

of the aggressive newness of his clothes. And when the visitors whirled away, after renewed promises for a meeting a little later in the spring, he stood for a moment in a kind of daze. Then he hurried toward the nearest telephone booth.

As the Vernes sat at dinner that night in the Abyssinian Room of the Obelisk Hotel, the poet said to his wife: "It would have been delightful to spend a few days with the Stocktons."

"My dear," said she, "I wouldn't have these wealthy Americans see how shabby we are for anything. The children are positively in rags, and your clothes—well, I don't know what they'll think at Harvard. You know if this lecture trip doesn't turn out well we shall be simply bankrupt."

The poet sighed. "I believe Stockton has quite a charming place in the country near New York," he said.

"That may be so," said Mrs. Verne. "But did you ever see such clothes? He looked like a canary."