The Call

SUNDAY.....APRIL 9, 1899

JOHN D. SPRECKELS, Proprietor.

Address All Communications to W. S. LEAKE, Manager.

PUBLICATION OFFICE.....Market and Third Sts., S. F.
Telephone Main 1868.
EDITORIAL ROOMS.....217 to 221 Stevenson Street
Telephone Main 1874.

DELIVERED BY CARRIERS, 15 CENTS PER WEEK.
Single Copies, 5 cents.
Terms by Mail, Including Postage:

DAILY CALL (including Sunday Call), one year	$6.00
DAILY CALL (including Sunday Call), 6 months	3.00
DAILY CALL (including Sunday Call), 3 months	1.50
DAILY CALL—By Single Month	65c
SUNDAY CALL One Year	1.50
WEEKLY CALL, One Year	1.00

All postmasters are authorized to receive subscriptions.
Sample copies will be forwarded when requested.

OAKLAND OFFICE.....908 Broadway

NEW YORK OFFICE.....Room 188, World Building
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WASHINGTON (D. C.) OFFICE.....Wellington Hotel
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AMUSEMENTS.

Columbia—"Robin Hood" to-morrow night.
Grand Opera House—"The Black Hussar."
Orpheum—Vaudeville.
Alcazar—"The Charity Ball."
Tivoli—"Beautiful Golden Locks."
Alhambra—"Married, Not Mated."
Chutes, Zoo and Free Theater—Vaudeville every afternoon and evening.
Olympia—Corner Mason and Ellis streets, Specialties.
Recreation Park—Baseball.
Union Coursing Park—Coursing to-day.
Grand Opera House—Sauer Recitals, Wednesday afternoon, April 18.
Grand Opera House—Rosenthal, Tuesday afternoon, April 25.
Glen Park—Mission Zoo.
Central Park—The Steeplechase.
El Campo—The popular bay resort. Amusements every Sunday.

PROMPT ACTION NECESSARY.

IT is sincerely to be hoped that Attorney General Ford will find time between now and the expiration of his term of office to take up and consider the application of his predecessor for a writ of mandate compelling Wells, Fargo & Co. to pay their war taxes. Compared with most of the business with which the time of his office is consumed this proceeding is of transcendent importance. The express company in question is taking from the people of this State between $8000 and $10,000 monthly which it should pay to the Government. It is doing this by means of a bluff, which in an ordinary poker game would be called and disposed of immediately.

The late Attorney General applied to the Supreme Court for a writ of mandate and was referred by that tribunal to the Superior Court. The latter court issued the writ, and Mr. Fitzgerald was proceeding on the lines of the case lately decided in Michigan when Wells, Fargo & Co. interposed with a motion transferring the proceeding to the United States Circuit Court. At this juncture a change in the Attorney General's office took place, and since that time nothing has been done to bring matters to an issue.

All Attorney General Ford has to do in connection with the motion interposed by the tax-shirking corporation is to move in Judge Morrow's court to dismiss it. Every lawyer knows that the Federal tribunals do not issue writs of mandate except in aid of their own process, and the proceeding transferred in this case on the ground that it involves a Federal question is bound to be defeated here just as it was defeated in the State of Michigan. The necessity of the case is merely an Attorney General who will move on the works of the enemy.

In an interview the other day Attorney General Ford said that he would take up the case as soon as possible. This is not the way to go about the business. It should be taken up at once, since it is of more importance to the commerce of the State that Wells, Fargo & Co. should be compelled to pay its war taxes than that almost any other principle of government should be enforced. The war in the Philippines is now being carried on at the expense of the people. This tax-shirking express company is paying not a single cent toward its prosecution, but is evading payment by tying up cases in the courts and resorting to legal technicalities entirely ridiculous in character.

ARREST OF CONFISCATION.

THE case of Village of Norwood vs. Baker, recently decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, will have a deterring effect upon the frauds often perpetrated under the guise of street assessments. As the law stood before this decision was rendered street improvements in municipalities frequently operated as confiscations. It has been generally held that in the case of unaccepted streets, that is, streets not to be kept in order by general taxation, the cost of the improvements could be lawfully assessed against the adjacent property by the rule of the front foot. In some of the States the extreme doctrine has been laid down, either expressly or by implication, that where the cost exceeded the value of the property the deficit could be collected through a personal judgment against the owner. In this State that extremity of robbery was avoided, and it has been held that the measure of possible recovery for street work must be limited to the enforcement of a lien upon the property itself, and that when a man's land has been taken the spoliation must cease. But our Supreme Court has also declared that the right to assess and to recover on this kind of work is not dependent upon any benefit to the property assessed. One lot might be injured and another lot improved, but each would have to contribute in proportion to its frontage.

The case of Village of Norwood vs. Baker lays down an intelligible rule, founded on principle, that, in respect to streets, will go far to reconcile law and justice. It determines that when an assessment for street improvements is substantially in excess of the correlative benefits it is invalid under the Federal constitution, for the reasons that it proposes, first, to take for public use without compensation property held in private ownership; and, second, to deprive a man of his property without due process of law.

The salutary effect of this ruling will nowhere be more generally welcomed than in San Francisco, where over and over again people have been "improved" into insolvency. The history of street work, like the record of the water front in connection with the State, is replete with shameful evidences of the use of the local government to gratify the rapacity of contractors and of conscienceless speculators. The Supreme Court of the United States has rendered a great public service.

THE PHILIPPINE TRADE.

THE Chinese Consul-General in this city has issued the prospectus of the United States and China Trading Company, to be incorporated under the laws of this State, with a capital of from $5,000,000 to $10,000,000. The prospectus conveys and repeats much information as to the Chinese trade, and quotes at large from Sir Charles Beresford on that subject.

The opinion of the Consul-General is that the United States, having been non-aggressive in China, will be preferred by that Government in the granting of trade concessions and protection in their enjoyment. The European nations are characterized in the document as "aggressive and grasping," and the inference is plain that China will treat us as the favored nation. Silence is maintained, however, upon the light in which those aggressive and grasping Europeans will look upon any attempt to give to us exclusive privileges and benefits in China. England, Germany and Russia are already there, busy in staking out spheres of influence and zones of commerce and posts for military occupation. Whatever grace China shows toward us brings us in conflict with the interests of these prior occupants, and, while we will have no dispute to settle with China, our contentions with her other powerful parasites may involve us very seriously and to an extent not offset by the commercial advantage gained.

The prospectus impleads the Philippine trade with that of China, and herein betrays a feeling that Chinese interests in the islands require us to help sustain them. It says that there are one million Chinese in the Philippines, and that Chinese merchants control their commerce. The proposed California corporation is to make connections with these Chinese merchants already established there and make use of their facilities for distribution.

The Chinese estimate of the wealth to be gained by exploiting the Philippines is as sumptuous as that of Senator Morgan. The Consul-General says: "The principal products of the Philippines are sugar, hemp, tobacco, rice, coffee, cacao, gums, arrowroot, indigo, cotton, pepper, cochineal, betel root, areca nut, cocoanuts and nut oil. In the forests grow ebony, bamboo, logwood, rattans and numerous hardwoods, gum-bearing trees and plants. The islands are also fabulously rich in gold, and copper, coal and iron abound in large quantities."

No wonder that after that dazzling catalogue the representative of China is able to say that the proposed corporation will enter into possession of a veritable Golconda. The development of this new field, however, will require labor, and this can only be had from China. Americans cannot work in that climate. The million Chinese already in the Philippines form a population already in possession. The present population of the Philippine Islands is 87 to the square mile, against the average of 81 for Europe, Asia 48, Africa 15, Oceanica 8, North America 8, South America 3, and the world's average of 26.

The native races are not given to industry voluntarily, and it is clear that they must be forced to work and lashed into taxpaying, as Professor Wooster says they were under Spain, or a laboring population must be introduced from China.

It is therefore highly probable that if the future develop in line with this prospectus issued by the Consul-General of China, the United States will protect the introduction into the Philippines of a million more Chinese, who will repeat there the history of their invasion of the Straits Settlements, Ceylon and the other tropical countries into which they have penetrated.

FAKES, FIGHTS AND FINANCES.

AT the meeting of the Board of Supervisors last Monday the first steps were taken to conform with the act enacted by the last Legislature authorizing incorporated clubs to give public exhibitions of twenty-round boxing contests at any time upon the payment of a license fee, the amount of which is to be fixed by county Supervisors. Supervisor Perrault presented a resolution fixing the license to be paid in San Francisco at $5000 a year, and it was referred to the City and County Attorney for consideration. At the same meeting the permit granted the National Athletic Club for the boxing match between George Green and the "Mysterious Billy" Smith was approved.

The meeting permitted between Green and Smith has taken place and has furnished a valuable and instructive lesson to the Supervisors in considering the Perrault resolution. There was no boxing in the match. Smith announced that he would not box for the amount of money in sight and walked out of the ring. The patrons of the show got their money's worth in experience, though doubtless many of them are convinced they were swindled.

With such an illustration of the ease with which the public can be defrauded in such exhibitions, the merit of the Perrault resolution is too apparent to need argument. Something must be done to put an end to these disreputable fakes. Since the State law deprives the city of the power to forbid prize-fighting when called "a twenty-round boxing match," the only course left is to guard against the repetition of frauds. That can be accomplished only by fixing the license so high that none but clubs of financial responsibility can afford to undertake such exhibitions.

It is also right that the county should derive considerable revenue from the boxing contests, since the pugs and their following put the taxpayers to a good deal of expense for police service. The amount of the license proposed by the resolution is not at all too high. If the City and County Attorney reports favorably on its validity, it should be adopted at once.

The people of San Francisco have borne too long in patience the impudent pretensions and the insolent fakes and frauds of the lower class of prize-fighters. A high license fee would exclude those fellows from the ring and they would have to go to work or be arrested as vagabonds. The ring would be rid of their trickery and the city of their presence. The irresponsible clubs that have made money out of such fellows would have to close up and quit. From every point of view, therefore, the enactment of the ordinance would be a benefit to the community.

It is difficult to understand why the British should have taken the trouble to seize the Tonga Islands all of a sudden, unless it be that they just happened to notice for the first time that the islands are a part of the earth.

The disappointed patrons of the ring who, after the Mysterious Billy Smith fake, were consoled by the gift of tickets of admission to another contest, will probably find they have been provided with a dissolving view show.

Coroner Hill readily admits that he carries a superabundance of fat about his waistband. The impression is rapidly gaining ground that his head is also acquiring an excess of embonpoint.

With the marked activity in opposition to the present lighting monopoly in San Francisco the expression "How'd you like to be the gasman?" is nothing short of irony.

A WARWHOOP FROM KENTUCKY.

WITH a multitude of words so numerous as to form an essay rather than an editorial, the Louisville Courier-Journal has made reply to a correspondent who asked: "Accepting, for the sake of argument, your view that silver, if not a dead issue, is at least a dead weight, with what would you replace it, and how would you line up the party in 1900 so as to give us a fighting chance?"

The Courier Journal, which poses, be it remembered, as an organ of conservative Democracy, replies that before it began the work of reconstruction it would "throw out the debris of Populism which has accumulated among the general mass of Democratic wreckage," and then, having cleared the decks for action, "it would proceed to formulate a line of domestic policies having these four ends in view":

First—The destruction of combinations of capital designed to limit production, to raise prices and to promote monopoly.

Second—The raising of the public moneys by taxes fairly divided between production and consumption; beginning with a tariff for revenue only and ending in a graded income tax, oppressive to no class or interest.

Third—The recovery to the people of all franchises belonging to the people, but diverted from public to private uses, by the purchase of corporations and individuals, corruptly working through State and municipal legislatures.

Fourth—Such a reorganization and reform of our judicial system as will remove the courts farther from the influence of the rich and make them more accessible to the poor; a result not to be reached by excited appeals and revolutionary menaces, but by calm, conservative methods, originating in the benign and orderly operations of an enlightened public opinion.

So that is what they call conservatism in Kentucky! A return to the old disastrous free trade experiment, the retaking by the Government of all railroad and other franchises granted to corporations, some kind of change in our judicial system, Federal and State, and the wholesale breaking up of combinations suspected of trying to raise prices and promote monopolies.

It would require a campaign book of a thousand pages to explain what that platform means. What are the combinations of capital that are trying to raise prices and how are they to be destroyed? How are taxes to be fairly divided between production and consumption, and how is the income tax to be graded so as to be oppressive to nobody? How are the people to recover all the franchises diverted from public to private uses, and what will they do with them when they get them? What sort of reorganization of the judicial system is to be made so as to remove the courts farther from the influence of the rich and render them more accessible to the poor, and how is it to be effected without excited appeals and revolutionary menaces?

The proposed platform is, in fact, out of the domain of reasonable argument. It is so vague and so suggestive of antagonism between rich and poor that it could not be argued calmly even by the coolest-headed of men simply because no two could ever agree as to the meaning of a single plank in it. It is about as wild a piece of demagogy as Bryan himself ever put forward. If that be the best Kentucky conservatism can offer, it might as well retire from politics and leave the Chicago platform undisturbed.

SOCIALISM IN GREAT BRITAIN.

COMMENTING upon the increase of socialism among the working classes of Great Britain, and the failure of the Liberal party to formulate a policy satisfactory to the people, the Newcastle Chronicle recently made use of a very striking comparison. It said: "The Unionist employers in Parliament who complacently cackle about the compensation act remind us of nothing so much as the Christmas goose which thinks it is chased for its feathers."

The implication is clear. The man who chases the Christmas goose is out for blood. He desires not a few feathers, but the whole bird. The British workingman is now pursuing the land owners and the capitalists not for compensation for injuries received at his work, nor for old age pensions, nor for any feathers of that kind, but for the nationalization of land and something like state socialism on a large, comprehensive scale.

Since Gladstone retired from its leadership the Liberal party in Great Britain has gone to pieces. It is now even more disorganized and demoralized than Democracy in America. It has no leader and no platform. The men who are highest in its councils disagree among themselves, and not one of them can rally a formidable following in the country. This collapse of Liberalism has given radicalism a chance to assert itself, and the evidences of its growth are becoming portentous.

The Chronicle says: "Politics, and especially popular feeling upon politics, are in a state of lethargy because the country is prosperous and the people as a whole are slothfully content and given more to vulgar pleasures than to the passionate ideals of the Chartist convention. But the next great economic crisis in this country, causing much popular distress and the reopening of the unemployed problem in a more serious form, will mean a rude disturbance in the air. It will probably mean socialism."

Whether this prediction is to be verified at the coming of the next commercial depression is dependent upon the ability of the Liberal leaders to put forth a policy sufficiently vigorous to draw the masses from radicalism into the Liberal ranks. Certainly when hard times come upon them the people will not remain sluggish and content under Tory rule. Some opposition party will carry the country and assume power, and it appears the socialists are quite ready to accept the responsibility. Clearly the British goose is not being chased for its feathers.

After the Samoan incident it is probable that the Emperor William will try to be good. He has trifled just once too often with Grandma Victoria, forgetful that the hand of that lady was ever on the international slipper. He knows better now. His experience in the back yard of nations with Uncle Sam and the "Widdy of Windsor" should last him a lifetime. He'll not forget it, at any rate, until he has recovered sufficiently from the correction to be able to sit upon that part of his anatomy due south of the imperial equator reddened by the impact of queenly footwear.

When we have beaten and crushed the Filipinos of Luzon we will not have to weep for more worlds to conquer. There are about a thousand islands in the Philippine group and it will be a long time before Othello's occupation there will be gone.

The formation of the proposed National Referendum party is not likely to do much more than afford every tinhorn reformer in the country an opportunity to blow himself and think he is beating the band.

The Jamaican revolt against the Government is likely to be hot stuff, for the island is full of rum and ginger.

An appropriate salutation for yesterday was, "How would you like to be the iceman?"

EDITORIAL VARIATIONS.

BY JOHN McNAUGHT.

John Fiske, a wise man, in the Boston sense of the term, and one whose fame has been noted at times even in our cosmopolitan city, has confided to the exclusive and almost secret society that reads the Atlantic Monthly his dogma on the mystery of evil. Taking as his text the familiar words: "Your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," he maintains that what we call evil is a force, or a condition, essential to the moral evolution of man. "The whole universe," he says, "is animated by a single principle of life, and whatever we see in it, whether to our half trained understanding and narrow experience it may seem to be good or bad, is an indispensable part of the stupendous scheme." It will be seen that while this relieves us from old-time anxieties by removing the devil from our horizon, it throws a heavy responsibility upon the original author of evolution.

In elaborating his argument Mr. Fiske maintains that we regard as evil the conditions from which we are emerging by the processes of evolution and esteem as good those to which we are tending. Thus he says: "As we survey the course of this wonderful evolution it begins to become manifest that moral evil is simply the characteristic of the lower state of living as looked at from the higher state." That means the more experience we have the more evil we know. The good of to-day is the curse of to-morrow. For example the people will at one time shout for a man, work for him, call him a statesman, vote for him and elect him Governor; and after trying him forty days in office will find him dealing out the worst brand of pernicious activity on record—but of course that illustration doesn't apply to California. It was borrowed from Kansas for the sake of euphony.

This philosophy is of some value to the world. It has all the merit of a bread poultice and will relieve the mental irritation caused by many of those minor evils of life which are more vexatious than t big ones. It is worth while applying it to some of the problems that have been fretting the country during the past week; and there is no better time for experimenting with the application than this balmy day of rest—for as this Sunday follows immediately after Easter it has no new bonnets to show, and therefore there is no fashionable necessity for going to church.

To many good souls that really merit a life of unalloyed comfort, one of the most distressing things of the week has been the amount of gorgeous, reckless rhetoric poured forth column after column in a rapt and almost adoring adulation of the matrimonial alliance between an heir of the house of Vanderbilt—brother-in-law of the house of Marlborough—with a daughter of the house of Fair. It has seemed to many people that the publication of this phosphorescent mass of "rotten stuff" about the vulgar ostentation of wealth was an evil—that it was something which pandered to a spirit of flunkyism among us, or served to feed a morbid appetite for gossip about the doings of the rich.

That, however, was not so. The great mass of people who read those daily columns of gush are not flunkies by any means. They are men and women whose minds are so harassed with desires for a dollar or a dress suit that wealth is t e one object of idolatry. A millionaire seems to them an ideal creature. They delight to read of golden plates, heaps of diamonds and splendid silks just as other people like to read of art and science and poetry, or to liste to music, but they are not toadies. They would shy a brick at a plutocrat if they had a chance.

Men and women whose lives are made up of incessant toil under sordid conditions, who are chronically impecunious, who long for a holiday to frolic in the sunshine or the gaslight, to wander by the seashore or to dance in a Nob Hill mansion, but who hardly ever have as much as a day of really unrestrained enjoyment in a year, turn with delight to stories of Dukes and Earls and millionaires, of stately palaces, ropes of pearls and exhaustless wealth by an inevitable law of their being, just as starving men dream of rich banquets by reason of the promptings of the empty stomach. To the human being tormented by a half-starved life there is a satisfaction in contemplating those who have everything. The feeling is not a vulgar flunkyism, but something of an ideal aspiration, akin to that which Shelley calls:

"The love of the moth for the star;
Of the night for the morrow;
The longing for something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow."

Nor was the ostentatious display of profuse extravagance in the ceremony to be wholly condemned. From a social point of view it is perhaps bad, since it tends to set up the corruptions of luxury in places where the refinements of culture should have an undisputed sway; but from an economic point of view the extravagance of the rich is to be commended. The sooner the fools among them are parted from their money the better it is for all concerned. It is, therefore, worth while to applaud them when to illumine festal night they burn money enough to make an aurora borealis.

What is good to men and women of one level of intellectual development is an evil to those of the next higher level. On the highest plane of life to-day are those who find delight in what has been attained for humanity by men of genius; on a lower stage are persons who are eager to learn all the little scandals and petty details of the lives of great men, and who are not satisfied until they have heard all the tales of the servants and read all the private letters and notes of the gifted ones; lower still are those whose admiration is for the sumptuosities of the rich; beneath them is the class that yearns to have a description of the underclothes of the millionaires and learn the size of their stockings. Finally we have the class that likes to read about murderers and to see pictures of the weapons with which the deeds were done. One of these classes is about as human as another, and if we could only supplement the church, the press and the schoolhouse with a wholesome whipping post we might do justice to them all without sentencing anybody to Hades.

Another source of irritation during the week has been the course of politics in Cleveland and Chicago. A pamphlet issued by the Good Government League of Cleveland states that one of the candidates for Mayor, McKisson, went into a ward populated largely by a poor class of Jew immigrants who cannot speak English, and informed them, through an interpreter, in the course of a campaign speech, that if they would vote for him he would, if elected Mayor of Cleveland, take steps to compel the French Government to release Dreyfus immediately and pay him damages for false imprisonment.

The Good Government League denounced the speech as an evil; as an illegitimate method of campaigning; as a fraud practiced upon the American voter. All the same, the League in that very pamphlet informed the voters in straight English, without an interpreter, that if their candidate should be elected Mayor he would break up the political machines, put an end to the spoils system, drive the corporations out of politics and make Cleveland a clean city. Now that was a bigger lie than the Dreyfus lie, but it will take a better po.itical expert than I am to determine which is on the higher stage of intellectual development.

Evil after all is largely a matter of taste. It will be conceded, of course, that some evils, like murder, or a breach of promise, are of such shocking bad taste that any one guilty of them ought to be hanged or shot, but that is no reason why we should fret over the majority of those incidents which show the depravity of our neighbors and prove them to be lower than ourselves. A broad, liberal toleration will save us from many an irritation. For example, the fact that the intelligence of San Francisco delights in The Call and is content with it is no reason why the fools should be denied their Examiner.

In elaborating his theory of the evolution of man Mr. Fiske says: "The physical differences between man and the ape are less important than the physical differences between African and South American apes. Zoologically man is simply one genus in the old world family of apes." That statement raises a curious question as to what would have been the condition of man to-day if he had developed from the American ape instead of the old world ape. If our primeval progenitor had been some gracile ape like the Dourocoulis Nyctipithecus (profanely called the owl-faced monkey) disporting an innocent life in the sun-lighted, flower-perfumed forests of this favored land, instead of a big, black beast roaring in the jungles of darkest Africa, is it not probable that by this time we would have reached such a degree of perfection that all of us would be cotillon leaders with a Greenway grace—and not a Supervisor in the bunch?

While the doctrine may be disputed in the East, it is none the less true that the farther West you go the more virtuous you are. A proof of it is to be found in the contrast between the conduct of the Western soldier in the Philippines and that of the Eastern soldier in Cuba, as depicted by themselves in private letters to friends at home. Here is a case in point, drawn from the news of the week. A volunteer writing from a Florida camp says:

"Five of the boys married Cuban wives and brought them home. They all have either a small lemon or orange grove, while one of the boys captured a dusky maiden who has a six-hundred-acre coffee plantation. Sixteen others married Cuban girls, but they drew blanks, and when the troops came home they left them to shuffle for themselves."

Reflect upon the morals of that conduct just long enough to fix in your mind the disloyalty of the Eastern braves to the girls they left behind them and then warm your heart with this extract from the letter of a soldier at the front in the Philippines:

"Our lady nurse was with us in the trenches that night. She sat right next to me, and every time I took a shot she had another cartridge ready for me. They shot closer than they ever did before and the bullets were just nipping over our heads."

Such a contrast as is afforded by these letters speaks for itself and needs no comment. All will admit it was shocking bad taste for the Eastern braves to forget the girls at home and go to investing in Cuban belles as if they were tickets in the Havana lottery—to be kept if they drew prizes and shuffled off if they did not. The conduct of the Western man, who took his nurse with him to the trenches and fought almost in her arms, is not only better than the Eastern practice by comparison, but is positively good—so very good indeed that one can imagine him pausing for a moment from his Filipino target practice, leaning over to his fair companion and whispering through the star-lit battle air, while the bullets whistled music: "Sweet nurse, if this be war, may we never have peace."

Mr. Fiske concludes his confidence by saying: "Thus we have arrived at the goal of my argument. * * * The mystery of evil remains a mystery still. * * * But assuredly its deep impress upon the human soul is the indispensable background against which shall be set hereafter the eternal joys of heaven." It is just as well to let it go at that.

On a Tour.

Rev. I. M. Atwood, D.D., editor of the Universalist and superintendent of Universalist churches, is making a tour of the United States, and will preach in Oakland Sunday, April 16. His journey includes the southern part of California. He is accompanied by Mrs. Atwood.

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Malice in Kansas.

An Atchison woman has appeared in a dress worn by her husband's first wife, and the indignant neighbors have started the story that she goes out to the cemetery and dances on the first wife's grave. —Kansas City Journal.

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IAN MACLAREN AS A PREACHER AND NOVELIST

It was an introduction worthy of California. The uniformed page boy of the Palace staggered into the parlor under the weight of a huge paper parcel. And little Mrs. Watson, Ian Maclaren's wife, received it in her lap, a wealth of glorious blossoms rolling out from the loosened cover. There were roses, carnations, lilies, lilacs and a dozen other glowing blooms, not forgetting the far-famed eschscholtzia, California's favorite flower.

"What a splendid welcome," exclaimed Mrs. Watson as she bent over the fragrant heap. "And there's no card either. Just imagine! Last night we plowed our way through twelve feet of snow and this morning we are in the land of sunshine and flowers. It's too wonderful."

Ian Maclaren, the novelist, sat at the table opposite and smiled pleasantly, not in too pronounced a manner, but with just that subdued grace characteristic of the cultured cleric. However, you must not confuse the Rev. Dr. John Watson of the Presbyterian church with Ian Maclaren, the writer of "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush," and many other famous Scotch stories of the "Kailyard School." The two men lead a kind of idealized Jekyll and Hyde existence. In the pulpit of his crowded church at Sefton Park, Liverpool, Dr. Watson is the earnest preacher, the skilled theologian; here, on his lecturing tour through the United States, he is the eloquent speaker, the genial man of the world, whose reputation is magnetic enough to draw crowds wherever he goes, even through snowstorms and blizzards.

"I am traveling now purely as a civilian, and not as a clergyman," he went on.

The doctor's dress indicates as much. He has dropped the clerical broadcloth for the loose, easy fitting tweed of the experienced traveler; and, as if to accentuate the change of costume, he has even gone so far as to don a red necktie, a color which sets at defiance all the traditions of the Scottish Kirk. Still, costume notwithstanding, his clean shaven face, his broad, thoughtful forehead, his keen dark eyes, half hidden under bushy eyebrows, mark him as one set apart for the service of the church. In fact, with his tall, massive frame, his firm step, his general air of one born to command, Dr. Watson, attired in suitable canonicals, would have made an ideal English Bishop. And that he is not on the high road to this dignity is not the fault of the Presbyterian church of Scotland.

"I have been tried twice before the theological court," he remarked, "on account of a religious work I wrote four years ago, 'The Mind of the Master.' They charged me with heresy because of the doctrines I expressed, but in each instance the charge failed. They have still the right to try me again, on the general merits of the case, but," he added with a grim smile, "I do not think they will."

"And what would have happened had they found you guilty?"

"I should have been divested of my orders, and of course expelled from my church."

"And then?"

"Why, then, it would have been the Church of England. I shall never abandon my religious vocation, and of all churches I lean most toward the Anglican.

"Now you must not imagine," continued the doctor, "that this prosecution had anything to do with my Scotch stories. If there is one thing more than another which I abominate, it is theology in fiction. Theology is a science and should be treated as a thing apart, in its proper place. That is why I always publish my religious writings under my own name, John Watson, while for my imaginative stories I use the nom de plume of Ian Maclaren. There are three different theologies in my tales, according to the beliefs of the characters whom I have portrayed.

"No, they are not taken from real life, my people of Drumtochty; that is a popular fallacy. They are composite photographs, built up, a bit here and a bit there. Probably there are in Scotland women like Kate Carnegie, or doctors like McClure and Davidson; but there are none which are identical in every detail. I consider that no novelist has ever made a success who actually copied from real life. Why, you cut out at once all the imaginative and creative element. That was Disraeli's great fault. He merely described living individuals, instead of creating ideals of his own. And in recent years there have been cases of the same kind, though I would rather not speak of my contemporaries in fiction. Not to mention the bad taste of the thing, we may draw an analogy from art. The difference between a real and created character is exactly that between a photograph and an artistic sketch. The one merely shows us things just as they are; the other vivifies them, invests them with an atmosphere of romance; gives them an air of fascination.

"Look at Kipling's people, created by his wonderful genius. They are absolutely lifelike; yet, I venture to say, not one of them is an actual copy from real existence. The master hand has touched them and they breathe. Why, I have been so closely identified with some of my characters that only the other day, in the East, a university chancellor introduced me to the audience as Mrs. Carnegie's husband. And they have asked me many times to write a novel about the subsequent life of this lady and her husband. But I do not think I shall; my forte is the short story."

In planning his prospective work Ian Maclaren frankly admits the decadence of what adverse critics term the "kailyard school" of fiction. "There has been enough written about the subject," he said. "Barrie and Crockett and myself, not to mention numerous other writers, have quite exhausted it. I shall turn my attention to other matters. In my last volume 'Afterward' there were only two Scotch stories; all the rest were English. And now that I have finished the annals of Drumtochty, there is nothing left to write about. By the way, speaking of imaginary names, I may mention a curious fact. I invented the name of Drumtochty, which was really my first parish of Logie Almond, and felt quite proud of the creation. To my surprise, I found later that there was actually a district in Scotland of the same name, and that many people had visited the neighborhood in order to locate the scene of my stories."

The heroism of self-abnegation is to be the theme of Maclaren's future work, and it is more than probable that he will take as the theater of his stories the great commercial center of Liverpool, where his parochial interests lie. "I am becoming more and more convinced," he remarks, "that in the world of commerce there are more opportunities for sacrifice and self-abnegation than in professional life. Why, look at the heroism of some of these men of business, at the risks they daily run, at the burdens which they uncomplainingly bear on their shoulders. There is romance in commerce. Daily in the course of my parochial duties I have met with unexampled instances of devotion, of men and women whose lives have been brightened by their care for others. It is an opportunity which has been little utilized by the novelist, and I propose to seize it."

Truly, this weary world will not complain if Ian Maclaren's magic pen can turn from Scottish themes and weave romance into the prosaic, money-grubbing life of busy Liverpool.

J. E. ROSE-SOLEY.