THE STORY OF A STAGE PLAY.

COMPOSED BY GILBERT AND SULLIVAN.

MR. GILBERT RELATES THE HISTORY OF THE EVOLUTION OF "THE MIKADO."

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Very few people have any idea of the amount of earnest thought that a dramatic author must bestow upon his original work before it is in a condition to be presented to the very exacting audiences that fill a good London theatre on the occasion of the first performance of a new play. I do not mean to say that original dramatic composition involves necessarily a high order of literary ability. On the contrary, I believe the chief secret of practical success is to keep well within the understanding of the least intelligent section of the audience. The dramatic author is in the position of a caterer who has to supply one dish of which all members of every class of society are invited to partake. If he supplies nothing but *crème de volaille*, he may please the epicure in the stalls, but he will surely irritate the costermonger in the gallery. If he supplies nothing but baked sheeps' head, the costermonger will be delighted, but the epicure will be disgusted. Probably the dish that will be acceptable to the largest number of every class is rump steak and oyster sauce, which is, after all, a capital thing in its way, and may be taken as a type of the class of piece which is most likely to succeed. It does not call for a very high order of merit on the part of the *chef*, but it requires a good deal of practical skill nevertheless. The occupant of the sixpenny gallery is as fully entitled to have his money's worth as the philosopher in the stalls, and it must not be forgotten that the occupant of the sixpenny gallery is the man who is in the habit of expressing his disapprobation in the loudest and most embarrassing manner.

It has occurred to me that the difficulties of dramatic authorship—and that of anything but an elevated character—may be effectively set forth by narrating the history of a piece from its germ to its production upon the stage, and as the incidents of "The Mikado" are fresh in my mind, that piece will serve my purpose as well as another.

In May, 1884, it became necessary to decide upon a subject for the next Savoy opera. A Japanese executioner's sword hanging on the wall of my library—the very sword carried by Mr. Grossmith at his entrance in the first act—suggested the broad idea upon which the libretto is based. A Japanese piece would afford opportunities for picturesque scenery and costumes, and, moreover, nothing of the kind had ever been attempted in England. There were difficulties in the way. Could a sufficient number of genuine Japanese dresses in good condition be procured in London? How would the ladies of our chorus look in black wigs? Could they be taught to wear the Japanese costume effectively? However, none of these difficulties appeared to be insuperable, and the scheme of a Japanese piece was decided upon. Then it became necessary to fit the company with parts, and this was not so easy a matter as it may appear at first sight to be. We had written six operas for practically the same company, and in this, our seventh, it was of course necessary to steer clear of everything that we had already done, and yet to fit our company with parts to which they could do justice, and which would do justice to them. As the principal character was to be a Japanese executioner, it was obvious that this part must be written for Mr. Grossmith, and equally obvious that he must be represented as an exceptionally tender-hearted person whose natural instincts were in direct opposition to the nature of his official duties. Then it became necessary to fit Mr. Barrington, and I was for some weeks unable to invest Mr. Barrington's character with distinctive attributes of an effective description. In an early draft of the plot I find that he was a Remembrancer, who was engaged by Mr. Grossmith to check that gentleman's tendency to think too highly of himself, by continually reminding him of injudicious acts and speeches of which he had, at one time or other, been guilty. Mr. Barrington was at the same time in love with Mr. Grossmith's daughter, and his natural desire to conciliate Mr. Grossmith caused him to temper his irritating duties as Remembrancer with a profusion of statesman-like apologies. The reader will perhaps agree with me that in abandoning this device I was not ill-advised. I find, on referring to my note-book, that Mr. Barrington remained a colorless Japanese nobleman until last August, when he suddenly developed an inordinate quantity of family pride, which he endeavored to counteract by committing deeds of indescribable meanness. Assisted by these attributes, Mr. Barrington came rapidly to the front, and ran neck and neck with Mr. Grossmith at the finish. With Mr. Lely I had some little difficulty at first, for he presented himself in the guise of an Agent in Advance to a strolling theatrical company, and as it is proverbially dangerous to introduce theatrical topics into a dramatic composition, I hesitated to deal with Mr. Lely in that capacity. A certain indistinctness of outline that characterized Mr. Lely as an Agent in Advance induced me to examine him more closely. The result was that I saw through his flimsy disguise at once and identified him as no less a personage than the son of the Mikado, disguised (for family reasons) as a wandering ballad singer. As the Agent in Advance he was in love with Mr. Grossmith's ward, Miss Jessie Bond, but as the disguised son of the Mikado he succumbed to the charms of Miss Leonora Braham. If I am not mistaken this transfer of his affections was prompted by Sir Arthur Sullivan, who had professional reasons for insisting that a tenor shall always fall in love with a soprano. Then Mr. Temple had to be provided for. Mr. Temple is an excellent baritone singer and a capital actor, and as it is advisable in a two-act opera to reserve a striking effect for the middle of the second act, Mr. Temple was cast for the Mikado, who does not appear until that period. Then the ladies had to be considered. The accident that Miss Braham, Miss Jessie Bond and Miss Sybil Grey are short in stature and all of a height suggested the advisability of grouping them as three Japanese school-girls who should work together throughout the piece. Miss Brandram is a personable young lady who has no objection to "make up" old and ugly—and of her good-natured readiness to sacrifice her own personal attractions to the exigencies of the plot we have perhaps taken an undue advantage. Miss Brandram, an admirable contralto singer and an excellent actress, found herself transformed once more into an elderly and undesirable lady, with whose affections Mr. Lely had unduly trifled.

The next thing was to decide upon two scenes which should be characteristic and effective. The respective advantages of a street in Nagasaki, a Japanese market place—a wharf with shipping—a Japanese garden, a seaside beach and the courtyard of a Japanese palace, were duly weighed, and the courtyard and the Japanese garden were finally decided upon. Then the story of the piece had to be drawn up in narrative form, and this, I find, was done in eleven different ways, each, presumably, an improvement on its immediate predecessor. The story is next divided into two acts, and the sequence of events in each act is decided upon, with the exits and entrances sketched out, the purport of the various dialogues suggested, and the musical situations arranged. I had to make at least a dozen shots at the "*scenario*" (that is the technical name for the piece in its skeleton form) before a course of action was finally decided upon. The final scenario began thus:

"Scene, a Japanese market place." (This was subsequently altered, for scenic reasons, to the court-yard of a palace.) Japanese noblemen and market people (men and women) discovered.

(The market people were subsequently discarded, as it was thought advisable not to "discover" our ladies, but to reserve their entrance for a special effect later on).

Chorus of nobles and market people.

Short dialogue leading to song, in which Pish Tush explains circumstances under which Koko was appointed Lord High Executioner.

(This song was subsequently placed after Nanki Poo's entrance as, Nanki Poo being a stranger, it was considered more workmanlike to sing the song conveying this information to him, rather than to people who may be supposed to have known all about it.)

Entrance of Nanki Poo, disguised as wandering ballad singer. In reply to inquiries, he describes himself and his calling. Sings snatches of half a dozen ballads.

(*a*) A verse of a love song.
(*b*) A patriotic song.
(*c*) A drinking song. (Subsequently dispensed with).
(*d*) A sea song.
(*e*) A hunting song. (Subsequently dispensed with).

To him enters Pook Bah.

And so forth, through the two acts.

The plot having reached this stage, I read the story and scenario to Sir Arthur Sullivan. He approved of the story, made some valuable suggestions bearing chiefly on the musical situations, and after three or four hours of careful deliberation the chain of events was finally determined, and a twelfth and last version of the story, varying in no very great degree from its immediate predecessor, was prepared the next day—and then the libretto was begun.

The libretto in its first form is simply the scenario reduced to dialogue of the baldest and simplest nature, leaving the songs to be written afterward. No attempt at a joke is to be found in the dialogue: it merely carries on the action in the fewest possible words. Thus:

Enter Nanki Poo.

Nauhi—Where is Yum Yum?
Noble—Who are you?
Nauhi—Ballad singer. Listen. (Sings).

After song, enter Pish Tush.

Pish—What do you want with Yum Yum?
Nauhi—I was a member of the Town Band. In this capacity I saw her and loved her. Found she was betrothed to Koko. Fled. Hearing he was condemned to be beheaded, returned. Here I am.
Pish—He was not beheaded, but made Lord High Executioner.
(Song, telling how).

And so forth, through the two acts.

Having roughly sketched out the dialogue, it was put aside for a term, that I might devote myself to the words of the songs. My usual practice is to furnish Sir Arthur Sullivan with the songs of the first act, and while he is setting them I proceed with the songs of Act Two. When these are practically finished I revert to the dialogue, elaborating and polishing the crude suggestions contained in the first version of the libretto, while he composes the music, and so it comes to pass that the pianoforte score and the libretto are usually completed at about the same date.

The libretto is then set up in type and read to the company. This is always a nervous affair, for by this time the jokes have lost their point, the situations their novelty, and the author is generally at a loss to see where the laughs will come in. I have often seen it stated that actors and actresses form a dispiriting audience at such a ceremony, and that they care little for the story or dialogue in the abstract, their attention being concentrated on the parts which they believe they are destined to play. I am bound to say that my own experience is to the contrary effect. As a body they are keenly alive to such merits as the piece may possess, and I am sorry to say that I have often had occasion to wish that my play had "gone" with the audience half as well as it did when it was read to the company.

Then comes the actual business of putting the piece upon the stage. Hitherto it has existed only in manuscript—henceforth it is to live as an aggregate of fifty human beings. As the piece is an opera, the company must learn the music before they begin to study the dialogue and action. The music rehearsals, conducted by Sir Arthur Sullivan, or in his absence by his next in command, Mr. Frank Collier, usually last a fortnight, during which the author occupies himself, partly in getting the rhythm of the musical numbers into his very unmusical head, partly in arranging details of scenery with the scenic artist, partly in arranging details of costume, but chiefly with determining the "stage management" of the piece, so that when the first "stage rehearsal" takes place he shall be in a position to announce a clear and distinct policy to his company. To this end fac-simile models of the scenes, on a scale of half an inch to the foot, are supplied to me by the scenic artist, and on these miniature stages the piece is duly rehearsed, by the aid of blocks of wood three inches and two and a half inches in length, representing men and women respectively. The details which are obtained by these means are committed to paper, and at the very first rehearsal the piece begins to take a definite and distinct form.

While these matters are occupying me, Sir Arthur Sullivan is busy with the music rehearsals. The company are seated in a semi-circle on the stage, the principals in front, and each number is gone through several times until it is thoroughly acquired. After two or three rehearsals at which the whole company is present, two or three rehearsals for the chorus only take place under the superintendence of Mr. Collier, while Sir Arthur Sullivan instructs the principals at his own residence. Then principals and chorus are brought together again, and in about a fortnight the music is thoroughly grasped by everybody concerned excepting myself, who am absolutely incapable of acquiring an air with any approach to correctness. I can get the rhythms into my head easily enough, but that is all, and for purposes of rehearsal the rhythms are sufficient.

The piece is now ready for the stage, and to the stage rehearsals we invariably devote four weeks. During the first week we usually deal with Act One, during the second with Act Two, and during the third with both acts, while the fourth is devoted to four band rehearsals and at least three dress renearsals, the stage being generally handed over to the scenic artist and carpenters during two days of this last week, that the various portions of the scenery may be accurately fitted together. In the course of the first three weeks it is generally found advisable to call two more rehearsals of the music, as the introduction of "business" into the earlier stage rehearsals acts rather prejudicially upon music which has been learned without the accompaniment of dramatic action. Moreover, it is generally found necessary to make certain musical alterations—songs have to be lengthened or reduced, and perhaps one or two musical numbers have to be added or excised.

The first stage rehearsal is rather a depressing affair. The principals are occupied in dealing rather with the mechanical details of exits, entrances, crosses, sittings down and gettings up, and the dialogue is allowed to go by the board. The chorus deal only with broad effects, the niceties of detail are passed over for the time being. The intention of the first rehearsal is to convey a rough general notion of the relation borne to each other by the various characters in the piece, and if this is accomplished the first rehearsal has served its end. At the second rehearsal the first half of the first act is dealt with microscopically, and the "business" to be introduced into the musical numbers is roughly sketched out. The third rehearsal is concerned with the second half of Act One, and by this time the "business" of the entire act is practically settled. It is now time to call in the ballet-master, Mr. John d'Auban, who looks on during one rehearsal, and comes the next day prepared with a certain number of dances, which he teaches to the company at rehearsals called for this express purpose. As soon as the details of the first act are roughly settled, Sir Arthur Sullivan usually attends a rehearsal in order to see that the proposed "business" is not inconsistent with his musical effects, and this visit generally results in a certain amount of rearrangement. He is the most self-sacrificing and unselfish of composers, but even his good-nature is not proof against an arrangement whereby the chorus dance a wild jig during an elaborate *cadenza* or an unaccompanied quartet. But when a composer works with a librettist who is deaf, dumb and blind on all musical points, he is not unprepared for professional solecisms of this description.

As soon as the stage rehearsals began it occurred to me that the native ladies of the Japanese village might possibly be prevailed upon to teach us some of their dances, and Mr. Tannaker, the manager of that exhibition, most kindly promised to assist us in every practicable manner. A very charming young Japanese lady came day after day to rehearsal, and went through her dances, piece by piece, until her very apt pupils, Miss Braham, Miss Jessie Bond and Miss Sybil Grey, were pronounced reasonably proficient. It was impossible not to be struck by the natural grace and gentle courtesy of their indefatigable little instructress, who, although she must have been very much amused by the earlier efforts of her pupils, never permitted them to see that the spectacle of three English ladies attempting for the first time a Japanese dance in Japanese dress had its ridiculous side. Our verbal intercourse with this fascinating little lady was limited, all the Japanese we could command being, "Sayo nara" ("good by"), whereas the Japanese young lady (who serves cups of tea in the village tea-house) knew but one English sentence, "sixpence each."

The first dress rehearsal is usually a disappointing business. The dresses require considerable alterations to make them fit, many of the dresses are incomplete, the company have yet to learn how to put them on, and the bootmaker has, as a matter of course, disappointed us. But by the second dress rehearsal the costumes are quite satisfactory, and the third, with band, scenery, and lime-lights as at night, is to all intents and purposes a first performance.

And yet not quite that, for at the close of this last rehearsal, the night before the production of the piece, the fearful thought occurred to us that the Mikado's song, in the second act, was extremely poor and had much better be cut out. It was excellently sung and acted by Mr. Temple, but the merit of his performance seemed only to make the words show to a greater disadvantage by reason of the contrast. So at least I thought, and so thought my *collaborateur* at the end of the rehearsal. We broke it delicately to Mr. Temple, for it was his only song, and we felt that he would have good ground for complaint if we took it from him. Mr. Temple, however, most cheerfully resigned the song, and it was publicly announced to principals and chorus that it would be omitted. Presently half a dozen gentlemen, press men and others who had witnessed the rehearsal, came to us in a body and begged us to restore the excised "number," suggesting that it could be cut out after the first performance, if it was then thought desirable to do so. Their wishes prevailed, and a message was sent to the members of the chorus (who by this time were changing their clothes) that the Mikado's song would be sung after all. As we were leaving the theatre, a few minutes later, we heard three ringing cheers from the chorus dressing-rooms. On inquiry we found that the cheers were the outcome of their gratification at the restoration of the song, which is now one of the most successful features of the second act. They were right and we were wrong.

Of the first performance of this, or any other piece with which I have been concerned, I can say little, as I always leave the theatre as the curtain rises on the first act and do not return until the end of the last. With the last rehearsal my functions come to an end. All has been done that can be done, and the fortunes of the play are in the hands of the audience.

W. S. GILBERT.

As evidence that the great mining industry of this country is about to take a fresh start, it is worth mentioning that "A new shaft is being sunk on the May Queen lode, on the north side of Little Stray Horse Gulch, Colorado."—[Boston Record.

GROUPS IN THE HOTELS.

PROMINENT MEN WHO CAME TO NEW-YORK FOR THE GREAT FUNERAL.

On the occasion of the memorial services of President Lincoln at Washington, I heard George Bancroft utter these memorable words as he began his great tribute to the martyr President: "Kings are lifted up or thrown down, nations come and go, republics flourish and wither, dynasties pass away like a tale that is told, yet nothing is by chance, though men, in their ignorance of causes, may think so." Looking on all the mingled "emerge and circumstance of war" sent out to mourn by grand parade the soldier-hero of the age, looking on all the men that other men call great gathered at Grant's grave, and all the multitude thronging up to do honor to the dead, one may well wonder what hidden moving destiny lies behind it all. I said as much yesterday, to one of the most distinguished of the gentlemen who rode in the funeral procession, a man whose good fortune in the republic has been marvellous, and whose experience and years have made him a philosopher. He responded slowly and thoughtfully: "It is a curious study, the movement of the public mind as it instinctively rises up and pays tribute to its heroes, alive or dead. It seems to come at a time when hero-worship is needed. There may be destiny in that. It is part of the common humanity of the world. England has just paid honor to Chinese Gordon, and France to Victor Hugo, and Russia to Skobeleff. Germany has her Bismarck and the Soudan her El Mahdi, who belong too, to the world. Circumstances create both men and heroes. You might start at the Battery and walk Broadway to Central Park, and every tenth man you meet has in his inner consciousness the firm-rooted belief that he possesses the elements of heroism that only need opportunity to develop. The unsuccessful Galena tanner is to such a man a type of hundreds and thousands of his fellow men. Reading of the imposing ceremonies of his burial, there comes to those thousands of men the remembrance of his early life struggles and they take new hope and heart for their own burdens. If Bancroft was right in his estimate of the controlling decrees of eternity, what grander purpose can be conceived in these scenes than the simple reviving of human faith?"

Ex-Congressman Miles, of Connecticut, said a little thing to me that went into the deep sea soundings of this channel. It was: "We shall never see Grant's like again in our day, because, I hope, there will not be another war, civil or foreign, in our time, to raise up another military hero."

I saw General Sherman moving about the Fifth Avenue Hotel corridors in an old straw hat, an alpaca blouse with a single button, and a pair of battered old slippers, and then blossoming out in full uniform, tall, erect, martial and proud, a fine type of the American citizen-soldier. His quaint manners and the freedom with which he can be approached by any one and every one, are not least of the features of his character that draw men involuntarily to like "Old Tecumseh," the leader of the March to the Sea, that cut the rebellion in two. Altogether different is General Phil Sheridan, who went about with his brother, Colonel "Mike" Sheridan, who is frequently mistaken for him, as a sort of twin Sheridan, in a crowd, and would be picked out by a stranger as a prosperous curfman. In civilian's dress he looks as if he had just stepped out of a bandbox, except that his face is bronzed and reddened. His suit of gray English goods fits him like wax. In the wearer of a high white hat it would be difficult to discover offhand the hero of Winchester and the gallant cavalryman who cut out the Confederacy at Richmond. These men were Grant's foremost lieutenants. In the group of Senators called here by the Vice-President, a third type of soldier was presented to view in the swarthy face and raven mustache of General Logan, who, perhaps, more than any other man is to-day the favorite of the volunteer soldiery, whose deeds and valor saved the Union. It would be hard to find, the country over, or the world over, a handsomer typical warrior than General Hancock, whose 250 pounds are carried in military harness with a martial air and gallantry beyond all criticism. These four men, like General Grant, are of humble origin.

Glancing through the gathering crowds I saw General Lew Wallace, looking sober and thoughtful, through gold-bowed spectacles under a brown slouch hat, but missed his fellow officer, General McClernand, who fell with him under the wrathful criticism of Grant at Shiloh and Donelson. General Wallace has acted with a manly dignity in the matter that I hear is likely to be rewarded, though he may not know it, by words of justice to him which General Grant has written and left behind in his Memoirs. General Wallace has claimed that but for himself and McClernand, Grant would have been crushed in either of those battles. If Grant shall have so written it, Wallace may well have waited in silence until now.

Senor Romero, small, slender, dark-visaged and black-haired, would pass unknown for anything in his appearance. But as he came and went at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, I heard many men speak in terms of highest praise of the tenderness of his devotion to General Grant—almost like a woman's love.

Ex-Secretaries Creswell and Belknap, meeting in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, might have been mistaken for brothers, on account of the similarity of height, stocky forms and blond whiskers. General Belknap told me that he rode in the carriage with Grant at Lincoln's funeral in Springfield. As a reminiscence of the Lincoln obsequies at Washington, he mentioned the fact that Sherman's army, 90,000 strong, marched through the streets in platoons that reached from curb to curb of those wide thoroughfares from 9 o'clock in the morning until half-past 4 in the afternoon.

Dwight Lawrence, who is a keen observer, and went through all the Grant tributes from Mount McGregor to Riverside Park, said to me: "The most impressive sight to me was at West Point. The sky was black with heavy clouds. The low mutter of thunder was heard occasionally. On the opposite bank from the train was a battery of artillery, whose guns kept up a discharge at regular intervals. They were stationed far enough away, so that the noise of the firing did not interfere with the dirges of the bands, which fell on the ears with a solemnity heightened by the surroundings furnished by nature. By the side of the track, motionless as so many marble statues, were the cadets, headed by General Merritt, drawn up in line at a salute. Every eye was in line, and not a muscle moved, as they stood there until the train passed on. The boys must have been on their mettle judging from the perfection of their pose. But taken all in all the scene was impressive beyond anything I saw."

Possibly so many distinguished men have never before been brought together in New-York on any one occasion. In the groups that gathered now and again, there were to be seen the incised features of Senator Evarts; "the cultured Lincoln," as I heard him called; Senator Morrill, of Vermont, tall, stoop-shouldered, with a white, student face, something in appearance like Charles Sumner's, but not so heavy or leonine and vigorous; General Manderson, Senator of Nebraska, short and inclined to be stout, with a soldierly mustache and goatee, gold eye glasses and light slouch hat, and handsome and dapper enough for the admiration of all the fair sex; Senator Warner Miller, with his large round face, blonde mustache, heavy weight and slow movements; John Sherman, erect and angular as a guidepost, with his keen face lifted above all his fellows; Senator Isham G. Harris, of Tennessee, with bald and shining head; ex-President Hayes, with sandy hair and freckled face, stouter than of yore; ex-President Arthur, also grown a trifle gray and a little stout, elegant in attire as always; ex-Attorney-General Pierrepont, who, by his cut of whiskers and facial expression, might have stepped from a picture of a Puritan gathering into his modern garb and modern surroundings; the smooth-shaven, wrinkled and smiling visage of Governor Oglesby, of Illinois; Henry Watterson, in brown business suit, brusque and nervous, with his head turned slightly to one side and moving constantly about to secure for his one eye the vision of two; Murat Halstead, with a field marshal air, and mustache and goatee white as the driven snow; Speaker Carlisle, with a black suit strangely in contrast with a high white hat, under which the same cynical smile is constantly to be seen on his bare face; Samuel J. Randall, standing by him, heavier in form, larger in mould and feature, with the same thin-lipped smile, but dressed in better taste; General N. P. Banks, of Red River fame. These and hundreds of others command attention, by reason of their prominence in public life or their personal appearance. Nearly all of the throng have risen, as Grant rose, from the ordinary walks of life. It is a revelation of the possibilities of the new world of which General Grant wrote to General Buckner," I know now the value of our inheritance."

General Grant has always been pictured as a silent and reticent man. Yet his friends all testify that he was companionable in the highest degree. I got a glimpse of this side of his character in his early life at St. Louis, from John G. Priest. Mr. Priest said to me: "While he was living in St. Louis, Grant had nothing to do and plenty of time to do it in. He used to come to my office day after day, rock his feet upon a desk and sit by the hour. He did not know many people in St. Louis, but he was not a reticent man. He had an opinion ready on every possible subject that came up, men, horses, cattle, public affairs, Indians or what not. He was a thorough Democrat in those days. Indeed, I think he was always a Democrat in spite of being run for President by the Republicans. But there was no question about his ability to talk and talk well upon any subject, or about his willingness to talk freely. When he came back from Europe he was full of reminiscences of travel, in the relation of which he showed all his old youthful vigor and manner."

Mr. Priest told me of a remark made by General Grant about ex-Secretary Folger which will have much interest to New-Yorkers. Mr. Priest said: "My relations with the Grant and Dent families date back of the War. I knew the General as far back as 1857. On May 29, 1883, he came into my office at St. Louis for an old-time chat. We talked about old times and new, and he told me a great many incidents of his tour around the world. The thing that struck me most forcibly, because it illustrated his liberal way of looking at men, grew out of my inquiry as to what was to be the end of our financial struggle. He said: 'It depends almost entirely on the Government—on the conduct of the Treasury Department.' I said that I did not like Mr. Folger's seeming procrastination, when he rejoined, 'Neither do I.' He added in a moment, 'I do not like John Sherman a particle, but I wish he was Secretary of the Treasury now.' I shall never forget how the remark impressed me at the time. Folger was a Staiwart and his political friend. Sherman was never his political friend. Yet he could weigh them in their public capabilities and do them justice."

GRANT'S DIRGE.

I.

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Ah, who shall sound the hero's funeral march?
And what shall be the music of his dirge?
No single voice may chant the Nation's grief;
No formal strain shall give its woe relief.
The pent-up anguish of the loyal wife,
The sobs of those who, nearest in this life,
Still hold him closely in the life beyond;—
These first, with threnody of memories fond.
But look! Forth press a myriad mourners thronging,
With hearts that throb in sorrow's exaltation,
Moved by a strange, impassioned, hopeless longing
To serve him with their love's last ministration.
Make way! Make way, from wave-bound verge to verge
Of all our land, that this great multitude
With lamentation proud albeit subdued,
Deep murmuring like the ocean's mighty surge,
May pass beneath the heavens' triumphal arch!

II.

What is the sound we hear?
Never the fall of a tear;—
For grief repressed
In every breast
Mere honors the man we revere.
Rising from East and West,
There echoes afar or near—
From the cool, sad North and the burning South—
A sound long since grown dear,
When brave ranks faced the cannon's mouth
And died for a faith austere;—
The tread of marching men.
A steady tramp of feet
That never flinched nor faltered when
The drums of duty beat.
With sable hats whose shade
Falls from the cord of gold
On every time-worn face;
With tattered flags, in black enrolled,
Beneath whose folds they warred of old?
Forward, firmly arrayed,
With a sombre, martial grace;
So the Grand Army moves
Commanded by the dead,
Following him whose name it loves,
Whose voice in life its footsteps led.

III.

Those that in the combat perished—
Hostile shapes and forms of friends—
Those we hated, those we cherished,
Meet the pageant where it ends.
Flash of steel and tears forgiving
Blend in splendor. Hark, the knell!
Comrades ghostly join the living—
Dreaming, chanting: "All is well."
They receive the General sleeping,
Him of spirit pure and large:
Him they draw into their keeping
Evermore, in faithful charge.

IV.

Pass on, O steps, with your dead, sad note!
For a people's homage is in the sound;
And the even tread, in measured rote,
As a leader is laid beneath the ground,
Rumors the hum of a pilgrim train
That shall trample the earth as tramples the rain,
Seeking the door of the hero's tomb,
Seeking him where he lies low in the gloom,
Paying him tribute of saint and mage,
From age to age!

V.

Tall pine-tree on McGregor's height,
How didst thou grow to such a lofty bearing,
For song of bird or beat of breeze uncaring,
There where thy shadow touched the dying brow?
Were all thy sinewy fibres shaped aright?
Was there no flaw? With what mysterious daring
Didst thou put forth each murmuring, odorous bough,
And trust it to the frail support of air?
We only know that thou art now supreme:
We know not how thou grewest so tall and fair.
So from the unnoticed, humble earth arose
The sturdy man whom we, bewailing, deem
Worthy the wondrous name fame's far voice blows.
And lo! his ancient foes
Rise up to praise the plan
Of modest grandeur, loyal trust,
And generous power from man to man,
That lifted him above the formless dust.
O heart by kindliness betrayed,
O noble spirit snared and strayed—
Unmatched, upright thou standest still
As that firm pine-tree rooted on the hill!

VI.

No paragon was he,
But moulded in the rough
With every fault and scar
Ingrained, and plain for all to see:
Even as the rocks and mountains are.
Common perhaps, yet wrought of such true stuff
That common nature in his essence grew
To something which till then it never knew;
Ay, common as a vast, refreshing wind
That sweeps the continent, or as some star
Which, 'mid a million, shines out well-defined;
With honest soul on duty bent,
A servant-soldier, President;
Meekest when crowned with victory,
And greatest in adversity!

VII.

A silent man whom, strangely, fate
Made doubly silent ere he died,
His speechless spirit rules us still;
And that deep spell of influence mute,
The majesty of dauntless will
That wielded hosts and saved the State,
Seems through the mist our spirits yet to thrill.
His heart is with us! From the root
Of toil and pain and brave endurance
Has sprung at last the perfect fruit,
The treasure of a rich assurance
That men who nobly work and live
A greater gift than life may give;
Yielding a promise for all time,
Which other men of newer date
Surely redeem in deeds sublime.
Forerunner of a valiant race,
His voiceless spirit still reminds us
Of ever-waiting, silent duty:
The bond of faith wherewith he binds us
Shall hold us ready hour by hour
To serve the sacred, guiding power
Whene'er it calls, where'er it finds us,
With loyalty that, like a folded flower,
Blooms at a touch in proud, full-circled beauty.

VIII.

As the waves of a river wild with rain,
Onward the people crowd
Their serried columns in billowing train.
And the men who fought him
But ne'er o'erwrought him
Muster together,
Like a dark cloud
In summer weather,
Whose threatening thunders suddenly are stilled,
And all the world is filled
With smiling rest. Victory to him was pain,
Till he had won his enemies by love;
Had leashed the eagle and unloosed the dove;
Setting on war's red roll the silver seal of peace.
So here they form their solid ranks again,
But in no mood of hatred or disdain.
They say: "Thou who art fallen at last,
Beleaguered stealthily, o'ercome by death,
Thy conqueror now shall be magnanimous
Even as thou wast to us.
But not for thee can we blot out the past:
We would not, if we might, forget thy last
Great act of war, that with a gentle hand
Brought back our hearts unto the mighty mother,
For whose defence and honor armed we stand.
We hail thee brother,
And so salute thy name with holy breath!"

IX.

Land of the hurricane!
Land of the avalanche!
Land of tempest and rain;
Of the Southern swamps and frozen peaks;
Stretching from main to main;—
Land of the cypress-glooms;
Land of devouring looms;
Land of the forest and ranch;—
Hush every sound to-day
Save the burden of swarms that assemble
Their reverence dear to pay
Unto him who saved us all!
Ye masses that mourn with bended head,
Beneath whose feet the ground doth tremble
With weight of woe and a sacred dread.—
Lift up the pall
That to us shall remain as a warrior's banner!
Gaze once more on the fast-closed eyes;
Mark once the mouth that never speaks;
Think of the man and his quiet manner:
Weep if you will; then go your way;
But remember his face as it looks to the skies,
And the dumb appeal wherewith it seeks
To lead us on, as one should say, "Arise—
Go forth to meet your country's noblest day!"

X.

Ah, who shall sound the hero's funeral march?
And what shall be the music of his dirge?
Let generations sing, as they emerge
And pass beneath the heavens' triumphal arch!

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

HOW THREE DRUNKARDS WERE SAVED.

SUNK TO THE LOWEST DEPTHS—HELPED WHEN THEY WERE DOWN.

By a singular coincidence three well-dressed, contented-looking men met in front of the Post-office yesterday morning. One was a politician, one a Custom House official, and one a formerly well-to-do lawyer. Each of the three looked as if life agreed with him and he enjoyed it. An acquaintance passing by was hailed by one of the group, the eldest, past fifty years of age, who said:

"I want you to see three reformed men. You know me, and I guess you have seen us all at one time or another."

A good-natured laugh from the others greeted this remark. Four years ago the eldest of the trio was one of the most miserable, degraded drunkards that ever trod in ragged shoe-leather. His haunts were in the lowest dens in Baxter and Mulberry sts. His clothes were rags and tatters, and he was even lost to decency and had been disowned by wealthy relatives and by all people of respectability. The man whom he had called to the group had given him many a nickel and was glad to get rid of him. The Potter's Field seemed to gape for the miserable man. As a last resort he was sent to the Christian Home for Intemperate Men nearly four years ago, where he was clothed and fed, and since that day the man has led a sober life, has been restored to his family and social position, and has saved money. One of his delights now is to visit the quarters where he once led such a life of wretchedness, seeking out the suffering and needy and aiding them in a small way financially and otherwise.

A second one of the three, a well-educated man of forty years, had fared even worse than the eldest one. So strong was his appetite for rum that he lost friends, position and everything, and joined the tomato-can brigade. He was one of the most besotted tramps in Mulberry-st., and a year and a half ago was sent to the Island with a gang of vagrants. Here one of the Commissioners of Charities and Correction befriended him, gave him employment and clothing, and the man, who said that he had once despaired of ever being a respectable human being again, became temperate, and to-day is doing well, is restored to his family, and is respected by all who know him.

The third one of the party is the brother of a wealthy New-Yorker. "I had been a hard drinker," said he, "for forty years. I held responsible positions and dined at Delmonico's. I used to go on my spurees in a carriage and drink nothing less expensive than champagne. I spent a fortune that my father left me, and cost my brother another and my friends a great deal, and I got so low that I was cast off by all. I committed forgery and was sent to Sing Sing, but that did not cure me. Eighteen months ago I was as low down as it was possible for a man to be, and I would actually beg for ten cents of a stranger to buy vile rum. My wife died of a broken heart and my brother sent for me to attend her funeral. I had not seen her for years. I vowed when I saw her that I would never touch liquor again, and I haven't. I would lose my right arm first. Every one despaired of me and said there was no hope for me in this world or in the next. But I lack for nothing now, and I find that there are people always ready to help a sober man who tries to help himself. Who dares say," concluded the speaker, "when he compares our former condition with our present state, that there is no hope for a drunkard?"

THE SERVANT-GIRL ADVERTISEMENTS.

THE SKILFUL BAIT OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES EXPOSED.

A man on the sidewalk in front of a low building in Fourth-ave., near Fourteenth-st., tearing up bits of paper and throwing them away, kept saying that something was "a blanked swindle." A TRIBUNE reporter passing by overheard the remark and scented an item. When accosted the irate citizen said:

"You're a newspaper man? Well, why in blank and blankation don't the newspapers expose this blank servants' employment agency system instead of continuing to publish their lying advertisements?"

The reporter glancing up saw a sign "Servant Employment Agency." The angry man went on to explain:

"My wife is sick. We have a half-trained girl, who does well enough when my wife is well, but can do nothing at all now. I had to have a girl right away. I picked up *The World* and hunted out half a dozen advertisements. Here, I can give them to you word for word, except the addresses." The advertisements were as follows:

HOUSEWORK—Neat young woman, honest, sober, economical; two years' reference for housework; excellent cook; bread, biscuit, soups, desserts; first-class laundress; not afraid of large family; city, country.

HOUSEWORK—Strong, willing girl, not afraid to work, for housework; fond of children; good references; city or country.

HOUSEWORK—Good, strong, willing girl; good cook and laundress; not afraid to work; city or country; good references.

HOUSEWORK—Respectable, strong, German girl for general housework, plain cooking; good washer and ironer; city references; city or country.

HOUSEWORK—German Protestant, good cook and laundress, for general housework; best references; good home preferred.

The man continued:

"I thought surely out of these and one or two more like them I should find a girl. Do you know what I found? Employment agencies every one! Not a single genuine advertisement. Not an agency that had such a person as advertised. Every one willing to furnish me such a servant if I would pay a registry fee and wait till they found her. The spider and the fly. A blanked infernal outrage. A man wouldn't mind paying a fee to get a servant, if they had what he wanted, as they advertised; but they haven't got what they advertise. Just before I went upstairs here I met an old friend. I told him my experience and he gave me a pointer, which the public ought to have. Advertisements like those I have given you appear right along, every second or third day, in the papers devoted to this kind of advertising. If you notice the addresses from day to day you can pick out the concerns easily. It is only when a fellow is fresh and green as I was that he goes to all this trouble."

ODD CUSTOMERS IN UNION SQUARE.

The salesmen at Tiffany's derive much quiet amusement from studying the ways of their customers. Summer is generally a dull time, but business is lively in spots. Many people from the South come up and spend the money they have been saving for ten years perhaps; thousands of dollars that have been laid away for their next visit to New-York. They are entirely unconscious of the fact taat they are ten years behind the times and innocently ask for ornaments of the most old-fashioned kinds. "Yes, that's all very pretty," they say after the obliging salesman has exhibited everything he can lay his hands on, "but you haven't shown us any coral jewelry. I saw the most magnificent set of coral jewelry when I was here in '73." And then the salesman has to explain as delicately as he can that coral ceased to be the rage some time ago. Then the way in which elderly customers ask for men who have waited on them in former days creates much amusement. "Where is that nice young man that used to wait on me?" is a frequent interrogation from old ladies who are all unconscious that the "nice young man" in question has successfully married off three or four daughters and has been rendered bald by the worry and anxiety of the said undertaking.

PROMISE OF AN ATTRACTIVE CITY PARK.

One of the most attractive parks in New-York will be the Bronx in the new district. The Bronx River is a varied and picturesque stream, which now forms the eastern boundary of the present territory of the enlarged city, and in its course varies from 50 to 300 feet in width. The land selected is a strip from half to three-fourths of a mile wide upon each side of the Bronx. The tract comprises 653 acres and includes portions of the Lorillard, Lydig and other noted estates, which have been preserved intact since the Revolution. They present scenes of wild beauty, which cannot be found nearer than the Adirondacks, and the tract requires but little at the hand of art to convert it into a park of romantic beauty. The chief feature of the park is the river from which it takes its name. At one point it rushes through a narrow gorge, with rocky walls nearly 100 feet in height, and again widens into broad reaches and appears like a series of tranquil lakes with high wooded banks. In its course the river reaches Lydig Dam, which causes it to spread out into a beautiful lake one mile long. The river falls below the dam in a broad cascade which adds greatly to the beauty of the landscape. The park is full of promise of future attractiveness, and needs only roads and paths.

THEY KNEW EACH OTHER.

From The Fairfield (Me.) Journal.

An old Republican friend of ours, a resident of Norridgewock, tells us a good story at the expense of two prominent Democrats of that town. It illustrates the efforts of several candidates for one or two offices in this county, in attempting to break down the reputation and influence of those who are backing the opposite candidates