was called, had relieved the town of his presence. Then on day something happened. The owner of the Thompson homestead announced that he had sold it for twice what he gave for it. The next starter was the registry of the deed to the premises in the name of Evan Thompson. Lastly, one morning a maiden lady passed the Thompson house and reported that she had seen 'Seedy' Thompson himself sitting on the porch puffing a cigar. The end of it all was that Thompson was there with a wife and children.

"Thompson has told me that he never read the story in 'The Arabian Nights' Entertainment.' He seems to have hit upon the same method of procedure by coincidence. He will invite a stranger to stay at his house for one night, but will never receive the same person twice."

It was my good fortune to break his rule, but I did it through his eldest daughter. I married her.

A MAGIC CLOCK.

Curious Deed Used by the Native Fishermen of Hawaii.

"Lava melon" is the name of a decoy used by the native fishermen of Hawaii. It is made of the hardest wood to be found on the islands and is carved and rubbed till it assumes the shape of a club with a little knob at the smaller end, to which the line is tied.

The club is from one to three feet long. A village sorcerer performs certain rites over it over a sacred fire. After this is done the club is magic, and the fisherman must be extremely careful of it. If a woman should step over it or enter a canoe in which it lies the club would lose all its power and would be useless ever afterward.

After the club has been charmed the fisherman mixes candlenut and coconut meat, bakes it and ties the mixture in a wrapper of cocoon silk fiber.

At the fishing grounds the club is covered with the oily juice of the stuff and is then lowered carefully to the bottom. The scent of the baked nut meat attracts certain kinds of fish, which soon gather and begin to nibble at the club. As soon as enough fish are around the decoy a small bag shaped net is lowered very gently until its mouth is just over the club. The latter is then pulled up carefully and cunningly till it is within the bag. The fish are so eager for the stuff with which the club is "charmed" that they follow it into the net without fear. As soon as all the fish are in it a fisherman dives and closes the mouth of the net, whereupon the rest haul it up quickly.

THE MIDDLE AGED MAN.

Finding Happiness in a Life That is Youth is Irksome.

"Younger people," said the middle aged man, "want variety. They want to be always on the go. Routine galls them. They hate to have to do the same thing over and over and over again day after day.

"They want to go somewhere or do something different all the time. Other people are happier in a life of routine, most distressed when variety is thrust upon them."

"For myself I welcome my daily task, endlessly repeated and always the same. I should be lost without it; I should be bored if it were changed. A life of habit suits me best. I like the old scenes—familiar friendly surroundings. I don't want to change.

"Nor do I want much outside pleasure. In fact, I think I should be best suited with none. I like my groove. It fits me, and I fit it. I don't want change. I just want to be left alone to work in my accustomed ways. It is comfortable. I like a life of labor and routine."

"And could there come to one a greater blessing? Nature and the customs of men enforce routine upon us whether we like it or not. In youth this trick is not so apparent. In middle age it is a life of routine, in the undisturbed enjoyment of familiar labor, we may find our greatest happiness."—New York Sun

The One to Pay.

When she was Lady Randolph Churchill, Mrs. George Cornwallis, consented to electioneer for Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett in his first parliamentary campaign. Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett was married to the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, a very rich woman, who was nearly forty years his senior. Lady Randolph, with her beauty and charms, did splendid work for the candidate.

To a group of farmers she said one day:

"Won't you promise me to vote for Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett?"

"My lady," said a red faced farmer, with a chuckle, "we'll all vote for him if every vote 'll be paid for with a kiss."

"Thank you very much," said Lady Randolph. "Your offer is accepted. I'll send for the Baroness Burdett-Coutts at once."

Deserted Their Towns.

So late as the end of the seventeenth century the inhabitants of Oeylow were in the habit of deserting their towns. Their customs are described in the narrative of Captain Robert Knox, who for nineteen years, from 1680 to 1679, was a captive among them. He speaks of several towns as lying desolate owing to the fact that their inhabitants had forsaken them. This they did if many of them fell sick and two or three died soon after one another, thinking that it was a visitation of the evil one. Some of the evil came back when they thought the spirit had departed.

A Cuser Creature.

Queer that while the male seal is a bull and the female a cow their youngster is not called a calf, but a pup.

Why "seal fisheries" too, when the seal is not a fish?

And why should the seal's breeding place be styled a rookery?

It looks as if this strange creature is only a fish in common parlance while at sea. On land (or ice) he is claimed popularly with animals or birds.—Exchange

Gratitude.

Kind Lady—My poor man, what would you do with the money if I gave you a penny? Fred Hobbs—Madam, I'd buy a picture postcard and write a note of thanks.—Cleveland Leader

To Live in Peace.

We live in peace we have beheld in not to die.—Cleveland

MAN'S WILL POWER.

Monarch's Comment on Schopenhauer and His Theory.

In an entertaining account of a dinner party at Prince Bismarck's Berlin residence which is given in the next section of the Livonian Journal, Bismarck, the following, which was a part of the table talk, shows the best in a new light. The conversation had turned on Schopenhauer's early days at Frankfurt and Bismarck asked whether at the table of the House of Aschewerth his host had ever met Schopenhauer. "No," said Bismarck; "he had to use for me for him. Moreover, I have never had time or desire to occupy myself with philosophy. While I was a student Schopenhauer was still unknown. I know absolutely nothing about his system."

Another guest, an admirer of Schopenhauer, then joined enthusiastically in the conversation and explained that the philosopher's great merit consisted in the discovery of the fact that will power was the indomitable essence of the mind, that was not subject to fatigue, was only of secondary importance. "That may very well be true," said Prince Bismarck, "at least as far as I am concerned, for I have often noticed that my will had already come to a decision while my mind had not yet finished thinking about the same subject."

VENETIAN WOMEN.

The Whims of Fashion Held No Terror For Them.

The women of Venice are absolutely free from the rule which Dame Fashion exercises over their sister elsewhere. They care nothing for modes. With them the length of the skirt remains always the same, neither shorter nor longer, and they always wear thickly made dark dresses, black stockings and the heaviest slippers of the east. Hats are unknown.

The universal outdoor wear for all ages and all sizes is the black shawl with a deep silk fringe. It is folded with a short point above and a long one below, and sometimes it envelopes the figure from head to foot. It is never fastened at the throat, and when it slips off it is gathered up with one outstretched arm, which makes the spectator think of a big bird stretching its wing.

In their attire the women of Venice are independent, only wearing local clothing, but with feminine inconsistency they are thoroughly up to date in the matter of hairdressing, the style of their collars, changes from time to time, according to the vogue of the moment in London and Paris.

Identified.

William M. Chase, the artist, was a picturesque figure, dressing in clothes that had a certain originality, though they conformed more or less to the prevailing fashions. On one occasion Chase on his way home stopped into a little wine shop and ordered a jug of claret of a special brand sent to his home. The lad who brought it came to the front door an hour afterward, when the artist had already retired.

"Some wine?" he said curtly. The maid, knowing there was no wine in the cellar and believing the lad had made a mistake, said she was sure it was not for that house and did the boy remember the name of the man who ordered it. The boy didn't.

"Then," said the servant, "you've come to the wrong place; we never ordered wine!" At this moment the boy spied Chase's fingers hat on the hall table. "Say," he asked, "does that hat live here?" "Yes," said the maid, "yes," she said, "yes," she said triumphantly, "here's where the wine belongs!"—Argonaut

Not Far From Her's Saler.

The criminal law of England was formerly marked by indiscriminating severity. Theft of an article valued above 10 shillings was punished with death. In writing about "Sweet Hampstead and its Associates" Mrs. White records a pleasant thing of Lord Mansfield, who, as a rule, leaned to the side of mercy. It was Lord Mansfield who directed a jury to find a stolen trinket less in value than 10 shillings in order that the thief might escape capital punishment. To this the juror who presented himself, asserting that the value of the thing had cost him twice that value.

"Gentlemen," replied the juror with grave solemnity, "we ourselves stand in need of mercy. Let us not hang a man for the fashion's sake!"

MacMahon's Epigram.

When Marshal MacMahon in the Crimean campaign took the Malabar by storm and wrote his celebrated dispatch, "Ty s'as; Ty rot!" "Here I am; here I stay!" these words made him famous all over the world. Yet his friends said that the worthy general had written them in the most matter of fact manner, with no thought of phrase making. One day he surprised some of the soldiers of the epigram was MacMahon himself.

Helping Her Out.

"Have you a young chicken? I am rather green at cooking."

"Such being the case, madam, don't you think you'd better have an experienced fowl?"—Louisville Courier-Journal

Mirth.

Harmless jests are the best counter against the consumption of the world. Wherefore jesting is not unlawful, if it transgress not in quantity, quality or season.—Fuller

Ignorance when it is Voluntary is Unusual.

Ignorance when it is voluntary is unusual.—Johnson

ROCK HESTER