

Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., September 11, 1925.

THE SMILE OF A LITTLE CHILD.

There is nothing more pure in heaven,
And nothing on earth more mild,
More full of the light that is divine
Than the smile of a little child.

The sinless lips, half parted
With breath as sweet as the air,
And the light that seems so glad to shine
In the gold of the sunny hair.

O, little one smile and bless me!
For somehow—I know not why—
I feel in my soul, when children smile,
That angels are passing by.

I feel that the gates of heaven
Are nearer than I knew,
That the light of hope of that sweet world,
Like the dawn is breaking through.

THE MAN THAT WAS IN HIM.

Four men smoked together on a wide veranda in the glory of late afternoon. The sunlight slanted down over miles of wild lands stretching in front, and shone gently into their eyes. A wind brushed past, as always at this country place. The four men were very much at ease.

Three of them were alike; but one, the host, was set apart. Only at the first glance would they have seemed of a single breed. True, they were dressed with the same nicety, the same precision. They lolled with the same poise in their big chairs. But here the likeness stopped. Three were young men with unlined faces; the host was in late middle age, his hair gray, his fine, firm face graven with the trenches of a thousand battles. His hands might have been marble, for strength, yet the slim, long fingers holding the cigar were those of an idealist.

"You explain your success as a railway builder by the fact that you learned the business from the bottom up, Austin?" one of the guests was saying.

The host nodded.

"But what explains your fame as a statesman, a social worker?"

"The same thing—that I got to know men. I came to know how staunch, how fine most men are. I've never stopped studying them. It usually is a most refreshing thing to go among them—not as a king goes among his subjects, but as one of them. I've often gone out unknown; and that is the way I've kept in touch with all departments of my railway lines. And I defy any one to go where I've gone, to do what I've done, and still remain a snob."

"It seems queer that you aren't recognized when you go out among them."

Austin did not reply for a while. His smoke cloud swirled off in the wind and he idly watched the lengthening, wavering shadows of the shaking tree limbs. It was a peaceful, lovely place, this country home of Austin's—acres of cool forest wound about with enticing paths, wide gardens, still fragrant in the dying summer, parked lawns and open meadows.

"Men in overalls look very much alike," he said at last. "Such expeditions have been the biggest influence in my life. They taught me to trust and respect our fellow men."

He paused, for from somewhere in the rear of the house there rippled up to him the happy laughter of a child. The joy it gave him was incomparable with any worldly thing—John Austin was old enough to have young grand-children.

"Yes?" one of the others urged him. "And I suppose you had some real experiences?"

"One in particular that I thank God for. Would you care to hear about it?"

A stretch of double track on a steep grade, a length of road that faded into gloom, a white cross like a famished ghost with outstretched arms, and a giant warehouse, behind which all the northern stars were hidden—this was all. The world was lost in darkness, and O' Ezram, seated with two companions in the lee of the warehouse, was lost in dark broodings.

His name had not been O' Ezram always. No one would guess it to look at him, but the old man had been youthful once, in the long-ago, and had not needed the prefix. Then he had had a last name too but even he had almost forgotten what it was. It did not matter at best. And now he was known the length and breadth of the vagabond world as O' Ezram. And the title fitted him. Sitting there in the shadow of the warehouse, his thin legs stretched out, his white head bent a little on his breast, he seemed as some withered relic of a musty past. Not that his years were so many, but his life had been so hard. Men that walk the trail of ties age quickly, and the dice had never fallen right for Ezram.

He seemed small beside his two companions, perhaps because he was trying to condense himself beneath his tattered coat. The winds, shrieking through a gap in the mountains, touched his old bones with cold. Then the man to his left struck a match to light his pipe, and Ezram's face, in all its pathos, was revealed. It was a kindly old face, beneath its white stubble, but pinched and wrinkled like a fallen leaf. A thousand little lines about his eye-sockets spelled good humor, if there was any sort of justification for it. But tonight, as O' Ezram waited for a freight, his long hard years were swinging back to him, and his heart was heavy, indeed. Tonight his face was clouded, and there was a hint of desperation in the somber glowings of his eyes.

His two companions did not notice these things. They were looking out into the night. And the flaring match revealed their faces too. One was that of a middle-aged man, lined by trial, but strong in conquest. A stranger to Ezram, he—not long on the road, perhaps. Portland Pete was the negligible. His coarse face revealed nothing but a coarse nature and a useless life. The years were swinging back, and in Ezram's mind they had all been wasted. The voices that had called

him and lured him to the rocks at last. The joyous lands that he had always thought lay just beyond had been but fancies, after all, and the long road had had no end.

"Just beyond," he said aloud. "And it wasn't there at all."

"Ay, what ye sayin'?" asked Portland Pete.

The old man looked about and something of his dauntless spirit crept back into his face. It was a kind of joke, after all, a cruel one, but yet a joke. So he cackled a little, in his funny old way.

"Great heaven!" exclaimed the stranger. "What are you laughing about?"

"Might as well laugh, stranger. When ye get my age, ye laugh at everything ye can find to laugh at. An' ye drink—hard—to make ye laugh easier. It's a good ol' joke, and I'm the goat."

"I thought I'd have a house by this time, and grown-up sons, and grandsons. But the end of the road is as far away as ever. Just like you, and there wasn't no place to go. I thought by now I'd have a fire-place to toast my shins at— Look!"

O' Ezram pointed a stringy arm. "I don't see nothin'," growled Pete. "You see heaven, that's what ye see. A light, burstin' from a window. You know what that light's from? It's from a house, a home, where there's a kind woman, and the noise of kiddies goin' to bed, and the fire's a-crackin'. An' ol' man, that might ha' been me, with a grand-son asleep in his lap. The col' can't get in there. No evil, no harm can get in there. And here am I—oh, God! here am I—sittin' lonely and col' in the dark."

The gloom tightened about them, and they heard each other's heavy breathing. Then the old man laughed again.

"To think how I've been fooled! Just to think." And he sat there chuckling, lost in his own thoughts.

Trembling through the night came the far-off wail of a freight. The dark farms beside the warehouse stirred a little, and turned their eyes down the faintly-gleaming rails. It was almost time to go.

And soon they could hear the engine, panting up the steep grade toward them. The younger of Ezram's two companions rose and stretched his legs. Still Ezram sat motionless. The headlight flamed up the rails now, and the other of the two stood up, yawning. Although he was middle-aged, Ezram noticed that he had a youthful vigor. And now the train was roaring almost up to them, so with a final chuckle the patriarch rose too.

The breaks squeaked, the train slowed down and stopped. There was switching to do here.

"Don't like this pebbly track—awful on the skin," observed O' Ezram. "Guess I'll ride atop."

"And get booted off the first junction," said Pete.

"What of it? We'll get to the next town with any luck at all, and we're goin' to catch the Sunset Limited from there, ain't we?" The old man was skinning up to the top of a great red box car. The stranger followed him, and after a moment's hesitation Portland Pete brought up the rear. "No brakie's goin' to wander down this far between here and the first town up the hill. Booted off nothin'!"

A brakeman's lantern gleamed far ahead; the engines snorted and puffed; cars jolted and a conductor shouted orders. Then the train moved on.

"Just switching?" asked the stranger.

"When she starts out like this, so steady like, you know she's pullin' out," explained Ezram. And soon the warehouse, the length of road, and the stretch of double track were far behind them.

It was an unusually steep up-hill grade they traversed, and the engines groaned beneath the burden. The three men rode in silence. Ezram lay with his white face bathed in starlight, his tattered coat across his chest. The night wind swished over him and he looked chilled, but he gave no sign.

In a little while they drew into the long, dark switchyards of a small city—a place of flaring fireboxes and impenetrable walls of darkness, lights like fireflies and shrieking engines and nebulous clouds of smoke. The train stopped with a grinding of brakes. A brakeman approached with bobbing lantern, and the three tramps hugged the car top. Not that they cared if they were ordered off now, but it was always sport to fool the "brakies." But that official did not look up. He walked down the length of the car, and they heard the rattle of coupling pins. A moment later the fore part of the train was jerked forward, and the three men saw that they were upon its rear car.

"Complicated switchin' this," observed Ezram.

"Aw, this ain't nothin'. We'd better skin off and lay for the Sunset Limited, or get kicked off."

"I kindo like to get pulled 'round. What's up now?"

The train, by sundry advances and backings, and after much switching, backed into a dark siding. A brakeman approached and took out the coupling pins just ahead. Then he turned and walked back toward the engines.

"Don't quite figure this out," said Ezram.

"I do, you fool," was Pete's rejoinder. "This car's goin' to be left here, and us with it."

"I guess you're right." The old man sat up, and pawed his way into his coat. "We can wait the Limited right here."

Then, in a flash, they understood. The blow of the backing train had started the car—and now it was running away with them, back down the grade.

"We're on a siding—we'll be wrecked—sure," Portland Pete shrieked. He stood up to jump, but O' Ezram, jerking at his coat tails, pulled him back.

"We're past it and on to the main track already," he shouted—then, meditatively, "and goin' lickety-split!"

For a single moment they sat, dull, stupefied, their strength ebbing at their finger tips. The car moved like lightning now. Then O' Ezram scrambled to his feet.

"To the brakes," he shouted. He seized the hand brake of the car, and the others leaped to help him. The rusted shoes groaned; but slowly, indeed, their speed was checked. The car, loaded with pig iron, had developed a terrific impetus.

"Pull, pull, you fool," Pete begged. His great shoulders writhed—and all at once something pulled free. They could turn the wheel quite easily now, and for a moment Pete turned it round and round like a child with a broken toy. Faster and faster they plunged into the night. In the strength of his desperation Pete had broken the hand brake.

"Now we've done it!" he cried. "Oh, if we'd just jumped—if we'd just seen and jumped in time. And now we're goers, we're goers, sure as ye!"

"Shut up and let me think!"

O' Ezram had released the brake, and now he stood on the car top, apparently unconscious of their swift descent, the tip of a skinny finger at his temple. He was a ridiculous old figure, erect upon the car top. He balanced himself on the rocking car as unconsciously as a ship captain on his storm-swept deck.

"We're goers, sure," Pete was saying, as he fumbled with the useless wheel. "We'll jump the track in a minute. We better jump."

"Shut up and let me think," Ezram commanded, louder than before. His coat tails flapped in the wind, like a scarecrow's, but instinctively the other turned his eyes to him. "Sit ye've busted the brake, have ye? But thank God, this is the steepest part of the grade."

Luckily for them, O' Ezram spoke the truth. If the grade had continued thus for long the car would have been derailed at the first curve in spite of the steady influence of its tons of pig iron. As it was, they were hurling down the darkness at a stupendous rate, faster than ever freight trains move. The lights of farmhouses shined a second, and were gone. The click of the rails was almost continuous, and the white signposts trailed by like a procession of fleet-winged ghosts.

"Are ye goers?" asked the stranger. His voice trembled a little, otherwise he seemed unmoved.

O' Ezram turned toward him sharply.

"You're cool enough. No, you're not. And now I've got it all thought out."

And thereupon he sat himself down on the car top.

"But how, how?" Portland Pete was babbling. "We're goin' faster all the time. We'll run into somethin'—some time, sure. Those fellows back there didn't see us go, and they won't send word ahead."

"You're right there, son. Like as not they think we're roostin' back there on the sidin', quiet-like, instead of floatin' to hobo heaven. Leave it to a brakie to be bone-headed—haven't I fooled 'em every day for the last forty years? Besides, it was darker'n pitch, and we didn't make much noise at first."

"But, man! tell us what we can do."

"Lot's o' time, lot's o' time. Ten minutes, anyway, before we get to get busy. Now, here's the proposition."

"Yes?" urged the stranger. His voice was steeper now.

"There's a place about ten mile from here where you can get off. There's a little rise—and while we'll likely be goin' fast enough that we'll go right over that rise, we'll sure slow down enough that you and Pete there can 'op off."

"Thank God!"

"Maybe you'll sprain your ankle, or somethin', but with any luck at all you can get off without any serious mis-'ap."

"But what will happen to this car? This grade goes on for twenty miles, doesn't it?"

"The car—and I— The old man chuckled. "We be goin' to take the chance of fortune."

"And you're not goin' to get off with us?" Pete asked blankly.

"No, I isn't. I don't get such a care-free ride as this often."

"But man! And the stranger seized his shoulder. "It means death."

"I got my reasons. And I'll tell you 'em if you want to know. Only thing is, don't object. This car is loaded with somethin' all-fired heavy, and if we should bust into a train on this grade—"

"But you're stayin' on won't help any."

"That shows ye got no foresight." He paused a breath, listening to the clicking rails. "We go through a town pretty quick; but at this hour o' night no one but the agent will likely be at the station. It's pretty dark there, too. Comin' through like a hell-bat, no light and no whistle, nine chances out o' ten he won't see us at all in the dark; he'll just think it's a hand car. If he does see us he won't know what to do quick enough if there ain't nobody to tell him. And as sure as sure, if this runaway car isn't wrecked before we'll crash into the Sunset Limited just a little beyond the town. It would be the worst wreck in the history of the road—just as sure as God."

The stranger sat up perfectly straight. Pete leaned forward, breathing hard. Ezram forked about in his pocket until he found a match; then he looked at his old silver watch. Faster and faster sped the car, on into the yawning darkness. They could not see even the gleam of a rail.

"What can you do, man? How can you save them?" asked the stranger tensely.

"I stay on, and when we go hell-

bent through the town I'll pass 'em the word to wreck us at the first derailin' switch."

"But it's death—it's death, I say. You'll be killed when this car is wrecked. You'll be killed if ye try to jump."

It was Pete, a sob in his voice, that pleaded.

"Don't argy with me, boys, I've got my min' all made up. The brakies didn't see us go, and the agent won't see us come, and if I got off with you, there'd be a wreck—sure. You might as well get ready to 'op off. We reach that hill in about five minutes, at this rate."

"You fool," breathed Pete. "What do ye owe 'em? Bunch o' plutes that wouldn't give ye a square meal if ye was starvin'. Don't be a fool. Get off with us."

"Women and kids on that trun—somebody's women and somebody's kids," was the quiet reply. "Maybe I can't swing it, but I'm sure ready to give this old life to ye."

"Maybe you're wastin' your life."

"Maybe I am, maybe so. But I'll take a chance."

For a flash no one spoke. The wind roared in their ears; an auto light on the highway gleamed and was gone.

"I'll help you, O' Ezram!" the stranger cried.

The old man turned in amazement, and they eyed each other in the dark.

"But I won't," swore Pete. "I don't owe 'em nothin'. My life's as good as theirs." The car swayed as it shot about a curve.

"No," Ezram replied, after a moment's suspense. "It only needs one. And you're fairly young yet—good for several years. No use o' any one but me stayin'."

"But you think—do you suppose that I'd shirk when there's work like this to do? The old men—and the women and children—are always first off the sinking ship."

"But it's wrong. My days are over. Don't argy with me son. Get ready—hardly three minutes more. You can't do no good by stayin'. Maybe you've got chil'ren yourself." Ezram looked up hopefully.

"Yes, but they're grown up and independent."

"Don't either of you stay," shouted Pete. "Plutes—that would kick ye from their doors tomorrow! We didn't set the car loose. Let 'em take their chance."

"Hush!" The stranger turned to him, his voice hardening. "Old man, I'm with you—to the last ditch!"

"Don't be a fool, stranger," urged Ezram. "I know you've got the nerve, but it ain't needed. I'd get off too, if there was any other way of gettin' word to the switchman. I'm an ol' man, and my time's almost over anyhow. Don't be a fool."

"I won't leave you here!"

"Then I'll have to boot ye off."

"You haven't the strength. But I'll play the game with you—let chance decide which of us is to stay. Pete, give me your deck of cards—quick."

"I won't."

The stranger leaped toward him across the rocking car, and Pete, suddenly cowed, sullenly drew out his soiled deck.

"Oh, you fools, you miserable fools!" he cursed.

And now the older men were face to face again.

"Do you agree?" came the same hard voice.

"Yes," sighed the old man; "I agree. The man with the low card stays."

Formation of Habits

Makes for Lost Motion

One morning I happened to be up early and went to a lunch counter restaurant for breakfast at about 8:40. The place was so crowded I couldn't get near the counter. But only 15 minutes later the rush was over and there were seats to spare, Fred Kelly writes in the Nation's Business Magazine. Which made me think that one of the silliest things about us human beings is our habit of all trying to be at the same place at the same time.

Why shouldn't there be more scattering of hours of eating and hours of labor? Why must so many reach their offices at about 9 o'clock? Why should not subway and street car rush hours be more divided? Not long ago I walked at 2 a. m. along a famous thoroughfare that a few hours earlier was bedlam. The street was quiet and delightful. I felt as if I should like to sleep all day when everybody else is getting in one another's way and do my moving about at night when others are asleep. Why not? Why couldn't more work be done at night? Half the men who go to offices at a certain hour do so only because the boss hasn't enough imagination to recognize that it isn't really necessary.

The chief statistician for a big institution tells me that when he occasionally takes a day off and works at his place in the country he is twice as useful to his employers as if he were at the office. Because he is in a quiet spot, free from interruption, he naturally accomplishes more work and his employers get the benefit. But if he were to ask for the privilege of doing all his work at home he undoubtedly would be regarded as a shirk. His employers like to know that he is at a certain desk in the main office. Because it is necessary for a few people to do their work at the office, the boss fails to recognize that it is not equally essential for everybody.

What a lot of lost motion may be traced to following rules and customs—to doing what is generally considered the proper thing!

Honolulu

Honolulu this time was a revelation. A magic wand had touched the place and transformed it, even as Miami and Los Angeles have been transformed. It is now a flourishing city in a setting of surpassing loveliness. There is life and progress and enterprise on all sides. The down-town district has become metropolitan and up-to-date. The mountain sides are terraced with beautiful houses to which perfect roads, flower-lined, wind upward under canopies of great spreading trees.

One cannot be long in Honolulu without observing the racial problems which confront its administrators. Over 42 per cent of the population is Japanese, while only 8 per cent is American, British and German. The remainder is divided between Filipinos, Chinese, Hawaiian, semi-Hawaiian and Portuguese. I have seen a photograph of 32 school girls, each of a different race of racial combination—John T. McCutcheon, in Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan.

Greater detail in cut and in trimming is the accepted vogue for autumn, judging from the new clothes, dresses and coats in particular already exploited. Front, side, back and all-around flares and fullness, long sleeves with many types of wrist finish, higher necklines often finished by a collar are outstanding details.

No definite or concentrated movement in the raising of the waistline is yet noted, but the varying position of this important feature gives rise to the prediction that the natural waistline will, before long, be rather generally stressed.

Already there are for evening wear many lovely dance frocks with a decidedly normal placement of the waistline, but the examples of this trend in day-time dresses are still few and far between.

However, the fact that the waistline placement in day-time dresses varies almost bewilderingly seems to substantiate the contention that a decided change in waistline placement is not far off. In the meantime coat dresses, bolero frocks and more fitted effects in straight-line models add a new interest to new dresses for autumn and winter.

The coat suit is becoming more and more popular, and it is predicted that by spring this very smart and practical attire for street wear will be enjoying some of its old-time popularity.

Naturally the return to favor of the coat suit means a renewed interest in blouses and skirts, and the former are already quite well represented by decidedly tailored shirts of wash-silk shirting in white, in stripes and in the lovely blues, tans and grays that have for some time been popular in men's negligee or sport shirts.

Autumn apparently brings no change in the vogue of scarfs unless it be an increase in interest and a wider use of these lovely accessories. Noticeable among the new scarfs are small neck scarfs of silk and of wool in check plaid and multicolored designs, and others that, quite the reverse, are shawl-like in size, done in crepe silk, embroidered and fringed or decorated with multicolored appliques of crepe in cubist motifs on painted backgrounds in two colors. 64 inch squares of gloves silk deeply and effectively bordered by designs done in brocade effect are new shawl squares, that, as an outcome of the scarf as an evening wrap, are this season introduced in evening shades and for adjustment that makes them literally evening wraps.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

"God sent His sinners upon earth. With songs of gladness and of mirth. That they might touch the hearts of men, And bring them back to heaven again." —Longfellow.

The dress of severe simplicity, the one-piece slip on over the head model and with little or no trimming, will soon make its exit from milady's wardrobe. Yet this departure of a long-time favorite mode, enforced as it is, does not mean that actually women are to be denied the comfort and pleasure of wearing practical frocks that have come to mean so much to them. Rather, it is to be understood, has the dress of our choice simply been made to take on some desirable details that add interest to the mode of the one-piece dress. The embarrassment of plainness that had, without doubt, become somewhat monotonous is to be eliminated.

In a dress of fine wool a French designer introduces box plaits at the front to provide the greater detail of design and the skirt flares that makes the straight-line, one-piece dress modish and acceptable for autumn wear; but there are other examples at home as well as from abroad where the back flare or the side flare to the skirt, combined with yoke and front fullness, tucked panels, cascades, interesting collars and the application of trimming, provides the details of enhancement now demanded by fashion for the long-time favorite, the one-piece frock.

Bordered fabrics, both silk and wool are decidedly in favor for autumn and winter dresses, but, in keeping with the style trend in design, the straight line simplicity that prevailed in summer frocks of bordered material has been forced to give way to more interesting development of these decorative fabrics.

The flare and greater skirt width being so generally demanded, it might seem to be impossible to provide these by bordered materials along with the practicality of the one-piece frock of our present understanding, but designers both here and abroad have conceived wonderful results along lines decreed by fashion, yet conforming to the demands of busy femininity for ease of adjustment, youthfulness, comfort and good style.

However, though new dresses and apparel generally are elaborated by cut and ornamentation, millinery is conservative. Trimmings and some hats are noticeable chiefly because of the scarcity of trimming employed.

Distinctive in the group of untrimmed hats are the turbans of velvet, where trimming is conspicuous by its absence.

Where trimming is employed ribbon is extensively used, sometimes flatly applied, and correspondingly flatly plaited, or is actually part of the hat; as, for instance, where a wide ribbon forms a high standing crown-line for a small velvet shape or tricorn points to a round turban or wing-shaped sections to a large brimmed hat.

The vogue of painted doll faces as ornamentation, seen on many accessories of dress, is likewise exploited as a hat trimming, the queer little heads in many instances having flowing locks or closely cropped hair converted from ostrich in some form.

Clipped ostrich is used as facing on turn-back brims of medium small turban-shaped hats of velvet, and in fact all the various forms of ostrich are seen in the autumn showing of new hats—not an extravagant use of ostrich as in the days of the willow plume, but a discreet use of this lovely trimming that fits in beautifully and most appropriately with fashion's ruling that there must be this coming season more decorative details in woman's dress.

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Her Own Fault

The train was about to start when the door of a compartment containing a solitary commercial traveler was flung open and a young woman entered and dropped into a corner seat.

After a while the traveler said, politely: "Excuse me, miss, but—"

"If you speak or annoy me I'll pull the communication cord," snapped the girl.

The train rolled on, and after a lengthy pause the young man made another attempt to speak, but again the girl threatened to give the alarm.

At last the train slowed up at a station and the traveler rose to his feet.

"I don't care whether you like it or not," he said, "but I want that bag of strawberries you've been sitting on for the last six miles."

His Indifference

"Hey there! hey!" yelled a hillside dweller to a bypasser in the big road. "I've just heard terrible news!"

"Say you—p'tu—have?" returned Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge, who was the bypasser.

"Yes! A feller come a-runnin' over the hill and told me another feller had told him that he's heard they was a telephonin' out from town that the world is comin' to an end day after tomorrow!"