

INVENTING GREAT MEN.

Plato on the whole, was a greater man than Rider Haggard, but if he were alive now, he would not make so much money by his books. Ibsen seems likely to die considerably poorer than the late Henry Pettitt, as far as money is concerned. Great philosophers and poets are apt to starve, because their wares are above the heads of the public, there is no demand, and, therefore no price, although the commodity offered is very scarce and precious. But when the ability is of a sort every one can appreciate, or, above all, that can make money or cure illness, there is no lack of demand.

Sometimes there is no lack of supply either; for instance, in the modern city, the policemen, the firemen, the sewer-men, are supposed to save property, life and health wholesale, yet their ability is to be had without stint for 24s a week or thereabout, because the supply is large. Not so the supply of popular painters, novelists, dramatists, consultant physicians, special pleaders and directors and organizers of industry. I say popular rather than able, for the public is often a very bad judge of ability.

For example, there died a short time ago a barrister who once acquired extraordinary celebrity as an Old Baily advocate, especially in murder cases. When he was at his zenith I read all his most famous defenses, and I can certify that he always missed the strong point in his client's case and the weak one in the case for the prosecution, and was, in short, the most homicidally incompetent imposter that ever bullied a witness or made a "moving," but useless appeal to a jury. Fortunately for him, the murderers were too stupid to see this; besides their minds were fully impressed with the number of clients of his who were hanged. So they always engaged him and added to his fame by getting hanged themselves in due course.

In the same way a surgeon will get a reputation as the only possible man to consult in cancer cases simply because he has cut off more breasts than anyone else. The fact that in all professions there is the first favorite means no more than the fact that there is only one editor of the "Times." It is not the man who is singular, but the position. The public imagination demands a best man everywhere, and if nature does not supply him, the public invents him. The art of humbug is the art getting invented in this way.

Every generation invents great men at whom posterity laughs when some accident makes it aware of them. Even in business the greatest reputations are sometimes the result of the glamour of the city superstition. I could point to a railway chairman reputed indispensable, whom the shareholders and the traveling public might with great profit send to St. Helena with a pension of \$10,000 a year.—Fortnightly Review.

POT POURRI.

"Une des demi mondes d'Omaha le plus populaire," said my friend as we walked down Farnam Street.

She was facing us, coming down the steps of a handsome house, and walked on past. She had the triple alliance of beauty, youth and health.

There was as yet more of nature than art in the roses in her cheeks, and the fine triumphant life in vein and nerve shone forth from the eyes, and gave token in that firm elastic step. So young too.

She had a sweet, winning face—Oh, how soon it would change! But it was very fair to look upon now, and the eyes were large and round, and full; they reminded me of other beautiful eyes I knew once, which years ago dropped their dark fringed lids under a northern sky. Her eyes haunted me for days, they were so like.

I was waiting on the corner in a carriage for a friend. Dust filled the air, the wind blew a gale. I heard a child's sharp cry, and saw the wind had blown a ragged little waif of a girl off the curbstone, scattering her basket and its contents broadcast. The little thing was hurt.

There was a spot of blood on her cheek and the little one was heartbroken over her loss.

Before she was fairly on her feet a gentle hand was helping her, and I saw the face and form belonged to her of the marvelous eyes.

Unseen myself, I could see it all. She took her embroidered handkerchief to wipe the tears and blood from the dirty little face; she reached under the wrappings for a long belt pin to fasten the ragged

little shawl securely; she smoothed her hair back as tenderly with her gloved hand as a mother might. Then she put the empty basket on the child's arm, a piece of money into the blue cold, little hand, and bending down she kissed the dirty, hungry, old-young face, and I heard her say softly, "I love little children."

Kissed her as kindly as if it had been a clean sweet face, with rosy lips. How that child's face lighted up! It was a perfect revelation. One read of neglect, poverty and baby tears as the one illuminated page shone forth.

Then they parted, and the watching angels drew the starry curtains and the Recording Scribe made an entry.

That picture was in my dreams for a week. The magical eyes haunted me still, and in my visions I heard two voices wonderfully blended somehow, and one said clear and sweet, "Tho thy sins—," and the other was in a wailing, minor key—"I love little children."

It was a child's funeral.

Her name was Daisy; a little flossy haired creature, who was known for blocks around. A sprite, who ran away—was here, there everywhere; who talked incessantly, and made everybody know her, whether or no.

And this baby was dead.

Such a merry little witch. We all loved her. The parlors were darkened, and filling with friends, when I saw one come with a beautiful crown made of the smallest white daisies, and laying it on the white casket, stop for an instant for a look at the beautiful sleeping child, and then, taking a distant chair, she sobbed like one bereft.

She was dressed in deepest mourning, and I did not recognize her till near the close of the services, when I caught a glimpse of those starry eyes, and, "I love little children," came back to me at once.

In a flash I saw it all. Somehow, somewhere, she had found this sweet little Daisy and learned to love her. Just a sidewalk acquaintance, but she loved little children. She had covered her identity in a crepe veil, that she might see her again—pass unknown through crowd and lay her daisy wreath beside the baby.

Why? Had she put away a little face under the grasses some day?

Was there a baby adrift somewhere that was her's, and for whom the mother's heart, through all its guilt, never ceased to mourn?

God knows.

AUGUSTA L. PACKARD.

Your dollar goes farthest in buying shoes at Herpolsheimer & Co.'s shoe department.

CHANGE, FATE—GOD.

Chance, on a quiet, shady street, happened dark-visaged fate to meet, and said, with careless, listless glance, "all things existing came by chance. There's nothing in predestiny, heartless and cold fatality, election, or foreordination. Whatever happens in creation, evil or good, 'tis clearly seen, is summed in this: It might have been, come, cast aside that sullen frown, and in bright joy your sorrows drown; let us be merry while we may, whether we live or die today. Come, let us in good fortune trust, and gather troubles when we must." Fate glowered on him with angry face, and hateful, vengeful, mad grimace. "I hold the reins; whate'er I say, will meet mankind in all his way, I shake the destinies of men, I care not whom, or where, or when; all feel the pressure of my hand, obeying, when I give command, and every saved or ruined soul is under my severe control, or great, or small, there's no event that may be called an accident; each day, and every passing hour I exercise my kingly power, and, with an enemy or friend, will do so until time shall end." This is the truth—deny who can; God made the world, and fashioned man, sun, moon and stars; the sea and land, came from his strong creative hand; and he it is who rules on high and fixes nature's destiny; but to his fallen creatures he exhibits kindly charity, and gives them ample power to choose all that is good, or to refuse. His laws we all may disobey, and wander from his holy way; but if we turn away from sin—from sin without, and sin within—His tender mercies will abound, and gracious pardon will be found.

EDGAR THORNE.

"The flowers that bloom in the spring" are not more vigorous than are those persons who purify their blood with Ayer's Sarsaparilla. The fabled Elixer Vite could scarcely impart greater vivacity to the countenance than this wonderful medicine.