

through the head-pieces of those two vagabonds as you swept by, in your chariot of fire. You will never suspect that that brief moment gave you two sworn liegemen who would have gone to the world's end at your bidding. Yet it was so. Thus came and went the Apparition of the Pretty Girl. We sat silent for some time, feeling as if a strain of music had ceased; then we took the upward path again, and the hard work drove the vision out of our heads.

First over the heavy timber bulwark that dams back the ever-flowing gravel and sand from the track we clambered; then up the face of the great cutting. At the top of this trees were growing and a steep and narrow path wound among them. The unceasing labour of lifting one's weight, foot over foot, soon tells; and in the close evergreens, we were breathless after the first five minutes. Emerging from the trees at last, we found some twenty feet of stone sheer as a wall, which we had still to climb. By inserting your feet in the crevices of the rock, you could reach above your head a jutting ledge about a foot square, but longer than it was broad. Then you had to get your arm over this and pull yourself up cautiously till you could stand upon it. This was an exciting moment. You hung for a few seconds on the face of the hill like a fly on a wall. You felt a sudden heat all over, an agreeable strain of every muscle in your body, your hands grew moist and gripped the stones hard and then—the dangerous part of the scramble was over. Roots of trees and convenient holes in the rock made the rest of the way easy. In a few moments we were both on the very top of the Peak, lying panting on the bare, flat rock.

We were well rewarded for our trouble. The sight before us was well worth a longer tramp and a much harder climb. The morning rain had washed the air and made it as transparent as crystal. Not a cloud was in the sky, nor the least smoke or haze to obstruct the view. It was one of the most glorious days of the year, and rare even in Canada. The Peak had been formed by a turbulent creek, which in the course of ages had carved a deep, narrow chasm down the face of this range of hills. At our right hand we could just see it below the pines. The roar it made barely reached our ears, we were so far above it, and the sound was so softened by distance that it seemed rather to blend with the calm of the day than to break in upon it. The stream was not what it once had been. Its headlong freedom was gone; man had tamed it. The railway had bridged it, the paper mill had dammed it and made it turn all the wheels and machines in the ugly brick building, and when the servile stream did escape this tyranny, it wandered slowly and shamefacedly through the stony fields outside the town to lose itself in the marshes by the bay. It was the brightest thing in all the dun valley, for the grass had not yet come nor the wheat, and the sun on the moving water made it glitter like a ribbon of steel.

The valley was very wide and had been scooped out by some mighty river in the early ages of the world. Far away on the opposite range of hills a little village could be barely made out in a wedge-shaped cleft, and directly under us lay the town we had passed through. It had taken the best part of an hour to traverse it from end to end, and now it looked as if we could cover all its roofs, spires and trees with an outspread handkerchief. We could trace the winding road by which we had come back to the city we had left in the morning. We could see that it stood on a much higher level than the rest of the valley. At this distance it was simply a vague mass topped by the dome of the permanent exhibition building and some tall factory chimneys, but it did not look like the common-place, humdrum city we knew. The hill was at its back, the broad land-locked bay before it, and ten miles away beyond the golden bar of sand which closes the entrance flashed the blue waters of Ontario, till they lost themselves in the sky and were merged in the dim, receding coastline. The whole county lay before us like a map; we looked down upon it as we might from the basket of a balloon.

There we lay in the sun and stared at the immense prospect. The change from the confinement of the school and warehouse to the freedom of the open, high-domed sky made us feel our own littleness. On the edge of that cliff overlooking that huge valley we felt like two brotherly ants that had crawled to the edge of a cauldron and were peering over the rim. But the thought did not depress us. We were the only living things in sight, and this fragment of the universe seemed to be our special possession. We formed part of the calm, the quiet, the pure light which pervaded the scene, and the longer we gazed the more deeply seemed to settle down upon us a serenity that was more than happiness. At last we had to leave the long shadows stretched across the fields and we turned our faces homewards. It was after dark when we reached the city, rather stiff and foot-sore, and much more ragged and dirty than in the morning. We found our compensation in the creature comforts of a bath, a change of raiment, a good dinner and a well-earned lounge in easy chairs after it. The evening passed quickly in talking it all over. Our pleasant day had an end as all pleasant things must, but it lived on as a cheering influence in both our lives for many a year.

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

CHARACTER is what man is in his inmost thought.—
Dr. Newman.

QUIS CUSTODIET CUSTODES?

THERE is an old saying, that if you want a thing well done you should do it yourself; but, as things are now-a-days, it has become a difficult rule to follow. Obviously few men are so constituted as to be able to make their own boots and defend their own law suits; the time required for special training would alone render such feats impossible. But they do not for that reason commit themselves, body and soul, to their shoe-maker and their lawyer; they never pay bills without looking at them. Devotion of that sort is associated in our minds with mental weakness. On the contrary the circumspect man is full of little devices for putting checks upon his brethren. He tastes his merchant's wine before buying it; he plucks his tailor's cloth for cotton before he orders a suit; not even the word of the clergy is accepted about themselves, for do we not hear of provisional appointments and trial sermons?

It is a pity that such caution is necessary; but, being necessary, we rightly applaud the man who conducts his affairs in a business-like way. Where people make their mistake is in limiting their watchfulness to what they term their own affairs. It seldom reaches beyond the home and the office, though occasionally it is manifested on behalf of a church or a club. It is rarely aroused on behalf of civic affairs, seldom or never in affairs of state. If things go wrong and money is wasted, the blame is thrown upon the government, or the existence of rings is deplored. The real connection between the people and the government is the last thing realized. References are occasionally made to the High Commissioner as a civil servant; but it is treated as a rather harsh rhetorical phrase, when in reality it is but a weak expression of a fact true not only of the High Commissioner, but of every member of the Government. Tell a labouring man that the Premier is his *employé* and he will probably laugh at you. And yet this is an elementary fact, and a fact people must manage to get into their heads before any degree of purity of government can be attained. If people charge certain persons to do things in their behalf and forget all about the matter, they must not be surprised if everything goes wrong. The story of a political scandal is the story of popular laxity.

We have no special reference to the "revelations" now going on at Ottawa. The matter is, we are told, *sub judice*, and we are warned against the "indecent" of assuming that anything has been proved. However, there is a certain class of minds not gifted for algebra who shrink from problems in which the letter *x* occur. Substitute its value and the thing is to them as plain as day. Speeches have been spoken by the hour, and articles written by the column on the corruption of our public services; but the unknown quantities—names and figures—repelled an inert public. Now they are being supplied. People begin to think they know all about it, and are getting angry; they would like a general election and another chance to "turn the rascals out." And if, in turning them out, they could earn an honest dollar or two, so much the better. A new broom, say they, sweeps clean.

Representative government is still in its infancy, and a very deformed infant it is. Whether it will ever attain the stately ideal that has been pictured for it, depends on whether the voter ever learns his part and conscientiously fulfils it. When will our people learn that they cannot with unclean hands elect clean men? How long will they put themselves at auction, and wonder that they are bought? They seem to think that dishonesty will stop with them; and that a Government elected by the lowest means will be conducted with the highest motives. Nothing could be more contrary to reason and experience. If, then, people are in earnest about reform of government—if they really want these scandals to cease—they must begin with themselves. First they must resolutely refuse themselves to accept bribes, whether in dollars or subsidies or tariffs; next they must refuse to vote for any man who offers to bribe them. In a word they must carry out the spirit of their own election laws. Then they must pay attention to public affairs, look into figures, and read debates, and, if necessary, make it hot for the Government. They can do this by refusing their support, and by obliging their member to refuse his support to corrupt legislation; they can in short by exercising the duties and privileges of citizenship secure the proper management of what are, after all, their own affairs. Then when any of them is asked the question that heads this article, he will not assume a look of dumb and impotent sagacity, nor refer vaguely to inspectors or electors, but simply answer "I."

OLD LONDON PLAYHOUSES.

IT is a fact familiar enough to all students of human development that the world has seldom shown itself capable of breaking away entirely from the traditions of the past, or of committing itself to any radical change. The imaginative quality, and the desire for abstract excellence, count for little, while the dread of innovation and of the "evils that we know not of" count for a great deal at every stage of progress. Thus, when any institution becomes so manifestly out of harmony with the spirit of the times as to make some modification an absolute necessity, that modification is still certain to be as slight as possible. Men have rarely had strength sufficient to brace themselves up to the Herculean task of clearing the decks and beginning afresh; for the iron hand of ancient usage restrains them at every forward step.

A curious instance of this universal failing, and one which furnishes no small amount of interest for students of the drama, is brought to our notice by the general construction of our modern theatres. Familiar as we are with this from our childhood up, it probably never strikes us to enquire when and why it was adopted, and whether it is after all the most satisfactory that could have been hit upon for the purposes in view. The plain fact is, that our modern theatre is simply the result of tradition, dating back to—what? To the days before the English drama had any permanent home, and when public performances were as a rule given in the court-yards of inns. A moment's consideration will show us that there is nothing extravagant in this statement, strange as it may at first sight appear. When a play was presented in a tavern-yard, some kind of raised platform was generally constructed on one side of the available area. In front of this lay the yard, occupied by spectators; and on the other three sides were the windows, upper and lower, of the inn, overlooking the yard, and from which could also be obtained a fair view of the performance. When these inn-yards were forsaken, and the first playhouses built, what more natural than that their builders should retain unaltered, as far as the new circumstances allowed, the general outline and arrangements with which everyone concerned—actors and public alike—had so long been familiar? Hence little was done beyond removing the scene of action from a temporary to a permanent home, and the latter was fashioned almost entirely upon the model furnished by the former. In place of the platform there now appeared the regular stage; the inn-yard was replaced by the pit or parquette, which was, however, still known as the "yard"; the lower windows gave way to boxes; the upper developed into a gallery. Even the character of those various locations have to this day been decided by their ancestry. The inn-yard had naturally accommodated the most miscellaneous part of the audience, and the pit has ever since continued to do the same. The lower windows had been formerly employed by the better classes of guests; and these classes the boxes inherited in their turn. Finally, just as the servants of the house and the poorer frequenters of the hostelry had been forced to content themselves with the upper windows, so also have the upper storeys of our playhouses been systematically reserved for visitors of the same description. Thus it is not difficult to see how plainly the modern theatre bears upon itself the traces of its early history.

The court-yards of inns continued to be used for the performances of plays until the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and even, in a more or less irregular way, for a good many years after the first permanent houses were opened. Fleckno, in his "Short Discourse of the English Stage," says that in his day—that is in 1664—some remains of these primitive theatres were still to be seen at the "Cross Keys" in Grace Church Street, and at the Bull Tavern in Bishopsgate Street. In after years, when many theatres were built, some of these inn-yards were themselves used as the bases of permanent structures. Stowe, in his "Chronicle," mentions five thus transformed between 1570 and 1630.

The establishment of regular playhouses in London came about in a somewhat singular way—the story indeed belonging to one chapter in the history of the long and bitter conflict between the church and the stage. Early in the career of the secular drama, the theatre came into collision with the religious public of the metropolis, and swords were drawn by the players on the one side, and by the corporation on the other. The matter was complicated by the fact that (fortunately for the English drama) the court sided with the players; and this in its turn led to open warfare between the court and the city. The support and protection of the court rendered the corporation more cautious than it might otherwise have been in its dealings with the players; while, on the other hand, the ancient city of London had rights and powers with which the Crown did not think it wise to meddle. Thus, while the city hesitated to have recourse to the severity which it would otherwise have been only too ready to employ, the court no less was warned by the determined attitude of the metropolis that it must act circumspectly. Nevertheless, though conducted with a certain decorum, the quarrel was a very real one, and might ultimately have passed into a far more acute phase, but for the fact that the players themselves made a sudden and decisive move. Orders of council had been issued against the representation of plays in tavern precincts or on scaffolds in the open streets, *within the city limits*. Availing themselves of the loophole furnished by the wording of this decree, the players determined to cut the gordian knot by transferring themselves from the city-area to the neighbouring suburbs, where, while they would be out of the reach of the long arm of the civic authority, they would still be easily accessible to all their patrons—the gallants of the court, the dandies of the day, and the staid burger playgoers. Thus began the exodus of the players from the city; and this was accompanied by the establishment of regular playhouses in lieu of the haphazard resting-places with which the older actors had contented themselves. In this way our drama ended its nomadic career and entered a new and more settled stage of existence.

All this occurred in 1576, and three theatres were erected in the course of that one year. The first of these was styled simply and emphatically "The Theatre"—its name clearly reminding us of the days of its dramatic monopoly. It was built by James Burbage, the father of