

CHARACTER SKETCH.

SECOND SERIES.

NO. 12

The author of the "Character Sketches," which for two seasons now have been a feature of THE COURIER, sent with the twelfth sketch, which appears below, the following more or less personal note to the editor:

"Don't you think it would be a good idea now to discontinue the sketches? It seems to me the people of Lincoln have been very forbearing, and they are entitled to some respite. With your permission I will put up

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my mental kodak for awhile and give the people important enough to pose as "characters" a rest. You have not hesitated to tell me that sometimes you have thought my remarks were too pointed, and at other times rather too indefinite. Your criticisms, probably, were just, on the whole. But I think you will readily understand the difficulty I have had in properly focusing the kodak. Sometimes the view was taken when the subject was not quite in the position that I desired, and then again the negative, when it has come to be developed, has brought out points that I should have preferred to have left unnoticed. The views were at best but snap shots, and it was inevitable that some of them should be more or less unsatisfactory. It has been a

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source of some satisfaction to me to know, however, that without a single exception, the subjects of the sketches have been promptly recognized, from the timid, politic, vacillating and generally unreliable man who was pictured in the first sketch, of this series, down to the Col. Mulberry Sellers of last week. This general recognition tells me that whatever injustice may have been done, my kodak has certain trustworthy qualities, and I don't know that I regret my second excursion into the field of photography."

[The fact of the matter is, the author of the "sketches" is going away for a portion of the summer, and is therefore desirous of being relieved from the burden of the kodak; but it was represented

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to the maker of the sketches that the kodak is a particularly suitable traveling companion, and it is probable that additional views may appear from time to time.—E.D.]

There are a great many fairly nice people with compressed minds. They are near-sighted, mentally. The world to them, isn't a great something that extends over a circumference of twenty-five thousand miles, and takes in an infinite variety of things and thoughts. It is a prescribed field, fenced on four sides by ignorance, conceit, jealousy and incapacity. Frequently, it is no

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larger than one small town, sometimes it don't extend beyond the limits of the neighborhood. And once in a while it is confined to a single office room or family residence. In this shut in area these people with small minds gambol about with all the joyous self-assurance possessed by people who are able to get over the bars that exist for the narrow minded. They survey their own little town, or neighborhood, or office with the feeling that therein is the world. They cannot see what is beyond, and they do not believe in anything that is outside of their vision. Columbus had a good deal of difficulty in persuading the crowned heads of Europe that there



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was anything but space out in the broad expanse of the Atlantic. Talk to these flat minded people of a country out of their ken, of a condition of things they know not of, and they at once become doubting Ferdinands. They cannot be persuaded that there is anything of importance outside of their little sphere; for downright arrogance they are 'way ahead of those who really have some little excuse for arrogance. They judge everything by their own little standards; small themselves nearly everything else is small to them.

It is a characteristic of these people

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that as a corollary of their small minds, they have small hearts. They profess to be big hearted like other people; but they are not. The heart is controlled by avarice or some form of selfishness, and they are unable to see any virtue in others, or in anything they do not themselves do. The promptings of the heart have their mainspring in a small mind, and they are, necessarily, instinct with littleness.

Oftentimes they are quite successful. Bigotry and narrow-mindedness are often successful. Avarice and other attributes of a shriveled nature are often effective as against the qualities of a nobler mind;

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and in this life the small men are sometimes, in the estimation of the people, greater than those who are entitled to the distinction of greatness by reason of their bigness of mind and heart. The latter so often lack the qualities of self-advancement that are always to be found blooming luxuriantly in the narrow minded.

I have sought in these sketches to typify certain characteristics in persons known to readers of THE COURIER; and following out this plan I now call up a rather well known man in this city who emphasizes all that I have said about

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little-minded people. To begin with, he is a pretty decent sort of fellow. Of course he hasn't any strong friendships—his heart isn't big enough to take in unreservedly, one of his brethren. It is also true that he hasn't a great many enemies—his small mind prompts him to a sufficient cunning to prevent his making enemies on a large scale. He has got in the habit of spending a great many hours in his office and never looking out of the window. A hundred times have I seen him poring over the papers on his desk. Not once have I seen him looking out into the world that can be seen from his casement. He is always looking in at himself, not out at

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things more important. His mental range is fearfully small. He only sees a few things, and his understanding doesn't go beyond these few things. He is full of prejudice, not unmixed with hypocrisy. Under the cover of professed regard he does not hesitate to stab right and left. His smallness is manifested in a desire to throw obstacles in the way of other's success. He is envious and jealous, and yet, as I have indicated, he passes for a fairly good fellow. Not a great many people know him well. Those who do are acquainted with his narrow or small mindedness, and may recognise him from what I have said of his character. Nearly everybody knows

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somebody that, in a general way, resembles the person I have sketched.

A NEW BETE NOIR.

"Wot makes me tired," said Meandering Mike, "is dese here prosperity howlers."

"I don't know 'em," replied Plodding Pete.

"Yes ye do. I means dese here fellers dat keepe talkin about good times an' tellin' an' tellin' ye whur ye can git work."

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"Mandy," said Farmer Cornross, thoughtfully, "hez it occurred to you that Josiar is gittin' kinder sassy?"

"It has, I must say," confessed the young man's mother.

"An' don't it seem ter you that he's sorter shifless, too?"

"Yes," she sighed.

"He's too big ter lick, now, or we could fix it all right in no time. He's got 'er be disciplined somehow."

"What are ye goin' ter do?"

"Send 'im ter college next fall. It's terrible severe an' I hate ter do it, but nothin' short of a good hazin' 'll make any impression on that boy."

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He turned to the multitude.

"—is one who has run the gamut of life."

"No, no," protested the converted gambler, while the tears coursed down his cheeks, "no, no. I never run anything but a square game. I swear it."

He stood with hand raised impressively, while the ushers dealt gently but

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firmly with the person in the gallery who had seen fit to laugh a hoarse outre laugh.

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