A FAMILY AFFAIR,

BY HUGH CONWAY

Author of "Called Back" and "Dark Days"

CHAPTER XXV.

ANOTHER PAINFUL TASK.

The dinner that night at Hazlewood House was a dreary affair. Frank did not see his hosts until the gong sounded. Their calls had kept them so long that they were obliged to dress in undue haste to avoid unpunctuality in their own persons, a thing which would have amounted to a kind of moral suicide. The conversation whilst Whittaker was in the room was naturally forced. Frank could indeed tell them of the contemplated change in his life, but as all the while he was thinking how Beatrice would have received the news, his communication was made with none of his usual vivacity. Horace and Herbert were mildly astonished. They trusted—in that way which implies doubt—that it would be for the best. To give up a certainty for an uncertainty seemed a pity; but of course Frank knew his own business best. A remark with which Mr. Carruthers mentally agreed.

It seemed quite in order with the misfortunes of the house that the bottle of 1858 should have been shaken in some way and appeared cloudy, not to say thick. It might have been as thick as pea soup for all Frank cared.

Nothing, or next to nothing, was said during dessert about the recent painful event. Frank sat moody and silent. He was working out problems; connecting Beatrice's flight with the man of the afternoon and the visit to the inn. For Beatrice's sake he was now fighting for his own hand. Horace and Herbert he eliminated from the inquiry.

His moodiness affected his hosts, and upon his refusal to take more wine they suggested an adjournment to the drawing-room. Frank agreed readily. At any rate he could sit there and gaze at Beatrice's portrait.

"Do you mean to take any further steps?" he asked.

"I think not," said Horace. "Herbert and I have talked the matter over and feel there is no more to be done. We saw a great many people this afternoon, and I am sure have left a general impression that Beatrice has gone to visit friends."

"It was a most painful duty," said Herbert, "but one we felt must be performed. In fact, it was due to ourselves to forestall gossip."

"I am sure Frank quite understands the situation," said Horace.

A satirical smile curled round Frank's lips. "It must have been most painful," he said; "you must have felt like two Spartan boys with a joint fox under their clothes."

"Yes," said Herbert, simply; "we did."

"I have often heard the simile used," said Horace, "but its great strength never struck me until now."

Carruthers gave a short, quick laugh; he could not help it. The brothers looked surprised. They could see no reason for any approach to merriment. A biting sarcasm came to the young man's lips, but he restrained it, and in a moment was glad he had done so. It would have wounded these two kind, mild-looking men, who, no doubt, were as unable to realize the anxiety raised in his breast by Beatrice's flight, as he was unable to comprehend the importance of the consequences which they were making such sacrifices to avert. Seeing things in the same light is a matter of constitution, education, and training.

Just then Whittaker brought in tea, and whilst he handed it round Frank had leisure to rejoice, insomuch as he had kept his tongue in command. But misfortune had not yet done with Hazlewood House. Frank, in moving his arm, knocked down a cup, and sent its scalding contents over one of the several delicious little Chippendale tables, the pride of the Talberts' hearts and the envy of their lady friends.

The simile of the Spartan boy and the fox must have seemed even more appropriate to Horace and Herbert as they smilingly assured Frank it was of no consequence, none whatsever. They did not even ring for aid. This, however, was because Whittaker, who had witnessed the catastrophe, was already on his way to the scene with an armful of soft cloths. He mopped and dabbed and wiped the table as tenderly as a mother might perform the ablutions of an infant who suffered from some irritation of the skin. Horace and Herbert watched him for a while, and then, no doubt thinking their apparent carelessness had eased Frank's mind, joined in the rubbing and wiping. They twisted up

Horace and Herber joined in the wiping.

corners of their glass cloths, and poked them into every little corner and interstice exactly as a cleanly nurse would have explored the ears and eyes of her infant charge. Frank was compelled to stand by all the time and feel what a clumsy ruffian he had been. He sighed his relief as Whittaker at last gathered up the dusters and departed.

Conversation languished. The misfortune to the table seemed to have driven Beatrice into the background. There is nothing like a second grief for driving out the first. Frank felt that Horace and Herbert were still thinking of that ill-used piece of furniture. He was right. Presently Horace slipped out of the room, and returned with a small bottle of furniture polish and a piece of flannel. Gravely and deliberately he began polishing his slender-legged Chippendale treasure.

Frank could stand it no longer. There is a limit to penance, namely, human endurance. His nerves, after the events of the day, were highly strung, and he felt that if he watched Horace any longer he must burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

"Can't we go and smoke?" he said.

"Certainly," said Herbert, whose mind was now more easy about the table. He accompanied Frank to the dining-room, where, by and by, Horace joined them. He brought with him an unmistakable odor of furniture polish, so that Frank's remorse was, by the medium of his olfactory nerves, still kept awake.

"There is another painful duty to perform," said Horace, helping himself to a cigarette. Frank could not help thinking that the unmentioned painful duty was connected with the table. "We feel that we are bound to let Sir Maingay know what has happened."

"Of course. He is her father."

"Yes, he must be told. We think it better to make the communication orally." Horace was one who never misused the word "verbal." "We shall run up to town to-morrow and see him."

Frank had already been framing in his mind various excuses for a sudden departure. He felt that, fond as he was of Horace and Herbert, their constant society would at the present juncture drive him half mad. He jumped at the chance of escape. "I'll go with you," he said.

They protested against this, but Frank was firm. "My dear fellows," he said, "I have opened my heart to you. I have told you my true reason for paying this visit. How can I possibly stay here with Beatrice away?"

rte had his way. It was arranged they should all go to London on the morrow. Frank suggested that before going they should inquire if Beatrice had drawn any money from the bank. So on their way through the town the next day Horace and Herbert had an interview with Messrs. Furlong & Co., and ascertained that their niece had taken one thousand pounds with her.

When they came out of the bank they found Frank missing. Indeed, he kept them waiting fully five minutes before he reappeared. He had just been round the corner, he said, looking at some of the quaint old Blacktown houses. The truth is he had been to the "Cat and Compasses," seen the expansive widow d landlady, and ascertained the address of her worthy friend, Mrs. Rawlings. No doubt the Talberts could have given him this, but he did not care to trouble them for it.

As William Giles had accompanied his masters in order to drive the horses back, the Talberts, until they were in the train, could not make known to Frank the result of their inquiries at the bank. Frank heard the news gloomily. The sum taken by Beatrice showed that she meant her absence to be a prolonged one.

"Did you get the numbers of the notes?" he asked. They had not done so.

"I should get them. The first one she changes can be traced back, and we shall know where she is."

"I should never have thought of that," said Herbert, admiringly.

Horace said nothing. Conscience told him he would not have thought of it, but self-respect bade him hide the fact.

In London they parted. The Talberts went to their favorite hotel, and Frank, who wished to be quite free and unfettered in his researches, went to his. The next day the brothers called on Sir Maingay Clauson, and Frank found the way to 142 Gray street, the purveying establishment of Messrs. Rawlings Bros.

He asked for Mrs. Rawlings, and not knowing whether it was Mrs. John or Mrs. Joseph, was compelled to describe her as the one who had been at Blacktown some few days ago. That was Mrs. John. Mr. and Mrs. John were away. Would not he back for at least a week. No one knew exactly where they were. In their absence, caused perhaps by another wild goose chase after a supposed son, Frank was compelled to defer his researches. His heart was very heavy. It seemed to him that he would only find Beatrice by the prosaic way of tracing back the bank notes. He wished he had not suggested this course to Horace and Herbert.

He went down to Oxford and settled his affairs as best he could. He arranged with Mordle's friend, Fanshawe, a brother coach, to take such pupils as he could send him. So utterly unfit did he feel for work that he was glad to think that his new appointment did not become a fact for six months; so that, except for the book which he had to see through the press, he would have nothing to occupy him but the search for Beatrice.

Horace and Herbert were more successful in their call. Sir Maingay was at home and appeared delighted to see them. But this effusiveness only covered a certain fear with which, perhaps on account of their striking resemblance to his dead wife, the baronet always regarded his tall, grave brothers-in-law. To my mind, a widower who marries again had better make a clean sweep of all his first wife's relations. A painful duty, yet due to one's self, as the Talberts would say.

"So glad, so very glad, to see you, Horace; so delighted, Herbert," exclaimed Sir Maingay. "How well you both look! never saw you looking better."

They told him they were very well.

"You don't seem to grow a day older. No family cares to vex you. Most men keep young as bachelors. A family means responsibility as well as pleasure, you know." Sir Maingay nodded his head contentedly as one who knows all about it.

"We have something to say to you about Beatrice," said Horace.

Now, Beatrice was the very last subject which Sir Maingay cared to discuss with his brothers-in-law. Although they had never said so much, he felt that they altogether disapproved of his conduct with respect to his daughter. He felt that they thought he should not have gone abroad and left her to herself, although she had been so left by her own expressed wish. To some people, especially those whose consciences were ill at ease, the Talberts' grave, unspoken censure was more terrible than vituperation from any one else.

"About Beatrice," said Sir Maingay. "Not ill, I hope? I thought her looking far from well when she left here."

"No, she is not ill—but we are in some anxiety on her account."

"Ah, I think I know. I think I'm quite prepared for what you are going to say."

Horace raised his eyebrows. "You are?" he said. "If so, it will make our task easier."

"Much easier," said Herbert.

"Well, you are going to say that young Carruthers is in love with my girl. He came here once or twice; I saw it then. He told me he was going down to your place."

"Yes, that is part of what we were going to say." They had decided it was as well to let Sir Maingay know of Frank's ambition.

"Well," said the baronet, "I like Carruthers. Besides he is a kinsman of yours, I assure you, my dear Horace, my dear Herbert, I can never forget the many happy years spent with poor——" he actually hesitated for the name. Think of that all young wives who believe that your husbands will be inconsolable should death remove you!—"with a much beloved member of your family."

"Thank you," said Horace, quietly. He recognized the fact that Sir Maingay meant well.

"Besides," continued the baronet, "Beatrice is entirely her own mistress. She has a will of her own. I have no power over her fortune, which, by the by, is almost as large as my own. This is just as it should be, because with those sons of mine it will be impossible for me to add to her income at my death." So he rattled on, bringing out what was really a justification of himself.

"My dear Maingay," said Horace, mildly, "would it not be better if you heard what we have to say and made your comments afterwards?"

"It would be a great deal better, Maingay," said Herbert.

From the days of their first acquaintance they had always assumed this air of superiority over the respectable nobleman. He had never even struggled against it. So he obeyed and was silent.

They told him all about Beatrice. Her letter they could not show him, having forgotten to ask Frank to return it. Sir Maingay listened, but did not appear much upset.

"We will of course take any steps you wish, or aid you in any steps you may take," said Horace in conclusion.

"It's a nuisance, but I don't see any steps to be taken," said sir Maingay, composedly.

"Neither do we. But we felt it right you should know at once."

"Quite so. As I said, Beatrice always had a will of her own. She is full of strange freaks—full of them. As you know for some extraordinary reason she wouldn't be presented, and can't live in the same house with her mother——"

"Her mother!" exclaimed the Talberts in a breath, and glancing simultaneously at a certain picture on the wall; an upright landscape which filled the space once occupied by the portrait of Sir Maingay's "ALL."

The baronet colored. "With my wife, I mean. You may be sure this is but a freak of the girl's. She has her maid with her, you say—a respectable, middle-aged woman. Oh, it will be all right. Perhaps she means to write a book. Ladies do all sorts of things to write books nowadays. Lady Fanny Beaumont went through Patagonia and shot some niggers or something. There's another lady who roughs it in Italy and Spain. Fancy Spain, Herbert! You know what a beastly hole Spain is. Women do all sorts of out-of-the-way things now."

"Some women," said Horace, severely. His ideal woman, if he had one, did no strange things. "However, if you are contented, there is nothing more to say."

"I'm not contented. It's a nuisance to think of a child you love, wandering heaven knows where. But she'll turn up all right again. Ah! here's my wife; we'll hear what she thinks of it."

Lady Clauson entered, looking, as usual, very beautiful. Horace and Herbert rose and greeted her with solemn gallantry. They were always particularly attentive and courteous to Sir Maingay's second wife. This the lady attributed to her charms. She was quite wrong. The Talberts were only anxious to show that if Sir Maingay chose to marry again it was a matter of no concern to them.

Lady Clauson was told the news. She turned to her husband triumphantly. As many better bred people sometimes do, she forgot herself. "I always told you she would do something disgraceful," said her ladyship.

"My dear! my dear Isabel!" said Sir Maingay. He glanced timidly at his brothers-in-law.

Horace and Herbert rose like two figures worked by one spring. Their calm eyes looked down their straight noses and concentrated their gaze on Lady Clauson, who turned very red.

"Madam," said Horace, "the members of our family, and, I believe I may say, of Sir Maingay's family, are not in the habit of doing disgraceful things. Beatrice may have left us unadvisedly, but I am certain her reason, if known, would meet with her father's and with our approval."

Lady Clauson at once saw her mistake, and apologized humbly; an apology which the brothers accepted gracefully. Then, after having been shown the nursery treasures, they took their leave.

"Maingay does not improve as he grows older," said Horace. Herbert shook his head mournfully, as one who wished to gainsay a fact, but dare not.

Lady Clauson, in spite of her apology, told her husband that Beatrice had done something disgraceful. "Oh, no, my dear," said Sir Maingay. "It's only a freak. You know, I won't say for what reason, she can't come back here to live. Well, she's grown tired of life down at Oakbury. I don't wonder at it. Horace and Herbert are two regular old women. They darn their own stockings, make antimacassars, and all sorts of things. She was ashamed to say she was tired of the life, so went off on her own account."

Here was yet another motive attributed to Beatrice. Nothing is more risky than the attributing of motives. It is as dangerous as prophesying before the event.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A WORD IN SEASON.

After one or two unsuccessful attempts Carruthers found Mrs. John Rawlings installed behind the family counter at No. 142 Gray street. She was very hard at work—no doubt endeavoring to make up for her husband's repeated absences. In her hands she held what appeared like a long salmon-colored two-inch rope, which, by a dexterous twist of the wrist, or some manipulation only known to the initiated, she was rapidly transforming into ornamental and symmetrical festoons of those luscious articles of diet, sausages. Upon learning that Carruthers wished to speak to her in private she wiped her hands on a cloth, and, lifting up a flap, or species of drawbridge, in the counter begged he would step through and follow her upstairs.

He did so, and was shown into what Mrs. Rawlings called the parlor; a room papered with a startling paper, carpeted with a dazzling carpet; furnished with imitation walnut chairs and couch upholstered in the brightest blue tapestry; the mantelpiece bearing a mirror in a burnished gilt frame, and, among other gay ornaments, a huge pair of those glass vases with suspended prisms known as lustres; the fire glowed very brightly, and was kept in order by a fender and fireirons of flashing steel. It was, in fact, a room which appeared to open its eyes and glare at you as you entered. A man even more anxious and preoccupied than Frank was could not fail to be struck with the general effect. It would have been positively ungracious not to have noticed it.

"What a bright room!" he said.

"It is a bright room," said Mrs. Rawlings in a gratified way. "You see, sir, we often kill as many as thirty pigs before breakfast."

This seemed a digression without bearing upon the main subject. "Poor things!" said Frank, without noting it clear whether he referred to the pigs or their slayers.

"At first, when I married Rawlings, I found it a melancholy business; so I made up my mind to have everything away from me factory bright and cheerful."

"You have succeeded here," said Frank, as he took the azure-covered chair offered him.

"I hope so. You see, sir," continued Mrs. Rawlings, "every business has its drawbacks as well as its advantages. Many don't like the pork business, but it's a nice clean business—there's no dust about it like there is about baking. I hate dust of any sort."

At another time Carruthers might have been amused and have tried to draw this woman out, but he was now only anxious to hear about Beatrice, so he commenced his inquisition.

Yes; Mrs. Rawlings had been at Blacktown. She had stayed at the "Cat and Compasses." She, or rather her husband, had believed a little boy to be their missing son. A young lady had called upon her one morning. She gave no name, but she was a tall young lady; very handsome; and with gray eyes; beautifully dressed; in fact, quite a young lady. Yes, poor thing! quite a lady.

Would Mrs. Rawlings tell her visitor what had been said or done at that interview? Oh, no—never. The good woman shut her eyes, compressed her lips, and shook her head slowly and solemnly; the combined effects of these actions being meant to show that Beatrice's communication was forever locked up in the sacred repository of her heart.

Mrs. Rawlings really meant to keep Beatrice's secret, and doubtless had no pressure been applied she would have kept it loyally. But unluckily she was one of those who have to struggle to retain a secret, not only its main body, but little corners which would slip out unawares. In trying to guard Beatrice's secret from her visitor's renewed questions she was like one trying to pack a feather bed into a traveling trunk; as one part was pushed down another part rose up. The words "poor thing!" applied to Beatrice had already raised Frank's curiosity to the highest pitch, and made him believe that the present inquiry was not collateral.

Was he justified in striving to learn what Beatrice wished hid? He thought so. He loved her with a pure, unselfish love; so unselfish that he was now endeavoring to find the cause of her flight for his own ends, but in order to be able to give her aid if she required it. Yes, the man who loved her had a right to try and learn all about the woman whom he believed loved him. Besides, had Beatrice in any way bound this woman to secrecy? He could scarcely believe it. He fancied that Mrs. Rawlings, as some people will, was making a mystery of nothing. Beatrice may have given her money to withdraw the absurd claim, and she was ashamed to confess the fact.

"Look here," said Carruthers. "I must and will know what took place between you and the lady. I warn you that by concealment you may do her the greatest wrong. You cannot harm her by telling the truth."

Again Mrs. Rawlings shut her eyes and shook her head.

Again Frank pressed her, again and again. She still kept the secret, but ever and anon, by means of some unguarded expression, let a corner slip out. So much so that Frank fully realized the fact that Beatrice was driven to seek that interview by some great stress, some grievous need. He began to fancy that in spite of her denial in knowledge even of her name, Mrs. Rawlings might be able to tell all about the flight.

"Can you tell me where to find her?" he asked. "I warn you if you withhold her address from me you may do her a wrong which may never be repaired."

He spoke earnestly and impressively, fixing his eyes upon the woman as he spoke. He wished to learn from her looks whether she knew the address or not.

A sudden inspiration seized Mrs. Rawlings. Inspiration may come to a purveyor as well as to a poet. This young man, this eager young fellow, was the cause of all the shame and mischief—what secret was there to keep from him? He might be right; incalculable harm might follow her silence.

"You want to find her?" she asked. "You don't know where she is?"

"I want to find her. I shall never rest until I find her." His manner told Mrs. Rawlings that her inspiration was correct. She rose and spoke with real emotion.

"Yes, sir," she said, "go and find her. Go and do what is right. If you are the man, I think your conscience will tell you what to do. Oh, sir, make what amends you can while there is time. Life is uncertain. It is things of this sort which haunt a man on his death bed."

The look of surprise which at first sat on Frank's face turned to one of something like horror. "Go on," he said hoarsely.

"Perhaps I am wronging you," went on the woman. "Perhaps you did not know all. She said the child was born in secrecy. Perhaps you never knew it. But go to her now, sir, and make what amends you can. It's not for me to speak, but what can a gentleman want for his wife more than a beautiful, proud-looking young lady like this. Dear, dear! what she must have suffered, poor thing."

Carruthers was ghastly. His hands grasped the table for support. Mrs. Rawlings glanced at him and felt that her impromptu oration was doing its work.

Mrs. Rawlings glanced at him.

"There, don't take on so," she said kindly. "There may be excuses for you. Old people oughtn't to judge the young too severely."

"Tell me all she said, every word," gasped Carruthers. He had forced the woman to give him this bitter cup, and he meant to drain it to the dregs.

"Oh, poor dear! she told me all. Told me how she had been forced to make her secret known by my husband's claiming the child. My heart bled for her. She told me how no one knew about the baby; how she should have to let all be revealed unless I helped her. She told me how she had longed for her child, and somehow, I don't know how, managed to get it to live with her or near her. Oh, it's such a pretty boy! Such a pretty boy, sir."

"Where can I find her?" asked Carruthers. Not that he now hoped to learn.

"Where! I suppose somewhere near the child, down at Blacktown. You know the lady's name. I don't. But you'll do what's right, won't you, sir?"

"Yes," said Frank. "I will do what is right. Thank you. Good morning."

He left the room, and departed by the way he had come. Mrs. Rawlings returned to her interesting occupations. She knew the name neither of her visitor nor of the lady whom she had seen at Blacktown, but to this day, when she recalls the look of what she believed to be remorse on the young man's face, she is happy in the thought that it may be a few heartfelt and appropriate words, though only spoken by a humble woman like herself, helped on the great fight of good against evil, righted a wrong, and made a sister woman happier. May such a mistake occur to many of us. It causes consolation.

A worthy soul, Mrs. Rawlings. Nevertheless, we will now bid her adieu, and hope that the business in Gray street continues to flourish.

But Frank Carruthers! Poor Frank whose researches had led him into such straits. Who had learned the terrible half truth which by a paradox is often greater than the whole. Carruthers walked and walked—out of Gray's road—on and on—without heeding whither. Such grief as he felt to-day was a new experience in a man's life. When some three months ago Beatrice told him she could not love him, the shock as we know was great, but in spite of it Beatrice was still the Beatrice of his dreams. Then there was hope; there is always hope in such cases. But now none! Not a vestige!

He laughed bitterly as he thought of the hours he had spent endeavoring to find the cause of what he had called Beatrice's complaint—of her general apathy and indifference to the world at large. Now he had got at the very germ of the disease. No wonder she was cold and reserved with such a secret to carry—such a dread overhanging her. Poor girl! Poor girl!

He could see how the boy's coming to Hazlewood House had been arranged. Through Mrs. Miller, of course. And by his new light he was able to explain a discrepancy which had always troubled him. On the night when she bade him hope and wait, the nurse had told him that Beatrice had saved her years ago from starvation, whereas, Horace had told him, that until she came to the house, she was a stranger to them all. He had not thought it worth while to pursue the inquiry.

She, this strangely mannered woman, had made him promise to wait. Wait for what? There was nothing to wait for. Even if he, as he scornfully told himself he could, should forget his manhood and be willing to take Beatrice as his wife even now, he knew that a barrier, never to be climbed, would be raised by her. He did not wrong her in this. He knew that for all that had befallen she was mourning in mental sackcloth and ashes. He had no blame to give her, no stone to cast.

She had not tried to win his love. She had not accepted that love when offered. Too well he knew why. Yet he knew also that she loved him—loved him but would never be his. The thought drove him half mad. No friend of Carruthers' would have known him, as, with heavy brows and bent head, he walked through those quiet streets of suburban London.

But why the flight? No new dread, no new danger could have threatened her. Did she after all fly because he was coming to Hazlewood House? Did she fear that her resolution must give way, and with one breath she must avow her love, and with the next tell her lover that love could not be between them? No. A word from her would have stayed his coming. She had even as good as asked him to come. She was not flying from him.

Then the thought of that man who was seeking her came to his mind. He shuddered and bit his lip: he knew not why. But his first thought was to trace this unknown man and hear why he wanted Beatrice.

His mood changed. He would not seek him. He had no more to learn. After what he had this morning heard all inquiries, all information, could but tend to make him more miserable. There was nothing now left for him in the world but sheer hard work. Work, work, work, the greatest blessing ever given to man.

So he walked on and on, almost crying in his anguish, almost raving in his utter helplessness to mend matters. But all the while, do what he could to tear his idol out of her shrine, thinking of her as the calm, fair, stately girl he had known and loved, the one of all the world against whom slander should raise no voice.

Before his aimless walk was ended his mood had grown soft and pitying. Anger had simply faded away. All he could now think of was Beatrice and her sorrow. All he asked was to be able to see her and tell her there was one who would ever be as a brother to her. The wild resolve that he would now acquiesce in her disappearance as calmly as did her uncles disappeared. He would find her. He would go to her, take her hand, tell her the secret was his, counsel her, and, if it were possible, stand between her and what she had to bear.

But he knew now, or thought he knew, the utmost that life had to give him, and he saw in it a sorry substitute for what it had seemed to promise only a few days ago.

Blame her! Why should he blame her? How had she wronged him?

MR. M'MASTER'S ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF THE NATIONAL SONG.

In Incident of the Times of 1798—Party Strife Between Old-Time "Federalists" and "Republicans"—The Popular "President's March."

[From "The People of the United States."]

Thousands of men who despised John Adams, who detested the Federalists, who loathed the influence Great Britain had in federal affairs, now turned to support the government with vigor. Their hearts were still warm toward France. But they could not suffer even so old and dear an ally to heap up insult on their native land. Such an outburst of patriotism had never before been seen. It began at Philadelphia, and spread thence as fast as the post-riders could carry the news. Night after night at the theatre, pit, boxes and gallery joined in one mighty shout for the "President's March," for "Yankee Doodle," or for the stirring music of "Stony Point." While the airs were being played the wildest excitement prevailed. The audience rose to their feet, stood upon the seats, waved hats and walking sticks, sang, cheered, and, when the piece was finished, demanded that it should be given over and over again. Then a band of hardy Republicans in some part of the gallery or the pit would call for "Caira" or the Marseillaise" hymn, till their cries were drowned amid a storm of groans and hisses. Not to be outdone, the Republicans thereupon bribed the musicians to play no federal tunes. The first night they refused a storm of indignation was raised in the theatre and they gave way. The next night they stood firm and were well pelted for their pains.

The Federalists were highly indignant. The theatre, said they, more than any other place brings men of all classes together. The managers should therefore pay some heed to public feeling in the selection of the music. The present is no time to grate the public ear with those Gallic murder shouts, "Ca ira" and the "Carmagnole." The enthusiastic clamor with which the "President's March" had been called for and the deafening applause with which it had been greeted should have taught them this. Is it the purpose of a theatre company to please or to insult the public? The action of pelting the fiddler and smashing the fiddle is greatly to be condemned. The firm and dignified conduct of leaving the theatre and keeping away till the managers solemnly promise that the "President's March" shall be the first tune played in the house is much to be preferred.

The theatre, the Republicans protested, was a public house and the managers would do well to keep this in mind. If, however, they were determined to make it the resort of the British faction, let them look to that faction for support. Every earnest Republican and true patriot would keep away. This was the rejoinder, is greatly to be wished. Men of sense long for time when the Jacobins and their murder shouts shall be driven from every decent resort. Let them desert the theatre and with the shillings thus saved pay some of their old debts.

While the factions wrangled the benefit night of a favorite actor drew near. No man knew better than he how to profit by the popular will, and at no time in the whole course of his life had so fine a chance of profiting by the popular will been offered him. Politics ruled the hour. The city was full of excited Federalists who packed the theatre night after night for no other purpose than to shout themselves hoarse over the "President's March." He determined to make use of this fact. He would take the march, find some one to write a few patriotic stanzas to suit it, and on the night of his benefit sing them to the house. Some Federalists were consulted, were pleased with the idea, and named Joseph Hopkinson as the man best fitted to write the words. He consented, and in a few hours "Hail Columbia" was produced. The night for the benefit was that of Wednesday, the 25th of April, and The Gazette announced that the performances would comprise a comedy called "The Italian Monk;" the comic opera of "Rosina;" "More Sack," an epilogue on the character of Sir John Falstaff, and "an entire new song (written by a citizen of Philadelphia), to the tune of the the 'President's March,' will be sung by Mr. Fox, accompanied by the full band and a grand chorus:

"'Firm united let us be,
Rallying round our liberty;
As a band of brothers joined,
Peace and safety we shall find.'"

Long before the curtain rose the house was too small to hold the thousands who clamored to be let in. Those who got in were too excited to wait quietly for the song. At last the comedy ended and Mr. Fox appeared upon the stage. Every line was loudly applauded, the whole house joined in the chorus, and when the verse "Behold the chief who now commands" was reached the audience rose to its feet and cheered till the building shook to its foundations. Four times the song was encored, was demanded again at the end of the pantomime and again at the close of the play. A few called for "Ca ira," but were quickly put down. The words of "Hail, Columbia" were printed in full in the newspapers of the following day. The Gazette hoped that every lady in the city would practice the music, learn the words and sing them at the next repetition; then, perhaps, the two or three French-Americans who remained might feel the charm of patriotism and join in the chorus of the song.

Roscoe Conkling, Henry Ward Beecher, Frank Mayo, Robert Bonner—Ex-Senator, Preacher, Actor And Newspaper Man.

[New York Cor. San Francisco Chronicle.]

Roscoe Conkling passed a group of politicians in front of the Fifth Avenue hotel a few days ago, and note was made of the changes time and age are surely making with the great lawyer and statesman. He walked slowly, partially from the pompous manner of the man, but a degree of feebleness was noted in the legs. His massive shoulders are rounding out and the fingers of time have got a decided clutch on the color of his whiskers and hair. Deep lines cut their ugliness around his eyes and furrows are severely drawn around his mouth. His dress is still marked for expense and fit, but the emphasis of his former brusque, businesslike manner seems to be growing tired. Few men now raise their hats as they used to when he passed them. New York city is the best place in the world for being idolized and loved "with a vengeance" for a while, and being as suddenly left when one little dreams of it. Surface interests, surface fidelity, surface friends, are all one may look for in the precious New York public.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Trembling hands are those the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher uses to turn over the hymn-book and the Bible. The noted orator on the Plymouth pulpit is aging rapidly, and he makes the most juvenile effort at throwing it off ever seen among men. His hair is as white as snow, his face is as red as a boiled lobster, his neck is thick and loose-skinned and his trembling body betrays that his years are infirm and fast falling into the "yellow leaf." Mr. Beecher does not wear his age with dignity. His assumption of boyish manners and attempts at humor are sadly pointless and undignified. He wiggles about on his legs when trying to appear young and destroys the very honor of his years. The Beecher before the trial and the Beecher of to-day are vastly different in appearance and manner.

A CURIOUS BUSINESS.

A COMPANY WHICH GATHERS "PRESS INTELLIGENCE" FOR EVERYBODY.

Collecting Notices, Criticisms, Ideas, Facts and Fancies for Those Who Want General Information in Complete Yet Compact Form.

[New York Letter.]

At 1127 Broadway, two old newspaper men, William F. G. Shanks and Edward C. Hancock, are successfully conducting a curious and novel business, under the name of The National Press Intelligence company, of which themselves, Gen. Thomas L. James, president of the Lincoln or "Vanderbilt" bank, Gen. Frank J. Herron and Algernon S. Sullivan, public administrator of the city, are the principal stockholders. Their service is to subscribers and strangers in the city. Among the former may be mentioned as representative men, Senator William M. Evarts, Hon. Levi P. Morton, Mr. Cyrus W. Field, Thomas A. Edison, Mayors Grace and Low, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., the secretary of the navy, William C. Whitney, William Walter Phelps, Senor Romero, the Mexican minister, Dr. Hammond, and scores of famous artists, authors, actors and actresses.

The general manager was asked the nature of the business he was conducting. "We aspire to be the 'exchange readers' for the universe," he replied. "At least that part of the nation which is too busy to search all the papers of the country through for the notices, criticisms, ideas, facts and fancies, too, concerning themselves and their business. You have no idea how many men and corporations are interested in having this service done in complete and yet compact form. It is chiefly for business reasons that they want the extracts, which we furnish to all applying. For instance, Secretary Whitney wants all criticisms of the navy department. Mr. Fairchild for Secretary Manning wants to see what is printed about the conduct of the treasury department. Mr. Edison wants all that is published about electric lights. William Seward Webb, president of the New York Sleeping Car company, is interested in accounts of all inventions for the improvement of railway traveling facilities. So are a dozen other railroad officers. Two railroad companies want to know by telegraph the names and addresses of any persons injured by their cars. Why? That they may settle with the injured before the lawyers induce them to bring suit.

"Scores of lawyers are subscribers, but no two of them want information on the same subject. Authors want notices of their books which the publisher can not or will not furnish him. They also want newspaper comments on topics they are writing about. We look after the book notices of numerous other publishers with small exchange lists, and read exchanges for several weekly and monthly papers or magazines. Artists? They want, of course, the criticisms of their paintings, but also advertisements of exhibitions to come off, and discussions of art matters generally. We have many hotel men who want articles on various topics of importance to them; one, who has a big hotel in the Adirondacks, wants sent by telegraph accounts of the first appearance of cholera at the sea shore resorts. The R. G. Dun & Company Mercantile agency wants every failure, embezzlement, libel and slander suit and legislation on a score of topics. But in every instance the subscriber wants matter concerning his business. We are also the New York agents for many out of town newspapers."

"How do you send the material desired?"

"We clip the articles direct from the papers, attach them to a printed slip, write in the name and date of the journal, and send by mail. We read over 1,000 papers every day. There is another curious demand which we supply. A person wants to buy, or sell, or let, or lease a house in some particular locality. Instead of purchasing all the papers and reading the advertisements at a loss in time of several times the amount we charge, he sends us $1, and all the advertisements of the kind desired are sent to him from a whole week's publications. We do this in other matters of domestic economy, including advertisements of furniture, auction sales, even of servants wanting places. Then a stranger, for instance, is in town, say for a week, he comes here, pays his fee of $1, and has his home and other papers, for weeks back, at command; has the luxury of a handsome reading-room, where he has opportunies to meet prominent men in every profession, and make pleasant and profitable acquaintances.

"We sell steamer, railway and sleeping-car tickets, thus enabling travelers to avoid the annoyance and the danger of encountering the runners at the down-town office; cash drafts for travelers who are unknown at the city banks; provide guides who are gentlemen for strangers who are desirous of seeing the best and most curious features of the city, furnish ladies with lady shoppers who know how to buy economically; purchase goods for persons at a distance by sample or otherwise, and we even provide lone ladies with gentlemanly escorts to balls and theatres whose characters we guarantee. There are many curious features about the business which are explained by circulars which we send to those desiring them."

A very curious business it is, and conducted in luxurious apartments for the very best people in the country.

THE COUNTRY COUSIN AND THE ROUNDER ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

The Usual Programme of a Visitor—Difference in City Guests—What Countrymen Are Learning—Trouble with the Kickers.

[New York Sun.]

"The summer visitor is beginning to fill up the town," said the clerk of an up-town hotel as he leaned over the desk and twisted a lot of toothpicks into little frames and odd designs. "I notice there is a great improvement in the manners and appearance of the countryman since I went into the hotel business, thirty-two years ago. We no longer find that there is any necessity for putting up signs in all the rooms warning the guests not to blow out the gas, and the hat boy at the entrance of the dining-room does not call me over to see a queer collection of head gear since 1874. This hat boy of ours, by the way, is verging on his 50th year, and he is as shrewd as they make them. He is a dried up little specimen, and thinks of nothing else but hats. He will take 1,000 guests, and return each hat to its proper owner three times a day for twenty years without making a mistake. Prior to 1872, he would rush out to the desk mysteriously and call me in to look at the collection of suburban hats. In those days countrymen, particularly southerners, felt that they would be sacrificing their self-respect if they adopted the custom of the town and wore garments that accorded with the prevailing mode. They were afraid of being considered popular swells, and preferred to be regarded as guys.

All that is changed, however. The traveling salesman, who is really responsible for the advance in civilization in America has disseminated fashionable hats, well-cut garments, and many of the lighter knickknacks, and the fashions that go to make up the dress of New York men until a change has been wrought everywhere. There are no end of good clothing houses in New York and Philadelphia who have adopted the system of establishing branch houses in small towns. These big clothing houses make 10,000 suits of clothes and ship them all over the country to their agents. The clothes may be good, bad or indifferent, but the one unquestionable result is that the countrymen learn to dress. They used to come here in the middle of summer with black broadcloth frock coats, doeskin trousers, heavy waistcoats and boots. Now they dress more seasonably. It is very rare that a man comes to our house who is not presentably attired. Even in the streets one seldom sees the guys who formerly came in such vast numbers simultaneously with the hot weather."

"What is the usual programme of a visitor?"

"Well, if there is a burlesque show, profusely advertised and holding forth a promise of innumerable pink tights, rouged cheeks, high-heeled slippers, low necked dresses, and the like, it will gather in the countrymen with a force that no power on earth can resist. It does not make the slightest difference what the other attractions in town may be, who the visitor is, whether parson or plowman, he is sure to go to the burlesque shows. At 11 o'clock he comes in tired out and ready for bed. At 6 he is out in the corridor or in the smoking-room, picking his teeth and staring into the street. He never thinks of eating after the theatre is over, and eats his biggest meal in the middle of the day. He makes the best guest that the hotel can entertain, for he is quiet and unobtrusive and content with decent treatment. He has a morbid horror of running in debt, and is punctuality itself in the matter of payment. Take him all in all, our country cousin is a pretty square and solid sort of a man, and he always finds a welcome at the best hotels.

"There is a good deal of difference in city guests," the clerk continued, rolling over on his other elbow and balancing the penholder deftly on his first finger. "Our city guests consist of two distinct classes, kickers and rounders. The rounders are dear to our hearts. It is rather difficult to make them pay up at the end of the week, but they are liberal patrons of our house, keep the servants in good humor by feeing them often—this, by the way, is a thing the countryman never does—and increase the custom of the bar. Two or three well-known rounders will do more to pull up the business of the bar-room, if they reside in the house, than you would imagine. We have a Wall-street operator in this house who is known from one end of the house to the other. He tells good stories, is jolly and has grown rather fat. We put a big armchair in the cafe for his special benefit. After a big dinner every night he lights a monstrous cigar, waddles through here in order to crack some joke with the clerk, goes to the cafe, settles himself comfortably in the chair and remains there usually until it is time to go to bed. His bed-time is 1 a. m. It is not a very good habit for his health, but it is a rattling good thing for the house. His friends drop in to see him during the whole evening, and sometimes he has eight or ten men around the table. He stands the house in on an average about $20 a night.

"As a rule, the young men go outside for their fun, while the old rounders stay indoors. They wander from the billiard-room to the cafe, thence to the reading-room, make a call on some of the guests in the hotel, and finally drift off to bed. As I say, the rounders are our best customers. The kickers the more numerous. They are of every age, size, and sex, but most of them are of the feminine gender and about 40 years of age. Some of the women growl because the halls are scrubbed too early in the morning, others