MASTER WALLER, DIPLOMATIST

THE proudest sometimes unbend, and the Botanical Gardens were, for one afternoon, throwing off their usual reserve. Ordinary folk had only to come across Regent's Park from Chester Gate and present a card at the entrance to the gardens, and the bowler-hatted old gentleman at the gate welcomed them as though they were most important members. Miss Llewellyn and Master Kenneth Waller, her friend, walked on the grass in the direction of music.

"Anybody you know here, Miss Llewellyn?"

"I don't suppose so, Kenneth."

"You don't know many people, do you, Miss Llewellyn?"

"Very few."

"Wonder at that," said the small boy, "because you're not bad-looking, you know. Did you use to come here when you were well off? Do they sell lemonade here?"

"Seems possible. You think that everybody ought to have plenty of friends?"

"Plenty of friends," said Kenneth, wisely, "but one in particular. Wonder how old you are?"

"That," said the young woman, good-temperedly, "that is the only question, Kenneth, that you must never put to a lady."

"I should guess," he said, critically, as they sat down in the low chairs near the refreshment tent and watched the people, "that you were about 26." Miss Llewellyn gave a quaint gesture of horror. "Well, 25, then. Fancy!" The small boy whistled amazedly. "Twenty-five and not married yet."

"Young man," said Miss Llewellyn, flushing and affecting a tone of grave severity, "I find your conversation much too personal. You would like lemonade, I think, and two pieces of cake."

The scarlet coated band perched on seats near the glasshouse, with a crowd of smartly dressed folk in front of them, started a cheerful selection from a comic opera. Miss Llewellyn, a composed young woman in an ordinary way, as young women are who work for their living, found herself in quite a delighted mood. Music can do much when it tries.

"Of course," said her candid guest, with cake at his mouth, "I don't mean to say that you mightn't get married even now. I had an aunt once who was close upon 30 before she could get any one to look at her."

"The instance is encouraging, Kenneth. Don't eat too fast, mind."

"Still," said the youth wisely, "if I were a girl I should be jolly careful not to miss a good opportunity. Are those orchids they're carrying there? Hasn't that chap got a brown face who's telling the men where to take them? Seem to have seen him somewhere before. Shouldn't like to be an orchid, should you, Miss Llewellyn? Why, you'd have to grow out in South America, and people would have fearful trouble to find you, and risk their lives— Hullo! Brown-faced chap's coming this way."

Miss Llewellyn looked up and then looked down again quickly, and for a moment her face went rather white. Her hand trembled as she held it out.

"Mr. Bradley," she said. "How do you do? I did not expect to see you here."

"I did not expect to see you again anywhere," he said.

There was the pause that comes after the banalities of greeting. Master Waller, not having spoken for quite half a minute, felt that he was in some danger of being overlooked, and coughed.

"This is my little friend, Kenneth Waller," she said. "Kenneth, this is Mr. Bradley."

"What's the matter with your face?" asked the small boy. "Have you been abroad?"

Mr. Bradley placed a broad fist on the round iron table and leaned down towards Master Waller good-naturedly. He seemed as confused at the meeting as Miss Llewellyn, and as unprepared with conversation.

"I have been abroad, young man. I've been hunting orchids."

"Are you home for good now?" asked Kenneth.

Miss Llewellyn gripped the parasol that rested in her lap with both hands.

"I can't do any good at home," said Mr. Bradley. "I am off again to South America in a day or two."

"Why don't you stay in London?"

"Nobody asks me to stay."

"Should have thought," said Master Waller, "that you could have got somebody to do that. Have you any foreign postage stamps about you?"

Friendship between the two gentlemen was cemented and made permanent by the production of several foreign stamps and an envelope to place them in. People were coming up to the refreshment tent now, the band having decided to rest for half an hour and recover breath, and Master Waller invited Mr. Bradley to take his chair.

"You don't mind?" asked Bradley of Miss Llewellyn.

"Not at all," she said, politely.

"May I smoke?"

"Let me strike the match," interposed Master Waller. "I'm awfully good at that. And tell us some of your adventures."

"They wouldn't interest Miss Llewellyn."

"Girls don't count," Master Waller. "Tell me. Make it," said Master Waller, appealingly, "one where you nearly lost your life."

Ten or fifteen minutes were thus occupied, the small boy seated on Bradley's knee and staring at him with open-mouthed astonishment. Miss Llewellyn, her head bowed, studied the band program in apparently a laborious search for the misprints that a musical program always offers. Bradley told the story very well, without obtruding his own share in the adventure, and when he had finished, punched the small boy humorously to bring him back from South America to Regent's Park.

"And is that story true?" asked the small boy, respectfully.

"It has that drawback, youngster."

"Well," said Master Waller, "I'm a man that's awfully fond of adventure, but I shouldn't care for that. What did you think of when that fierce animal was waiting to spring upon you?"

"Guess."

"Can't," said Master Waller. "Can you, Miss Llewellyn?"

She shook her head, and again became interested in the band program. Bradley looked at her and waited for her to speak, but she made no sign. Now, silence may at times be tolerable for grown-up folk, but for impatient young men like Master Waller it brings nothing but weariness.

"Is there any chance of seeing the orchids, Mr. Bradley?" asked the youth. "It'll be something to brag about to my people if I could just get a sight of them."

"We'll all go over to the marquee and have a look. Miss Llewellyn, will you come, or shall we leave you here? There's rather a crush."

"Let's leave her," suggested Master Waller. "Miss Llewellyn likes being alone."

"I think I will stay here," she said.

"We shall be back in ten minutes," said Bradley.

Master Waller had to trot to keep up with the long strides of his new friend, but he did not mind this, because he felt a kind of reflected glory in being accompanied by the man who had brought home some of the rarest of the amazing specimens in the crowded tent.

"Girls are a nuisance, aren't they?" said Master Waller, looking up confidentially.

"Sometimes," said Bradley.

"She isn't so tiresome, though, as some."

"I think I agree with you there."

"Works awfully hard. Too hard, my mamma says."

"No necessity for that, surely," said Bradley, rather sharply.

"But Miss Llewellyn has to live," urged the small boy. "My mamma says that she was well off for a year or two before her father died, but since that——"

"Her father dead?"

"Here, I say," said Master Waller. "Don't grip a man's shoulder like that."

"Sorry!"

"They come into money, so my mamma says, a few years ago——"

"I remember that."

"And then Miss Llewellyn's governor put all into something, and it never came out again. That's why she has to manage the calisthenic school that I go to. And I say! Can you touch your toes with the tips of your fingers without——"

"Where does she live now?" Mr. Bradley seemed excited.

"In rooms," replied Master Waller, volubly. "I've been there to tea along with my sisters. (That's a fine orchid there. You can't see it now; a girl's hat's in the way.) And Miss Llewellyn's got awfully nice furniture and photographs, and——" Master Waller slapped his knee suddenly. "I remember now where I've seen your face before, Mr. Bradley. Only without the short beard."

"Come outside," said Bradley, "and tell me."

They made their way through the crowd and reached the exit. Bradley held his breath and bent to hear the small boy's reply.

"On her dressing table," whispered Master Waller, confidentially, "in the beautifullest frame you ever saw, and—— Where are you going?"

"Back to Miss Llewellyn," cried Bradley.

"Well, but," said Master Waller, protestingly, "wait for me."

Bradley did not obey the young man. He strode across the lawn, past the band, which was playing a quick march that was not quick enough to keep pace with him. Before Master Waller found the two there had been a swift exchange of low sentences that altered their views of the world, and made them both think of it as a place where happiness is to be found.

"And why did you refuse me before, dear?"

"Because all my people pressed me to accept you," said Miss Llewellyn.

"The excuse of a very obstinate young woman."

"Why did you—why did you not ask me again?" she demanded.

"Because," said Bradley, "it was just then that your father came into that money."

"The excuse of a very independent man," said Miss Llewellyn, touching with pretty affection the big hand that rested on the round table. "When—when it is that you leave for South America?"

"Not until you tell me to go, dear," he said, promptly.

"Here, I say," cried Master Waller, arriving after some difficulty. "You two! Don't lose sight of me, mind. Miss Llewellyn, have I been a good boy?"

"I've a great mind to kiss you, Kenneth," she said.

"Rather have some more lemonade."

"As Kenneth declines your suggestion," said Bradley, signaling to a waiter, "may I venture to submit myself——"

"Hush!" said Miss Llewellyn.—The Woman at Home.

DRESS COST $40,000.

Gown Exhibited in Chicago Made for the Czarina, but Rejected.

The famous $40,000 coronation robe made by the ambitious Mme. Barutti, of Paris, for the Czarina of Russia was placed on exhibition in Chicago recently. The robe, which is the finest ever shown in America, and one of the finest ever seen at any time in the world's history, was viewed by thousands of people.

The costly gown is a wonderful creation of gold thread, ermine, white satin and royal purple velvet. Not a jewel was used on it, but $10,000 worth of gold thread and $7,000 worth of royal ermine were fashioned into the gown during the two years it took Mme. Barutti to complete it.

The history of the royal robe is as interesting as its folds are luxurious. Royalty never wore the gown, although it was made for the Czarina, but without her knowledge. When the old Czar of Russia died, Mme. Barutti announced that she had been commissioned to make the robe for the Czarina. She hastened to carry out her plans. After many months she began showing the gown to her creditors, who were harassing her, for she owed more than 6,000,000 francs. Ambitious to become the royal dressmaker for all the houses of Europe and hoping thus to recoup her lost fortunes and clear up her credit, Mme. Barutti convinced her tradesmen her day was coming and secured further credit from them.

The time arrived, however, when she saw the robe would not grace the coronation, and Mme. Barutti went to the room where the gown was displayed and killed herself. The gown and all she owned were sold at auction, and finally came into the possession of a New York firm.

The great mantle, twenty-seven feet long, is the main part of the gown. It is of royal purple velvet, trimmed with white satin ribbons and a wealth of gold thread, and lined with 1,500 royal ermine skins. The gown proper is decollete, of double thickness of white satin. The train extends 100 inches from the waist, and is bordered with a gold fringe two inches wide. Every detail of the wonderful robe is elaborately wrought. The scattered gold decorations and scroll work, the rich laces and heavy satin make it a modiste's dream.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

PROFESSIONAL PRAYER.

The Odd Business of an Old Negress in New Orleans.

"In one of the more unique quarters of New Orleans I have found one of the most unique characters I ever saw, in an old negro washerwoman," said a man who has lately taken up his residence in one of the more popular avenues of the city, "and she seems to be proceeding along original lines in the main purpose of her life. Washing clothes seems to be a mere incident to the general plan she carries out. She is an interesting old character, and can quote copiously from the Bible. This seems to be a hobby with her. She has some kind of construction to put on every line she quotes, too. She can tell you just exactly what it means from her way of looking at it. But this is not the point I had in mind.

"Several days ago I got into conversation with the old woman, and she asked me if I didn't have some family washing to give her. I told her I did not, but encouraged the conversation, as I have a fondness for the negro of the ante-bellum type, finding them always very interesting. She finally threw a quotation from the Bible at me, and it was followed by another, and still another, and so on. 'Say, boss,' she said after a while, 'does yo' ever have anybody to do any prayin' fo' yo'?' I told her I did not, and, becoming more interested in the old woman, I got her to unfold her whole scheme to me. She did it without any sort of hesitation.

"She is a professional prayer, and makes no small sum out of it from what she told me. She told me she was praying once a week for the lady next door, who had employed her to pray for her husband to quit drinking, although he is a very light drinker, to my own knowledge. The old woman seemed to be very proud of her calling, and whatever other people may say about it she is an enthusiastic believer in the efficacy of her own prayers."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Fire Engine Trolley Cars.

A special trolley car for conveying fire engines is in use at Springfield, Mass. The engine is carried on a platform only nine and one-half inches above the top of the rail, mounted on a truck at each end. The front truck is detached and the front end of the platform lowered to the ground when the engine is to be loaded on the car. Platforms over each truck afford space for firemen and equipment. The length of the car over all is thirty feet ten and a half inches and its net weight is 14,000 pounds. The Springfield fire department has loaded an engine on one of these cars in two and one-quarter minutes from the time the car was in position to its being ready to start, and has unloaded an engine and attached the horses to it in one and one-quarter minutes.

About the maddest thing on this earth is a woman wearing a white dress caught down town in a rainstorm.

When one reflects how popular modest men are, it seems strange that egotists continue to increase and multiply.

OLD KING COAL'S CENTENNIAL.

February 11, 1802, First Piece Was Burned at Wilkesbarre.

It was on February 11, 1802, that a few of the pioneer residents of Wilkesbarre, then a rude backwoods settlement, gathered in the old log tavern to watch the experiment of making fuel of the "black rock" which cropped up plentifully in and about the town. A grate was specially constructed for the purpose and the trial was made. It is needless to say that the experiment was a complete success.

Wilkesbarre, the birthplace of this wonderful fuel product, came in later years to be the center of the greatest coal-producing region on the globe, and itself a busy, thriving, prosperous little city, still increasing steadily in numbers, wealth and power. The rude grate in which the first coal was burned is sacredly preserved as the most cherished relic of old times in Wilkesbarre. It has been twice stolen and twice recovered after a long and weary search. It is now carefully guarded from envious and thieving hands.

From the handful of "black rock" burned that winter day before the curious eyes of the old pioneers a mighty and far-reaching industry has sprung, an industry which has revolutionized modern trade and commerce and added untold billions to the wealth of the world. The handful of "black rock," says Leslie's Weekly, has grown into an annual product of over 250,000,000 tons in America alone, with a value exceeding $200,000,000, more than half of this being credited to the State of Pennsylvania, where the industry had its birth.

Servants in Paris Are Being Banished

Paris, just now, is more or less excited over a new phase of social life which is known by the name "Corinthianism." It sems entirely too magnificent a title for anything of the kind. It really looks to such simplicity in life as will result gradually in the disappearance of the domestic servant. It is an application of the theory of self-help to domestic life to a degree astonishing to persons unfamiliar with the eccentricities of Paris life. Even the efforts at economical reform are not seriously regarded there.

The quality of "Corinthianism" is shown best by a dinner party at which the guests are believers in the new doctrine. The guests cook the meal, lay the table, and two of the youngest persons present act as waiters. This is the quality which the French are supposed to prize so highly, applied to social life. In the household, of course, every person is expected to do his own work.

The adherents of "Corinthianism" contend that it solves the servant question in addition to conforming to the highest social rules. It restores people to the original state in which no classes existed and conforms to other high social standards. It may do all these admirable things, but there are yet many persons who think that it would be better not to give a dinner party at all than to have the guests cook the dinner.—New York Sun.

King of Rats.

Rats proclaim their monarch on account of his gray hairs—he is always an ancient and wise-headed warrior. He fights his way to the front; but it is not only that that gives him the throne—it is his cunning. The rat tribe celebrates his coronation in an almost human way. The whole tribe of the house or granary gathers, and the big monster steps out and sniffs the air. He grates his teeth wickedly, daring any rival to come and try his luck; and, if none offers, he is thenceforth given the lead in all matters. If a house is unsafe or a ship unfit for sea, the king it is who leads the tribe away in time; and his subjects never molest him when he helps himself to the pick of the food or the best nesting place, and his family enjoys the same distinction.

How the Nickname Originated.

Time and again in the world's history has a name applied in derision been adopted by the persons sneered at and later been considered with pride. Gotham, New York's alias, was originally applied in derision, doubtless because of some alleged foolishness of New Yorkers, the name being taken from "The Merry Tales of the Madmen of Gotham," satirical stories written in the fifteenth century by Adam Borde, a Carthaginian monk, who afterward died in the Tower of London.

How He Celebrated.

As an instance of the overpowering strength of the human desire to make a noise somehow during times of rejoicing a story is told in London of a commonly sane and sober citizen who, upon hearing of the recent declaration of peace in South Africa, went outside his house and violently rang his own door bell until he felt calmer.

Just Resentment.

"What's the Armless Wonder mad about?"

"Oh, he says he dozed a little, and the manager came along and yelled out, 'Stir your stumps!'"—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Perfumes Known of Old.

The records left by the Phoenicians, Assyrians and ancient Persians show that among all those nations the use of perfumes was very common.

Woman is a good listener when she can't think of anything to say.

TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

The beauty of a woman who paints isn't even skin deep.

This country has almost too many patriots for pie only.

Misery is like a marriageable young lady; it loves company.

When pride heads the procession poverty always brings up the rear.

Exceptions prove the rule; that's why the golden rule is so firmly established.

Emperor William says no man can afford to put in more than forty-five minutes at his dinner.

Life may be worth living and it may not—it all depends on whether it's your life or the other fellow's.

Schwab is going to have a $3,350,000 home in New York. He must intend to remain in this country.

The J. J. Hill line from Duluth to Labrador, if built, might be able to reduce the price of ice a trifle.

If at the age of 40 a man meets a woman he thought he loved at 20 he is apt to believe that luck is with him after all.

The wedding presents received by W. H. Vanderbilt's granddaughter amounted in value to $1,300,000. It pays to marry a girl like that.

An old bachelor says the only difference between a wedding and a hanging is that with the former a man's troubles begin and with the latter they end.

Queen Alexandra has bought a book written by President Roosevelt. Emperor William will have to hurry now and do something else to keep up the friendly relations.

It is the sheerest folly to permit a state of war to exist between labor and capital. All differences should be settled by peaceful methods and in a way to secure the broadest justice to all. Conflicts between employers and employed will inevitably arise, but they should be settled without inconveniencing the general public and without increasing the cost of living of those not responsible for the existing differences.

An over-enthusiastic priest delivered a powerful arraignment of people who go on Sunday excursions, and at the end of the service discovered that a large part of his congregation were members of an excursion party. The excursionists could not but believe that when they had paid their respects to the priest's reputation for eloquence, he had taken special pains to reprimand and offend them. His explanation that he had not known them at all was not accepted with good grace. But why should they feel offended, even had the priest been aware of their identity? And why should the priest feel called upon to explain? Why shoot sermons into the air? Why not aim right at the spot and hit hard at the right time? If Sunday excursions are wrong, why not say so, knowingly and intentionally, to guilty ones caught in the very act? Why should people go twenty-five miles to hear a distinguished preacher and then expect him to talk on the sins of other people and not on their own? Can it be possible that any church-going people want the minister to scandalize the doings of other folks and give no spiritual guidance for their own cases? The explanation made is said to have been profuse, but certainly it was not profuse enough on either side.

It is a matter for regret that the Army Board has decided that green shall supplant blue as the color in soldiers' uniforms. The regret is sentimental, for blue surrounds the trooper of the Union as a halo. This question of clothing for men in the field has long been discussed in war offices of the different governments, the object being to make the men as inconspicuous as possible. British forces in South Africa wore a khaki of dull brown which would harmonize with the rock-ribbed land in which operations were carried on. American experts believe that green is the best color, because of the probability that active operations in the future will be conducted in countries where foliage is abundant. Experience on these lines was gained in Cuba and the Philippines and as all new possessions of the United States are in tropical countries, the probabilities are that any wars of the future will be carried on in lands where green is the prevailing color, so that theory urges the advisability of clothing troopers in harmony with the grass and bushes in which they will be concealed, to the end that they may be less readily detected by the enemy. But the passing of the blue will be accompanied by a wave of sorrow throughout the land. It is woven in song and story; it has become part of history; it has been a synonym of the Union.

"If you want to know what a man is, examine his castles in the air," said a old, sick pauper in an English workhouse to a writer for the Spectator. The obstacle to following the advice, and thus increasing our knowledge of human nature, is that these same castles are off the line of our railways, and that, even if we reach the portcullis, we are all too likely to be without the password. What we should like to be is a deeper secret even than what we are. We know that Raphael aspired to be a poet instead of a painter, and that "Dante once prepared to paint an angel." The boy has visions of his triumphs at the bar or in the laboratory. The girl dreams of fame as a novelist or a singer, or of social power and charm. These are natural enough. But the really interesting question is, "What is the air-castle of the man or woman who in the eyes of the world has scored a brilliant success?" In nine cases out of ten it would be found to be in the nature of a return to simplicity. The rich banker dreams of the joys of the farmer; the woman of society pictures to herself the grateful solitude of life on a remote ranch. She may even sigh for the quiet of the convent, notwithstanding its stern rules. What seems monotony to the villager promises peace to the weary dweller in the great city. A glimpse of a hundred air-castles would discover in scores of instances that the desire for luxury and display had given way in the world of dreams to a new regime of "plain living and high thinking."

One of the most important acts of the late session of Congress which is of especial interest to the States in the Mississippi Valley is the adoption of the bill introduced by Congressman Page Morris, of Duluth, providing for the creation of a national park forest reservation at the headwaters of the Mississippi. The creation of this forest reserve in order to preserve the water supply of the Mississippi has been urged upon Congress for years, and it is largely due to the perseverance of a public-spirited Chicagoan, Colonel John S. Cooper, who was backed by twenty-one other Chicagoans, as well as prominent citizens of other cities, that the foundation for a most extensive forest reservation has been laid at this session. Under the Morris bill, which has been agreed upon by conference committees of both houses, there will be a forest reserve of nearly 250,000 acres, covering the head waters of the Mississippi, and which will be purchased from the Chippewa Indians. The advocates of a forest reserve sought to have the entire Chippewa reservation of 650,000 acres retained, but were forced to be content with reserving only 250,000 acres at this session, owing to the economical spirit that appears to have seized Congress. The reservation of this tract, however, removes the danger that now exists that the lands of the Chippewa reservation may be denuded of timber and the sources of the great "father of waters" dried up. Of the Chippewa reservation 250,000 acres are covered with pine and 218,000 acres are under water, there being 97 lakes and seven rivers in the tract. The bill not only represents an important beginning in the work of preserving the water supply of the Mississippi Valley, but means that the government is about to undertake the scientific preservation of our forests.

Once there was a man who sued another man because the other man's dog chased his cat. He said his cat had suffered from nervous derangement ever afterwards and that her value as a household pet had been impaired. The attorney for the defendant held that the dog had not chased the cat out of any malicious desire to derange her nervous system, but simply out of good humor and regard for tradition. He was taking advantage of the inherent, inalienable, and immemorial right the dog has always had to chase the cat whenever he pleased. A similar right has been established for the dog in Missouri. Mr. Simon owned a thoroughly exemplary dog called Jupiter. Mr. Quinn owned a less exemplary boy called Willie. Jupiter was basking in the sun when Willie found him. To Willie's taste basking was rather slow fun. There were other things that would add more zest to life. Accordingly, he tied a tin can to Jupiter's tail. Now, Jupiter was not a bully, but neither was he a non-resistant. The can annoyed him. He bit Willie. Willie ran home and told his father. His father prosecuted Mr. Simon. Fortunately Judge Sidener was a man of discernment. His decision was that Mr. Quinn was to pay the costs of the trial. The dog was not to blame, for, as the decision most admirably says: "Any dog has a legal and undeniable right to bite any man, woman, or child who purposely and with intent to disturb said dog's tranquillity and peace of mind does attach or cause to be attached to said dog's tail a tin can or other weight which will impede, or tend to impede, the progress of said animal. A dog which bites its prosecutor in such a case is acting purely and honestly in self-defense, and is as justly immune from punishment as the man who strikes at a burglar in defense of his own life and welfare." This seems more than reasonable, and it is to be hoped that the courts of other States in the Union will take the same stand. The tincanned dog has rights which deserve recognition.

A Delight in Store.

Grand-nephew (to himself)—"I've got round the old lady at last! I'm helping her night and day to search out deserving objects for her benevolent schemes. To-day she said I'd have cause for rejoicing when her will was read." Great-Aunt (to herself)—"I had no idea the dear boy was so good. It worries him terribly to see so much misery in the world. How delighted he will be to find that all my money is to go to the support of the poor friendless orphans!"

A princess, whose father is a hard-working man, is a dreadful example in a community, but there is something worse—an only boy whom his mother makes into a prince.