

THE WHITE CAT.

I was crossing from the Law Courts to my chambers in the Temple. It was the week before long vacation, and I was looking forward to a well-earned rest. Constant attendance at the Courts had made havoc of my nerves, and I needed to replenish my overtaxed resources.

I was walking rapidly, my hands in my pockets, my head bent toward the ground, when suddenly became conscious of shouts, to which I had hitherto paid no heed. At the same moment a hand touched my arm, and a passer-by told me that it was my attention which the shouts were intended to attract, and, turning, I saw a coachman even now gesticulating from his box. With a feeling of annoyance I crossed the road.

"Did you call me?" I asked impatiently. "I did, sir. Her ladyship wishes to speak to you."

Then I was aware that a fat foreigner was beckoning to me from the interior of the brougham.

"Oh, my dear Mr. Oswald Jones," said her ladyship. "You are Oswald Jones, aren't you? I am delighted to see you; I am indeed. You are not looking well. Come inside for a moment; I wish to speak to you."

I obediently entered. "Ah, Mr. Oswald Jones," she continued; "see what a penalty you pay for success? I began modestly to assure her ladyship that the prize was worth the pain.

"No doubt, but to so many ambitious men. But you should not overdo it. You are never without a headache, I am sure; you have no appetite; in short, you're a miserable creature."

I was beginning to protest, but her ladyship cut me off. "Not a word now. I have not lived sixty years for nothing, and I say that you, a successful barrister, with a large practice, are, nevertheless, a miserable creature.

Your mother was a dear friend of mine, and I reproach myself with having neglected my friends. Now I feel myself bound to look after you. When do your holidays commence?"

"To-morrow is the last day of term." "Then, next Monday morning you must take yourself and baggage to Waterloo, and come by the 10:15 train to Barkington. Some one shall meet you, and you shall spend your vacation with me."

"My dear Lady Pownceby," I exclaimed, appalled at the thought of spending months with this old lady, "I could not think of troubling you. I was thinking of going to Branscombe with a friend."

"You are not to go to Branscombe; it's too fashionable; you would not rest. I will take no refusal. You must come. We will make you comfortable. We are quite, you know; but not dull; my niece is with me, and there are several good people in the neighborhood."

"I shall expect you on Monday morning, don't disappoint me. Now go home; take an old woman's advice and have a basin of gruel before bed to-night. Good-by."

"I accepted her plump hand despairingly. I was unable to resist her authoritative invitation—her size added weight to her argument—and so I found myself engaged to rusticate at Barkington.

Lady Pownceby, who I hardly knew, was the widow of an Indian merchant who, having won a fortune and a baronetcy, died, leaving his childless wife to console herself with the solidity of one and the sentiment of the other.

Duly, on Monday morning, I left Waterloo, and in a couple of hours was seated in Lady Pownceby's dog-cart, listening languidly to the inane monotonous of the coachman. My hostess met me with effusion at the door, and insisted on my going at once to my room, where I found a luncheon laid on the table.

In the afternoon she took me round her ample grounds, pointing out things here and there for me to admire. "Dorothy is out," she said presently. "She is very busy with her poor women this morning. She is very useful in the village; indeed, our vicar, Mr. Haig, calls her his assistant-curate."

"Dorothy is your niece?" "Yes; my poor sister, Mrs. Braithwaite's daughter. She is an orphan. You will meet her at dinner, and I'm sure I hope you will be great friends."

I hoped so, too. I never was a lady's man. Of woman friends I had not one, and of acquaintances but a few. What would two months be at Barkington if I were not to be acquainted with Dorothy?

I was in a hurry to look out of the window. I took out my watch; I played with the chain; I crossed and uncrossed my legs; I blurted out: "Are you sorry I am going?"

"Of course. You have been very pleasant to me. I thought she spoke coldly, and I saw again the metamorphosis of cat into curate. "May I hope that you would be pleased to see me again?"

"Oh, yes." "Ten minutes past nine!" "Dorothy!" "Will you—can you—are you engaged to the curate?"

"Oh, no! How absurd!" "Can you—will you—do you—would you like to be married?" "I don't know," she laughed.

"Would you—could you—Dorothy—I must tell you—!" A prolonged sigh started us both. I had come close to Dorothy, and my right hand was approaching hers. I felt a sharp pain in my forefinger; and the white cat flew out of the window rearing and rearing upon me and sprang into Dorothy's lap. I stood up and cursed that cat; Dorothy uttered a little cry; Lady Pownceby awoke and said, "Dear me! Have I been asleep?" and a servant entered and said, "The dog-cart is waiting for Mr. Oswald Jones."

"I had time only to see my boxes carried out and to take a hurried farewell of my hostess and her niece, and then I was driven away to the station. And I had not asked my question.

For the next two months I devoted myself exclusively to my work. I heard no news, saw no plays, and nobody's dinners but my own, but took my guineas as they came, and tried to reflect. I anthematized the white cat, and regarded myself as one with whom the gods had dealt hardly. But for the cat I might now have been the happiest instead of the most miserable of mortals. I began to see clearly that I had made a fool of myself. I had had months in which to say my adieu to Dorothy, and then what an exhibition I had made of myself at the last moment.

A week before Christmas I received a kind note from Lady Pownceby asking me to give her and her niece—and her niece!—the pleasure of my company during Christmas week. I laughed at the thought of it. I replied by return of post, expressing myself very emphatically, and made up my mind with some bitterness to spend Christmas in bachelor solitude.

On the morning of Christmas Day, I found awaiting me when I came down stairs from my bedroom a large hamper. With a fervent benediction on the kind, thoughtful soul who had shown such practical sympathy for my forlorn condition, I cut the cord. What pictures in my mind of mince pies and other Christmas delicacies! What anticipation of the delight of teeth meeting teeth in the seasonable turkey! But the lid—!—but drew back with almost a scream, for out of the basket sprang, not vivified mince pies or a resurrected turkey, but my sworn enemy, the white cat!

"Why does she always call me by my full name? Why not Mr. Jones, simply?" "Oh, there are so many Joneses, you know. Our curate's name is Jones, and so she calls you Oswald Jones to distinguish you from him."

Perhaps Dorothy was to assist curate in a more particular sense. Strange to say, I felt jealous. But I was prevented from asking any questions by a sudden intrusion to another inmate of the house. Something stirred behind the curtain at my side, and out sprang a large white cat, which, having been disturbed in its sleep, dug its claws into the carpet and arched its back in cat fashion and then leaped into Dorothy's lap. Dorothy began to fondle it, stroking its head, putting her head against its, and performing those many little tricks which ladies and cats enjoy. Now I abominate the whole feline race, but the thing I hate most in the world is a white cat. And this cat especially won my detestation. Its fur was spotless white, and the fact that I could find no fault with it made me hate it the more. Dorothy spoke to it as if it were an animal. I loathed it.

"I hate cats!" I cried. "Popsy hates men," Dorothy serenely replied. "Mr. Arthur Jones, our curate, you know, is the only man she will allow to touch her."

"Perhaps he is not the only Jones," I said, feeling more jealous still. "Let me try."

But Popsy did not approve of my patting. Somewhere from her interior proceeded a low rumbling, her ears were laid by, and I judged it wise to relinquish the experiment.

"We are to be enemies, then," I said; and I fear I was scornful of Dorothy's evident affection for the cat.

Here Dorothy suggested that we should walk in the garden. I agreed, and that walk was the first of many. Before a fortnight passed I was wading in love with Dorothy. I was distractedly happy when in her company. But I felt some little uneasiness because of the Rev. Arthur Jones and the white cat. I had watched the reverend gentleman carefully. He was a bright, happy-faced young cleric, and his behavior left no sort of doubt in my mind that he loved Dorothy. And his high spirits seemed a proof to me either that he had won the lady or fully expected to do so. Scarcely a night passed without my dreaming of him or the cat. In one of my dreams I saw an ancient sibilant warning me with outstretched finger to beware of the white cat, and I gazed, fascinated, at the animal, the form of its countenance was changed, and I saw the curate's face, wreathed in a triumphant smile.

Time sped rapidly away. I went with Dorothy to picnics and garden parties; I took her to the theatre and to the races; I boated with her, played tennis with her, and listened to her singing. I regained my health, and lived in an elysium. I determined that my vacation should not close without a question and an answer—the most important Dorothy's. I loved her; did she love me?

I suffer from an embarrassing defect of constitution. I can talk to the bewigged solemnities on the beach without a quickening of pulse, but with ladies, if ever I wish to leave the last train, at 10 o'clock, I passed the day with Dorothy, but said no word to her of what was on my heart. Dinner-time came, and still I had said nothing. Lady Pownceby, after declaring that she would forego her nap on this last evening, went to sleep in the drawing-room, while Dorothy and I sat in our favorite seats by the window. She had some needlework, but not a stitch did she make. I had a book, but not a word did I read. The dog-cart was to be at the door at a quarter past nine; it was now half-past eight.

"Are you sorry your holiday is over?" Dorothy asked. "Very," I said laconically. "A word of silence."

"Will you have much work to do when you get home?" she said. "I hope so."

"Will you forget all about us?" "Never."

A quarter to nine. I was in a dreadful state. I was hot and cold by turns. I could not sit still. Nine o'clock. She did not ask my question. Many times I had opened my mouth to begin; then something seemed to grip my throat, and I could not utter a word.

Five minutes past nine. I was in a agony! I looked out of the window. I took out my watch; I played with the chain; I crossed and uncrossed my legs; I blurted out: "Are you sorry I am going?"

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What surprise! What disappointment! What disgust! What still greater surprise when the cat, instead of spitting and swearing at me as was her wont at Barkington, now raised her inoffensive tail and arched her graceful back, and rubbed her irreproachable white fur against my legs! The cat had become friendly towards me. I divined that it was hungry, and placed some milk before it, for which it placed its thanks.

When I thought of this strange event, I came to the conclusion that a deliberate insult had been intended. I grew exceedingly wrathful. And I felt skeptical of the love which could consign its object to the tender mercies of a railway guard. But second thoughts did not me. I believed that Dorothy must have had an object in sending her cat to me. She would hardly insult me so gratuitously. And so I gradually weaved in my mind an explanation.

Dorothy loved me, and wanted me, and had a right to do so. I was a stranger of peace and good will. She had placed the cat unreservedly in my hands; what could she mean but that she preferred me far above the cat? My timidity disappeared. Glancing at the clock, I found that I could just catch the 10:15 train. I hurriedly threw some things into my portmanteau, consigned the cat to the care of my astonished landlady, and rolled off in a cab to Waterloo. I had only time to scramble into the first compartment the guard opened for me when the train started.

As soon as I collected myself I looked to see who my one fellow-passenger was. "Dorothy!" I exclaimed. "It was she. She had herself brought up her Popsy; and she had expected me to come by the first train. I was delighted, and when she begged me to not think her unmanly in the course she had adopted, I gave her an oscular demonstration how content I was. What need to set down what we said and did? The guard kept our compartment sacred to us, and passed the window with averted head. In a month Dorothy and I were one, and we got on very well with each other and my mentor, Lady Pownceby, and our most faithful friend is the white cat.—The Argosy.

WATER FILTRATION.

Sand Filters Not Impervious to Bacteria—Interesting Experiments.

(From the Engineering and Building Record.) The evidence which has accumulated of late years with regard to the efficiency of filters of various kinds in removing from water the specific germs of such diseases as cholera and typhoid is somewhat contradictory. As regards filtration of municipal water supplies, the standard scale by means of sand, it has been shown by the experiments of Frankland, of the Massachusetts State Board of Health and elsewhere, that a very large proportion of the ordinary bacteria are removed by such filtration if it is not made to go on too rapidly.

A recent outbreak of typhoid fever in Berlin led to a fresh and more careful investigation of the effects of the sand filters used in that city, and the results are of much practical interest. For the eight years, 1880-88, there was comparatively little typhoid fever in Berlin, the annual number of deaths from this cause being only a little over two in 10,000 living population. In the last year of 1889, an epidemic of about 700 cases of typhoid occurred in the eastern part of the city, which is supplied with water from the River Spree, taken through the sand filters.

In the western part of the city, supplied from Lake Tegel, there was little or no typhoid.

This led to a series of experiments by Frankel and Piefke, which demonstrated that a certain proportion of many forms of bacteria, especially those of cholera and typhoid, do pass through the sand filters. Their trials were first made with the *Bacillus violaceus*, because its presence is easily recognized in gelatin cultures by the blue-colored spots which it produces.

The Spree water containing a small amount of this peculiar organism was passed through a sand filter and the effluent test, this being continued for thirty days. Through one of these filters the water was passed at the rate of 100 milliliters per hour, and through another at three times this velocity. It was found that in each filter, and from the very beginning of the filtration, some of the blue bacteria passed through; that when the filtration was slow the proportion found in the effluent was about the same as that in the supply, and when the velocity of the filtration was three times increased the proportion of bacteria in the effluent also increased to 3 per cent.

Having settled the question, they were next made with the bacillus of typhoid and that of cholera in the same manner, and with precisely the same results.

It appears, then, that a certain proportion of dangerous bacteria will go through sand filters, and that the amount which passes depends on the number in the unfiltered water, the rapidity of the filtration, and the length of time during which the filter has been used. No experiments seem to have been made upon the effects of successive filtrations with intermittent aeration—that is, the sending through a fresh sand filter the water which has already passed through one filter. The effect of this would not be the same as that produced by successive filtrations through a double thickness of sand.

The French Minister of War states, in a recent report, that steps have been taken to provide filters for all military posts where thoroughly satisfactory drinking water for the troops is not obtainable. These are to be porcelain filters of the Chamberland pattern, and it is estimated that for the garrisons in France and Algeria about 23,000 of the filter tubes will be required.

That something should be done to secure pure drinking water for the French soldiers is evident from the great prevalence of typhoid among them, and from the fact that out of 187 specimens of water from different sources examined in the laboratory of the Military School of Val de Grace, 91 contained the bacillus of typhoid. 7 contained the typhoid bacillus, and 21 were contaminated by human excreta.

It is more than doubtful whether the Chamberland filters will remove all germs after continuous use under pressure for several months, but they are undoubtedly safer than sand filters as a sole reliance for securing drinking water. It would seem wise in all cases to use the sand filter for the general supply, for it greatly improves the water, though it does not absolutely purify it. It should be remembered that when in any house, barrack or town two kinds of water are furnished, one especially for drinking and the other for cleansing purposes, the more impure water will eventually be used for drinking through the ignorance, indolence or carelessness of servants, and that therefore the presence of an accessible supply of pure water is always a source of danger, and should be avoided as far as possible.

THE SUMMER GIRL.

Once more the season swings around, in time's eternal whirl. When forth in graciousness there comes the bonnie summer girl, she holds a racker in her hand, she makes one in your vest.

So janynt is her simple air, so trimly is she dressed in winter's garb she did not change. When Wag-berry was in the house, she sought a corner quietly, while the keys were banged.

In Emerson she is not "up." Isen she has not read. It's possible she doesn't know that puzzling Browning's dead.

You thank the Lord for this, and drive in startle. Most recklessly abandoning the inconvenient car. You feel that everlastingly and blissfully deservable are.

And then in earnest count the lover's shooting star. Warren (O) Tribune.

ATTENTION!—If you desire the head of hair, of a natural hue and free from dandruff, Hall's Hair Renewer is the best and safest preparation to accomplish it.

PUBLIC MARKS.

Offenders Against Decency in Public Places.

(From the New York Tribune.) It ought to be a pleasure to every respectable citizen, not only to note the fact that a crusade has been begun against offenders against decency in public places, but also to assume a share of the task of exterminating them. It may be assumed, we think, without much risk of refutation, that the great American exporator has become slowly less numerous and intolerably infamously. And yet it does undoubtedly require a large measure of philosophical impartiality to recognize the dawning of a new era. The species is still abundant and prolific, and the multiplication of transportation facilities and of popular resorts makes its existence universally burdensome.

With some prevalent complaints against the owners and management of public conveyances we are not in the most thorough sympathy, realizing that for the present they are faulty and that patrons are quite entitled to be as much to blame as public places, entirely confident, for example, that the street-car company which should make and enforce a rule forbidding the admission to a car of more persons than it could comfortably seat, would forthwith become the object of bitter maledictions. The average inhabitant of the United States, man, woman and child, claims an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and of all particulars included under the latter of these rights, few are more precious than the right to place in the first conveyance that comes along, without reference to its previous condition of surplusage. When new transit systems shall have doubled our present facilities, and our most advanced cities shall become less intense, and a slow process of education will set in.

But for other miseries of urban travel there is no excuse, and no explanation except in the bestial instincts of a minority. An official mandate has been issued in Philadelphia against the vile and selfish habit of spitting, which deserves to be initiated in every city, town and hamlet which maintains a public conveyance. The unhappy fact is that this disgusting vice is entrenched in the personal proclivities of a multitude of men who are in most respects inoffensive, but from whom an uncontrollable dullness or obliquity of perception conceals its real enormity. That a man who will cheerfully surrender his seat to a woman, and liberally preferring her comfort to his own, should be willing to appear as if he were revenging the sacrifice upon her feet and skirts is an inexplicable phenomenon.

As to the other offenders, but less odious, those who refuse to relinquish their seats to those who are lame, blind, old, and infirm, and those who smoke cigars at car-steps and station platforms, and thus exact economy as a greater virtue than regard for others' rights. They do not generally defy the notice of the universal mandate against smoking in public conveyances, but they do so by a subtle and insidious method of a furtive inhalation by way of fanning a hidden fire in the nostrils; and they one and all ignore its spirit, for, as every uncorrupted nostril knows full well, a cigar that has not its most offensive odor, but a cigar that is burning. Extinction is infinitely worse than combustion.

But more detestable than these violators of the law of love are the unscrupulous wretches who take advantage of their superior strength to harass and annoy the weak and helpless. These are the most odious of all annoyances, and they are the most common. They are the most common annoyances of propriety into the gratuitous offense of unnecessary contact—who find an odious gratification in swaying and pressing against their neighbors, in the certainty that they can escape any and every charge of impropriety. These are the most common annoyances of propriety into the gratuitous offense of unnecessary contact—who find an odious gratification in swaying and pressing against their neighbors, in the certainty that they can escape any and every charge of impropriety.

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next day, he shouldn't have waited ten seconds. Pickett's division had been knocked all to pieces—almost wiped out. The same was the case with A. P. Hill's corps, or at least two divisions of it. There were three divisions gone. They left a break in our line of over a mile. Meade shouldn't have waited at all, but should have thrown the army right in between us."

"That would have ended the whole thing?" "Probably. Of course we would have tried to get together, and would have fought the best we were able, but that was what Meade should have done. Grant was right, I think. The greatest mistake of the war on the Union side was in Meade not making the move I had indicated the day before yesterday. It may be assumed, we think, without much risk of refutation, that the great American exporator has become slowly less numerous and intolerably infamously. And yet it does undoubtedly require a large measure of philosophical impartiality to recognize the dawning of a new era. The species is still abundant and prolific, and the multiplication of transportation facilities and of popular resorts makes its existence universally burdensome.

With some prevalent complaints against the owners and management of public conveyances we are not in the most thorough sympathy, realizing that for the present they are faulty and that patrons are quite entitled to be as much to blame as public places, entirely confident, for example, that the street-car company which should make and enforce a rule forbidding the admission to a car of more persons than it could comfortably seat, would forthwith become the object of bitter maledictions. The average inhabitant of the United States, man, woman and child, claims an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and of all particulars included under the latter of these rights, few are more precious than the right to place in the first conveyance that comes along, without reference to its previous condition of surplusage. When new transit systems shall have doubled our present facilities, and our most advanced cities shall become less intense, and a slow process of education will set in.

But for other miseries of urban travel there is no excuse, and no explanation except in the bestial instincts of a minority. An official mandate has been issued in Philadelphia against the vile and selfish habit of spitting, which deserves to be initiated in every city, town and hamlet which maintains a public conveyance. The unhappy fact is that this disgusting vice is entrenched in the personal proclivities of a multitude of men who are in most respects inoffensive, but from whom an uncontrollable dullness or obliquity of perception conceals its real enormity. That a man who will cheerfully surrender his seat to a woman, and liberally preferring her comfort to his own, should be willing to appear as if he were revenging the sacrifice upon her feet and skirts is an inexplicable phenomenon.

As to the other offenders, but less odious, those who refuse to relinquish their seats to those who are lame, blind, old, and infirm, and those who smoke cigars at car-steps and station platforms, and thus exact economy as a greater virtue than regard for others' rights. They do not generally defy the notice of the universal mandate against smoking in public conveyances, but they do so by a subtle and insidious method of a furtive inhalation by way of fanning a hidden fire in the nostrils; and they one and all ignore its spirit, for, as every uncorrupted nostril knows full well, a cigar that has not its most offensive odor, but a cigar that is burning. Extinction is infinitely worse than combustion.

But more detestable than these violators of the law of love are the unscrupulous wretches who take advantage of their superior strength to harass and annoy the weak and helpless. These are the most odious of all annoyances, and they are the most common. They are the most common annoyances of propriety into the gratuitous offense of unnecessary contact—who find an odious gratification in swaying and pressing against their neighbors, in the certainty that they can escape any and every charge of impropriety.

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