Columbus Journal

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COLUMBUS, - - NEBRASKA.

The Pulpit's Failure.

The loss of moral leadership by the clergy is often deplored; but what else is to be expected, when so many clergymen appeal to the feminine rather than to the masculine conscience? To-day the virile, who see in graft and monopoly and foul politics worse enemies than beer, Sunday baseball and the army canteen, scoff when the pastor of the indicted boss of San Francisco pleads, "He never was known to smoke or take a drink. He never was seen in front of a saloon bar." In political battles, the sinister interests easily rally the religious people by standing for a "lid on" policy. In the struggle of a city to free itself from corporation bondage, is not the psychologic moment always punctuated by a hectoring deputation of clergymen to summon Mr. Mayor to enforce to the letter the Sunday closing ordinance, followed by a blast from the pulpits when the mayor declines to play the traction company's little game? Not long ago a reform mayor was discredited because, emerging late from his office, he descended into a basement lunchroom and ate at the same counter with street walkers and night birds, says E. A. Ross, in Atlantic. The pastors of the straight-laced magnates who had never stooped to anything worse than stealing a street were scandalized at the mayor's elbow-touch with disreputables, and appealed with success to the ossified Puritanism of their flock.

Walter Wellman, the Arctic explorer, who was expected last year to make an attempt to reach the north pole by means of an airship, has sailed from New York and will try to do the trick this summer. Mr. Wellman, who knows the frozen north, having led an expedition in that direction, while convinced of the practicability of the airship method, sensibly declares he will take as few chances as possible, and will make a thorough test of his apparatus before beginning his aerial flight. Andree, the only man up to date who has started for the north pole by balloon, has never been heard from. The hope is universal, says Troy Times, that the plucky American will have better fortune. Yet there are a whole lot of people who put more trust in the coming expedition of Commander Peary, which will go by the good ship Roosevelt.

Two new railroad lines have been opened into the Congo Free State in Africa. One runs from Stanley Falls, where the River Congo ceases to be navigable, in an easterly direction to Mahagi, on the Albert sea, a distance of 1,120 kilometers (kilometer, 0.62 mile), and the other route starts from Stanleyville, the city by the falls, and running from north to south, partly by boats on the navigable portions of the upper Congo and partly by a railway for such portions of the stream as are not navigable, ultimately is bound for the district of Katanga, in the extreme southern portion of the Free State, where there are great copper and gold fields. Of this latter line the road was opened last autumn from Stanleyville to Ponthierville and is now in operation for a distance of 127 kilometers.

Andrew Carnegie is now a commander of the Legion of Honor, having been made such by the French government in recognition of his eminent services in behalf of peace. This is not only a merited distinction, but one in which it is easily conceivable the recipient takes justifiable pride. As was remarked by Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, who conferred the decoration in the name of the president of France, Mr. Carnegie is now a citizen of the world, made such by his devotion to the cause of promoting amity among the nations. To be a commander of the Legion of Honor under such circumstances as those attending the decoration of Mr. Carnegie, says Troy Times, is to be singled out as one who particularly typifies the growing humanity and the higher civilization of the age.

Of the income tax collected from securities in Great Britain, $18,000,000 was from American securities. Scotland during the last ten years has grown wealthy in business more rapidly than England, the rates of increase being 50 per cent. in Scotland and 41 per cent. in England.

Mr. George Gould has sold his polo ponies because, as he says, he cannot afford to keep them. Perhaps there is some truth in James J. Hill's predictions of hard times. But we can stand them if they don't strike anybody but those who have polo ponies.

A well-known actor had his pocket picked and his wallet abstracted from it. As it contained real money and not stage jewels the advertising he gets out of it is not the usual gratuitous variety.

During the year 1906 Europe spent $10,000,000,000 on its armies, and $4,000,000,000 on its navies. The people of Europe are nothing less than feeble-minded imbeciles, exclaims the Los Angeles Times, to allow themselves to be soaked like that for feathers and brass buttons.

Japan's new warship is to be the biggest in the world. As an object lesson in the interest of universal peace it can be expected to make a lasting impression.

CHAPTER IV.

The Coward.

As she left me I again caught the look of wonder, a resentful wonder, a curiosity that was even harsh and stern.

I seated myself opposite the woman I had unconsciously wronged. For the first time she looked at me, and I saw with relief that neither pain nor anguish lurked in her clear eyes. There was no outraged love nor tenderness. Nor was there pity for herself or for me. But even so, it seemed to me pathetic that a woman should be so strong.

"I wish to hear everything. Begin, please, with your first meeting with Mr. Willoughby. Tell me all—to the last moment."

"I shall not spare either yourself or myself," I promised.

"Did you know Mr. Willoughby intimately? Were you at Oxford with him? I think I do not remember his speaking of you."

She spoke slowly, with a certain aloofness. A desire to be just struggled with a manifest dislike—a dislike that was evidently not lessened because of my studied calm. Perhaps she thought a fervent expression of penitence more fitting. But instinctively I knew that an hysterical repentance would increase her contempt for me. I preferred her hatred to that. And so I told my story absolutely without feeling.

"I met him for the first time the night before his death."

"Indeed!" Her voice trembled with anger. She was indignant that he should have discussed his love with an utter stranger.

"It was not until we had both given up hope that he mentioned you, Miss Brett," I said with some sternness.

"But surely his death was the result of a quite unexpected accident? The newspapers gave one that impression," she exclaimed suspiciously. The words and the look accused me of falsehood.

"The accident came only after we were both utterly exhausted by the sufferings of a night spent on the mountain paths."

"And were the newspapers correct in saying that you were not an experienced mountain climber? And did Mr. Willoughby know that?"

"Yes, I am simply a tourist. This is the first time I have been in Europe. I came to Switzerland as thousands of others come—to see the mountains from an hotel piazza or a railway train. To me, as to most tourists, the Alps were simply a gigantic panorama to be viewed complaisantly, as one looks at Niagara Falls. To climb them never occurred to me until I met Mr. Willoughby.

"I was making the usual circular tour, Interlaken, Scheidegg, Lauterbrunnen, Grindelwald. Mr. Willoughby happened to sit next to me at the table d'hote at the Bear hotel. He was an athlete; Switzerland to him was simply an immense playground; he spoke of the trophies he had won at Queen's fields in the same breath as his exploits in scaling a mountain top. At first I listened to him with indifference; his enthusiasm amused me—nothing more. I had supposed that people climbed mountains simply for the view; because on the summit one could see a little farther than if one were merely on the mountain-side. But as he talked I began to understand. It was a game—a conflict—a battle if you wish—in which one pitted one's strength and wit in a hand-to-hand fight with nature.

"Gradually his enthusiasm aroused mine. I was wearied of sight-seeing; the horde of tourists disgusted me. Before we had finished our cigars I longed to pluck my first edelweiss; to play this new game myself. I hinted vaguely at dangers, but my companion laughed at them. I was presumptuous enough to think that where he led I might follow."

"The usual mistake of the tourist, I believe," commented Miss Brett, coldly. "And you begged that you might go with him on his next climb?"

"At least I was willing enough to do so when he suggested that. He was planning to make the Stralegg Pass. I confess that the word 'pass' did not sound especially formidable, for he declared that guides were not at all necessary. So I agreed to make the ascent with him. I did not realize that mountain climbing, more than any other sport, required arduous training.

"The next morning at 11 o'clock we started from Grindelwald. We were provided with the customary paraphernalia of the Alpine climber; but our climb to the Schwarzegg Club Hut, at the Upper Ice-fall, where we were to spend the night, might have been made with walking sticks instead of alpenstocks. It was for the most part a simple path over glassy slopes on the eastern side of the Lower Grindelwald Glacier—a bypath winding along the cliffs.

"We were aroused the next morning before it was light, and I was rather relieved when two guides, who were waiting at the hut for a party expected that day, shook their heads at the weather, and warned us that it would not be safe to attempt the pass alone. My companion laughed at their fears. The heavens were quite clear; the stars shone faintly; the moon was waning; there was no hint of wind or storm. He assured me that the protests of the guides was a clumsy attempt to frighten us into engaging their services. They were waiting for us; it was the usual trick. I accepted his explanation as plausible enough. I was unwilling to disappoint him now that we had started; but for the first time I felt some misgiving.

"I shall not weary you with the description of our climb. The ascent was steep and trying in places, over ice and rock. In about four hours we reached the Zasenberg Chalets and the Central Ice-fall. A stiff scramble of an hour brought us to the frozen snow of a plateau. Here our path seemed to me less clear, but my companion advanced with confidence. I felt the altitude now distressingly; I had qualms of mountain sickness. Still I struggled after him, until we came to the base of a precipitous wall of ice. We had passed over the last of the glaciers; we had reached the summit.

"I supposed now that the worst was over. But the descent was by far the most difficult and dangerous part of our day's work. Every step had to be taken with extreme care. We were roped, of course; and I annoyed Mr. Willoughby by being compelled to halt repeatedly. The fact is, I was frightfully exhausted, though I struggled after him as doggedly as I could.

"At last the descent became less hazardous. I believe that we should have arrived at Grimsel safely had we continued our way in a direct line and with the care that had characterized our first movements. But my companion attempted more and more difficult feats of climbing. As a rule I did not follow him. But presently a mountain ledge obstructed our path. Two courses were open to us: we could make a long but safe detour around it, or we could scale it. My companion decided upon the latter course. I again fastened the rope about my waist and followed him."

"I Wish to Hear Everything."

"Do you wish me to infer that the boyish confidence of Mr. Willoughby led to the tragedy?" Helena asked in a passionless voice.

"I wish you to infer nothing."

"But you place the blame, at least tacitly, on one who is dead and cannot defend himself," she insisted angrily.

"I am sorry you should think so. I am trying to give you the facts quite simply—the absolute truth."

"I do not wish to wrong you," she said in a low voice. "I wish to be just to you, Mr. Haddon."

"Just when I realized that we were in danger I hardly know. Or perhaps I should be more honest if I said that I cannot tell just when I began to feel afraid. We had climbed cautiously and slowly around the ledge. Mr. Willoughby was in the lead. Suddenly, as we rounded this shoulder, a flake of snow touched my cheek.

"Clinging to the face of the rock, I looked down. The ice slopes were turning yellow in the cold early evening light. But far below they were hidden by mists, which even as we looked seemed to gather volume and to roll onward and upward, threatening to engulf us. The sky was laden. As we made the ledge a gust of wind almost swept us from our foothold. The snow fell more thickly; it came, it seemed, from every quarter in an instant.

"We had made the ledge in safety, but even as we looked about us the mist enveloped us. It was impossible to see more than a few yards ahead. Still we struggled on slowly and mechanically. Rocks, which in ordinary circumstances would have seemed quite easy, suddenly appalled us; for we were unable to see where to put hand or foot.

"Even to my inexperienced eyes we were in a terrible predicament. Willoughby, however, was cheerful and confident. If he had misgivings he kept them to himself. I followed him blindly.

"Suddenly to our complete dismay the descent was cut off by a precipice, the rocks on either side falling almost sheer to the glacier beneath. Further attempt was useless that night. Even Willoughby acknowledged that. There was nothing for it but to bivouac for the night, and trust for better luck on the morrow.

"It is impossible for me to describe for you the sufferings of that terrible night. We gathered such stones as we could find on the narrow mountain ledge, and placed them as a protection against the biting wind. We consumed the last morsel of food. We had already drunk our tea. We huddled close to each other for warmth. We shivered, not for moments, but for 15 minutes at a time. Every now and then we chafed each other's hands to prevent their being frost-bitten. But the greatest suffering was caused by our efforts to fight off the deadly numbness and drowsiness."

"Did you give up all hope then?" asked Helena, shuddering.

"I am sure that Willoughby did not. His courage and heroism were unfailing. Until the cold had exhausted us we attempted to wile away the hours by relating to each other incidents of our past life. It was natural that our talk should become increasingly intimate. Death stared us in the face. At such an hour as that one forgets that one is speaking to a stranger. It was then that Mr. Willoughby told me of you."

"I understand," said Helena in a voice that was strangely gentle. For the first time there were tears in her eyes.

"At half past two the snow ceased falling. The sky cleared. The stars shone out one by one in a blackened sky. It was now, I think, for the first time I felt our utter helplessness. The terror of the mountains, the awful loneliness, the stillness, the sense of utter isolation—all overwhelmed me. The ghostly whiteness of the mountain peaks shone out against the dark sky. The moon shed an unearthly radiance over all. Shadowy and unreal, a phantom host, mountain after mountain stretched as far as one could see. And our helplessness was made the more pitiable because at our feet we could see the lights of the village.

"The sun rose at last. But I was terribly exhausted with the cold, the night's vigil, and fatigue. Three times we attempted to resume our descent, and three times my exhaustion paralyzed every effort. I wish to make no excuses, and yet—"

I paused. I looked at her wistfully. I saw no pity or sympathy in her eyes. She came from a race of soldiers. They, too, had suffered and died, and their honor had been stainless. Why should she make any allowance for my suffering and weakness? When all is said, weakness to her meant cowardice. She forgot, as the world had forgotten, that it is not so difficult to be brave when the danger is a familiar one. She looked at me quite unmoved.

"The rocks," I continued, "were covered with snow and were ice-glazed. Willoughby was anxious now. And yet it was impossible to linger; no one would dream of looking for us on this side of the mountain. He had presently when the sun rose higher and we were partially warm, I stumbled painfully and slowly after my companion.

"For a time I followed him mechanically in perfect silence. Suddenly he came to a pause. He told me very quietly that we were lost. He pointed as a proof of that to the overhanging ledge around which we had climbed the evening before. I am nearly at the end of my story, Miss Brett."

Again she shuddered, and we both looked at the little beacon light flickering very faintly now. About us the people laughed and talked; the orchestra was playing a Strauss waltz.

"Do not spare me, please," whispered Helena.

"To retrace our steps was impossible. Just around the mountain-side we knew that we should find ourselves in comparative safety. But to climb down the overhanging precipice had been appallingly difficult the day before. Now, exhausted in mind and body, the rocks slippery with snow and ice, it seemed impossible—for me, at least. And yet it is I who am alive to tell you how desperate that chance was.

"Generous to the last, he insisted that I go first. The rope was fastened about my waist; I climbed down the overhanging cliff, supported by the rope held by my companion above.

"I reached the ledge. I was safe. But I had put forth the last of my strength. I could only stand there, fighting for my breath. Almost immediately Willoughby flung down the rope and warned me that he was coming, and that I should be ready to give him what assistance I could. I tried to speak—to implore him to delay the descent for a few moments; my voice seemed a mere whisper. Probably he did not hear me. Or he dared not delay lest he should lose his own nerve; for he must have known that the chances were wholly against him.

"Not even for you can I linger over the details of these last awful moments. He had almost accomplished the impossible. He was just above me. I could have reached up and clasped his body. And then what I had feared, what I had known would happen, did happen. His feet slipped. He was hanging by his arms. He called to me in a strong and steady voice to come to his aid. I did not. At least, until it was too late. He hung there one frightful instant, and then—"

Helena clasped her hands convulsively. "And so the end came," she murmured. "And he died without one word?"

I hesitated.

"It is my right to know." She looked at me with burning eyes.

"Yes, he spoke one word—one—"

"And that was—?"

"'Coward!'" I whispered.

CHAPTER V.

A Life for a Life.

A long silence fell between us. I looked where the little beacon light had flickered feebly a few moments before. It had gone out. With an effort, I sought the face of the girl who sat opposite me.

She had judged. I knew that. She looked at me as if I were a being apart, of another world. By my own confession I had shut myself out of her world. The man who had loved her loyally had died as the strong people of her race had died. That proud fact supported her. For her I existed no longer. She gathered her skirts about her. She inclined her head slightly. She was going out of my life. She had uttered no spoken reproach. But her look, her every movement, echoed the verdict of the man who was dead.

I pushed back my chair. Thank Heaven, the ordeal was over; that was my first thought. Then I hesitated. Suddenly I longed to make this woman understand.

When others had pointed the finger of scorn I had refused to be crushed, because I believed their censure unjust. I had grown almost indifferent as to whether people despised me or not. But this was the first woman to whom I had spoken since the tragedy. Had she loved Willoughby, it would have been hopeless to expect any sympathy from her. She would have felt toward me a lifelong hatred.

But she did not love Willoughby. It was merely a sense of duty that had urged her to seek from me my story. Perhaps she wished to tell it to his bereaved parents. It was to be a sort of reparation owed to the memory of the man who had loved her.

She had judged me without emotion, without passion. She had spoken no words of reproach or anger. She was leaving me in silence. But I knew that the silence of this woman would haunt me as no spoken word of bitterness ever could. It was a silence that would irritate and madden with the coming years. It was hopeless to make her understand, to expect one word of sympathy. But at least she should speak, though it were in anger. I leaned toward her; there was a certain pride in my humility.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WHAT WAS WRONG

His First Experience with a Motor Car.

By G. F. MORGAN.

There was no doubt about it, they were stuck. He varied the mixture, adjusted the spark, shifted and rearranged everything in sight, and cranked with an energy born of despair. No use. He thought of everything he had been told by the man who gave him lessons. He seemed to remember dimly something about a part under the seat which might need adjustment. He took out both seats and adjusted every knob and screw which was movable. Still no results. He wished now he had not felt so confident about being able to run the auto without the assistance of the man, and he also devoutly wished he had not brought Her with him on this first trial trip.

He crawled cautiously under the machine and looked around. He had forgotten what a good many of the things there were for. However, nothing was lying out of place that he could see. He hesitated between lying and making a clean breast of it. Finally he decided on the latter.

He emerged from beneath the car and stood up.

"I'm awfully sorry," he explained, regretfully, "but something seems to have gone wrong."

"So it appears," she remarked. Her tone lacked enthusiasm. The day was somewhat cold, and they had been there about an hour. Besides, he had a black smear across his nose, and he was moist and unpleasant. A man does not appear at his best when he crawls out from beneath a balky car.

"It's evident," he went on, "that they hadn't put the machine in proper shape when I took it out. That's the way with these fellows, you know. They let you take a car when it's all out of whack, and then the first thing you know, it breaks down with you."

He was warming to the subject. No doubt this talk was shifting the blame most successfully.

"You bet I'll give it to those fellows when I see them," he continued. "There ought to be some law to prevent their sending out machines when they're not in order. This sort of thing is a disgrace to a decent garage. The Automobile club ought to take it up."

She murmured assent, but it was evident she was occupied, not so much with the theory, as with the condition which confronted them.

He looked over all the available parts again, and then cranked till he was black in the face. Nothing doing.

"I suppose there's nothing else for it," he observed, finally, "I shall have to go and 'phone somewhere. You bet I'll make it hot for them, too. Those fellows ought to be arrested. I guess I'd better walk back to that house we passed, and 'phone the garage to send a man to fix the thing. Will you come, or do you prefer to stay in the car?"

She preferred the car, and he started off alone.

He was back in an hour and twenty minutes, and with him an expert from the garage, who had come out with his repair kit in a runabout.

"There, there's your machine," he observed, in virtuous indignation. "Stuck, you see. Just pulled up to get my hat, and the blame thing absolutely refuses to start. I don't know what's the trouble. If the machine had been sent out in proper order it should never have happened."

The expert made a hasty examination. Then he grinned broadly.

"I guess t here ain't much the matter," he observed.

"There isn't! Well, I'd like to know what you call it. I've worked on her for about two hours, and she don't budge an inch. What's wrong?"

The expert grinned still more broadly.

"She'll run all right if you treat her right," he explained. "Why don't you take off the brakes?"

Capital "Society" Busy.

Washington society people are plunged into a mad struggle for pleasure. Even Sundays are overworked. Admiral Dewey gives things at the Country club on Sundays—the best in days and everything else is good enough for the admiral—and the John M. McLeans have turned on their brilliant Sunday luncheons to society in edition de luxe, at their fascinating "Friendship." But even the unexpurgated and the great unwashed are welcome every day to the splendid grounds of "Friendship." Unless you are an automobile or a dog, against which there is special discrimination, the McLeans place no restrictions upon the public enjoyment of their vast acres, the most beautiful sweep of land near Washington, baronial in its extent. The quaint old house itself, once a monastery, is surrounded by a "monk's walk," outlined in box bushes. There is a long pergola, wistaria laden, an ancient fountain and other poetic accessories that inspire.

The Fox as a Decoy.

Some 30 years ago a tame fox was kept at the Berkeley Castle duck decoy in Gloucestershire, England. This animal understood the whole art of decoying wild-fowl, and, showing himself to the duck, widgeon, and teal on the decoy lake, used, by waving his tail and moving gently to and fro, to attract the attention of the curious fowl. The birds were fascinated by the fox's motions, and, following him up the decoy pipe, fell easy victims to the concealed fowler. It is a well-known fact that the old decoy fowlers invariably secured, if they were able, a red dog, as near in color to a fox as possible, for the difficult part of decoying duck from the pool to the netted pipe.

Exasperating in the Extreme.

"Oh! how my wife does aggravate me!"

"You surprise me! She seems so mild always—"

"That's just it—her awful mildness. Whenever we have an argument and I'm in the right she always sighs and says, 'Oh, very well, dear, have it your own way.'"—Philadelphia Press.

Jesters Have Their Troubles

Punishments for Failure to Amuse Their Royal Masters.

The man who has recovered $5,000 reward for his services as a jester may thank his stars that he did not have to joke for a livelihood in earlier days at the courts of greater potentates.

Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, and the Emperor Paul, for example, had rough ways with their fools. A dagger thrust would follow a poor joke and banishment any sign of declining wit. Once when Fougere, the jester of Czar Paul, offended his royal master he was permitted to depart in peace. In the middle of the night, however, he was aroused, and ordered to get up and prepare for immediate banishment to Siberia. He was bundled into a dark van and driven away on his long journey.

Day after day, week after week it lasted. Upon arrival he stepped out into the presence of—the czar. All the time he had been driven, not toward Siberia, but round and round in St. Petersburg!

Qualities That Win Success.

Nothing will give permanent success in an enterprise of life, except native capacity cultivated by honest and persevering effort. Genius is often but the capacity for receiving and improving by discipline.—G. Eliot.

Attention, Geniuses.

The world never forgives a genius for dressing normally and acting reasonably.

The Small Buyer of Paint who takes care that the Dutch Boy trade mark, shown below, appears on every keg of white lead he buys, is perfectly protected; as perfectly as if he were a railroad official buying hundreds of tons, and with a corps of chemists at his back to see that no adulterant is palmed off on him.

Pure White Lead and Pure Linseed Oil are absolutely necessary to good painting.

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He—Won't you forgive me for kissing you?

She—No. If I did you'd kiss me again.

He—I promise I won't.

She—Then what's the good?

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Relief work to employ 3,000 men have been established in the Chinese famine centers. The English-American relief fund amounts to $250,000.

Don't Sneeze Your Head Off.

Krause's Cold Capsules will cure you almost instantly. At all Druggists, 25c.

Anyway, the rolling stone doesn't get into the moss-back class.

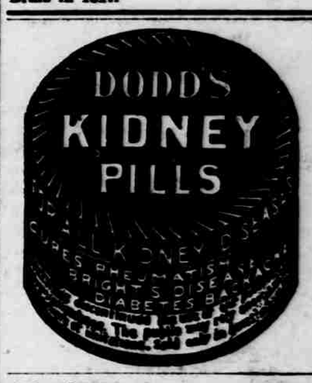
Smokers appreciate the quality value of Lewis' Single Binder cigar. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

Fraud is the recourse of weakness and cunning.—Gibbon.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup.

For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

The velocipede was invented by Drais in 1817.



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