

Quidam, Alterque Tertium Quid.

SENTIMENT.

Conceits have warred since jealousies began;
Delusions strange seem native to the man;
And most in love; each suitor to his eyes
A bandage lifts, which laughing Cupid ties.

Place—The shore at Herculaneum.

Time—A.D. 80. Mid-day

Dram. Personæ—Belisarius, Sardonicus, Lucretia.

Bel.: Well met Sardonicus! But why thy face so gay
With smile and jubilation? Have thy ships well
brought

From Egypt, or does Love with fav'ring wing upon
Thy shoulder rest, to thee a message of the gods
To bring, made happiest of men?

Sard.: Though judgest well,
O! comrade, though 'tis not thy first but latter mind
That's true. Hast seen the Saxon maid, who all our
town

Of Herculaneum by ears has ta'en? The fame
Of her great beauty, and the marvel of her mien,
Have made our lovers passion sick. But yet to none
Save me does she the favour of her kind smile grant!

Belis.: But hold, Sardonicus! Describe this Saxon maid.
'Twas said at feast the other eve, by Polonus,
That Phryne's name from beauty's fane must wane
now since eclipsed.

Sard.: Right glad I speak, and only wish that half
Of her just merit I could state, in eloquence
Fired by the favour of the smile she gave; when
from

The steps of Venus' temple she had looked at me,
A passer by. Lucretia is her name, but born
In Britain's isle. Her port majestic, yet her step
As light as dancer's; while the music of her voice
Shames all the echoes of the streams from Apennines'
White heights that fall, in blended notes of harmony.
Her eyes e'en richer than the deep cerulean
Of that renowned sea beneath our palace walls;
Their pity passing words; entrancing modesty,
Beyond the power of eloquence or song; her lips
A Cupids bow; her words love laden arrows that
The heart transfix.

Bel.: Most bravely dost thou praise; and now,
Methinks that self same maid was she, who yestereve
A lotus flower from out an open lattice threw
Before my feet, which picking up most tenderly
Unto my lips I pressed in token of my full
And fondest service to a hand so fair. I go
Beyond thy tribute, and I hold that none so fair
As she at Titus' household dwells; nor all Rome's
walls

Enclose a nobler or a truer maid. And now,
As to the smile thou claimest, I deny that so
Much fortune in thy lap has fallen; for yestereve,
At vespers, I had gone to meet Corinnus, and
Before the temple stopped to gaze a moment at
The maids who off'rings brought to Venus' shrine;
when, lo!

One fixed on me most wond'rous eyes, and, marvel!
for

She cast a smile at me.

Sard.: Stay! say not more, I hold,
My honour is impeached. Thou craven soul, stand!
draw!

We'll see by noble battle whom the smile was for.
[They draw.]

SOLILOQUY.

Place—House on Via Mari. Lotus flowers in troughs beneath
lattice windows.

Time—Even.

Lucretia: I sigh for Britain; not this pleasure town; the
men

About the temple steps so congregate, that maids,
Who to the shrine with off'rings go, must 'dure their
stare.

When yestereve I cast a smile Clemenia
To greet, two bold gallants tried to speak to me before
I gained my friend. But happily we reached our
home

Where lotus flow'rs a fragrant welcome give; and
oft,

In gen'rous fullness, to the street below their blooms
Will cast, when soft winds kiss their silken leaves.

JOHN STUART THOMSON

Montreal.

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Washington Letter.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND has been driven by newspaper comments on the new bond issue to the extraordinary course of giving his minister of the treasury, Mr. Carlisle, a certificate of good conduct. Not less strange is the extent of popular belief that the testimonial was not unneeded. It is an open secret at Washington that twice at least has Mr. Cleveland felt constrained to take the secretary by the collar and shake him; the first time when Mr. Carlisle intimated his purpose to put the country on a silver basis—a threat that hastened, if it did not cause, the panic in June of last year; the other occasion when he gave his support to the compromise tariff eventually forced on the democratic party by Senators Gorman, Brice and Smith. The facts that Mr. Carlisle needed shaking and accepted the discipline meekly, reveals his characteristics as a public man. He is amiable and honest, but very weak. As Speaker of the House of Representatives he was courteous and just, but so inefficient that the House fell into public contempt for its incapacity to transact the legislative business of the nation: a situation from which his successor, Mr. Reed, rescued it by methods no longer seriously condemned by anybody. Mr. Carlisle, while Speaker, was also the cause of a scandal in the police department at Washington that made a great stir in its day. Translated to the Senate, he there took a respectable but not conspicuous rank, and won the general esteem of his associates by his amiable and accommodating disposition. In the Senate his selection by Mr. Cleveland for the most important place in the cabinet was recognized as an unpromising one, but the Senators of both parties united in a complimentary banquet to him, Mr. Godkin elevated him to the rank of a statesman in the columns of *The Nation*, and he made, therefore, a promising start. Mr. Godkin alternately warned and praised him till the little exhibition of practical politics in the proceedings against Mr. Morton's English coachman during the late electoral struggle in New York State, and then washed his hands of him.

Mr. Cleveland can hardly be blamed for evading a cabinet rupture just before a meeting of Congress and immediately after a signal defeat of his party. Besides, acceptable cabinet officers are not easily to be found. Public men whose abilities and reputations are already established, prefer rather to shun than to accept such places. The Presidential, as opposed to the parliamentary system of government, is a great strangler of administrative opportunity. The head of a department can do nothing important without Congress, and Congress can only be reached by squaring the chairmen of the proper standing committees. This is work for little men, and little men, therefore, are habitually to be found in the cabinet. Political ability seeks the Senate and, in a less degree, the house.

The recent general election has made havoc in the list of Democratic availables for the Presidency. Were it not for the sentimental objection to three term Presidents, nobody but Mr. Cleveland could be hopefully thought of now as his successor in 1897. With him out of the list, there are only Governor Pattison, of Pennsylvania, ex-Governor Russell, of Massachusetts, and "Tariff Bill" Wilson, of West Virginia, that any disinterested observer would think about seriously. Any of the three would make a President above the average in ability and highmindedness, but a Democratic National Convention would have to be in a very solemn and desponding state of mind to bestow a nomination upon any of them. Still, President Cleveland may be in a position to dictate the nominee when the time comes, year after next,