

The Gray Day.

Evermore all the days are long, and the cheerless skies are gray. Restless wander the battling winds that scatter the blinding spray. And the drifting currents come and go like serpents across my way.

Wearily fades the evening dim, drearily wears the night. The gloomy mists and the hurrying clouds and the breakers' crests of white. Have blotted the stars from the desolate skies—have contained them from my sight.

Speeding alone, my wave-tossed barque on countered no passing sail. Welcoming friend nor challenging foe answers my eager hail—Only the sobbing, unquiet waves and the wind's uncaring wail.

Hopefully still my sails are bent, my pilot is faultlessly true. He holds my course as though the seas and the mirrored skies were blue. And the port of peace, where the winds are still, were evermore in view.

For over the spray and the rain and the clouds shines the eternal sun. The unchanging stars in the contained dome still gleam when the day is done. And mists will be kissed from the laughing skies when the port of rest is won.

A FOOLISH MISTAKE.

"Lucy, which of us are you going to give up, Mark Beauclere or me? It must be one of us, dear, and the sooner you decide the better."

The speaker—a tall, lithe, brown-haired, brown-skinned young fellow of three-and-twenty, with an honest face and a pair of earnest blue-eyes—placed himself very deliberately in Lucy Armstrong's way, as she was strolling under the trees in the shady old garden, with her hat pulled over her eyes, and a pocket volume of some poet in her hands. It was a scorching July afternoon, and Lucy had quietly slipped away from the half-dozen ladies who were sitting round her Aunt Hester's tea-table, discussing all the latest news of the period.

Mark Beauclere, an aesthetic young gentleman of 30, with a very fine voice, rather weak sight and a large income, was there too, but he generally was to be found at Miss Hester Armstrong's tea-table, and Lucy was a little tired of them all, and wanted to be alone. She looked as if she were having some very pleasant thoughts, as she sauntered under the trees, and seemed in no way prepared for the sudden interruption.

"Why, George, you quite startled me," she said, standing still, for George Leslie had placed himself in her way. "Why didn't you go in and have some tea?"

"Because I wanted to talk to you, Lucy. I've been trying to get an opportunity of talking to you for the last week, and I couldn't. I want to know which of us you are going to give up, Mark or me?"

"Seeing that I never possessed either of you, it would be rather premature of me to say," and she glanced up at him from under the shelter of her hat.

"Why, George, what's the matter?" she asked, laying her hand lightly upon his arm. "Are you ill—or angry?"

"No, only heart-sick and sorry and disappointed," and the young fellow looked quite haggard. "I suppose I ought to congratulate you, and then efface myself as speedily as possible, but when a fellow has cared about somebody all his life, as I have cared about you, it's not so easy, Lucy."

"What's not so easy, George? I really have not the slightest idea of what you're talking about," Lucy cried, growing very red and confused. "Do tell me exactly what you mean, like a good boy."

George winced, and turned aside with rather a savage expression. To be called "a good boy" by Lucy under certain circumstances would be all very well, but in that tolerant almost patronizing tone, it was too much for him. "Am I not to congratulate you on your engagement to Mr. Beauclere?" he said grimly.

"Certainly not," was the very grave reply. "Then you've refused him, Lucy?" with humiliating eagerness. "I guess you would."

"Mr. Beauclere has not done me the honor of asking me."

"Ah!" and George's face fell perceptibly. "But you will refuse him, Loo, won't you?" he continued. "He told me he was going to propose this very day," in a savage whisper.

"Then perhaps he will inform you of my reply in due course," and she looked up with a droll twinkle in her bright hazel eyes. "Now George, if you're not coming in to have some tea, let me pass, please."

"But you don't care about him, Loo, do you?" he whispered, with a very penitent glance.

"Pardon me, I like Mr. Beauclere very much, indeed. Why shouldn't I? And I thought, George, you and he were friends."

George turned away with an exclamation that sounded like "Confound him," and Lucy returned to the house, serenely smiling under her broad-brimmed hat.

The drawing-room was empty, but in a little snugery beyond, which her aunt called her boudoir, there was a muffled hum of voices, and Lucy smiled more comically than ever as she went up-stairs to change her dress for dinner. Both George Leslie and Mr. Mark Beauclere were to dine at "The Nest," and Lucy, brimful of mischief, resolved to tease George thoroughly before she put him out of his misery.

So she donned a fresh muslin gown, and fastened a crimson rose in her hair, and then went down and took her seat near the drawing-room window, which commanded the entrance to the front garden, and with a very demure smile awaited the course of events.

Presently she was joined by her aunt, looking gravely important, and bristling all over with a secret. Miss Hester was a tall, slender, keen-eyed, thin-lipped lady of as near 40 as possible, with smooth dark hair, regular features, and a stately not to say commanding presence; she had very beautiful white hands, and she used them in a majestic way. When dinner was announced it was by a wave of them she signified to her niece that she meant to proceed at

once to the dining-room. Lucy followed her with suppressed amusement beaming from every feature of her face. She guessed pretty accurately what her aunt's secret was, though, till Miss Hester opened the subject, she would not breathe even a hint of it. As the dinner progressed in impressive silence, she found herself wondering why George did not come. Later on, as she sat at the twilight, and played over her favorite songs, singing snatches of them, wandering aimlessly from "Auld Lang Syne" to the "Lass of Richmond Hill," and then to "Home, Sweet Home," she little thought who was listening to her on the other side of the lilac tree that shaded the drawing-room window.

There in safe obscurity, George Leslie, with just the suspicion of a bang, and saw Lucy's slight white-robed figure cross the room and approach the open window, then he stole away noiselessly with something between a sob and a sigh. There was even a suspicious and humiliating moisture in the poor fellow's eyes as he hurried across the fields in the direction of the railway station.

"She's treated me very badly—but for all that, I hope she may be happy. Heaven bless her!" as he caught a glimpse of "The Nest" as the train shrieked past.

Then he shrank back into his corner and gave himself up to the bitterest reflection. He found it difficult to realize that he was rejected; yet Beauclere had told him distinctly that he had proposed to Miss Armstrong that afternoon and had been accepted. There was no further reason for his staying at Westwater; and he was going to ask his uncle, of the firm of Leslie & Longhampston, to send him on a confidential mission to the extreme end of the earth, where they were supposed to do business. George could not be philosophical enough to look at happiness "through another man's eyes," so he determined to get completely out of the way of Mark Beauclere; and he could not even summon up courage to congratulate Lucy or say good-bye; but he wrote her a nice little letter, in which a good deal of real feeling was hidden under some stiff, formal phrases and through it all peeped a very sore, bruised, affronted, but still faithful, love.

Lucy laughed at it first, and then cried over it, then wiped her eyes, and wrote an explanatory and affectionate reply; but, alas! George was gone on the confidential mission. His letter said that he was on the eve of starting for China, and bore the Southampton postmark. He said he might be absent for years, or forever. To poor Lucy, in the first dismay of her discovery that George was really gone, it seemed the same thing.

"M. dear Leslie, this is a surprise and a pleasure! How are you? When did you get back?" and George Leslie found his hand grasped by a portly, comfortable-looking gentleman in gold-rimmed glasses and a wideawake hat.

"I beg your pardon, I don't—I can't recall you, though I seem to remember your voice," George stammered!

The portly gentleman laughed. "Well, you're more changed than I am, I dare say, and yet I knew you in a moment. Is it possible that you have forgotten—?" "Beauclere? Why, of course; how stupid of me!" and George's face grew a curious brick color as he wrung his old friend's hand.

"I've been away five years, Mark, and it tells on all of us."

"I wish it told such a flattering tale on me as it does on you," Mark said, with a smile. "Come and dine with me, old fellow—no excuses—it won't put us out in the least. Mrs. Beauclere is at Brighton with Miss Armstrong, so I'm en garçon. We live at Putney, Jump-in—" as a bus came up—"and tell me all about your adventures, and when you returned."

"I only landed three days ago, and I haven't had any adventures except of the most commonplace kind. The business I went out to manage turned out very well. I made some money, and I've come to England to settle down—that's all. How is Mrs. Beauclere?"

"Quite well, thanks. Have you put on the halter yet, George?"

"No. The Celestial Empire is certainly not the place of all others to tempt a man to matrimony."

"Lucky fellow! I wish I had gone there with you."

George was silent—it seemed like treason to echo the wish. It was just like the monster Mark, ever to express it. Of course he made the poor Lucy miserable, that was only to be expected. How he ever could have become so supremely dull and commonplace George I couldn't imagine. When he entered the drawing-room he couldn't help noticing little evidences of Lucy about; her old-fashioned work-table—a black cat which he seemed dimly to remember—books, and a drawing or two. His heart beat a little quickly; and on the whole he was glad that he had not to meet her on the first evening. "Does Miss Armstrong always live with you?" he asked presently.

"Yes, of course; where else could she live? Indeed, I don't know in the last how the house would get on without her. You see, my wife and I go in for politics and literature, and that sort of thing; and if we hadn't some one to keep us in order and see to our creature comforts, I'm afraid we'd starve. If ever you do marry, George, don't select a clever woman with a taste of logic and metaphysics," Mark whispered, looking round cautiously. "It's simply awful!"

"I never fancied Mrs. Beauclere would develop a taste for those subjects," George replied; and then he smiled a little sadly as he thought of Lucy as a blue-stocking, and Aunt Hester, who had always been his special horror, whispering about the house, upsetting the domestic comfort of every one, and waving her hands, in command or disapproval, unceasingly.

"I never could stand it, I know," he said to himself, as Mark went on giving him some details of the establishment, with a sort of rueful good humor. "A clever wife and an energetic aunt-in-law would be too much for me."

And it had evidently proved too much for poor Mark Beauclere. He was no longer slender, sentimental and esthetic; indeed, his chief idea in life seemed to be thorough enjoyment of

such pleasures as to him. He enjoyed his dinner for instance, thoroughly, and grew quite confidential over his coffee after.

"It was very sudden, your going away, George," he remarked, after a long chat over the old times at Westwater, and the pleasant evenings they used to have at "The Nest." "Do you know, I thought once that you had rather a fancy for Lucy?"

George grew brick-red again, and bent his eyes resolutely on the table. "It would have been a capital thing for you; and I believed she liked you, for she seemed altogether out of sorts when she got your letter. In fact, George you might have done much worse than to have married Lucy Armstrong."

Still silence and steady contemplation of his glass on the part of George. "And, for that matter you might do worse than marry her still."

George looked up with a sudden angry flush, then he grew quite white. Mark was not chaffing in the least, he felt that; still he could not take it all in at once.

"I believe it's entirely on your account she has remained single," Mark continued with good-natured garrulity, "in spite of all her aunt's efforts to get her well married."

"Did you say Mrs. Beauclere was staying at Brighton?" George presently asked, in a very meek voice; "because I thought of running down there for a few days. Will you come Mark?"

"No, thank you," with a droll shrug. "My wife and Lucy are staying at the Royal; give them my love, and tell them they need not hurry back, as I'm all right."

"Lucy, dearest, can you forgive me? It was all a dreadful mistake from first to last! I thought it was you Mark who wanted to marry; and when he told me that evening that he had proposed and been accepted, I was frantic. Aunt Hester never once entered my head."

Lucy's reply was a little unintelligible, but after a time they managed to understand each other. Miss Armstrong could not long resist a lover who had been faithful to her for five years, even when he believed her lost to him forever; and George resolved to marry her out of hand, so that there should be no more misunderstandings. Sometimes Mark Beauclere chaffs them a little about George's mistake; but he always boldly asserts that the great mistake was Mark's after all.

TEN YEARS HENCE.

How Retirees for Age will Remove War Veterans from the Active Army.

A letter from Washington says the retirement of Col. C. C. Gilbert, Seventeenth Infantry, is successful, and during that of Major General Murray, Colonel General Robert Murray, Colonel General L. Felber, Pay Department; Gen. John Newton, Chief of Engineers; Col. S. D. Sturgis, Seventh Cavalry; Col. J. H. Potter, Twenty-fourth Infantry; Col. P. Bradley, Thirteenth; Col. John D. Wilkins, Fifth; Col. J. N. G. Whistler, Fifteenth, and by the retirement of several officers of less rank than that of colonel.

These compulsory retirements under the law which removes from the active list officers who have reached the age of 64, may be supplemented by voluntary retirements for other causes, or by deaths. In 1887 another notable list of retirements will be due; and altogether the reflection is provoked that the veterans who won a name for themselves in the war for the Union are rapidly going into the shelter.

If we look forward ten years to the spring of 1896, we find that then nearly all the now famous names will be gone from the active list. Lieutenant General Sheridan will then have been retired a year, and every one of the present Major Generals and Brigadier Generals, except General Miles. All the present chiefs of staff departments and bureaus, including Adjutant General Bureau, Inspector General Bureau, Quartermaster General Bureau, Commissary General Bureau, Surgeon General Murray, Paymaster General Rochester, General Newton, Chief of Engineers; General Benet, Chief of Ordnance, and Chief Signal Officer Hazen, will be on the retired list. The same will be true of the five highest officers now in the Adjutant General's Department, the seven highest in the Quartermaster's, the six highest in the Subsistence, the eleven highest in the Pay Corps and the nine highest in the Engineers.

Of the present cavalry Colonels, Grierson, Hatch, Sturgis, Brackett, Carr, Royal, Ouis, Dudley and Switzer, will be retired, and only Merritt will remain in active service, while he, of course, will long before have become a general officer. Of the present artillery Colonels all five—Ayers, Hamilton, Best, Gibson, Tidball—will long before have been retired. Of the twenty-five Infantry Colonels the only ones not retired by the end of 1896 will be Ruger, Eighteenth; Wheaton, Second; Shafter, First; J. R. Brooke, Third; E. S. Otis, Twentieth, and H. C. Merriam.

Retirements for age will also have gone on in lower grades. In short, ten years hence, considering the other casualties, as of death, retirement for disability, and so on, officers who have served in the war for the Union will constitute a minority in the active army, while those who had achieved fame as general officers of volunteers will be rare exceptions.

Nitrate of Soda.

The death of a sea captain recently was ascribed by medical authorities to blood poisoning, caused by his vessel carrying a cargo of nitrate of soda. The sailors were affected with what they called rheumatism. The captain being in the after cabin, suffered the full force of the evaporation of the nitre. It is said that four captains in the employ of a leading eastern shipping firm have died within a few years of the same cause.

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Fifty years ago Russia stood almost first in iron-producing nations; now her name is nearly lost, and her imports of iron and steel amount to more than \$75,000,000.

THE RICHEST WOMAN.

The Wondrous History of Mme. Cousino, of Santiago, Chili.

The Ceresus of South America is a woman, Donna Isadora Cousino, of Santiago, Chili, and there are few men or women in the world richer than she. There is no end to her money and no limit to her extravagance, and people call her the Countess of Monte Cristo. She traces her ancestry back to the days of the conquest, and has the record of the first of her fathers who landed in the New World. His family was already famous, for his uncles and sire fought under the ensign of the Arragon before the alliance with Castile. But the Spanish branch of the family was lost in the world's great shuffle two or three centuries ago, and none of them distinguished themselves enough to get their portraits into the collection which Senora Cousino has made of the lineage she claims.

From the coal mines alone Senora Cousino has an income of \$80,000 a month, and there is no reason why this should not be perpetual, as they are the only source from which fuel can be obtained in all South America, and those who do not buy of her have to import their coal from Great Britain. I do not believe there are any mines in the world which pay so large a profit upon the capital invested, and the labor expended. They lie at the extreme southern limit of the populated district of Chili, just above where the archipelago that you will notice on the map begins. Talcahuana is the nearest port of importance, but the towns at the mines are Lota and Coronel. The coast is quite abrupt here, and the mines are entered by shafts that are immediately over the water of Lota Bay, so that the coal is drawn on trucks to the mouth of the mines and dumped into launches and lighters which are towed out to the anchorage of ships. It is said that it costs only \$1.35 a ton to mine and deliver this coal on shipboard, and she will not sell an ounce of it at a price less than \$7.50 a ton, just a shade lower than the cost of imported Cardiff. As the deposit is inexhaustible, and the widow has a monopoly, it will be surmised that this portion of her property will yield enough to keep the wolf from her door.

She has a fleet of eight Iron steamships, of capacities varying from 2,000 to 3,600 tons, built in England and used to carry coal up the coast as far as Panama, and around the straits of Magellan to Buenos Ayres and Montevideo. At Lota she has copper and silver smelting works, besides the coal mines, and her sailing ships bring one down the coast as a regular cargo from Upper Chili, Peru, and Ecuador, while those that go to Buenos Ayres bring back beef and flour and merchandise for the consumption of her people. Mme. Cousino owns every house in the town of Lota, and every one of its 6,000 or 7,000 inhabitants is dependent upon her for support. In Coronel her proprietorship is not quite so complete, but nine-tenths of the people, and there are 8,000 there, are on her pay-rolls. She has brick-kilns and potteries, as well as smelters, and makes all the tiles and earthenware used on the west coast. It is said that she pays out from \$100,000 to \$120,000 a month as wages in these two towns, most of which comes back into her own pocket through the supply stores, where she sells food and clothing to her own people.

At present the madam is living in a temporary structure, but remains on the ground to superintend the construction of her new home. She has another park and palace an hour's drive from Santiago—the finest "estancia" or plantation in Chili; perhaps in all South America and I do not know of one in North America or Europe that will equal it. This is called "Macul," and the estate reaches from the boundaries of the city of Santiago far into the Cordillera, whose clinging caps of everlasting snow mark the limits of the widow's mine. In the valleys are her fields of grain, her orchards, and her vineyards, while in the foothills of the mountains her flocks of sheep and herds of cattle feed. Here she gives employment to 300 or 400 men all organized under the direction of superintendents, most of whom are Scotchmen. She has one American in her employ at "Macul," whose business it is of a general farmer, but his time is mostly occupied in teaching the natives of the place how to operate labor-saving agricultural machinery.

Farming in Chili is conducted very much as it was in England in old feudal times, each estate having its retainers, who are permitted to use tenements or homes built there for that purpose, and are paid for the amount of labor they perform. These persons are not permitted to accept employment from any except their landlord; and are always subject to his call for purposes of war or peace. It is said that the Madam can marshal a thousand men from her two farms if she needs them.

The vineyard of "Macul," supplies nearly all of the market of Chili with claret and sherry wines, and the cellar on the place, an enormous building, 500 feet long by 100 wide, is kept constantly full. Mme. Cousino makes all her own bottles; but imports her labels from France. On this farm she has some very valuable imported stock, both cattle and horses, and her racing stable is the most extensive and successful in South America. The madam takes a great interest in the turf, and always bets very heavily upon her own horses.

At the last meeting her winnings are reported at more than \$100,000 outside of the purses won by her horses, which are always divided among the employes of the stables.

In addition to Macul she has another large estate about thirty miles from Santiago, but gives it very little attention, and has not been there for a number of years. In the city she has two large and fine houses, one of them being the former residence of Henry Meigs, the California fugitive, which was the finest residence in Santiago at the time it was built. All the timber and other material used in its construction came from California, and it is mostly red cedar.

The construction and architecture are in the American plan and in appearance and arrangement it resembles the villas at Newport. The cost was enormous, but it was built in the days of Meigs' glory, when money

was of no value to him. The other city residence of Senora Cousino is a stone mansion erected on the Spanish-American plan, with a court in the centre, and is ornamented with some very elaborate carving. The interior was decorated and furnished many years ago by Parisian artists, at an enormous cost, and the house is fit for the palace of a king. There is no more elaborate or extensive residence in America, and the money expended upon it would build as fine a house as that of W. H. Vanderbilt in New York. The widow spends very little time in its walls, however, as she prefers her home at Lota, where most of her business is.

The madam is very fond of young men and has from fifteen to twenty young fellows around her constantly, to whom she gives all the money they can spend. In return she expects them to entertain her. While the United States fleet was at Valparaiso not long ago she invited all the officers to spend a week with her at "Macul," and Santiago, and sent a special train to bring them up. Admiral Uphur and about twenty of his officers accepted the invitation, lodged at the widow's house, rode in the widow's carriages, and had a high old time at the widow's expense. She would not allow one of them to spend a dollar, and sent word to all the shops and restaurants that anything the American officers ordered was to be charged to her account. There was a good deal of scandal over this affair at Santiago, and the Americans who were not asked to share the Madam's hospitality felt at liberty to talk about it as severely as they pleased. But the officers were in no way to blame for this was one of the lady's freaks, and her method of having a good time. Every person of distinction who comes to Chili is entertained by her, and her balls are marvels of social splendor. Lady Brassey, in her story of the voyage of the Sunbeam, gives an account of her acquaintance with Senora Cousino, and the splendor in which she lives.

Last spring the Madam fitted out one of her coal ships, provisioned it in the most extravagant manner, hired an orchestra of twelve pieces, and invited fifty or more ladies and gentlemen to take a cruise. The party visited Juan Fernandez, the island that is sacred to the memory of Robinson Crusoe, and then sailed down the coast to Terra del Fuego, where several days were spent in search of a good time. From the stories that are told, the errand was successful, and the gossips of Chili will never cease to talk about it. The cruise lasted about three weeks, and cost the Madam many thousands of dollars.

Fabulous stories are told of her extravagance. A million dollars or so is a trifle to a woman whose income is so enormous, and there is nothing in the world that she will not buy if she happens to want it. She doesn't care much for art, but has a collection of diamonds that is very large and valuable, and sometimes appears loaded down with them. Usually she looks very shabby, as she has no taste or ambition in dress, and her party costumes that are ordered from Paris are seldom worn. Of late she has been a sufferer from sciatica, and it has not only destroyed the Madam's own pleasure, but has seriously impaired the comfort of those who have relations with her. Although a comparatively young woman, being somewhere between forty-five and fifty years of age, she declares she will not marry again, and there is not a man in Chili who has the courage to ask her. Not long since she took a fancy to a young German, with a very blonde beard and hair, and insisted that he should give up his business and make his home with her. The inducements she offered were sufficient, and for several months the young man has been tied to her apron strings, having the ostensible employment of a private secretary. But the Madam is very fickle, and will probably throw him overboard when the whim seizes her, as she has done many others.

A Boy's Coolness.

When General Tims was about 16 years old he met with an exciting adventure. He came home late one night and entered the house through a window. His father, a very excitable old gentleman, was under the impression that a burglar was in the house, and catching a glimpse of a dark figure in the hall he fired at it six times with his revolver. Having exhausted his powder and ball, old Tims flashed a light on the situation and discovered that the supposed burglar was his son. After the flurry was over the boy was asked why he had not revealed his identity. Turning his solemn and impassive face to his father he replied, with a quiet dignity: "I thought I'd wait till you got through; I didn't want to interrupt you."

"But, me che-ild," groaned old Tims, "when the bullets whistled around your head, tell me what were your sensations, what were your thoughts?"

"Which?" inquired the youngster. "What did you think about?" "Nothing," was the calm response, "Nothing at all."

And that was all they could get out of him. The delighted father was so proud of the boy's coolness under fire that he related the incident to everybody in town. After that young Tims had a tremendous reputation for courage.

Painted Rock.

The painted rock of Santa Barbara County, Cal., is 150 feet high, and upon it are many color paintings in a good state of preservation, that are thought to be the work of Indians. There are two caves in this giant rock, one at its base another some sixty feet from the ground, and in each of these are pictures of animals.

Bees have to expend immense labor in the gathering of honey. Let us suppose the insects confine their attention to clover fields. Each head of clover contains about sixty separate flower tubes, in each of which is a portion of sugar not exceeding the five-hundredth part of a grain. Therefore, before one grain of sugar can be got, the bee must insert its proboscis into 500 clover tubes. There are 7,000 grains in a pound, so that it follows that 3,500,000 clover tubes must be sucked in order to obtain but one pound of honey.

SOCIAL POSITIONS OF WOMEN.

How Etiquette Interferes with Business in a Store.

A lady with heightened color and angry eyes swept into the private office of the proprietor of a big retail store on Fourteenth street, New York, with the complaint that one of the saleswomen had treated her rudely. The merchant smiled wearily, and promising to inquire into the matter, bowed the lady out.

"Now, there's a case in point," said the merchant to an inquiring visitor. "It may throw some light upon the subject of your errand—the insolence of clerks. Here, John"—to a porter—"ask Miss Black to come up."

Presently a well-appearing but tired looking salesgirl came into the private office. The merchant's face was like a stone.

"Well, Miss Black"—and his voice was like the cold gray day out of doors—"what is this complaint I hear about you?"

"Mrs. Brown? A lady in sealskin; auburn hair?" asked the girl in a slow, even tone.

The merchant nodded. "She was insolent to me," continued the girl. "Insulting, I should say. She has an idea that shopgirls are slaves. She and I are old friends. We worked at the same counter for two years before she married Brown, the builder."

"That will do, Miss Black; I am satisfied. Thus, you see," he continued, when the girl had gone. "the fault is on both sides. The saleswoman cannot bring herself to believe that she is a machine incapable of feeling affront; nor can the customer leave her thoughts of social distinction in her carriage outside. 'America is a free country, and labor is honorable,' says the clerk, and 'I expect obedience and subservience,' says the customer. Both are right and both are wrong. We shall never come to that point wherein customers are kind and reasonable and clerks invariably polite and attentive. Human nature must change before it can be done. I have tried all sorts of ways for improving my counter service, with very little effect. Discipline wouldn't do; fines were a failure, and dismissals defeated the very object in view."

"Did you ever try increasing salaries?" was asked.

"Once. Of course, I got a better grade of clerks and better service, but it cut into my profits so materially that I had to give it up. I had to increase the price of my goods to keep even, and my customers left me and went to cheaper places. Competition in prices keeps prices low. I do the best I can. I'm not here to harmonize the discordant elements of mankind, but to make money."

The young woman whose attendance had been complained of by the lady in sealskin took a sensible view of the matter when questioned about rude manners in clerks. "If lady customers would treat clerks as human beings," said she, "there would be no trouble at all. Why a lady should act in an overbearing and domineering manner toward employes in stores is more than I can explain. She does not treat her own servants in that manner. Mrs. Loftus has a social position. I have none. Is that any reason why she should look upon me with contempt across the counter? There is a great gulf between us, I know, but I don't care for that. I have other things to think of. Mrs. Loftus and her carriage are nothing to me. She is simply a customer to whom I will sell certain goods. It's a plain business transaction, with no social sentiment about it. Why can't we conduct the transaction from a purely business standpoint, as men do? Mrs. Loftus is not satisfied to bring her carriage up to the door; she must needs bring it inside and set it up, footman, pug dog and all, on my counter. More than that, she gives this social chasm material form and spreads it out between us. She brings society into the store with her, and treats me as though I were an unworthy applicant for an invitation to her 5 o'clock tea. I treat her from a business standpoint, neither cringing nor bending, and she, short-sighted creature, thinks that I mean to be impertinent. That's all there is to it. Women are so unreasonable. A man will go into a store, make his purchases from a male clerk and go out without once thinking of the social difference between him and the clerk. Such a thing never enters his head. He treats the clerk politely, and the clerk does his best to get what is wanted in the shortest possible time. The clerk tries to keep the man's custom, so that his value to the store may be enhanced. If women were more like men in their business dealings there would be small cause for complaint on the part of either clerks or customers."

"Demoralization of the French People. The attention, curiosity, and, it may be added, the irritation of the French public have been greatly excited within the last few days by the appearance of the volume just published by a certain Dr. Rommel. He said: 'Demoralization has fastened upon every class of French society. The peasant rushes to the largest towns; the artisan beaten by the foreign competitor, flocks to political meetings and gets drunk on agitation; the bourgeoisie crowds every public office and yearns after sedentary employment, and all the while the foreigner migrates into France. The exodus from the fields to the cities, the wild rush after all easy and sedentary occupations, the scourge of functionalism on the one hand and of proletarianism on the other, the absence of self-reliance, the paralysis of any kind of individual initiative, the universal appeal to the state, are so many signs of this moral foundering. Never has there been such a display of that religious indifference that precedes a storm; never has there been such utter contempt for opponents' opinions, or such deep hatred of the principles of authority, civil, military and religious.'

Aphalum varnish is recommended as a disinfectant. It is claimed that it will destroy all germs at once, and that no household insect will approach an article of furniture that has been coated with it.