

WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS

"Oh; had I the wings of a dove I would fly far, far away," expresses the daily mental endeavor of all of us. Oh, to get away from hod carrying and brick-laying and the heavy things that hit us on the head all the time. Who would not give up a few things classified as luxuries for an island of the sea only partially inhabited by unsophisticated natives? A place overrun with vines and wild scentless flowering things that do not cloy nor tire, where all you meet are strange dark people with no social traditions, no clothes to speak of, hence no anxieties of style to bother them or you. How like a morning walk in Paradise to wander over the fields that are not worth much because corn and wheat and greed will not grow there and when you meet only people you do not know. The last condition is the one, that, being never gratified, grows more alluring from the beginning to the end of the chapter called by your name. To escape from old jokes, weather chestnuts, quondam friends whom we have disgusted and who are, in consequence, themselves unindurable, is a dream that makes the island of the sea an enchanted spot. When the island fades, death is a satisfaction. Annihilation will wipe out other things at the same time that it abolishes you. If you cannot die the day after your enemy it is better to die the day before than to live embittered by his memory. That memory gives him a sort of immortality which, speaking for myself, I begrudge to him on his own account and because of the discomfort of hate.

I believe Anthony Hope's popularity is due, in great measure, to his making this "Island of the Sea" a reality. "The Prisoner of Zenda" gave the least imaginative a pass to Ruritania where none of their relations, queer friends, or creditors could ever get in. It was as good as having six feet of earth, measuring perpendicularly, between you and Lincoln, Nebraska. In McClure's for April Mr. Hope begins a continued story called "Phroso," a tale of brave deeds and perilous ventures. The hero, a young Englishman, buys an island in the Mediterranean, "nine miles long and five broad, a hundred miles from the nearest land, Rhodes, off the steamship tracks and equally remote from any submarine cable. Neopalia is extremely rugged and picturesque, it grows, cotton, wine, oil, a little corn" (much would make it an undesirable refuge for the world-weary.) The people are quite unsophisticated, but very good hearted—"You see how lovely the spot is and how it satisfies half a century's indrawn breaths of tortured desire? When his lordship arrives he finds the people surly. They give him ten hours to get back into his steam yacht and leave the island which they say is theirs not his. In case he refuses to leave they will kill him. Of course he stays and gets into his citadel or castle with three friends, some pistols, a rifle, two goats, a cow and a water supply. The April installment ends with the villagers approaching in a mob and singing a death chant. The style is a matter of fact and convincing as all of Mr. Hope's impossible adventures are. "That's what makes me say what I do" that Mr. Hope refreshes the children of dust by opening a window that the sodden and ungifted can look out of, and breathe and live happily for a while.

Radyard Kipling has a poem about the British horse-marines, "Soldier and Sailor Too," in McClure's.

"As I was spittin into the Ditch, aboard o' the 'Crocodile', I seed a man on a man-o'-war got up in the Reg'lars style.

'E was scrapin' the paint from off of 'er plates, an' I sez to him: "Oo are you?"

Sez 'e: "I'm a Jolly—'er Magesty's Jolly—
Soldier an' Sailor too!"

Now 's work begins by Gawd knows when,
And 'is work is never through—
'E isn't one of the Reg'lar line, nor 'e isn't one of the crew
'E's a kind of a giddy heramfrodite—soldier and Sailor too!

We've fought 'em on trooper, we've fought 'em in dock, 'an drunk with 'em in betweens,

When they called us the sea-cick scull'ry maids, 'an we called 'em the Ass marines;

But when we was down for a double fatigue, from Woolwich to Bernardmyo,

We sent for the Jollies,—'er majesty's Jollies—soldier 'an sailor too!

They think for 'emselves, an' they steal for 'em, solves an' they never ask what's to do. But they're camped an' fed an' they're up an' fed before our bugle's blew. Ho! they ain't no limp in procrastitudes—soldier an' sailor too."

The lines sing like the chorus of a comic opera or like a lot of men accustomed to simultaneous and harmonious action such as singing—reefing, marching or cannoner work. The words bawl themselves from twenty or thirty throats, enough to set the air in motion in a well. There is not a man alive today with the power of Rudyard Kipling. For the price of a story or a poem he will sit you down anywhere you like or in what company you may choose, providing ycur taste is not too bloomin' refined and literary.

McClure's magazine puts its money where it does the most good, i. e. they give it to authors whose work is the result of forever mysterious genius. They do not put it into pictures delightful, but of transitory value. The illustrations of Harpers magazine are the best that engraving can do in this or any other country. The text is no better than McClure's and when the latter has Anthony Hope and Kipling, not so good. McClure's illustrations are photogravures ugly and disappointing at best. The shadows are heavy and opaque daubs of black ink. An engraving or etching, and line picture, keeps the values, it lets light into the shadows, it has atmosphere, which a photogravure, because it is what it is, can not have. The man who invented the process was not a benefactor though the multiplication of the results of it may seem so for a while.

Sol Smith Russell at the Lansing Thursday evening a week ago filled the house. A Lincoln audience always treats Mr. Russell as though it were his foster father. The stage and pit are en famille. When the actor makes a speech he tells it how dear it is to him. He says "I remember when I was but a little lad and lived upon thy smiles and caresses. Now the world is at my feet but still, still, I love thee best." And then the audience and the orator are so soaked in good feeling it is difficult to proceed for fear of taking more cold.

Mr. Russell is a good man and a good actor, but I have never seen him in a play that was satisfactory. "An Everyday man" has an intrusive, ungraceful moral. I know, a man can be good and interesting. Roues are interesting to Zola and a few scientists. The rest of the world was sick and tired of them long ago. Society is thinning them out as fast as it can. On the other hand a man need not be "Little Jack Horner," or a "I do not smoke tobacco said little Tommy Reed" in order to please his neighbors. The most beautiful statue

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