

BELLONA'S HUSBAND.

I don't know how it got into print, but it did. It was in the column of personals, and ran thus:

Those contemplating suicide may learn something to their advantage by applying to the undersigned, room 42, Jackson building.

SIR SAGRAMOND.

The managing editor was very angry that such a notice should have been passed, but when he cooled off, he concluded an item might be made of it, and detailed me to hunt up the advertiser.

I found him in his office, seated at a roll top desk. When I told him I had called to see about that personal he smiled affably. Did I contemplate suicide?

"No," I said shortly, and then explained that I was a reporter.

"Oh! a reporter; well," said he, "perhaps this will be as good a good beginning as any other. All I want is an advertisement," and with that Mr. Sagramond opened a locker and showed me a big pile of cloth-bound books, one of which he gave me. It was entitled "Bellona's Husband."

Then he told me a long story about his reverses; how he was living with his wife and children in a flat; how he had tried to make a livelihood by his pen, and how he had failed.

"But there's my book," said he, enthusiastically. "You take it home and read it. I know you'll say it's the greatest book of the age—of my age. What is it about? Oh! it is about the meaning of life and the nature of the soul. It solves the mystery of the Ego."

I said it was very important to have that matter cleared up, and if the book did it the boom will follow without any help from me; but how about that personal? What did he want with his proposed suicides, and what advantages had he to offer them?

Then he told me his reverses, serious as they were, had not left him entirely destitute; he had several thousand dollars at his disposal, and this money he proposed to put in the hands of trustees for the benefit of the families of those who should depart this life under certain easy conditions of his selection.

"A man comes in, for instance, and tells me that life has become a torture because he has lost all his property, can't get employment and his wife and children are starving. I don't intend to black-guard him for a fool or coward, but I shall say, 'Sir, you are perfectly justified; the time has come for you to go. Would it ease your mind to know that your family had a comfortable little sum in bank?' Of course he says it would ease it materially. Then I tell him my plan. He is to shoot himself, let us say. Well, he is to do it right in front of a desk or table with my book open, and some striking passage underscored, such as 'The inevitable is not debatable,' or 'There are two ways of acquiring happiness—one by getting wealth, the other by limiting desire.'

"When the policeman and reporters come in my book will be found and mentioned in the papers, and in that way ultimately I expect to get the public ear."

Of course when I reported the facts my chief told me to pay no further attention to it. I think his idea was that Sir Sagramond was deranged. I confess it was mine. To be sure I had his book, and I ought perhaps to have read it, but I didn't, at least not then.

And yet, after all, the man was not deranged. A month or so after that a poor non-union printer died in a miserable den on the East side from an overdose of laudanum. It was mentioned in the papers that on the pallet beside him was an open copy of a book entitled "Bellona's Husband."

A few weeks later a traveling salesman was discovered in his room at a cheap hotel on the Bowery, asphyxiated by gas, and on the bureau "Bellona's Husband." This time the circumstance was commented upon by the press as a singular coincidence.

Next month an elderly man "either fell or threw himself from a window of an upper story of an office building down town." The papers stated that he was frightfully mangled, and that nothing of any value was found upon his person except "Bellona's Husband."

This set the boom going in earnest. Some of the comical papers that keep witty men on their staffs for such purposes, indulged in ill timed jests concerning the value of the book; others gave copious extracts from it, some—most in fact—in disparagement; but all helped; all served to boom the book. The leading reviews discussed it and the sales soon grew to be enormous. Whenever they flagged a little a corpse was safe to turn to turn up somewhere under conditions to help on the sales.

Sir Sagramond is famous enough now. He can name his own terms with publishers and is made a lion of generally. I have read "Bellona's Husband" and, while I cannot say truthfully that it has absolutely solved the mystery of the Ego, still, it is in its way entertaining. However, don't let me prejudice your opinion. If you are at all interested you might send to the publishers and get it.—HULOR GENONE in *Kate Field's Washington*.

DETERMINED ON REFORM.

Warden (to convict). "Your term of imprisonment expires today." Convict. "I am glad to hear it."

"I hope that from now you will lead an honest, upright life,"

"You bet I will!"

"Are you sure that you will not return to your evil ways?"

"Never again will I be up to anything crooked."

"You can go now."

The released convict hesitates.

"Why don't you go? What are you waiting for?"

"Ain't you going to give me back my dark lantern and my jimmy and the rest of my professional implements?"—*Exchange*.

IN HER OWN RIGHT.

Pearl Passe—Yes, dear papa is very generous. On my birthday anniversaries he always gives me a dollar for each year I have lived.

Yulle Younger—Indeed? That must have been the money Charley Gayboy meant when he said you had a fortune in your own right.

With pure, vigorous blood coursing through the veins and animating every fibre of the body, cold weather is not only endurable but pleasant and agreeable. No other blood medicine is so certain in its results as Ayer's Sarsaparilla. What it does for others it will do for you.

Rheumatic Twinges

Are escaped by the use of HUMPHREY'S SPECIFIC NO. 15. The infallible cure for rheumatism, sciatica and lumbago. For sale by all druggists. 25c.

If its something very nice you want either in millinery, gloves, hosiers or corsets see us. Famous.

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report

Royal Baking Powder
ABSOLUTELY PURE