

My Fellow Laborer.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN once we had made up our minds to get married, we both of us came to the conclusion that the sooner we did so the better; more especially as the introduction of a new factor into our relationship was to my unaccustomed mind in a certain sense improper and irksome, although by no means unpleasant. Also it wasted time and tended to direct our attention from the vast undertaking to which we were pledged. Accordingly, within a very few days of the occurrence already described, I visited a register, and having, as it seemed to me, paid several unnecessary fees, provided myself with a license. On my way back I walked down Fleet street, thinking amiably of getting married and Dr. Johnson, and intending to take the omnibus at Charing Cross. As I went I happened to look up, and my eye fell upon a notice to the effect that a certain well-known life assurance company had its offices within the building opposite. Then it was that the idea first occurred to me that I ought to insure my life, so that, should anything happen to me, Fanny might have something to keep her from poverty. As it was, she would have absolutely nothing. All that I had, and that my wife had brought with her, was strictly settled upon the boy John in such a way that I could not even give my subsequent wife a life interest in it, or a part of it. I stopped there in the street, and having given the matter a few moments' consideration, came to the conclusion that it was my duty to provide for Fanny to small extent—say two thousand pounds.

Upon this decision, I crossed the road-way, and, entering the office, some inquiries from a clerk. As it happened, the doctor attached to the company was at that moment in attendance and disengaged, so thinking that I could not do better than get a disagreeable business over at once, I sent up my card and asked to see him. The messenger returned presently, with a request that I would "step up," which I accordingly did, to find myself, to my astonishment, in the presence of an old fellow-student of my own, with whom I had in former days been tolerably intimate, but whom I had not seen for years. We greeted each other cordially enough, and after a few minutes' talk I told him the business I had in hand, and he began his medical examination with the series of stock questions which doctors always put upon these occasions.

The only point upon which he dwelt at all was insanity, and he was so persistent upon this matter that I perceived he had heard some of the rumors about me being mentally deranged, which my friends and relations had so materially assisted to spread. However, I got through that part of the business, and then I undid my shirt, and he proceeded with the physical examination. First he applied the stethoscope to my heart, and quickly removed it, evidently satisfied. Then he placed it over my right lung and listened. While he did so, I saw his face change, and a thrill of fear shot through me as it suddenly came to my mind that I had experienced some trouble there of late, of which I had taken no notice, and which had, indeed, quite passed out of my mind. Next he tried the other lung, and placed the stethoscope on the table.

"What is the matter?" I asked, keeping as calm a face as I could, for I could tell from his look that there was something very wrong.

"Come, Gosden, you are a medical man yourself, and a clever one, and there is no need for me to tell you about it."

"Upon my word," I answered, "I know nothing of what you mean. I have not bothered about my own health for years; but, now I think of it, I have had some local trouble on the chest, last winter especially. What is it? It is better to know the worst."

"Our rule here," he answered dryly, "is not to make any communication to the person examined; but, as we are brother practitioners, I suppose I may dispense with it, and tell you at once that I cannot recommend your life to the board to be insured upon any terms. That is what is the matter with you, old fellow," and he went on, in terms too technical for me to write down here, to describe the symptoms of one of the most deadliest, and yet most uncertain, forms of lung disease, in short to pass sentence of death upon me.

"I do not think I am a coward, and I hope I took it well. The bitter irony of the whole thing lay in the fact that while I was in active practice, I had made this form of disease a special study, and used to flatter myself that I could stop it, or at any rate stave it off indefinitely, if only I could get at it in time. I might have stopped my own, if I had known about it. Ah! who shall heal the physician?"

"Well, there you are, Gosden," went on my friend; "you know as much about it as I do; you may live three years, and you may live thirty, but the odds are against you lasting five. You know what an uncertain thing it is. There is only one thing certain about it, and that is, that it will kill you sooner or later. I speak plainly because we are both accustomed to face

these sort of facts. Perhaps you had better take another opinion."

I shook my head. Now that my attention had been called to it, no opinions could help me. He was perfectly right, I might go very shortly, or I might live till well on into middle life. As the event has proved, I have lived, but I am not far from the end of my tether now.

"Are you of opinion," I asked, "that my form of disease is likely to prove hereditary?"

I knew what his answer would be, but I put the question as a forlorn hope. "Of course," I should consider that it would certainly be hereditary; and, what is more, it is extremely probable that your wife would contract it also. But why do you ask? You are not going to get married again, are you?"

"I am engaged to be married."

"Well," he replied, "of course it is an awkward thing to talk to a man about, but if you take my advice, you will be a little more honorable than most people are under the circumstances, and break the match off."

"I am quite of your opinion," I said, "and now I will bid you good-day."

"Well, good-bye, Gosden. I don't think it will be of any use my making a report to the board unless you wish it. Don't worry yourself, old fellow, and keep your chest warm, and you may see fifty yet!"

In another minute I was in Fleet street again, and felt vaguely astonished that it should look just the same as it did a quarter of an hour before. Most of us have experienced this sensation when some radical change of circumstance has suddenly fallen upon us.

It seems curious that the great hurrying world should be so dead to our individuality and heedless of our most vital hopes. A quarter of an hour before, I was a man with a prospect of a long and useful, perhaps a most eminent career. Also I was just going to be married to a congenial wife. Now I was, as I then thought, doomed to an early grave, and as for the wife, the idea had to be abandoned. I was in honor bound to abandon it for her sake, and for the sake of possible children.

Well, I walked to Charing Cross, and took the omnibus as I had intended. I remember that there was a fat woman in it, who insisted upon carrying a still fatter pug dog, and quarreled with the conductor seriously in consequence. All this took place in the month of December, and by the time I got home it was beginning to grow dark. I went straight into the study; Fanny was there, and the lamp was lighted. When I entered she flung down her pen, and jumping up, came forward and kissed me; and, as she did so, I thought what a splendid-looking woman she had grown into, with her intellectual face and shapely form, and somehow the reflection sent a sharp pang through me. Now that I knew that I must lose her, it seemed to me that I loved her almost as I had loved my dead wife, and indeed I have often noticed that we never know how much we value a thing till we are called upon to resign it. Certainly I noticed it now.

"Well, dear," she said, "have you got it? Why, what is the matter with you?"

"Sit down, Fanny," I answered, "and I will tell you, only you must try to bear it as well as you can."

She seated herself in her calm, determined way, although I could see that she was anxious, and I began at the beginning, and went straight through my story without skipping a word. As soon as she understood its drift her face set like a stone, and she heard me to the end without interruption or movement.

"Well, Geoffrey," she said, in a low voice, when at last I had done, "and what is to be the end of it all?"

"This: that our marriage cannot come off—and death!"

"Why cannot our marriage come off?"

"I have told you why, dear. A man afflicted as I am has no right to send his affliction down to future generations. People are fond of calling the inevitable result of such conduct the decree of Providence, but it is the cause of most of the misery of the world, and as medical men know well enough, a wicked and selfish thing to do."

"The world does not seem to think so. One sees such marriages every day."

that you would have supported me in a very painful resolution. The blow is hard enough to bear, even with your help; without, it is almost unendurable."

She rose from her chair, and then for the first time I realized the depth of her emotion. Her beautiful eyes flashed, her bosom heaved, and she slowly crushed the paper she held in her hand to shield her face from the fire, into a shapeless mass, and then threw it down.

"You have no heart," she said. "Do you suppose it is nothing to me, who was going to marry you within a week, to lose my husband and to be obliged to fall back again into this half life, this very twilight of a life? Oh! Geoffrey, think again," and she stretched out her arms toward me, and looked at me, and spoke in accents of impassioned tenderness. "Think," she went on, "can you not give up your scruples for me? Am I not worth straining a point in your conscience? There is nothing in the world, Geoffrey, that a man can profit by in exchange for his love. Soon this disease will take a hold of you, and then you will grow weak, and miserable, and incapable of enjoyment. Live now while you can, and leave the consequences to Providence, or rather to the workings of those unchanging rules which we call Providence. Look at me: I am beautiful, and I love you, and my intellect is almost as great as your own. Don't throw me away for a theory, Geoffrey."

All the time that she was speaking she drew slowly nearer to me, her arms outstretched and her great eyes glowing and changing in the shaded light. And now the arms closed round me, and she lay upon my heart and gazed into my face, till I thought that I should be overcome. But, thank Heaven! somehow for conscience' sake I found the resolution to hold to what I knew to be right. I think it was the recollection of my dear wife that came over me at that moment, and induced a sudden feeling of revulsion to the beautiful woman who lay in my arms, and who did not scruple to resort to such means to turn me from my duty.

Had it not been for the thought, I am sure that being but a man, and therefore weak, I should have yielded and then there would have been no possibility of further retreat. As it were, I with a desperate effort, wrenched myself free from her.

"It is of no use, Fanny," I cried, in despair. "I will not do it! I think that it would be wicked for a man in my condition to get married. This distresses me beyond measure; but if I yielded to you I should be doing a shameful thing. Forgive me, Fanny. It is not my fault, I did not know. It is hard enough," I added, with a natural burst of indignation, "to be suddenly doomed to a terrible death without having to go through this agony," and with a sudden motion I flung the wedding license into the fire.

She watched it burn, and then sunk back in the chair, covered her face in her hands and said no more. In this position she remained for nearly half an hour. Then she rose, and with a stern, cold face that almost frightened me to look upon, returned to her work, which was now once more the chief bond between us; nor was the subject of our engagement alluded to again for many months. Nobody had known of it, and nobody knew that it had come to an end. And so it died, and went the way of dead things into what seems to be forgetfulness, but is in truth the gate-way into those new and endless halls of perpetuated life on whose walls evil and unhappy records of the past, blazoned in letters of fire, are the lamps to light us down from misery to misery.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CICILIAN LOVE CHARMS.

Some of the Most Curious and Popular Ones.

The love charms of Sicily are many and curious. One, very popular and considered very powerful, is to put into an eggshell a few drops of the blood of the longing lover, says Macmillan. The shell is exposed to the sun for three days and to the dew for three nights. It is then placed on hot ashes until calcined, when the whole is reduced to a fine powder and administered secretly in a cup of coffee or a glass of wine to the object of affection. Another charm is for the witch to undress at midnight and tie her clothes up in a bundle, which she places on her head; then, kneeling in the center of her room, she pronounces an incantation, at the end of which she shakes her head. If the bundle falls in front of her it is a good sign; should it fall behind her the charm will not avail. Yet another is worked in the following manner: Pieces of green, red and white ribbon are purchased in three different shops, the name of the person to be charmed being repeated, mentally, each time. The shop-keeper must be paid with the left hand, the ribbon being received in the right. When all the pieces are bought they are taken to a witch, who sets out to find the person to be charmed. On finding him or her the witch mutters to herself, "With these ribbons I bind you to such a one." Then she returns the ribbons to the purchaser, who ties them beneath his or her left knee and wears them at church.

Too Possible.

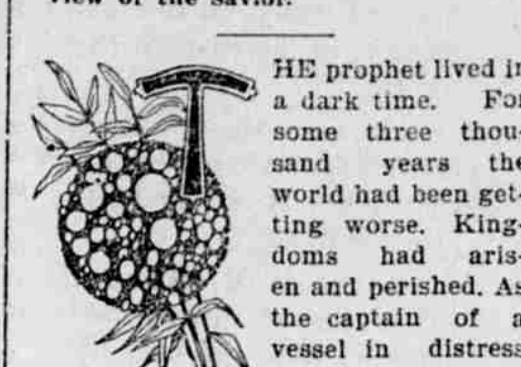
Knicker—"We had to discharge our pastor because he mispronounced a word." Bocker—"For such a trifle?" Knicker—"Yes. He said the dear departed had gone to 'the undiscovered country from whose burn no traveler returns.'"—Judge.

The Bashi Bazouks seem to be merely a somewhat idealized set of ruffians.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

MAGNETISM OF CHRIST LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Following Text: "His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful"—Isaiah, Chapter IX, Verse 6—An Unusual View of the Savior.



THE prophet lived in a dark time. For some three thousand years the world had been getting worse. Kingdoms had arisen and perished. As the captain of a vessel in distress sees relief coming across the water, so the prophet, amid the stormy times in which he lived, put the telescope of prophecy to his eye, and saw, seven hundred and fifty years ahead, one Jesus advancing to the rescue. I want to show that when Isaiah called Christ the Wonderful, he spoke wisely.

In most houses there is a picture of Christ. Sometimes it represents him with face effeminate; sometimes with a face despot. I have seen West's grand sketch of the rejection of Christ; I have seen the face of Christ as cut on an emerald, said to be by command of Tiberius Caesar; and yet I am convinced that I shall never know how Jesus looked until, on that sweet Sabbath morning, I shall wash the last sleep from my eyes in the cool river of heaven. I take up this book of divine photographs, and I look at Luke's sketch, at Mark's sketch, at John's sketch, and at Paul's sketch, and I say, with Isaiah, "Wonderful!"

I think that you are all interested in the story of Christ. You feel that he is the only one who can help you. You have unbounded admiration for the commander who helped his passengers ashore while he himself perished, but have you no admiration for him who rescued our souls, himself falling back into the waters from which he had saved us?

Christ was wonderful in the magnetism of his person. After the battle of Antietam, when a general rode along the lines, although the soldiers were lying down exhausted, they rose with great enthusiasm and huzzas. As Napoleon returned from his captivity, his first step on the wharf shook all the kingdoms, and two hundred and fifty thousand men joined his standard. It took three thousand troops to watch him in his exile. So there have been men of wonderful magnetism of person. But hear me while I tell you of a poor young man who came up from Nazareth to produce a thrill such as has never been excited by any other. Napoleon had around him the memories of Austerlitz and Jena, and Badajos; but here was a man who had fought no battles; who wore no epaulettes; who brandished no sword. He is no titled man of the schools, for he never went to school. He had probably never seen a prince, or shaken hands with a nobleman. The only extraordinary person we know of as being in his company was his own mother, and she was so poor that in the most delicate and solemn hour that ever comes to a woman's soul she was obliged to lie down amid camel drivers grooming the beasts of burden.

I imagine Christ one day standing in the streets of Jerusalem. A man descended from high lineage is standing beside him, and says, "My father was a merchant prince; he had a castle on the beach at Galilee. Who was your father?" Christ answers, "Joseph, the carpenter." A man from Athens is standing there unrolling his parchment of graduation, and says to Christ, "Where did you go to school?" Christ answers, "I never graduated." Alas! the idea of such an unheralded young man attempting to command the attention of the world! As well some little fishing village on Long Island shore attempt to arraign New York. Yet no sooner does he set his foot in the towns or cities of Judea than everything is in commotion. The people go out on a picnic, taking only food enough for the day, yet are so fascinated with Christ that, at the risk of starving, they follow him out into the wilderness. A nobleman falls down flat before him, and says, "My daughter is dead." A beggar tries to rub the dimness from his eyes and says, "Lord, that my eyes may be opened." A poor, sick, panting woman pressing through the crowd, says, "I must touch the hem of his garment." Children, who love their mother better than any one else, struggle to get into his arms, and to kiss his cheek, and to run their fingers through his hair, and for all time putting Jesus so in love with the little ones that there is hardly a nursery in Christendom from which he does not take one, saying, "I must have them; I will fill heaven with these; for every cedar that I plant in heaven I will have fifty white lilies. In the hour when I was a poor man in Judea they were not ashamed of me, and now that I have come to a throne I do not despise them. Hold it not back, oh, weeping mother; lay it on my warm heart. Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

What is this coming down the road? A triumphal procession. He is seated, not in a chariot, but on an ass; and yet the people take off their coats and throw them in the way. Oh, what a time Jesus made among the children, among the beggars, among the fishermen, among the philosophers! You may boast of self-control, but if you had seen him you would have put your arms around his neck and said, "Thou art altogether lovely."

Jesus was wonderful in the opposites and seeming antagonisms of his nature.

You want things logical and consistent, and you say, "How could Christ be God and man at the same time?" John says Christ was the Creator: "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made." Matthew says that he was omnipresent: "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Christ declares his own eternity: "I am Alpha and Omega." How can he be a lion, under his foot crushing kingdoms, and yet a lamb licking the hand that slays him? At what point do the throne and the manger touch? If Christ was God, why flee into Egypt? Why not stand his ground? Why, instead of bearing a cross, not lift up his right hand and crush his assassins? Why stand and be spat upon? Why sleep on the mountain, when he owned the palaces of eternity? Why catch fish for his breakfast on the beach in the chill morning, when all the pomegranates are his, and all the vineyards his, and all the cattle his, and all the partridges his? Why walk when weary, and his feet stone bruised, when he might have taken the splendors of the sunset for his equipage, and moved with horses and chariots of fire? Why beg a drink from the wayside, when out of the crystal chalices of eternity he poured the Euphrates, the Mississippi, and the Amazon, and dipping his hand in the fountains of heaven, and shaking that hand over the world, from the tips of his fingers dripping the great lakes and the oceans? Why let the Roman regiment put him to death, when he might have ridden down the sky followed by all the cavalry of heaven, mounted on white horses of eternal victory?

You can not understand. Who can? You try to confound me. I am confounded before you speak. Paul said it was unsearchable. He went climbing up from argument to argument, and from antithesis to antithesis, and from glory to glory, and then sank down in exhaustion as he saw far above him other heights of divinity unsealed, and exclaimed, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

Again: Christ was wonderful in his teaching. The people had been used to formalities and technicalities; Christ upset all their notions as to how preaching ought to be done. There was this peculiarity about his preaching, the people knew what he meant. His illustrations were taken from the hen calling her chickens together; from salt, from candles, from fishing tackle, from the hard creditor collaring a debtor. How few pulpits of this day would have allowed him entrance? He would have been called undignified and familiar in his style of preaching. And yet the people went to hear him. Those old Jewish rabbis might have preached on the sides of Olivet fifty years and never got an audience. The philosophers sneered at his ministrations and said, "This will never do!" The lawyers caricatured, but the common people heard him gladly. Suppose you that there were any sleepy people in his audiences? Suppose you that any woman who ever mixed bread was ignorant of what he meant when he compared the kingdom of heaven with leaven or yeast? Suppose you that the sunburned fishermen, with the fish-scales upon their hands, were listless when he spoke of the kingdom of heaven as a net? We spend three years in college studying ancient mythology, and three years in the theological seminary learning how to make a sermon, and then we go out to save the world; and if we can not do it according to Claude's "Sermonizing," or Blair's "Rhetoric," or Kames' "Criticism," we will let the world go to perdition. If we save nothing else, we will save Claude and Blair. We see a wreck in sight. We must go out and save the crew and passengers. We wait until we get on our fine cap and coat, and find our shining oars, and then we push out methodically and scientifically, while some plain shoeman, in rough fishing smack, and with broken oar lock, goes out and gets the crew and passengers, and brings them ashore in safety. We throw down our delicate oars and say, "What a ridiculous thing to save men in that way! You ought to have done it scientifically and beautifully." "Ah!" says the shoeman, "if these sufferers had waited until you got out your fine boat, they would have gone to the bottom."

The work of a religious teacher is to save men; and though every law of grammar should be snapped in the underdaking, and there be nothing but awkwardness and blundering in the mode, all hail to the man who saves a soul.

Christ, in his preaching, was plain, earnest and wonderfully sympathetic. We cannot dragon men into heaven. We cannot drive them in with the butt-end of a catechism. We waste our time in trying to catch flies with acids instead of the sweet honeycomb of the Gospel. We try to make crab-apples do the work of pomegranates.

Again: Jesus was wonderful in his sorrows. The sun smote him, and the cold chilled him, the rain pelted him, thirst parched him, and hunger exhausted him. Shall I compare his sorrow to the sea? No; for that is sometimes hushed into a calm. Shall I compare it with the night? No; for that sometimes gleams with Orion, or kindles with Aurora. If one thorn should be thrust through your temple you would faint. But here is a whole crown made from the Rhamnus of Spina Christi—small, sharp, stinging thorns. The mob makes a cross. They put down the long beam and on it they fasten a shorter beam. Got him at last. Those hands, that have been doing kindnesses and wiping away tears—hear the hammer driving the spikes through them. Those feet, that have been going about on ministrations of mercy—

battered against the cross. Then they lift it up. Look! look! look! Who will help him now? Cate, men of Jerusalem—ye whose dead he brought to life; ye whose sick he healed; who will help him? Who will seize the weapons of the soldiers? None to help! Having carried such a cross for us, shall we refuse to take our cross for him?

Shall Jesus bear the cross alone, And all the world go free? No; there's a cross for everyone, And there's a cross for me.

You know the process of grafting. You bore a hole in a tree, and put in the branch of another tree. This tree of the cross was hard and rough, but into the holes where the nails went there have been grafted branches of the Tree of Life that now bear fruit for all nations. The original tree was bitter, but the branches grafted were sweet, and now all the nations pluck the fruit and live for ever.

Again: Christ was wonderful in his victories. First—over the forces of nature. The sea is a crystal sepulchre. It swallowed the Central America, the President, and the Spanish Armada as easily as any fly that ever floated on it. The inland lakes are fully as terrible in their wrath. Galilee, when aroused in a storm is overwhelming, and yet that sea crouched in his presence and licked his feet. He knew all the waves and winds. When he beckoned they came. When he frowned, they fled. The heel of his foot made no indentation on the solidified water. Medical science has wrought great changes in rheumatic limbs and diseased blood, but when his muscles are entirely withered no human power can restore them, and when a limb is once dead, it is dead. But here is a paralytic—his hand lifeless. Christ says to him, "Stretch forth thy hand!" and he stretches it forth.

In the Eye Infirmary, how many diseases of that delicate organ have been cured! But Jesus says to one born blind, "Be open!" and the light of heaven rushes through gates that have never before been opened. The frost or an axe may kill a tree, but Jesus smites one dead with a word.

Chemistry can do many wonderful things, but what chemist, at a wedding, when the refreshments gave out, could change a pail of water into a cask of wine?

What human voice could command a school of fish? Yet here is a voice that marshals the scaly tribes, until in the place where they had let down the net and pulled it up with no fish in it, they let it down again, and the disciples lay hold and begin to pull, when, by reason of the multitude of fish, the net broke.

Nature is his servant. The flowers—he twisted them into his sermons; the winds—they were his lullaby when he slept in the boat; the rain—it hung glittering on the thick foliage of the parables; the star of Bethlehem—it sang a Christmas carol over his birth; the rocks—they beat a dirge at his death.

Behold his victory over the grave! The hinges of the family vault become very rusty because they are never opened except to take another in. There is a knob on the outside of the sepulchre, but none on the inside. Here comes the Conqueror of Death. He enters that realm and says, "Daughter of Jairus, sit up;" and she sat up. To Lazarus, "Come forth;" and he came forth. To the widow's son he said, "Get up from that bier," and he goes home with his mother. Then Jesus snatched up the keys of death, and hung them to his girdle, and cried until all the grave-yards of the earth heard him, "O Death! I will be thy plague! O Grave! I will be thy destruction!"

It is a beautiful moment when two persons who have pledged each other, heart and hand, stand in church, and have the banns of marriage proclaimed. Father and mother, brothers and sisters stand around the altar. The minister of Jesus gives the counsel; the ring is set, earth and heaven witness it; the organ sounds, and amid many congratulations they start out on the path of life together. Oh that this might be your marriage day! Stand up, immortal soul. The Beloved comes to get his betrothed. Jesus stretches forth his hand and says, "I will love thee with an everlasting love," and you respond, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." I put your hand in his, henceforth be one. No trouble shall part you—no time cool your love. Side by side on earth—side by side in heaven! Now let the blossoms of heavenly gardens fill the house with their redolence, and all the organs of God peel forth the wedding march of eternity. Hark! "The voice of my beloved! Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."

A Gum Game in Ohio.

The latest advertising "fake" to strike this city, says the Ashtabula, Ohio, News, is the chewing gum game. The makers of this gum put a coupon bearing one letter of the alphabet in each 5-cent package of the gum, and advertise that as soon as any one gets the letters that make certain words they will give him a present of a watch, bicycle or something of that kind. L. H. Smith, the teamster for Messrs. Richards Bros., wholesale grocers, is the first lucky purchaser of this kind of gum so far, for he has succeeded in acquiring the letters that make the words that entitled him to any \$100 bicycle in the market. He has more than enough of the letter "s" to win the bicycle, and if he had one "k" would be entitled to \$200 worth of diamonds. So intense is the interest manifested by some of the gum chewers that one of the trolley car conductors is said to have offered \$25 for the letter "w," which he needs to complete the words necessary to win a prize. Th w's, d's and e's seem to be the scarce letters.