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THE WIDOW

THE widow can bake, and the widow can brew,
The widow can shape, and the widow can sew,
And mony braw things the widow can do,
Then have at the widow, my laddie:
With courage attack her baith early and late;
To kiss her and clap her ye maun be blate;
Speak well, and do better; for that's the best gate
To win a young widow, my laddie.

The widow she's youthfu', and never a hair
The waur of the wearing, and has a good share
Of everything lovely; she's witty and fair,
And has a rich jointure, my laddie.
What could ye wish better, your pleasure to crown,
Than a widow the bonniest toast in the town,
With natching but draw in your stool and sit down,
And spore with the widow, my laddie.

Then till her, and kill her with courtesy dead,
Tho' stark love and kindness be all ye can plead;
Be heartsome and airy, and hope to succeed
With a bonny gay widow, my laddie.
Strike iron while it is hot, if ye'd have it to wald;
For fortune ay favours the active and bauld,
But ruins the wooer that's thowless and cauld,
Unfit for the widow, my laddie.

ALLAN RAMSAY.
(Born October 15, 1686; died January 7, 1758.)

THE INCENDIARY

NO one that had the misfortune to reside during the last winter in the disturbed districts of the south of England will ever forget the awful impression of that terrible time. The stilly gatherings of the misguided peasantry amongst the wild hills, partly heath and partly woodland, of which so much of the northern part of Hampshire is composed,—dropping in one by one, and two by two in the gloom of evening, or the dim twilight of a November morning; or the open and noisy meetings of determined men at noontide in the streets and greens of our Berkshire villages, and even sometimes in the very churchyards, sallying forth in small but resolute numbers to collect money or destroy machinery, and compelling or persuading their fellow-laborers to join them at every farm they visited; or the sudden appearance and disappearance of these large bodies, who sometimes remained together to the amount of several hundreds for many days, and sometimes dispersed, one scarcely knew how, in a few hours; their daylight marches on the high road, regular and orderly as those of any army, or their midnight visits to lonely houses, lawless and terrific as the descent of pirates or the incursions of banditti;—all brought close to us a state of things which we never thought to have witnessed in peaceful and happy England. In the sister island, indeed, we had read of such horrors, but now they were brought home to our very household hearths; we tasted of fear, the bitterest cup that an imaginative woman can taste, in all its agonizing varieties; and felt, by sad experience, the tremendous difference between that distant report of danger, with which we had so often fancied that we sympathized, and the actual presence of danger itself. Such events are salutary, inasmuch as they show to the human heart its own desperate self-deceit. I could not but smile at the many pretty letters of condolence and fellow-feeling which I received from writers who wrote far too well to feel anything, who most evidently felt nothing; but the smile was a melancholy one,—for I recollected how often, not intending to feign, or suspecting that I was feigning, I myself had written such.

Nor were the preparations for defence, however necessary, less shocking than the apprehensions of attack. The hourly visits of bustling parish officers, bristling with importance (for our village, though in the centre of the insurgents, continued uncontaminated,—"faithful amidst the unfaithful found,"—and was, therefore, quite a rallying-point for loyal men and true); the swearing in of whole regiments of petty constables; the stationary watchmen, who every hour, to prove their vigilance, sent in some poor wretch, beggar or match-seller, or rambling child, under the denomination of suspicious persons; the mounted patrol, whose deep "All's well!" which ought to have been consolatory, was about the most alarming of all alarming sounds; the soldiers, transported from place to place in carts the better to catch the rogues, whose local knowledge gave them great advantage in a dispersal; the grave processions of magistrates and gentlemen on horseback; and above all, the nightly collecting of arms and armed men within our own dwelling, kept up a continual sense of nervous inquietude.

Fearful, however, as were the realities, the rumors were a hundred-fold more alarming. Not an hour passed, but, from some quarter or other, reports came pouring in of mobs gathering, mobs assembled, mobs marching upon us. Now the high roads were blockaded by the rioters, travellers murdered, soldiers defeated, and the magistrates, who had gone out to meet and harangue them, themselves surrounded and taken by the desperate multitude. Now the artisans—the commons, so to say, of B.—had risen to join the peasantry, driving out the gentry and tradespeople, while they took possession of their houses and property, and only detaining the mayor and aldermen as hostages. Now that illustrious town held loyal, but was besieged. Now the mob had carried the place; and artisans, constables, tradespeople, soldiers, and magistrates, the mayor and corporation included, were murdered to a man, to say nothingg of women and children; the market-place running with blood, and the town-hall piled with dead bodies. This last rumor, which was much to the taste of our villagers, actually prevailed for several hours; terrified maid-servants ran shrieking about the house, and every corner of the village street realized Shakespeare's picture of "a smith swallowing a tailor's news."

So passed the short winter's day. With the approach of night came fresh sorrows; the red glow of fires gleaming on the horizon, and mounting into the middle sky; the tolling of bells; and the rumbling sound of the engines clattering along from place to place, and often, too often, rendered useless by the cutting of the pipes after they had begun to play,—a dreadful aggravation of the calamity, since it proved that among those who assembled, professedly to help, were to be found favorers and abettors of the concealed incendiaries. O the horrors of those fires,—breaking forth night after night, sudden, yet expected, always seeming nearer than they actually were, and always said to have been more mischievous to life and property than they actually had been! Mischievous enough they were, Heaven knows! A terrible and unholy abuse of the most beautiful and comfortable of the elements!—a sinful destruction of the bounties of Providence!—an awful crime against God and man! Shocking it was to behold the peasantry of England becoming familiarized with this tremendous power of evil,—this desperate, yet most cowardly sin!

The blow seemed to fall, too, just where it might least have been looked for,—on the unoffending, the charitable, the kind; on those who were known only as the laborer's friends; to impoverish whom was to take succor, assistance and protection f om the poor. One of the objects of attack in our own immediate neighborhood was a widow lady, between eighty and ninety, the best of the good, the kindest of the kind. Occurrences like this were in every way dreadful. They made us fear (and such fear is a revengeful passion, and comes near to hate) the larger half of our species. They weakened our faith in human nature.

The revulsion was, however, close at hand. A time came which changed the current of our feelings,—a time of retribution. The fires were quenched, the riots were put down; the chief of the rioters were taken. Examination and commitment were the order of the day; the crowded jails groaned with their overload of wretched prisoners; soldiers were posted at every avenue to guard against possible escape; and every door was watched night and day by miserable women, the wives, mothers, or daughters of the culprits, praying for admission to their unfortunate relatives. The danger was fairly over, and pity had succeeded to fear.

Then, above all, came the special commission: the judges in threefold dignity; the array of counsel; the crowded court; the solemn trial; the awful sentence;—all the more impressive from the merciful feeling which pervaded the government, the counsel, and the court. My father, a very old magistrate, being chairman of the bench, as well as one of the grand jury, and the then high sheriff, with whom it is every way an honor to claim acquaintance, being his intimate friend, I saw and knew more of the proceedings of this stirring time than usually falls to the lot of women, and took a deep interest in proceedings which had in them a thrilling excitement, as far beyond acted tragedy as truth is beyond fiction.

I shall never forget the hushed silence of the auditors, a dense mass of human bodies, the heads only visible, ranged tier over tier to the very ceiling of the lofty hall; the rare and striking importance which that silence and the awfulness of the occasion gave to the mere official forms of a court of justice, generally so hastily slurred over and slightly attended to; the unusual seriousness of the counsel; the watchful gravity of the judges; and, more than all, the appearance of the prisoners themselves, belonging mostly to the younger classes of the peasantry, such men as one is accustomed to see in the fields, on the road, or the cricket-ground, with sunburnt faces, and a total absence of reflection or care, but who now, under the influence of a keen and bitter anxiety, had acquired not only the sallow paleness proper to a prison, but the look of suffering and of thought, the brows contracted and brought low over the eyes, the general sharpness of feature and elongation of countenance, which gave an expression of intellect, a certain mementary elevation, even to the commonest and most vacant of human faces. Such is the power of an absorbing passion, a great and engrossing grief. One man only amongst the large number whom I heard arraigned (for they were brought out by tens and by twenties) would, perhaps, under other circumstances, have been accounted handsome; yet a painter would at that moment have found studies in many.

I shall never forget, either, the impression made on my mind by one of the witnesses. Several men had been arraigned together for machine-breaking. All but one of them had employed counsel for their defence, and under their direction had called witnesses to character, the most respectable whom they could find,—the clergy and overseers of their respective parishes, for example,—masters with whom they had lived, neighbouring farmers or gentry, or even magistrates,—all that they could muster to grace or credit their cause. One poor man alone had retained no counsel, offered no defence, called no witness, though the evidence against him was by no means so strong as that against his fellow-prisoners; and it was clear that his was exactly the case in which testimony to character would be of much avail. The defences had ended, and the judge was beginning to sum up, when suddenly a tall, gaunt, upright figure, with a calm, thoughtful brow, and a determined but most respectful demeanor, appeared in the witnesses' box. He was dressed in a smock-frock, and was clean and respectable in appearance, but evidently poor. The judge interrupted himself in his charge to inquire the man's business; and hearing that he was a voluntary witness for the undefended prisoner, proceeded to question him, when the following dialogue took place. The witness's replies, which seemed to me then, and still do so, very striking from their directness and manliness, were delivered with the same humble boldness of tone and manner that characterized the words.

Judge. "You are a witness for the prisoner, an unsummoned witness?"

"I am, my lord. I heard that he was to be tried to-day, and have walked twenty miles to speak the truth of him, as one poor man may do of another."

"What is your situation in life?"

"A laborer, my lord; nothing but a day-laborer."

"How long have you known the prisoner?"

"As long as I have known anything. We were playmates together, went to the same school, have lived in the same parish. I have known him all my life."

"And what character has he borne?"

"As good a character, my lord, as a man need work under."

It is pleasant to add, that this poor man's humble testimony was read from the judge's notes, and mentioned in the judge's charge, with full as much respect, perhaps a little more, than the evidence of clergymen and magistrates for the rest of the accused: and that principally from this direct and simple tribute to his character, the prisioner in question was acquitted.

To return, however, from my evil habit of digression (if I may use an Irish phrase) before I begin, and making my introduction longer than my story, a simple sin to which in many instances, and especially in this, I am fain to plead guilty;—to come back to my title and subject,—I must inform my courteous readers, that the case of arson which attracted most attention and excited most interest in this part of the country, was the conflagration of certain ricks, barns, and farm-buildings, in the occupation of Richard Mayne; and that, not so much from the value of the property consumed (though that value was considerable), as on account of the character and situation of the prisoner, whom, after a long examination, the magistrates found themselves compelled to commit for the offence. I did not hear this trial, the affair having occurred in the neighbouring country, and do not, therefore, vouch for "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," as one does when an ear-witness; but the general outline of the story will suffice for our purpose.

Richard Mayne was a weathy yeoman of the old school, sturdy, boisterous, bold, and kind, always generous, and generally good-natured, but cross-grained and obstinate by fits, and sometimes purse-proud,—after the fashion of men who have made money by their own industry and shrewdness. He had married late in life, and above him in station, and had now been for two or three years a widower, with one only daughter, a girl of nineteen, of whom he was almost as fond as his greyhound Mayfly, and for pretty much the same reason,—that both were beautiful and gentle, and both admired and coveted by others,—that Mayfly had won three cups, and that Lucy had refused four offers.

A sweet and graceful creature was Lucy Mayne. Her mother, a refined and cultivated woman, the daughter of an unbeneficed clergyman, had communicated, perhaps unconsciously, much of her own taste to her daughter. It is true, that most young ladies, even of her own station, would have looked with great contempt on Lucy's acquirements, who neither played nor drew, and was wholly, in the phrase of the day, unaccomplished; but then she read Shakespeare and Milton, and the poets and prose-writers of the Jameses' and Charleses' times, with a perception and relish of their beauty very uncommon in a damsel under twenty; and when her father boasted of his Lucy as the cleverest as well as the prettiest lass within ten miles, he was not so far wrong as many of his hearers were apt to think him.

After all, the person to whom Lucy's education owed most was a relative of her mother's, a poor relation, who, being left a widow with two children almost destitute, was permitted by Richard Mayne to occupy one end of a small farm-house, about a mile from the old substantial manorial residence which he himself inhabited, whilst he farmed the land inhabited by both. Nothing could exceed his kindness to the widow and her family; and Mrs. Owen, a delicate and broken spirited woman, who had known better days, and was now left with a sickly daughter and a promising son dependent on the precarious charity of relatives and friends, found in the free-handed and open-hearted farmer and his charming little girl her only comfort. He even restored to her the blessing of her son's society, who had hitherto earned his living by writing for an attorney in the neighbouring town, but whom her wealthy kinsman now brought home to her, and established as the present assistant and future successor of the master of a well-endowed grammar-school in the parish, Farmer Mayne being one of the trustees, and all-powerful with the other functionaries joined in the trust, and the then schoolmaster in so wretched a state of health as almost to insure a speedy vacancy.

In most instances, such an exertion of an assumed rather than a legitimate authority, would have occasioned no small prejudices against the party protected; but Philip Owen was not to be made unpopular, even by the unpopularity of his patron. Gentle, amiable, true, and kind,—kind, both in word and deed,—it was found absolutely impossible to dislike him. He was clever, too, very clever, with a remarkable aptitude for teaching, as both parents and boys soon found to their mutual satisfaction; for the progress of one half-year of his instruction equalled that made in a twelve-month under the old *régime*. He must also, one should think, have been fond of teaching, for, after a hard day's fagging at Latin and English, and writing, and accounts, and all the drudgery of a boys' school, he would make a circuit of a mile and a half home in order to give Lucy Mayne a lesson in French or Italian. For a certainity, Philip Owen must have had a strong natural turn for playing the pedagogue, or he never would have gone so far out of his way just to read Fénelon and Alfieri with Lucy Mayne.

So for two happy years matter continued. At the expiration of that time, just as the old schoolmaster, who declared that nothing but Philip's attention had kept him alive so long, was evidently on his death-bed, Farmer Mayne suddenly turned Mrs. Owen, her son, and her sick daughter out of the house, which, by his permission, they had hitherto occupied; and declared publicly, that whilst he held an acre of land in the parish, Philip Owen should never be elected master of the grammar-school,—a threat which there was no doubt of his being able to carry into effect. The young man, however, stood his ground; and sending off his mother and sister to an uncle in Wales, who had lately written kindly to them, hired a room at a cottage in the village, determined to try the event of an election, which the languishing state of the incumbent rendered inevitable.

The cause of Farmer Mayne's inveterate dislike to one whom he had so warmly protected, and whose conduct, manners, and temper had procured him friends wherever he was known, nobody could assign with any certainity. Perhaps he had unwittingly trodden on Mayfly's foot, or had opposed some prejudice of her master's,—but his general carefulness not to hurt anything, or offend anybody, rendered either of these conjectures improbable;—perhaps he had been found only too amiable by the farmer's other pet,—those lessons in languages were dangerous things!—and when Lucy was seen at church with a pale face and red eyes, and when his landlord Squire Hawkin's bloodhunter was seen every day at Farmer Mayne's door, it had become currently reported and confidently believed, that the cause of the quarrel was a love affair between the cousins, which the farmer was determined to break off, in order to bestow his daughter on the young lord of the manor.

Affairs had been in this posture for about a fortnight, and the old schoolmaster was just dead, when a fire broke out in the rick-yard of Farley Court, and Philip Owen was apprehended and committed as the incendiary! The astonishment of the neighbourhood was excessive; the rector and half the farmers of the place offered to become bail; bul the offence was not bailable; and the only consolation left for the friends of the unhappy young man, was the knowledge that the trial would speedily come on, and their internal conviction that an acquittal was certain.

As the time wore on, however, their confidence diminished. The evidence against him was terribly strong. He had been observed lurking about the rick-yard with a lantern, in which a light was burning, by a lad in the employ of Farmer Mayne, who had gone thither for hay to fodder his cattle, about an hour before the fire broke out. At eleven o'clock the hay-stack was on fire, and at ten Robert Doyle had mentioned to James White, another boy in Farmer Mayne's service, that he had seen Mr. Philip Owen behind the great rick. Farmer Mayne himself had met him at half past ten (as he was returning from B. market) in the lane leading from the rick-yard towards the village, and had observed him throw something he held in his hand into the ditch. Humphry Harris, a constable employed to seek for evidence, had found the next morning a lantern, answering to that described by Robert Doyle, in the part of the ditch indicated by Farmer Mayne, which Thomas Brown, the village shopkeeper, in whose house Owen slept, identified as having lent to his lodger in the early part of the evening. A silver pencil, given to Owen by the mother of one of his pupils, and bearing his full name on the seal at the end, was found close to where the fire was discovered; and, to crown all, the curate of the village, with whom the young man's talents and character had rendered him a deserved favorite, had unwillingly deposed that he had said "it might be in his power to take a great revenge on Farmer Mayne," or words to that effect; whilst a letter was produced from the accused to the farmer himself, intimating that one day he would be sorry for the oppression which he had exercised towards him and his. These two last facts were much relied upon as evincing malice, and implying a purpose of revenge from the accused towards the prosecutor; yet there were many who thought that the previous circumstances might well account for them without reference to the present occurrence, and that the conflagration of the ricks and farm-buildings might, under the spirit of the time (for fires were raging every night in the surrounding villages), be merely a remarkable coincidence. The young man himself simply denied the fact of setting fire to any part of the property or premises; inquired earnestly whether any lives had been lost, and still more earnestly after the health of Miss Lucy; and on finding that she had been confined to her bed by fever and delirium, occasioned, as was supposed, by the fright, ever since that unhappy occurrence, relapsed into a gloomy silence, and seemed to feel no concern or interest in the issue of the trial.

His friends, nevertheless, took kind and zealous measures for his defence,—engaged counsel, sifted testimony, and used every possible means, in the assurance of his innocence, to trace out the true incendiary. Nothing, however, could be discovered to weaken the strong claim of circumstantial evidence, or to impeach the credit of the witnesses, who, with the exception of the farmer himself, seemed all friendly to the accused, and most distressed at being obliged to bear testimony against him. On the eve of the trial, the most zealous of his friends could find no ground of hope, except in the chances of the day; Lucy, for whom alone the prisoner asked, being still confined by severe illness.

The judges arrived,—the whole terrible array of the special commission; the introductory ceremonies were gone through the cause was called on, and the case proceeded with little or no deviation from the evidence already cited. When called upon for his defence, the prisoner again asked if Lucy Mayne was in court, and hearing that she was ill in her father's house, declined entering into any defence whatsoever. Witnesses to character, however, pressed forward,—his old master, the attorney, the rector and curate of the parish, half the farmers of the village, everybody, in short, who ever had an opportunity of knowing him, even his reputed rival, Mr Hawkins, who, speaking, he said, on the authority of one who knew him well, professed himself confident that he could not be gnilty of a bad action,—a piece of testimony that seemed to strike and affect the prisoner more than anything that had passed;—evidence to character crowded the court;—but all was to no avail against the strong chain of concurrent facts; and the judge was preparing to sum up, and the jury looking as if they had already condemned, when suddenly a piercing shriek was heard in the hall, and pale, tottering, dishevelled, Lucy Mayne rushed into her father's arms, and cried out, with a shril, despairing voice, that "She was the only guilty; that she had set fire to the rick; and that if they killed Philip Owen for her crime, they would be guilty of murder."

The general consternation may be imagined, especially that of the farmer, who had left his daughter almost insensible with illness, and still thought her light-headed. Medical assistance, however, was immediately summoned, and it then appeared that what she said was most true; that the lovers, for such they were, had been accustomed to deposit letters in one corner of that unlucky hay-rick; that having seen from her chamber-window Philip Owen leaving the yard, she had flown with a taper in her hand to secure the expected letter, and, alarmed at her father's voice, had run away so hastily, that she had, as she now remembered, left the lighted taper amidst the hay; that then the fire came, and all was a blank to her, until, recovering that morning from the stupor succeeding to delirium, she had heard that Philip Owen was to be tried for his life from the effect of her carelessness, and had flown to save him, she knew not how!

The sequel may be guessed; Philip was, of course, acquitted; everybody, even the very judge, pleaded for the lovers; the young landlord and generous rival added his good word; and the schoolmaster of Farley and his pretty wife are at this moment one of the best and happiest couples in his Majesty's dominions.—Mary Russell Mitford. (Born 1787; died January 10, 1855.)

OLEOMARGARINE

The widespread demand for the abolition of the long standing prohibition of the importation, manufacture or sale of oleomargarine—a demand created by the very high price of butter—has not unnaturally led some of the dairymen of our country to register a protest against any such change. It is probable that the exclusion of oleomargarine tends to increase the demand, and consequently the price, for butter. In such circumstances, in a world not yet entirely free from selfishness, it would be too much to expect that all who are interested in the production of butter would readily assent to the abolition of the advantage which the present law allows. But there is reason in all things. In the face of the high cost of living now so much complained of, the farmers and dairymen should not place themselves in opposition to any movement calculated to supply any useful commodity at more reasonable prices. Of course, as a reason for opposing the admission of oleomargarine, it is alleged that the article is unwholesome. If the dairymen will rest their case on that ground and take steps to establish the truth of their contention, they will have a strong position. Oleomargarine in times past was often produced under conditions which certainly made the article undesirable. The reasons against oleomargarine were good. If the situation is the same to-day, if the dairymen can show that the oleomargarine of the market is unclean or unwholesome, they will have public opinion with them in their effort to continue its exclusion from Canada. But it is only fair to say that such objections are now said to be unwarranted. Oleomargarine as sold to-day is represented to be clean and wholesome. If this claim is well founded, there will be difficulty in showing good reasons for adhering to the present excluding laws. Canada, we believe, is the only country which does not allow the sale of oleomargarine. In England, where pure food laws are rigidly enforced, oleomargarine is sold everywhere. That fact creates a fair presumption that the old charge of unwholesomeness can no longer be sustained. If competent authority will show that the article is free from objectionable elements, and if strict provision be made for the marking of it with its proper name, so that the public may be protected against fraud, there will be a good case for abolishing the prohibitory oleomargarine law that has so long been in force. The question is pretty certain to come before the Parliament at the approaching session. It would be well for our Department of Agriculture to set on foot now an inquiry which will enable it to be ready with all needed information on the subject.—*Montreal Journal of Commerce.*

ENTENTE ALLIES REPLY TO GERMAN PEACE PROPOSALS

Paris, Dec. 30.—In reply to the proffer of Germany and her allies for a peace conference, the Entente Allies, in a collective note, declare that they "refuse to consider a proposal, which is empty and insincere."

The note was handed to American Ambassador Sharpe to-day by Premier Briand, and was made public simultaneously in London and Paris, as follows:

"The Allied governments of Belgium France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Montenegro, Portugal, Rumania, Russia and Serbia, united for the defense of the liberty of their peoples and faithful to engagements taken not to lay down their arms separately, have resolved to reply collectively to the pretended propositions of peace which were addressed to them on behalf of the enemy governments through the intermediary of the United States, Spain, Switzerland and Holland. Before making any reply the Allied powers desire particularly to protest against the two essential assertions of the note of the enemy powers that pretend to throw upon the Allies responsibility for the war and proclaim the victory of the Central Powers.

"The Allied governments cannot admit an affirmation doubly inexact and which suffices to render sterile all tentative negotiations. The Allied nations have sustained for thirty months a war they did everything to avoid. They have shown by their acts their attachment to peace. That attachment is as strong today as it was in 1914. But it is not upon the word or Germany, after the violation of its engagements, that the peace broken by her may be based.

"A mere suggestion, without a statement of terms, that negotiations should be opened is not an offer of peace. The putting forward by the imperial government, of a sham proposal lacking all substance and precision would appear to be less an offer of peace than a war manoeuvre. It is founded on calculated misinterpretation of the character of the struggle in the past, the present and the future.

"As for the past, the German note takes no account of facts, dates and figures which established that the war was desired, provoked and declared by Germany and Austria-Hungary.

"At the Hague conference it was a German delegate who refused all proposals for disarmament. In July, 1914, it was Austria-Hungary, who, after having addressed to Serbia an unprecedented ultimatum, declared war upon her in spite of the satisfaction which had at once been accorded.

"The Central Empires then rejected all attempts made by the Entente to bring about a pacific solution of a purely local conflict. Great Britain suggested a conference. France proposed an international commission; the Emperor of Russia asked the German Emperor to go to arbitration, and Russia and Austria-Hungary came to an understanding on the eve of the conflict. But to all these efforts Germany gave neither answer nor effect.

"Belgium was invaded by an empire which had guaranteed her neutrality and which had the assurance to proclaim that treaties were 'scraps of paper,' and that necessity knows no law.'

"At the present moment these sham offers on the part of Germany rest on the 'war map' of Europe alone, which represents nothing more than a superficial and passing phase of the situation and not the real strength of the beligerents. A peace the aggressors who, after imagining that they would reach their goal in two months discovered after two years that they could never attain it.

"As for the future the disasters caused by the German declaration of war and the innumerable outrages committed by Germany and her Allies against both belligerents and neutrals demand penalities, reparation and guarantees. Germany avoids mention of any of these.

"In reality these overtures made by the Central Powers are nothing more than a calculated attempt to influence the future course of the war and to end it by imposing a German peace. The object of these overtures is to create dissension in public opinion in the Allies countries. But that public opinion, has, in spite of all the sacrifices endured by the Allies, already given its answer with admirable firmness and has denounced the empty pretence of the declaration of the enemy powers.

"They have the further object of stiffening public opinion in Germany and in the countries allied to her—one and all severely tried by their losses, worn out by economic pressure and crushed by the supreme effort which has been imposed upon their inhabitants.

"They endeavor to deceive and intimidate public opinion in neutral countries, whose inhabitants have long since made up their minds where the initial responsibilities lie and are far too enlightened to favor the designs of Germany by abandoning the defense of human freedom.

"Finally, these overtures attempt to justify in advance in the eyes of the world a new series of crimes—submarine warfare, deportations, forced labor and forced enlistment of the inhabitants against their own countries and violations of neutrality.

"Fully conscious of the gravity of this moment, but equally conscious of its requirements, the allied governments, closely united to one another and in perfect sympathy with their peoples, refuse to consider a proposal which is empty and insincere.

"Once again the Allies declare that no peace is possible so long as they have not secured reparation for violated rights and liberties, the recognition of the principle of nationalities and of the free existence of small states; so long as they have not brought about a settlement calculated to end once and for all forces which have constituted a perpetual menace to the nations and to afford the only effective guarantee for the future security of the world.

"In conclusion, the Allied powers think it necessary to put forward the following considerations, which show the special situation of Belgium, after two and a half years of war. In virtue of the international treaties signed by five great European powers, of whom Germany was one, Belgium enjoyed before the war a special status, rendering her territory inviolable and placing and her, under the guarantee of the powers, outside all European conflicts. She was, however, in spite of these treaties, the first to suffer the aggression of Germany. For this reason the Belgian government thinks it necessary to define the aims which Belgium has never ceased to pursue while fighting side by side with the Entente Powers for right and justice.

"Belgium has always scrupulously fulfilled the duties which her neutrality imposed upon her. She has taken up arms to defend her independence and her neutrality violated by Germany, and to show that she remains faithful to her international obligations.

"On the fourth of August, 1914, in the Reichstag the German chancellor admitted that this aggression constituted an injustice contrary to the laws of the nations, and pledged himself in the name of Germany to repair it. During two and a half years this injustice has been cruelly aggravated by the proceedings of the occupying forces, which have exhausted the resources of the country, ruined its industries, devastated its towns and villages and have been responsible for innumerable massacres, executions and imprisonments.

"At this very moment, while Germany is proclaiming peace and humanity to the world, she is deporting Belgian citizens by thousands and reducing them to slavery.

"Belgium before the war asked for nothing but to live in harmony with her neighbours. Her king and her government have but one aim—the re-establishment of peace and justice. But they only desire peace which would assure to their country legitimate reparation, guarantees and safeguards for the future."

"Do you think your constituents agree with your views?" "Yes," replied Senator Sorghum. "I made it a point to have my views in agreement with theirs before I said a word."—*Washington Star.*

TOTAL PROHIBITION IN NEWFOUNDLAND

St. John's, Nfld., Jan. 1.—At midnight Newfounland went dry. A prohibiton act becoming effective, stops the importation, manufacture, or sales of intoxicating liquors of every kind within the colony. After this it will be impossible to obtain any alcoholic compound within the colony, except for medical, manufacturing, or sacramental purposes, and in order to prevent evasion of the law a long list of patent medicines has been placed under the ban.

The druggists association of the island having pettitioned the legislature not to put upon it the obligation of carrying stocks of liquor and dispensing the same on the prescreption of doctors, the government has provided for St. John's a public controller through whom medicinal prescriptions will be filled and supplies obtianed for manufacturing, while provision is made whereby the various churches can have there own agencies for importing wine for sacramental uses. Elsewhere on the island physicians or magistrates will be the local custodians of the supplies required for these purposes.

In St. John's fifty saloons go out of business.

SMART SCIENTIST

The scientist had given a very scientific lecture, and at the end he said, beaming down on his audience condescendingly:

"Now, if there is any scientific question that any of my friends would like to ask, I beg them not to hesitate. I shall be only too happy to answer any inquiry in my power."

An old lady in spectacles that gave her a severe, stern look, rose and said:

"Why do wet tea leaves kill cockroaches?"

The scientist did not know wet tea leaves did anything of the kind, much less the cause of the phenomenon: but, never at a loss, he replied:

"Because, madam, when a cockroach comes across a wet tea leaf, he says: 'Halloa, here's a blanket, and wraps himself up in it, catches cold, and dies."—*Tit Bits.*

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