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THE MAN WITH THE MAIL.

The man with the mail—God bless him—
Comes in all sorts of weather;
Letters and papers, books and cards,
All in his bag together:
He will come and go in the rain and snow,
On his beat you will ever find him,
Leaving his missives of weal and woe
In the varied homes behind him.

Tender epistles of youthful love,
Uttered in softest breath,
And tear-stained tales of the passing away
Of the loving and loved in death;
Letters of friendship from far away,
And greetings from neighbors near;
Some that beguile the hour with a smile,
And some that educe a tear.

Sad, sad news and glad, glad news,
In the sunshine and the snow,
The faithful mailman brings to me,
And yet he does not know;
It may be a message to lift the soul
To a nobler, truer part,
Or a tender woman may read and give
The wail of a broken heart.

Pollock Hutchinson, in Chicago Record.

THE CHEVALIER D'AURIAC

A STORY OF TWO YEARS.

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SYNOPSIS.

Chapter I—D'Auriac, commanding outpost where scene is laid tells the story. De Gomeron has been appointed by Gen. de Rone to examine into a charge made against him. Nicholas, a sergeant, brings in two prisoners, a man and a woman, who are from the king's camp at Le Pere. D'Auriac, angered by insulting manner of de Gomeron toward the woman, strikes him. A duel follows, and during the commotion the prisoners escape. De Rone happens on the disorderly scene, and d'Auriac, upon giving his parole not to attempt escape, hears this remarkable sentence: "To-morrow....you must die on the field. Win or lose, if I catch you at the close of the day, I will hang you as high as Haman."

Chapter II—D'Auriac next morning takes his place as usual on de Rone's staff. In the course of his ride over the field he saves the life of Nicholas, the sergeant, who, a victim of de Gomeron's malice, is found in imminent danger of almost instant death.

Chapter III—After the battle in which King Henry utterly routs de Rone's forces, d'Auriac, lying severely wounded, sees the forms of a man and woman moving under cover of the night among the dead and wounded. They find a golden collar on de Leyva's corpse, and Babette stabs Mauginot (her partner) to gain possession of the prize. After this hideous scene Henry with a retinue, among whom is the fair prisoner who had escaped from the hand of de Gomeron, rides over the field.

Chapter IV—D'Auriac in the hospital of Ste. Genevieve discovers his unknown friend is the heiress of Bidache. She visits him daily, and when he is well enough is taken to her Normandy chateau. Here he learns from Maitre Palin, the madame's chaplain, that the king is about to force upon the woman a very distasteful marriage with M. d'Ayen. With Jacques, his steward, d'Auriac leaves for the avowed purpose of preventing their marriage.

Chapter V—D'Auriac's horse castst a shoe. This causes a delay at village of Ezy, where he comes upon Nicholas, his old sergeant, who says de Gomeron is in the neighborhood with the king's commission, and that he (Nicholas) has evidence of treason brewing among de Gomeron and certain associates against the king.

Chapter VI—Led by Nicholas, d'Auriac goes by night to where de Gomeron is staying. They hear something of the outline of a plot against the king. Burning with revenge, Nicholas fires through the window at de Gomeron, but misses his mark.

Chapter VII—The two men fly for their lives, and think themselves almost beyond pursuit when they come suddenly face to face with Biron, one of the traitors to the king, whom d'Auriac cuts down, and with de Gomeron, who makes short work of Nicholas. D'Auriac escapes.

Chapter VIII—He comes to Rouvres where Jacques, by previous arrangement, had prepared to have him received.

Chapter IX—D'Auriac reaches Paris, and is struck by the aspect of gloom the city wears.

CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED.

"Pardieu, monsieur," exclaimed Jacques, as we turned up the Rue de la Harpe, hard by the hotel de Cluny, "one would think the king himself were dead, these gentry pull such long faces." My servant's chance observation sent a sudden shock through me. What if Henry was dead! What if I had got only one thread of the plot that was weaving at Anet? I did not answer Jacques, but observing a Capuchin priest advancing in my direction, I reined in Couronne, and giving him the day, asked what it was that had befallen the city. He looked up at me in a slight surprise, and then observing my travel-stained appearance, replied:

"I see you are a stranger, sir; but have you not heard the news?—it should have gone far by this."

"I have not, as you see—but what is it? Surely the king is not dead?"

"God forbid," he answered, "no—not the king, but she who in a few weeks would have been the queen of France."

"The duchess de Beaufort."

"Exactly."

"I knew that; but you don't mean to say that the city is in mourning for the mistress of the king."

"No, my son—not for the mistress of the king, as you call her, but for the open hand and the generous heart, for the kindly soul that never turned from suffering or from sorrow—for Magdalen bountiful, and, let us hope, Magdalen repentant."

Palin's directions were clear, and after crossing the pont St. Michel, a wooden bridge, we kept to the south of Ste Chapelle, and then, after many a twist and turn, found ourselves in the Rue des Deux Mondes, before the doors of Pantin's house.

The master himself answered my knock and stood in the doorway, a small, wizened figure, looking at us cautiously from gray eyes, shadowed by bushy white brows.

"Good day, monsieur. What is it I can do for you?"

"You are Maitre Pantin?"

"At your service."

"And I am the Chevalier d'Auriac. I have come to Paris from Bidache on business and need a lodging. Maitre Palin has recommended me to you."

"Enough, monsieur le chevalier. My friend Palin's name is sufficient, and I have need of clients, for the house is empty. If monsieur's servant will lead the horses through that lane there he will find an entrance to the stables—and will monsieur step in and take a seat whilst I summon my wife—Annette! Annette!"

I limped in and sat down, escorted by expressions of compassion from Pantin, who mingled these with shouts for Annette. In a little time Mme. Pantin appeared, and never have I seen so great a resemblance between husband and wife as between these two. There was the same small, shrivelled figure, the same clear-cut features, the same white eyebrows standing out prominently over the same gray eyes, their height, walk and tone of voice even were almost the same. Madame, however, had an eye to business, which her husband, although I understood him to be a notary, had not discovered to me, and whilst he went off to see, as he said, to the arrangements for the horses, Mme. Annette struck a bargain with me for my lodging, which I closed with at once, as I was in sufficient funds to be a little extravagant. This matter being arranged by my instant agreement to her terms, she showed me to my rooms, which were on the second floor, and commanded a good view of the river fare, and, pocketing a week's rental in advance, the old lady retired, after recommending me to an ordinary where the food was excellent and the Frontignac old.

I spent the remainder of the day doing nothing, going forth but to sup quietly at the Two Ecus, which I found fully upheld the good name Mme. Pantin had given it, and returning early to my rooms.

Jacques came in presently and lit the tall candles that stood in the grotesque bronze holders that projected from the wall, and then drawing the curtains, inquired if I needed his services further that night.

"I don't think so, Jacques, but stay!"

"Monsieur."

"How do we stand?"

"O, well enough, monsieur. Better really than for a long time. We have three horses and their equipment, although one of monsieur's pistols is broken, and a full 150 crowns."

"A perfect fortune—are you sure of the crowns?"

"As I am of being here, monsieur."

"Well, then, there is something I want you to do, and attend with both ears."

"Monsieur."

"I want you to take the two horses we got at Evreux and 50 crowns, and go back to Ezy. Keep ten crowns for yourself, and give 40 to the smith and his daughter, and take them with you to Auriac. The forester's lodge is vacant; let them live there, or, if they like, there is room enough in the chateau. I will give you a letter to Bozon. He wants help, and these people will be of service to him. After you have done this sell one of the horses—you may keep the proceeds—and come back to me. If I am not here you will get certain news of me, and can easily find me out—you follow."

"Exactly."

"Then, when will you be prepared to start?"

"As soon as monsieur le chevalier is suited with another man as faithful as I."

"Eh?"

"Sangdieu! monsieur, I shall never forget what Pere Michel and the old steward, Bozon, said when I came home last without you. I believe if I were to do so again the good cure would excommunicate me, and Maitre Bozon would have me flung into the bay to follow. If I were to go back and leave you alone in Paris, anything might happen. No! No! My fathers have served Auriac for 200 years, and it shall never be said that Jacques Bisson left the last of the old race to die alone, never."

"My friend, you are mad; who the devil talks of dying?"

"Monsieur, I am not such a fool as perhaps I look. Do I not understand

THE MASTER HIMSELF ANSWERED MY KNOCK.

that monsieur has an affair on hand which has more to do with a rapier than a ribbon? If not, why the night ride, why the broken pistol and the blood-stained saddle of Couronne? If monsieur had come to Paris in the ordinary way we would have been at court, flittering it as gayly as the rest, and cocking our bonnets with the best of them, instead of hiding here like a fox in his lair."

"Very well, Jacques; but remember if I get other temporary help that you approve of you will have to go."

"In that case, monsieur, it is different."

"Then it must be your business to see to this, and now good night."

"Good night, monsieur," and he took himself off.

I had made up my mind to lay my information before Sully. That he was in Paris I knew, having obtained the information from Pantin, and it was my intention to repair the next day to the hotel de Bethune, and tell the minister all. The night was one of those in which sleep would not come, not because the place was a strange one. I was too old a campaigner to lose rest because the same feather pillow was not under my head every night; but because my thoughts kept me awake. What these were I have already described, and they were in force sufficient to banish all sleep until the small hours were well on, and I at last dropped off, with the solemn notes of the Bourdon ringing in my ears.

It was about ten o'clock the next morning that I mounted Couronne, and followed by Jacques, well armed, took my way toward the hotel de Bethune.

Sully had just received the master generalship of the ordnance, and at his door was a guard of the regiment of La Ferte. I knew the blue uniforms with the white sashes well, and they had fought like fiends at Fontaine, Francaise and Ham. The officer on guard very civilly told me that the minister did not receive that day, but on my insisting and pointing out that my business was of the utmost importance, he gave way with a shrug of his shoulders. "Go on, M. le Chevalier, but I can tell you it is of no use; however, that is a business you must settle with Ivoy, the duke's secretary."

I thanked him and, dismounting and flinging the reins to Jacques, passed up the courtyard and up the stone steps to the entrance door. Here I was met by the same statement that Sully was unable to receive to-day, but, on my insisting, the secretary Ivoy appeared and asked me my name and business.

"I have given my name twice already, monsieur," I answered. "I am the Chevalier d'Auriac, and as for my business it is of vital import, and is for monseigneur's ear alone—you will therefore excuse me if I decline to mention it to you."

Ivoy bowed. "It will come to me in its own good time, monsieur. Will you be seated. I will deliver your message to the duke, but I am afraid it will be of little use."

"I take the risk, M. d'Ivoy."

"But not the rating, chevalier," and the secretary with a half smile on his face, went out and left me to myself. In a few minutes he returned.

"The duke will see you, monsieur—this way please."

"Pardieu!" I muttered to myself as I followed Ivoy, "he keeps as much state as if he were the chancellor himself. However, I have a relish for monseigneur's soup."

Ivoy led the way up a winding staircase of oak, so old that it was black as ebony and polished as glass. At the end of this was a landing, where a couple of lackeys were lounging on a bench before a closed door. They sprang up at our approach, and Ivoy tapped gently at the door.

"Come in," was the answer, given in a cold voice, and the next moment we were in the room.

"M. le Chevalier d'Auriac," and Ivoy had presented me.

Sully inclined his head frigidly to my bow, and then motioned to Ivoy to retire. When we were alone he turned to me with a brief "Well?"

"I have information of the utmost importance which I wish to lay before you."

"I hear that ten times a day from people. Will your story take long to tell?"

"That depends."

"Then for your important news, monsieur. It must be very important to have brought you here."

"I do not understand."

He looked at me, a keen inquiry in his glance. "You do not understand?" he said.

"Indeed no, monseigneur."

"Hum! you are either deeper than I take you to be or a born fool. Look you, are you not Alban de Breuil, Sieur d'Auriac, who was lately in arms in the service of Spain against France as a rebel and a traitor?"

"I was on the side of the League."

"Monsieur, the League died at Ivry."

"But not for us."

He made an impatient gesture. "We won't discuss that. Are you not the man I refer to—say yes or no."

"I am d'Auriac—there is no other of my name; but no more a rebel or traitor than Messieurs de Guise, de Mayenne, and others. The king's peace has pardoned us all. Why should I fear to come to you? I have come to do you a service, or rather the king a service."

"Thank you. May I ask if you did not receive a warning at La Fere and another at Bidache?"

"From M. d'Ayen—yes, monseigneur. I refuse to believe what I heard."

"And yet your name heads a list of half a dozen whom the king's peace does not touch. One of my reasons for receiving you was to have you arrested."

"It is a high honor, all this bother about a poor gentleman of Normandy, when Guise, de Mayenne, Epernon and others keep their skins whole."

"You have flown your hawk at too high a quarry, monsieur."

"Then that painted ape, d'Ayen, told a true tale," I burst out, in uncontrollable anger. "Monseigneur, do what you will to me. Remember that you help to the eternal dishonor of the king."

The words hit him, and the blood flushed darkly under the pale olive of the man's cheek.

"Monsieur, you forget yourself."

"It is not I, but you who do so. You who forget that your name is Bethune. Yes, touch that bell. I make no resistance. I presume it will be the chatelet."

His hand, half stretched toward the button of the call bell before him suddenly stayed itself.

"Were my temper as hasty as your tongue, monsieur, it would have been the chatelet in half an hour."

"Better that—" I began, but he interrupted me with a quick wave of his hand.

"M. d'Auriac, a time will come when you will have reason to regret the words you have uttered, if not to regret, I mean regret them in the place you have mentioned, but in your heart. In this business the honor of Bethune as well as the honor of the king is at stake. Do you think I am likely to throw my hazard like an infant?"

I was silent; but a dim ray of hope flickered up in my heart as I looked at the man before me, and felt, I know not why, in the glance of his eye, in the tone of his voice, in his very gestures, that here was one who had conquered himself, and knew how to rule.

"Now, sir," he went on, the animation in his tone dropping to a cold and frigid note, "proceed with your tale."

It was a thing easier ordered than done; but I managed it somehow, trying to be as brief as possible, without missing a point. Sully listened without a movement of his stern features, only his eyes seemed to harden like crystal as I spoke of Biron and Zamet. When I told what I heard of the death of Mme. de Beaufort, he turned his head to the open window and kept it thus until I ended. When he looked back again at me, however, there was not a trace of emotion in his features, and his voice was as cold and measured as ever as he asked: "And your reward for this news, chevalier?"

"Is not to be measured in pistoles, monseigneur."

"I see—and is this all?"

His tone chilled me. "It is all—no," and with a sudden thought, "give me 20 men, and in a week I put the traitors in your hands."

He fairly laughed out: "Corboeuf! M. le Chevalier, do you want to set France ablaze?"

"It seems, monseigneur, that the torch is held at Anet," I answered, a little sulkily.

"But not lighted yet—leave the dealing with that to me. And, monsieur, the king is at Fontainbleau, and for a month nothing can be done. And see here, monsieur, I can do nothing for you—you follow. At the end of a month go and see the king; tell him your story, and, if he believes you, claim your reward. I will go so far as to promise that you will be received."

All the little hope I had begun to gather fluttered away at these words like a scrap of paper cast in the wind. "Monseigneur," I said, and my voice sounded strangely even to my ears, "in a month it will be too late."

"Leave that to me," he answered.

"I thank you, monseigneur, but there is one little favor I ask."

"And that is?"

"The king's peace until I see the king."

"You would be safer in the chatelet, I assure you, but as you wish—stay; there is one thing. Not a word of your interview with me—even to the king."

My hopes rose again. "On my faith as a gentleman I will not mention it."

As I finished he struck his bell sharply twice, and Ivoy entered.

"Ivoy, do me the favor to conduct M. d'Auriac to the gates yourself, and impress upon him the necessity of keeping to his lodging. The air of Paris is unhealthy at present. Good day, monsieur."

Ivoy bowed with a slight upraising of his eyebrows, and we passed out. Going down the stairway, he said to me with a smile: "I see you dine at home to-day, chevalier."

"At the Two Ecus," I answered, pretending not to understand his allusion, and he chuckled low to himself. At the gates I observed that the guards were doubled, and a whispered word passed between Ivoy and the officer in command. But of this also I took no notice, and wishing them the day, rode back as I came.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

After the Satiagie.

Minister—Well, Bobby, what do you want to be when you grow up?

Bobby (suffering from parental discipline)—An orphan.—Boston Traveler.

FOR THE DRUMMERS.

Dr. Talmage Preaches to the Army of Commercial Travelers.

Cautions Them to Start Right on Their Journeys—Condemns Work on the Sabbath—The Duty of Employers.

In this discourse Dr. Talmage gives words of good cheer to commercial travelers and tells of their safeguards and their opportunities; text, Nahum 2:4, "The chariots shall rage in the streets; they shall justle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

It has been found out that many of the arts and discoveries which we supposed were peculiar to our own age are merely the restoration of the arts and discoveries of thousands of years ago. I suppose that the past centuries have forgotten more than the present century knows. It seems to me that they must have known thousands of years ago, in the days of Nineveh, of the uses of steam and its application to swift travel. In my text I hear the rush of the rail train, the clang of the wheels and the jamming of the car couplings. "The chariots shall rage in the streets; they shall justle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

Have you ever taken your position in the night far away from a depot along the track waiting to see the rail train come at full speed? At first you heard in the distance a rumbling like the coming of a storm; then you saw the flash of the headlight of the locomotive as it turned the curve; then you saw the wilder glare of the fiery eye of the train as it came plunging toward you; then you heard the shriek of the whistle that frenzied all the echoes; then you saw the hurricane dash of cinders; then you felt the jar of the passing earthquake and you saw the shot thunderbolt of the express train. Well, it seems that we can hear the passing of a midnight express train in my text. "The chariots shall rage in the streets; they shall justle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

I halt the train long enough to get on board, and I go through the cars, and I find three-fourths of the passengers are commercial travelers. They are a folk peculiar to themselves, easily recognized, at home on all the trains, not startled by the sudden dropping of the brakes, familiar with all the railroad signals, can tell you what is the next station, how long the train will stop, what place the passengers take luncheon at, can give you information on almost any subject, are cosmopolitan, at home everywhere from Halifax to San Francisco. They are on the eight o'clock morning train, on the noon train, on the midnight train. You take a berth in a sleeping car, and either above you or beneath you is one of these gentlemen. There are 100,000 professed commercial travelers in the United States, but 500,000 would not include all those who are sometimes engaged in this occupation. There are hundreds and millions of the rail trains. They have their official newspaper organ. They have their mutual benefit association, about 4,000 names on the rolls, and have already distributed more than $200,000 among the families of deceased members. They are ubiquitous, unique and tremendous for good or evil. All the tendencies of merchandise are toward their multiplication. The house that stands back on its dignity and waits for customers to come instead of going to seek bargain makers will have more and more unsalable goods on the shelf and will gradually lose its control of the markets, while the great, enterprising and successful houses will have their agents on all the trains, and "their chariots will rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

I think commercial travelers can stand a sermon of warm-hearted sympathy. If you have any words of good cheer for them, you had better utter them. If you have any good, honest prayers in their behalf, they will be greatly obliged to you. I never knew a man yet who did not like to be prayed for. I never knew a man yet that did not like to be helped. It seems to me this sermon is timely. At this season of the year there are tens of thousands of men going out to gather the spring trade. The months of February and March in all our commercial establishments are very busy months. In a few days our national perplexities will be settled, and then look out for the brightest ten years of national prosperity which this country has ever witnessed. All our astute commercial men feel that we are standing at the opening gate of wonderful prosperity. Let the manufacturers put the bands on their wheels, and the merchants open a new set of account books in place of those filled with long columns of bad debts. Let us start on a new commercial campaign. Let us drop the old tune of "Naomi," and take up "Ariel" or "Antioch."

Now you, the commercial traveler, have received orders from the head men of the firm that you are to start on a long excursion. You have your patterns all assorted and prepared. You have them put up in bundles or cases and marked. You have full instructions as to prices. You know on what prices you may retreat somewhat. You have your valise or trunk, or both, packed. If I were a stranger, I would have no right to look into that valise, but as I am your brother, I will take the liberty. I look into the valise, and I congratulate you on all these comfortable articles of apparel. The seasons are so changeable you have not taken a single precaution too many. Some night you will get out in the snow bank and have to walk three or four miles until you get to the railroad station, and you will want all these comforts and conveniences. But will you excuse me if I make a suggestion or two about this valise? You say: "Certainly; as we are having a plain, frank talk I will not be offended at any honorable suggestion."

Put in among your baggage some carefully-selected, wholesome reading. Let it be history, or a poem, or a book of pure science, or something that will give you information in regard to your line of business. Then add to that a Bible in round, beautiful type—small type is bad for the eyes anywhere, but peculiarly killing in the jolt of a rail train. Put your railroad guide and your Bible side by side—the one to show you the route through this world and the other to show you the route to the next world. "Oh," you say, "that is superfluous, for now in all the hotels, in the parlor, you will find a Bible, and in nearly all the rooms of the guests you will find one!" But, my brother, that is not your Bible. You want your own hat, your own coat, your own blanket, your own Bible. "But," you say, "I am not a Christian, and you ought not to expect me to carry a Bible." My brother, a great many people are not Christians who carry a Bible. Besides that, before you get home you might become a Christian, and you would feel awkward without a copy. Besides that, you might get bad news from home. I see you with trembling hand opening the telegram, saying: "George is dying," or "Fannie is dead; come home!" Oh, as you sit in the train, stunned with the calamity, going home, you will have no taste for fine scenery, or for conversation, and yet you must keep your thoughts employed or you will go stark mad. Then you will want a Bible whether you read it or not. It will be a comfort to have it near you—that book full of promises which have comforted other people in like calamity. Whether you study the promises or not you will want that Book near you. Am I not wise when I say put in the Bible?

Now, you are all ready to start. You have your valise in the right hand and you have your blanket and shawl strap in the left hand. Good-by! May you have a prosperous journey, large sales, great percentages. Oh, there is one thing I forgot to ask you about—what train are you going to take? "Well," you say, "I will take the five o'clock Sunday afternoon train." Why? "Oh," you say, "I shall save a day by that, and on Monday morning I will be in the distant city in the commercial establishment by the time the merchants come down!" My brother, you are starting wrong. If you clip off something from the Lord's day, the Lord will clip off something from your lifetime successes. Sabbath breaking pays no better for this world than it pays for the next.

Young man, the dollar that you earn on the Sabbath is a red-hot dollar, and if you put it into a bag with 5,000 honest dollars that red-hot dollar will burn a hole through the bottom of the bag and let out all the 5,000 honest dollars with it.

But I see you change your mind, and you are going on Monday morning, and I see you take the train—Pennsylvania, or the Baltimore & Ohio, or the Hudson River, or the Erie, or the Harlem, or the New Haven train. For a few weeks now you will pass half of your time in the rail train. How are you going to occupy the time? Open the valise and take out a book and begin to read. Magnificent opportunities have our commercial travelers for gaining information above all other clerks or merchants. The best place in the world to study is a rail train. I know it by experience. Do not do as some commercial travelers do—as many of them do, as most of them do—sit reading the same newspaper over and over again and all the advertisements through and through, then sit for two or three hours calculating the profits they expect to make, then spending two or three hours looking listlessly out of the window, then spending three or four hours in the smoking car, the nastiest place in Christendom, talking with men who do not know as much as you do. Instead of that, call William Shakespeare, the dramatist, and John Ruskin, the dramatist, and Tennyson, the poet, and Bancroft and Macaulay, the historians, and Ezekiel and Paul, the inspired men of God, and ask them to sit with you and talk with you, as they will if you ask them. I hear you say: "I do wish I could get out of the business of commercial traveling. I don't like it." My brother, why don't you read yourself out? Give me a young man of ordinary intellect and good eyesight, and let him devote to valuable reading the time not actually occupied in commercial errand, and in six years he will be qualified for any position for which he is ambitious.

Be ashamed to sell foreign fabrics or fruits unless you know something about the looms that wove them or the vineyards that grew them. Understand all about the laws that control commercial life, about banking, about tariffs, about markets, about navigation, about foreign people—their characteristics and their political revolutions as they affect ours; about the harvests of Russia, the vineyards of Italy, the teafields of China. Learn about the great commercial centers of Carthage and Assyria and Phoenicia. Read all about the Medici of Florence, mighty in trade, mightier in philanthropies. You belong to the royal family of merchants. Be worthy of that royal family. Oh, take my advice and turn the years of weariness into years of luxury. Take those hours you spend at the depot waiting for the delayed train and make them Pisgah heights from which you can view the promised land. When you are waiting for the train hour after hour in the depot, do not spend your time reading the sewing machine advertisements and looking up the time tables of routes you will never take, going the twentieth time to the door to see whether the train is coming, bothering the ticket agent and telegraph operator with questions which you ask merely because you want to pass away the time. But rather summon up the great essayists and philosophers and story tellers and thinkers of the ages and have them entertain you.

But you have come now near the end of your railroad travel. I can tell by the motion of the car that they are pulling the patent brakes down. The engineer rings the bell at the crossing. The train stops. "All out!" cries the conductor. You dismount from the train. You reach the hotel. The landlord is glad to see you—very glad! He stretches out his hand across the registry book with all the disinterested warmth of a brother! You are assigned an apartment. In that uninviting apartment you stay only long enough to make yourself presentable. You descend then into the reading-room, and there you find the commercial travelers sitting around a long table with a great elevation in the center covered with advertisements, while there are inkstands sunken in the bed of the table, and scattered all around rusty steel pens and patches of blotting paper. Of course you will not stay there. You saunter out among the merchants. You present your letters of introduction and authority. You begin business. Now, let me say, there are two or three things you ought to remember. First, that all the trade you get by the practice of "treating" will not stick. If you cannot get custom except by tipping a wine glass with somebody, you had better not get his custom. An old commercial traveler gives as his experience that trade got by "treating" always damages the house that gets it in one way or the other.

Again, I charge you, tell the whole truth about anything you sell. Lying commercial travelers will precede you. Lying commercial travelers will come right after you into the same store. Do not let their unfair competition tempt you from the straight line. It is an awful bargain that a man makes when he sells his goods and his soul at the same time. A young man in one of the stores of New York was selling some silks. He was binding them up when he said to the lady customer: "It is my duty to show you that there is a fracture in that silk." She looked at it and rejected the goods. The head man of the firm, hearing of it, wrote to the father of the young man in the country, saying: "Come and take your son away. He will never make a merchant." The father came in agitation, wondering what his boy had been doing, and the head man of the firm said: "Why, your son stood here at this counter and pointed out a fracture in the silk, and of course the lady wouldn't take it. We are not responsible for the ignorance of customers. Customers must look out for themselves, and we look out for ourselves. Your son will never make a merchant." "Is that all?" said the father. "Ah! I am prouder of my boy than I ever was. John, get your hat and come home."

But it is almost night, and you go back to the hotel. Now comes the mighty tug for the commercial traveler. Tell me where he spends his evenings, and I will tell you where he will spend eternity, and I will tell you what will be his worldly prospects. There is an abundance of choice. There is your room with the books. There are the Young Men's Christian association rooms. There are the week night services of the Christian churches. There is the gambling saloon. There is the theater. There is the house of infamy. Plenty of places to go to. But which, O immortal man, which? O God, which? "Well," you say, "I guess I will—I guess I will go to the theater." Do you think the tarrying in that place until 11 o'clock at night will improve your bodily health or your financial prospects or your eternal fortune? No man ever found the path to usefulness or honor or happiness or commercial success or Heaven through the American theater. "Well," you say, "I guess, then, I will go to—I guess I will go to the gambling saloon." You will first go to look. Then you will go to play. You will make $100, you will make $500, you will make $1,000, you will make $1,500—then you will lose all. Then you will borrow some money so as to start anew. You will make $50, you will make $200, you will make $600—then you will lose all. These wretches of the gambling saloon know how to tempt you. But mark this—all gamblers die poor. They may make fortunes—great fortunes—but they lose them.

"Well," you say, "if I can't go to the theater, and if I can't go to the gambling saloon, then I guess—I guess I will go to the house of infamy." Commercial travelers have told me that in the letter box at the hotel within one hour after their arrival they have had letters of evil solicitation in that direction. It is far away from home. Nobody will know it. Commercial travelers have sometimes gone in that evil path. Why not you? Halt! There are other gates of ruin through which a man may go and yet come out, but that gate has a spring lock which snaps him in forever. He who goes there is damned already. He may seem to be comparatively free for a little while, but he is only on the limits, and the satanic police have their eyes upon him to bring him in at any moment.

The hot curse of God is on that crime, and because of it there are men whose heaven was blotted out ten years ago There is no danger that they be lost They are lost now. I look through their glaring eyeballs down into the lowest cavern of hell! Oh, destroyed spirit, why comest thou in here to-day? Dost think I have the power to break open the iron doors of the dungeons of the damned? There is a passage in Proverbs I somewhat hesitate to read, but I do not hesitate long. "At the window of my house I looked through my casement and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strikes through his liver."

But now the question is still open. Where will you spend your evening? Oh, commercial travelers, how much will you give me to put you on the right track? Without charging you a farthing I will prescribe for you a plan which will save you for this world and the next if you will take it. Go before you leave home to the Young Men's Christian association of the city where you live. Get from them letters of introduction. Carry them out to the towns and cities where you go. If there be no association in the place you visit, then present them at the door of Christian churches and hand them over to the pastors. Be not slow to arise in the devotional meeting and say: "I am a commercial traveler. I am far away from home, and I come in here to-night to seek Christian society." The best houses and the highest style of amusement will open before you, and instead of your being dependent upon the leprous crew who hang around the hotels, wanting to show you all the slums of the city on the one condition that you will pay their expenses, you will get the benediction of God in every town you visit. Remember this, that whatever place you visit bad influences will seek you out. Good influences you must seek out.

O commercial travelers, I pray for you the all sustaining grace of God! There are two kinds of days when you are especially in need of Divine grace. The one, the day when you have no success—when you fail to make a sale, and you are very much disappointed, and you go back to your hotel discomfited. That night you will be tempted to go to strong drink and rush into bad surroundings. The other day when you will especially need Divine grace will be when you have a day of great success and the devil tells you you must go and celebrate that success. Then you will want the grace of God to restrain you from rollicking indulgences. Yes, there will be a third day when you will need to be Christians, and that will be the last day of your life. I do not know where you will spend it. Perhaps in your house, more probably in a rail car, or a steamer, or the strange hotel. I see you on your last commercial errand. You have bidden good-by to the family at home for the last time. The train of your earthly existence is nearing the depot of the grave. The brakes are falling. The bell rings at the terminus. The train stops. All out for eternity. Show your ticket now for getting into the gates of the shining city—the red ticket washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Who It Was.

"Old Boreas is here!" exclaimed Mr. Ricketts, as he entered the sitting-room, rubbing his hands.

"Oh, dear," sighed Mrs. Ricketts, "why did you bring somebody home that I never heard of before?"—Detroit Journal.

Recollections.

Mrs. Weeperly—Yes, we pay spot cash for everything.

Mrs. Whipperly—Ah! I often speak to my husband about the time when we had to.—Puck.

Satisfied.

His Wife—I hope this cook will stay.

The Suburbanite—So do I. She seems to be an easy boss.—N. Y. Journal.

STEP BACKWARD

The American Troops Retire From Guadaloupe Church.

The Advancing Insurgents Burn the Edifice—Gens. Pelar and Montenegro Conducting the Work of the Filipinos. Concentrating East of Manila.

MANILA, Feb. 20—5:33 p. m.—The heat was very oppressive Friday, and the troops, especially those who are compelled to work in the open, have been affected. It will probably be warmer from now on until the rainy season.

The rebels have been concentrating south of the Pasig river, in front of Brig. Gen. Ovenshine's lines, on the right, all day long. The country in the vicinity is a particularly thick jungle, extending for miles. The scouts report that the rebels are apparently coming from Laguna and Cavite provinces. The Americans are strongly intrenched from the beach to the Pasig.

MANILA, Feb. 20.—The California volunteers abandoned Guadalupe church at 5 o'clock Sunday morning, which has since been set on fire, and retired to San Pedro Macati. The rebels still hold the country in the vicinity of Guadalupe, Pasig and Patero, despite the efforts of the gunboats to dislodge them from the jungle on both sides of the river.

The heat is intense and is increasing perceptibly daily. Under present conditions it is impossible to provide shade for the troops in certain parts of the line, particularly McArthur's division. King's brigade is also exposed from San Pedro Macati to Culiculi, where it joins Ovenshine's brigade.

FOUR ASPHYXIATED BY GAS.

Mrs. Charles Fahrenkamp, Her Two Children and an Unknown Woman Found Dead in Their House in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 20.—Mrs. Chas. Fahrenkamp, aged 33; her two children, Florence and William, aged respectively 10 and 9 years, and an unknown woman, aged 35 years, were found dead Sunday in a room in Mrs. Fahrenkamp's home, 1416 North Fifty-second street. The gas was turned on and life had apparently been extinct for several days. Scattered about the first floor were remnants of cigars and cigarettes and empty beer and whisky bottles. The bodies were found by a next door neighbor who had forced an entrance to the house. Mrs. Fahrenkamp was lying on the floor and her daughter nearby. The unknown woman and the boy were in bed. The last heard from the inmates of the house was on Thursday night, when the piano was kept playing until a late hour. On Friday morning Mrs. Wilson, living next door, was asked by Florence to assist her in raising her mother from the floor where the child said she was sleeping. Mrs. Wilson told her she was unable to do so and suggested that the girl cover her mother and allow her to continue sleeping. [illegible] believed were then dead and from the position of the girl who occupied another room, it is thought that she was overcome by the gas while trying to lift her mother. Mrs. Fahrenkamp's husband, who is a traveling salesman, left home about a week ago on business for his firm.

BODY PLACED IN THE COFFIN

Remains of President Faure Prepared for the Grave—Twenty Thousand Persons Viewed the Body Saturday.

PARIS, Feb. 20.—It is estimated that 20,000 persons viewed M. Faure's body on Saturday. The family of the dead president spent some time in the presence of the body Sunday, prior to the touching ceremony of placing the remains in the coffin, which took place at noon. M. Dupuy stood at the foot of the catafalque while the deceased's military household marched in and took up a position behind the premier. MM. Berge, Legall and Blondel were also present. With tears in his eyes M. Berge cut a few locks of hair from M. Faure's head and kissed his left hand, an example which was followed by M. Legall and M. Blondel. Four mutes then gently raised the body and placed it within the coffin which was enclosed in a leaden shell the cover of which was soldered down leaving a glass covered aperture through which the face of the dead president is visible.

Upon the silver plate on the casket is a simple inscription which describes the deceased as president of the republic and master of the Legion of Honor and gives the dates of his birth and death. After the ceremony of coffining the remains was completed the casket was replaced upon the catafalque and the public was again admitted to view the remains.

Cracker Trust Purchase.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Feb. 20.—It was given out Sunday night that the American Biscuit Co., known as the cracker trust, has absorbed the Hitz Baking Co., of this city, one of the largest independent concerns in the country. Mr. Hitz refuses to either confirm or deny the report.

Died of Heart Trouble.

STEUBENVILLE, O., Feb. 20.—Isaac Gethen, of Wheeling, a guest of Sholer's hotel, died suddenly at 4 o'clock Sunday morning of heart trouble.

Asphyxiated by Gas.

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 20.—John W. Funston, a native of Champaign, Ill., and John G. Greene, a native of Belasco, Mex., were asphyxiated in their room, No. 1422 Harmony street, Friday night. The gas meter had frozen during the recent norther and, thawing out, escaped through the open burners.

Rain at Madison.

MADISON, Ind., Feb. 20.—Rain fell here Saturday. Navigation is expected to resume Monday.

Telegrams have been sent out to various persons in the states of the Louisiana purchase district, who had accepted invitations to attend the banquet in Washington next Saturday, notifying them that the banquet had been postponed until February 25, on account of the inclemency of the weather.

The New York World announces the wedding of Thomas A. Edison, jr., son of the inventor, and Miss Marie Louise Tuohey, a member of the Casino opera company.

"Evil Dispositions Are Early Shown."

Just so evil in the blood comes out in shape of scrofula, pimples, etc., in children and young people. Taken in time it can be eradicated by using Hood's Sarsaparilla. In older persons, the aftermath of irregular living shows itself in bilious conditions, a heavy head, a foul mouth, a general bad feeling.

It is the blood, the impure blood, friends, which is the real cause. Purify that with Hood's Sarsaparilla and happiness will reign in your family.

Blood Poison—"I lived in a bed of fire for years owing to blood poisoning that followed small pox. It broke out all over my body, itching intensely. Tried doctors and hospitals in vain. I tried Hood's Sarsaparilla. It helped. I kept at it and was entirely cured. I could go on the housetops and shout about it." MRS. J. T. WILLIAMS, Carbondale, Pa.

Scrofula Sores—"My baby at two months had scrofula sores on cheek and arm. Local applications and physicians' medicine did little or no good. Hood's Sarsaparilla cured him permanently. He is now four, with smooth fair skin." MRS. S. S. WORDEN, Farmington, Del.

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

Hood's Pills cure liver ills; non-irritating and the only cathartic to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

ELECTRIC THAWING.

An Invention That Is Much in Demand Among the Mines of the Klondike.

Miners who have returned from the Klondike say that in that region, as in others where the winter temperature runs down to well below zero, the bugbear of the miner is the frozen soil in which he has to work. Under the influence of the frost the ground turns as hard as rock for several feet down,