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WALTER WELLMAN DECIDES NOT TO BE A CAPITALIST.

He Arrives at This Sage Conclusion After a Voyage on a Millionaire's Yacht. An Idaho Monte Cristo's Disappointing Experience in Washington Society.

[Special Correspondence.]

AT SEA, OFF LONG ISLAND, Sept. 15.—I was trained a practical printer, and I love the printing business; my vocation is that of a newspaper writer, and I love that.

To me it has always seemed, as I doubt not it has to you, dear reader, that an ideal existence would be possession of a big fortune, with no worry about income save how to spend it, with no demand on one's energies save pursuit of new plans for having fun.

But I take it all back. I do not want to be a capitalist. I will stick to the newspaper business, working hard for a living, racking my dull brain to please both readers and managing editor, and when I fall back done for, worked out, no longer able to satisfy public and employer—as it is said all writers fall back sooner or later—I will take up the stick and rule and set type. Anything but being a capitalist.

This change of heart is due to a knowledge which I have recently acquired of the capitalistic business. I have discovered that it is not what it is cracked up to be. I have studied an object lesson in capitalism till I have become convinced it is a thing to be shunned as we would fly from the nimble germ of cholera or the insidious bacillus of yellow fever.

It is not nice to sit down and gossip about one's host—to use him as an object lesson—but in this instance I deliberately violate good taste in order to accomplish the worthy purpose of convincing hundreds of thousands of readers who are not capitalists, but who yearn to be capitalists, that they will be much better off if they remain what they are.

Two or three years ago out in Idaho was a young miner. He worked with his hands down in the bowels of the earth, wielding a pick or a spade, sometimes for others at so much per day, sometimes for himself in claims located by himself or partners. He was a steady and industrious young man, and in course of time saved up \$12,000 or \$15,000.

Another miner had a claim for sale and offered it to our hero. The latter, whose name was De Lamar, examined the mine with the alertness and acuteness of an expert. He concluded it was a good thing and offered \$7,000 for it. But this offer was not accepted. The owner had hopes of getting a bigger price from Senator Jones, of Nevada, whose agent was at that very moment inspecting the property.

Senator Jones is one of the keenest men in the world on mines, now that Senator Hearst is dead. If he had gone to Idaho himself he would have bought this mine if it had cost him \$500,000. But his agent was not enthusiastic, and the best the senator would do was \$10,000. Young De Lamar saw this \$10,000 and went it \$2,000 better, and for \$12,000 the mine became his.

He knew he had a good thing, but his wildest dreams had never pictured the reality. In three months the promising mine—had been developed into one of the richest finds in all Idaho. Instead of thousands it was worth millions.

All good things come to New York for a market. De Lamar brought his mine to Gotham, but was induced to go on to London. "New York has silver, but London has gold," said Tom Ochiltree to whom the young Idaho miner had been introduced. "London is the place to finance a big thing. Over there millions lie idle yearning for investment."

So De Lamar and Ochiltree went on to London. The latter had entree over there. He knew clubmen, lords, millionaires galore. He was popular with them because his stories had made them laugh. They had confidence in him because he was trusted by John Mackay, although perhaps they didn't know that Mackay paid Ochiltree \$5,000 a year to entertain him—\$5,000 a year to be a millionaire's court clown. De Lamar knew this, but he didn't care. "Tom is a good fellow and earns his money, and he is a square man and can get in with those rich nobles on the other side, and that's all I want."

They did get in with the nobles on the other side. They talked mine to them. Experts were sent all the way to Idaho. The surveys and assays were verified, for nowadays our English friends don't buy American mines with their eyes shut. And finally a London company bought a two-thirds interest in Mr. De Lamar's mine for about \$800,000—\$8,000,000. This great sum was paid in cash, and thus it was my host became a capitalist.

In addition to the \$8,000,000 in cash he still owned a third of the mine, and as it proved to be very, very rich the income from his share has been more than young De Lamar could spend, let alone the principal and the interest upon it!

"Lucky De Lamar," the world said. "Lucky boy," he said to himself. Then he started out to enjoy his millions. The world was at his feet. He could, with the magic power of money, do almost anything which he might chance to want to do. He had dreams of pleasures, triumph, of luxury.

For about a year and a half De Lamar has tasted the delights of great wealth—and he is tired of it. He is weary of being a capitalist. He almost wishes him self back in the mines, pick in hand, dinner pail waiting for him at the shaft.

De Lamar has had a strange, a unique career for eighteen months. He has

been a man marked by his wealth. He has been set apart from the remainder of mankind by his \$3,000,000 or \$4,000,000 in spot cash. And I greatly fear his gold has put an impenetrable netting about him, keeping him from the sweets of life—the sweets of life from him.

First he tried society at Washington. He had known Russell Harrison in Montana and rather liked him. Prince Russell "took him up" at the capital, introduced him, and I suppose borrowed money from him. Having millions, the young miner was much sought. But being a man of good sense, he didn't enjoy having people run after him simply because he was rich. You see, the fly in De Lamar's ointment is that he is a man as well as a millionaire. If he were a cad he would be perfectly happy.

For instance, in Washington he drove a span of beautiful Russian horses. He was fond of taking to drive the people he liked, but when these same people contrived to work the society columns of the papers for advertising on account of the ride De Lamar was disgusted. He liked Russell Harrison and Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. McKee, because they were kind to him and good companions, and he gave a dinner to Mrs. McKee, at which the flowers cost a cool \$500; the electric lights, arranged for beautiful and novel effects, \$1,000, and a singer, imported from New York, an even \$1,500. Mr. De Lamar did not care for expenses; his only aim was to please his friends. But when the newspapers wrote up the dinner, as the newspapers know how to do, he was sorry he had given it. He wants pleasure for his friends and himself; he does not want notoriety.

Of course, you perceive his difficulty. If he live and entertain modestly, people say he is miserly with his great wealth; if he does the generous thing, as it is always his impulse to do, they say he is making a splurge with his money—that he is a golden calf.

Another instance of the disadvantages of being a capitalist, and also an example of our hero's good sense—the diplomatic set in Washington took him up, of course. The young attaches tied to him because he had horses and dinners and generosity. Good naturedly he humored them; made up coaching parties, paying all bills; bought all the boxes at the theater, turned it over to the attaches and their ladies, winding up with a rich supper at the Shoreham.

How did the attaches return this courtesy? As cards might be expected to return it. They left their cards at Mr. De Lamar's hotel, instead of calling on him. One day in the hotel office De Lamar surprised a group of them who had left cards and were about to disappear. His patience was exhausted, and his western frankness came to the front.

"D—n you fellows," said he, "why don't you come up to my room and call like men? I am not a born aristocrat, but I appear to be good enough for you to associate with elsewhere. It happens that I have plenty of money, while you chaps have what your fathers give you. But what difference does that make? If you want to be friendly, ask me around the corner to have a glass of beer, offer me one of your infernal cigarettes, or do something to show you are friends. That's all I want."

The attaches were greatly shocked. They talked of challenging De Lamar, but didn't. The Idaho Monte Cristo soon left Washington, convinced that society there was hollow, insincere, tuff hunting. He tried Europe and didn't like it any better. He tried Newport, and found no relief there. Then he came down to New York.

Here, as elsewhere, life was made a burden. The beggars were after him—well dressed, plausible beggars. Schemers and borrowers sought him out. His mail was full of plaintive appeals, delusive offers. Women lay in wait for him by the thousands—some on their own account, some for their marriageable daughters.

While a poor man he had helped one girl to secure an education and to win success on the stage. When this became known thousands of stagestruck maidens besieged him. Actresses were after him to secure his assistance in starting their companies on the road.

Imagine the unfortunate lot of this young man. It is impossible for him to stir without being pointed out as the rich De Lamar, who has \$3,000,000 in gold cash. The waiters know him, cab drivers know him, everybody knows him. If he were a fool, like Coal Oil Johnny, he would throw his money around and have fun seeing the human monkeys scramble for it. But he is a man of good sense, with the instincts of a gentleman—a rough diamond; he is not fond of drink, of vice in any form, nor of gaming.

He would like to enjoy life, but hasn't found the means. He has much money, with which he is generous, but he doesn't propose to be made a dupe of by scheming men and women, and half the time is spent protecting that which he values more than his money—his reputation for shrewdness, tact and discernment.

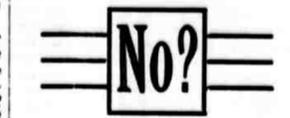
Finally the pressure became so great in New York that De Lamar bought this yacht to make his escape in. Inviting his friends aboard, he cruises about. He enjoys good companionship, bright but sensible conversation, better than more dashing pursuits of pleasure. He is himself unaffected, keen, sympathetic, unspoiled by luck. His chief fault or misfortune is his possession of three or four millions of money. Some day perhaps he will become desperate enough to throw his millions overboard and be happy!

WALTER WELLMAN.

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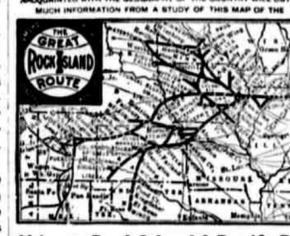
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