

EVOLUTION OF A BOOK.

How "Ships that Pass in the Night" Found a Title and a Publisher.

Beatrice Harraden, the eccentric writer of that eccentric book, "Ships that Pass in the Night," tells the story of its evolution in the January McClure's as follows:

It has never been greatly advertised. The English publisher never seemed to take much interest in it: and if one may be allowed to criticize so sacred a personage as a publisher, one might almost say that it has succeeded in spite of its publishers. From the very beginning it was quite independent of everyone and everything: it started life on its own account, and therefore regards itself, with justice, as self-made. It was first of all submitted to a well known firm of publishers, who decided against it. They said that it could not possibly sell; that it was morbid and pessimistic from beginning to end; that the attempts at sentiment and pathos rang false; and there was nothing original in it. But for all that, if it had been in three volumes, they would have published it, as they admired the style and appreciated the workmanship—or words somewhat to that effect.

At that time I was possessed with the fixed idea that these gentlemen were the only publishers in the world; and that, failing to meet with their approval, all chances of success were everlastingly cut off from me. So when a friend proposed that I should take the book to a young new firm, it seemed a matter of indifference to me whether or not it was submitted to me by other court; but finally my reasonableness gave way to my most grievous disappointment, and the little book went to the young new firm.

About five months later the book was published, and was reviewed in the papers unusually quickly; and I was beset with letters of inquiry concerning the origin of the words "Ships that Pass in the Night."

I myself did not know where to find them, although I had searched through many editions of Longfellow. They had been given to me many years ago, and I suppose I had borne them unconsciously in my mind all that time; and when I came to one of the last chapters of the first part of the book, where the melting of the snow had begun, and the guests of Petersburg were speeding each on his own way, each in utter disregard of any one else, then those words swept across my remembrance, and I called the chapter "Ships that Speak Each Other in Passing."

When the book was finished, I could find no title for it. I thought of this, and thought of that, and then in despair I took my pen and wrote on the outside sheet, "Ships that Pass in the Night." In sending the story to the publishers, I told them that I could suggest no other title, but that of course these words would not do, only that they would serve for the present, just for the sake of calling the book something. The publishers saw no objection to the quotation, and therefore the title remained.

How He Worked His Dad.

"Have you carefully considered all that I have said, my boy?" asked the old gentleman, the day after he had given his son a little fatherly advice.

"Yes, father," replied the young man meekly.

"You are getting near the age at which a young man naturally begins to look around for a wife, and I don't want you to make a mistake."

"I'll try not to, father."

"No butterflies of fashion, my boy, but a girl of some solid worth; one who has some practical accomplishments."

"Yes, father."

"Never mind the piano-playing and Delsarte lessons; never mind the dancing and the small talk. When you find a girl who can cook, my boy, it will be time to think of marrying. When you find a girl who can make up her own bed, knows how to set the table without forgetting something, is able to put up the preserves, and, above all, is good at sewing, go in and win her, my boy, and you will have my blessing."

"I have resolved, father, to seek such a wife as you describe," said the young man, with determination. "I see the folly of seeking a wife in society. I will go to an intelligence office this afternoon, and see if I can find one that will answer. And then I'll have mother call on her, and—"

"Young man, I'll break your neck in about a minute!"

"But you said—"

"Never mind what I said; I've changed my mind."

How Gold is Carried at Sea.

On an ocean steamer the specie locker is a carefully constructed vault, and is situated in the stern immediately over the screw. It has the shape of a half-oval, following the contour of the side of the vessel, and is generally about 6 ft. in its extreme from top to bottom. Some vaults are 15 ft. to 20 ft. in length, fore and aft. The interior is reached by a door or hatchway from the top, simply large enough to give convenient access. This door is of steel, and has a combination lock, which is known by only to the purser. Over this hatch are also fastened three bars of steel, two and a half inches thick, which swing at one end on hinges, and are locked and bolted at the other. The locker is in the most suitable part of the ship, as it is away from the crew, and cannot be tampered with, as on three sides it is the sea. The purser receives the gold, which is shipped in bags or kegs, carefully examines the seals, then checks off the weights, and assumes the responsibility for it.

He was not Scared.

One of the stories current in the Court which Justice Hawkins presides is that the learned judge had received a round robin, signed by his immediate neighbours, urgently entreating him to have a name-plate put on his door. It is pointed out that, if he is marked out for anarchist reprisals, it would be just as well for the emissary on the next occasion to present himself at the right house. Sir Henry is imperturbable amid circumstances that might well try the bravest spirit and abates no jot of his customary humour. Talking to Mr. Reginald Brett on the subject, he said with a twinkle of his eye, "It is no use, my dear Brett, their attempting to intimidate me by blowing in your front door."

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A STIRRING BATTLE SCENE.

How the day was saved for Napoleon at Marengo.

The hour of victory sounded. Faithful to Bonaparte, she came at last to hover over our heads, and to act as our guide. The divisions of Monnier and Desaix came in sight.

As soon as the first battalion of Desaix's division reached the height, it was formed into a close column. The consul, the general-in-chief, the generals, the officers of the staff, ran through the ranks, and everywhere inspired that confidence which gives birth to great successes. This operation lasted an hour, terrible to pass, for the Austrian artillery was thundering upon us, and each volley carried away whole ranks. Bullets and shells destroyed men and horses. They received death without moving from their places, and the ranks closed over the bodies of their comrades. This deadly artillery even reached the cavalry, which was drawn up behind us, as well as a large number of footmen of different corps who, encouraged by Desaix's division, which they had seen passing, had hastened back to the field of honor.

Everything is arranged. The battalions burn with impatience. The drummer, his eyes fixed on the baton of his major, awaits the signal. The trumpeter, his arm raised, is ready to sound. The signal is given; the terrible quickstep is heard; the regiments all move together. French impetuosity, like a torrent, carries everything before it. In a twinkling an eye the defile is crossed. The enemy is overwhelmed on all sides. Dying, living, wounded, and dead are trampled under foot.

Each leader as he reaches the opposite side of the defile and prepares to enter the plain, arranges his division in battle array. Then it was that our line presented a formidable front. As fast as the artillery arrived, it was arranged, and vomited death on the frightened enemy. They recoil. Their immense cavalry charges with fury, but musketry, grape-shot, bayonets, stop them short. One of their caissons explodes; the terror is redoubled. The disorder which begins is hidden by thick clouds of smoke. The cries of the victor increase the terror; at last they are overwhelmed, they fall back; they fly.

Then the French cavalry throws itself into the plain, and by its boldness conceals its small numbers. It marches on the enemy without fear of being broken. At the right is Desaix at the head of his intrepid soldiers. Like a thunderbolt he seems to proceed the lightning. Everything gives way before him. He crosses the ditches, the hedges; overwhirls, tramples, crushes everything in his way. The rough ground is crossed with the same speed. The soldiers clamber headlong over the ditches, conquer every difficulty, and even dispute with their chiefs the glory of passing first.

On the left, General Victor, with the same speed, takes possession of Marengo and flies towards the Bormida. In spite of the efforts of a superior enemy, whose artillery and cavalry disturb his right flank. The centre, with less force and cavalry, under the order of General Murat, advances majestically into the plain. Murat attacks the centre of the enemy, follows up his movement, holds in check an enormous body of cavalry. The intrepid Desaix, by an oblique and quick motion, turns to the right on San-Stephano, and cuts off entirely the left Austrian wing. At the same moment General Kellermann, with eight hundred horses gathered up from several regiments, compels six thousand Hungarian grenadiers to lay down their arms.

Oh, grief! It is in the very moment of his triumph, after having saved his army and perhaps his country, that the friend and the model of all brave men, Desaix, is mortally wounded. He has only time to say to young Lebrun, "Go tell the first Consul that the only regret I have is not to have done enough for posterity," with these words he expires. The first Consul, on learning this misfortune, cried out, "Why may I not weep?"

A Birmingham Bird Omen.

Here is a little item for the people who agitate themselves over white blackbirds and like freaks in bird life. Much superstition surrounds some birds. But we always thought that the robin, so long as well treated, was associated with nothing but good omens. However, a Birmingham Eng., doctor was recently summoned to a farmhouse just outside the city. He found an old man in bed but in perfect health and asked why he had been sent for. "Why sir," replied the daughter-in-law, "there came a little robin about the door. We knew it was a 'cat,' and we thought it must be grander; so we put him in bed and sent for you." The "grander" is doing well and fast on the road to recovery from the shock.

A Tip Wanted.

A story is narrated of Lord Rosebery's recent visit to the East-end of London. While passing through a great establishment several of the employees, whose knowledge of the distinguished guest chiefly centred in him as the owner of a good horse, communicated to one of the company their wish that Lord Rosebery would do them a favor.

"What was it they wanted—a speech?" suggested the gentleman approached.

"A speech! No! Speech be hanged!" said the men; "we want a tip for the Liverpool Cup!"

Sempe Idem.

Servant Maid (in breathless excitement): "Professor, there's a burglar in the dining-room!"

Professor (deeply absorbed, without looking up): "Tell him I'm engaged."

If you only knew what was in the air; breath; Yes! but also cold, coughs, influenza and bronchitis for those of weak throat and lungs at this season of the year. Have a bottle of Hawker's balsam of tolu and wild cherry always on hand, it is a sure cure for all forms of throat and lung troubles.

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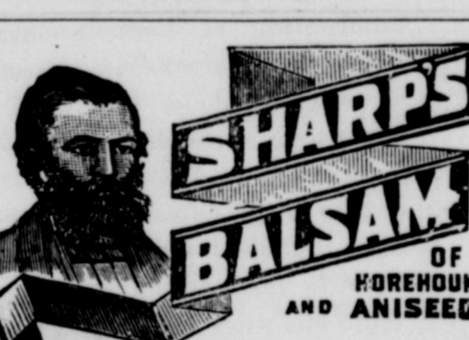
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HOW TO BE AN ACTOR.

A Key to the Eccentricities of Stage-Devotees.

When an actress has something particular to confide to her papa or mamma, it would be the height of ill-manners did she not crouch down on the floor by the side of her parent.

When an actor enters into confidential conversation with another actor, it is the proper thing for him to hang his leg over the side of a chair, his foot resting on its seat.

When an actor opens a letter, he invariably gives the unfolded sheet a smart tap with the back of his hand. He does this for the good and sufficient reason that all actors have done likewise since time immemorial.

When an actor walks up to the footlights, and declaims in a loud voice to the audience, it is to be understood that he is soliloquizing, quite "unbeknownst" to the other people on the stage.

When an actor comes upon the stage faultlessly dressed, with a flower in his button-hole, you may take it for granted that he is a villain of the deepest dye.

When an actor has all manner of hard luck, and is dilapidated as to clothing, and chronically empty as to stomach, he is to be congratulated, for he is shortly to wed the young lady of his choice, and to rise by a spasmodic bound to fame and affluence.

When an actor walks into the room represented on the stage, and stares at the pictures one by one on the walls, you may know either that he is a sheriff's officer or an auctioneer. If his hat is on his head, you may safely set him down as the latter.

When an actress enters with a stern step and a top-knot air, you need not be told that she is a mother-in-law.

When a wicked-looking actor beats his brow, it is to inform you that he is thinking of childhood's hour, when he was guileless and happy, and a stranger to the sin in which he is now steeped.

The Czar's Footnotes.

The annotations which the late czar was in the habit of jotting down in the margin of documents that were sent for his inspection have sometimes brought despair into the hearts of the highest Russian officials. On one occasion after reading a very lengthy report from a certain high-placed functionary the Czar seized his pen and wrote, "What a fool!" The official on having the document returned to him, was exceedingly sick at heart. The report would have to be placed in the archives, and His Majesty's opinion would probably follow him into history! He therefore resolved to petition the Czar to be merciful enough to revise his somewhat rigorous "appreciation of his servant. Alexander III. had a hearty laugh on reading the petition. Then, seizing the report he effaced the offending words, and instead wrote beneath them, "What a philosopher!"

Ring Cut out of a Single Diamond.

A ring, so cut, was exhibited at the Antwerp Exhibition in July of this year, when it was the admiration of the diamond cutters and merchants, being the first successful attempt to cut a ring out of a single stone. There are a great many difficulties in this method of cutting diamonds, and the stones have a certain cleavage and particular veins, all of which have to be carefully studied in order to prevent the splitting of the stone just as success seems within reach. After several unsuccessful attempts and three years, labor, the feat has been accomplished by the patience and skill of M. Antoine, one of the best known lapidaries of Antwerp. The ring is about six-eighths of an inch in diameter. In the Marlborough cabinet there is a ring cut out of one entire and perfect sapphire.

A Scotch New Year's Custom.

In Scotland calling, or "first footing," was a ceremony of much importance, and so universal was the custom of visiting from house to house that a century ago in Edinburgh, the streets were more thronged from 12 to 1 in the New Year's morning than at midday. As it was deemed unlucky to enter the house empty handed, the visitors bore with them cakes, cheese and bowls or kettles of "hot punch." As parties of friends met in the streets they exchanged cakes and buns and sipped each other's drink. It was also held everywhere to bring ill luck if anything was brought in:

Take out and take in.
Bad luck is sure to begin.
But take in and take out.
Good luck will come about.

With St. Peter.

"Oh, yes," said the new arrival. "I wandered from the straight and narrow path once."

St. Peter frowned.

"Once!" he repeated with great severity. "Why, upon consulting my books I find you charged with burglary in the second degree, high treason, disorderly conduct, malicious injury to property, entering dwellings in the daytime, disturbing the peace, and, under the head of suspicion, habitual criminality."

"Correct," joined the shade, "quite right. I sneaked into the house of a New York millionaire and fell asleep in one of his beds."

Sworn Himself In.

Gen Sir Evelyn Wood in his reminiscences of the Crimea in 1854 and 1855, tells a story of a fighting General who, during the conflict, was seen wherever bullets fell most thickly. When not visible his voice was heard encouraging his men with "a vociferous cry borrowed from the army in Flanders," which Sir Evelyn says will not bear repetition. "Years after he was appointed to the Aldershot command, and Her Majesty happened to ask, 'Has the new General yet taken up his command?' 'Yes, Your Majesty,' was the apt reply, 'he swore himself in yesterday.'"

What They Were Coming For.

Jones—"I'm going to bring my wife round to call on you to-night."

Smith—"That's right; but do me a favor, old man. Don't let her wear her new hat; I don't want my wife to see it just now."

Jones (grimly)—"Why, that's what we are coming for."

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