



UNANSWERABLE.

POMPOUS MAGNATE (making speech at public luncheon in provincial town)—SPEAKING OF TRAVEL REMINDS ME HOW GREATLY I HAVE ADMIRER THE SCENERY ROUND LAKE GENEVA, AND ALSO WHAT PLEASANT TIMES I HAVE SPENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF LAKE LEMAN.  
 CULTURED NEIGHBOR (in audible whisper)—PARDON ME, BUT THE TWO PLACES ARE SYNONYMOUS.  
 P. M. (patronizingly)—AH! SO YOU MAY THINK, SIR—SO YOU MAY THINK! BUT, FROM MY POINT OF VIEW, I CONSIDER LAKE GENEVA TO BE FAR THE MOST SYNONYMOUS OF THE TWO.—(Punch.)

destined to crown the fondest hopes of the French nation. But now that France is called upon to declare herself in the Russo-Japanese imbroglio, and to say whether she sides with her Muscovite ally or with Japan, Great Britain, the United States and the other foreign powers, she turns her face toward the latter, not only because her manufacturers and traders stand in quite as much need of open markets in China as their foreign competitors, but likewise because she is aware that support given to Russia would, according to the terms of Japan's alliance with England, involve her in war with the latter, an eventuality which would be so disastrous to her prosperity that sooner she would sacrifice thereto not one but several Russian alliances. Individually, the Russian is preferred to the Englishman in France, and of all foreigners there are none, not even the Germans, who are so cordially disliked in France as the British. Yet France's trade with England is greater than her commerce with all the other nations of the world put together, while people in this country have no idea of the colossal amount of English capital embarked in French industries, which would be crippled by its withdrawal. That is, then, the reason why France will be found, not on the side of her ally, Russia, but on that of England and of the other powers supporting Japan in the present Eastern imbroglio.

Before this letter appears in print war may have broken out, in spite of all the efforts which have been made to prevent it—efforts which are, however, in a measure stultified by the fact that they involve a humiliating backdown by Russia from the unfortunate position which she has assumed. And one of the first features of the con-

flict is likely to prove the seizure of Peking by the Russians, who alone are within striking distance of the Chinese capital. Once established there, nothing short of their total defeat by the Japanese will drive them out. Indeed, whichever side wins, the outlook for the United States and the other foreign nations is unpromising and even sombre, so far as trading interests are concerned, while there is little doubt that a war between Japan and Russia on Chinese soil would lead to a revival of massacres of foreigners and Christians throughout the Celestial Empire.

EX-ATTACHE.

LIBRARY QUIET BROKEN.

Some Queer Characters To Be Seen at the Reading Rooms of the Astor.

It is hard to find elsewhere such a range of varieties of human character as in the reading rooms of the Astor Library. Here congregate the schoolboy and the veteran author, the high salaried engineer who uses pencil and ruler as he works, and the literary tramp who enjoys the radiators even more than the books. And there are odd types of humanity, who have been encumbered with such a small amount of genius that in striving to do great things they have done nothing.

Among these lightly ballasted geniuses there is an ancient individual who is known to the attendants as "Darius Green." He is old and decrepit of body, with long, white hair, which he tucks under his collar in cold weather, but his mind works faster than the brains of many youths. For the last twenty years he has been



"MANDY, D'YE RE-FLECT HOW HENRY WIGGINS USED TO PLAY MARELES ALL THE TIME, WHEN HE WAS A LITTLE FELLER?"  
 "GOODNESS, YES!"  
 "WELL, HE HAIN'T GOT OVER HIS HANKERIN' AFTER 'EM YIT; THIS PIECE IN THE PAPER 'BOUT MILLIONAIRES' HOUSES SAYS HE HAS ONE OF THE FINEST 'LECTIONS OF ITALIAN MABLES IN THE HULL WORLD."  
 —(Copyright, 1903, by Brooklyn Life.)

trying to invent a means of transportation which would combine the characteristics of a flying machine and a bridge. He has studied day after day under the benign influence of a neighboring radiator on arcs and chords, tangents and paraboloids. One by one he files away his kiteshape drawings, numbered carefully as Exhibits A, B, etc. And, at times, when the steam gauge of the library's furnace registers unusually high, he has moments of triumph, and holds up a dog eared sketch, so that one may tell by the exultation of his eyes that he is fairly flying—in thought at least.

While "Darius Green" is wrestling with the problem of combining celestial and terrestrial modes of locomotion, a sphynxlike individual sits across the room who appears to be buried in the most profound thought. He is a man whom a prosaic scientist would classify simply as phlegmatic. In his fifty years of lethargy he has accumulated a fortune of fat, which he carries with him as does the Italian laborer his earnings—around his belt. So stable and substantial are these foundations that when this philosopher sits down in an ordinary chair it is practically impossible for him to topple over.

The favorite work of this rotund savant is Darwin's "Descent of Man." It would seem, from his persistent thumbing of this book, that he might take a certain personal interest in the subject, but should one ever watch him long he will learn that there is a far more potent reason. Day after day he is found with the same volume held at a gentle upturned angle in his lap, but the pages never move. To one a few feet away his eyes appear contracted under the strain of tremendous mental concentration, but they never wink. The eyelids rest securely on the eyeballs.

It chanced only the other day that a nervous looking youth, whose hair was too fine to be curly and whose thin cheeks showed either a too active mind or a too inactive stomach, sat down at the table opposite the ponderous Darwinian student. He glanced hurriedly from page to page of a book of Swinburne's poems

until he came to the six stanzas which are entitled "A Match." Here he began reading as follows:

If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf,  
 Our lives would — ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

A low, booming noise, which made the table resonate as if the bass note of an organ was sounded, startled the "gentle reader" at this juncture. With a quick look he caught sight of the portly figure opposite him, the downturned eyes, the upturned page. Thinking that he must be mistaken, and that the noise was caused only by some distant trolley collision, the mild youth resumed his reading.

Our lives would grow together  
 In sad or singing—

Again that same deep sound broke off the reader's thought. More quickly than before he eyed the imposing philosopher across the table; but as before he saw a face contracted, as if in the most profound thought. Somewhat suspicious and by this time thoroughly curious, the limp haired devotee of Swinburne watched his neighbor. His vigil was rewarded the next minute by seeing the great face open with a sudden snort. The pale faced youth made several more futile attempts to finish the stanza and then looked around helplessly, as if to call a library attendant to interfere.

"I'll bring him out of it," whispered a schoolboy at his elbow, who at the same time picked up a motheaten arithmetic, which showed more wear outside than in, and threw it on the table in front of the slumberer.

The book had no sooner crashed on the table, and the boy's arm was still in air, when both the eyes of the somniferous scientist opened as if they were part of a fire alarm system. They looked fair and square at the schoolboy, who blushed to the roots of his tow colored hair at the humiliation of being caught. Without a ripple of an expression, either of displeasure or surprise, the ponderous brain again plunged into the "Descent of Man."

A ragamuffin at the end of the table, who had



SO NICE FOR TANNHAUSER!

(THE INTERIOR OF THE VENUSBERG (BEHIND THE SCENES, TEN DEGREES BELOW FREEZING POINT).)

Chorus of Sirens: Come to these bow—ers!  
 Radiant with flow—ers!  
 Here love shall bless you,  
 Here endeth long—ing;  
 Soft arms shall press you,  
 'Mid bilazes throng—ing.



"THE DARLING OF THE GODS."

(NOT AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.)

—(Illustrated by...)