

realist. He had been ordered complete rest and was to leave at once for the far East. He would spend six months travelling in Thibet, and would, if possible, live for a time in the monasteries with the Llamas. I was wondering what manner of clay idols would be constructed from the sweepings of these monasteries and whether the American public would bow down and worship them as heretofore when the sweepings have been American, or at the worst European, and always from middle-class houses of the most undoubted propriety, when I was interrupted by the office boy's placing the mail from the second delivery on my table.

This is always the post of the day for me when any of my literary doves are away from the ark, for by it those sent out towards New York return.

As often happened before, I received a neat packet from which I tore the wrapper slowly. There was still a chance of its being accepted; it might have been returned for revision. Editors do not always accept articles as they receive them, even from the most successful men. But this hope vanished, as a neat printed slip dropped out, upon which the editor regretted, etc.

If half those printed editorial regrets had even a shadow of reality, I think the sorrow of an editor's life would break the hearts of its beholders. It has been represented to me that the editor does truthfully regret that he has read another worthless manuscript, but this is not a view that readily commends itself to contributors. It is easier to believe the editorial "we" to be a corporation, and so issue its printed slips, lying in soulless security.

This refusal was a blow, for "Fallen Leaves" had been the child of hope and toil, and had been expected to make its way in the world.

I have got beyond the suspicious stage in which a man believes firmly that his rejected manuscripts have not been read and so resorts to various tricks, such as arranging the pages in an improper order, gumming some of them together, putting locks of hair between them, and so on, in order to see if they have been carefully perused. As I said, I am beyond

that stage, and as I had no souvenirs to search for I did not force myself to go through the sheets again, looking my dead hopes in the face, but spent some quarter of an hour very unpleasantly in staring at the outside page. There it was, unsullied in its typewritten neatness as when Miss Taylor handed it to me for examination two months ago. At the centre of the page, but not too near the top, a large Roman figure I. stood boldly out below capitals spelled "Fallen Leaves"; and in the right hand corner, but not too near the edge, stood the mottoes under which all combatants enter the fields of literature, whether doughty knight or untried squire, "Kindly return to Simeon Jay, care Finch & Jay, Barristers. Stamps enclosed."

What joy it had been in writing it, when after long reflection some happy phrase seemed to catch fire from my idea and glow with the very life of the thought. There was a lot of feeling in it, too, my own feeling, and it was bitter to find that my heart's blood was too common for some rich publisher to traffic in.

I snapped the bell sharply twice for the typewriter who attends to my work. When she came in I handed her the manuscript.

"You may send this to the next publisher on your list, the Messrs. Scribblers, is it not, Miss Taylor?"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, and be careful to pare the edges. It will freshen it up, I notice you have left ample margins for the purpose."

I returned to my paper, and with a sort of fascination to the paragraph about Simpkins. He at least would never be refused. Three weeks later, the eventful second delivery brought me an envelope bearing upon one corner the firm name and style, "Scribbler's Sons, Publishers, New York." I looked it over carefully and felt it with my finger and thumb. No, it certainly was not a cheque, there was too much of it. Most likely, I thought, it would turn out to be one of those dreadful declined-with-thanks' slips and with it a sheet of directions as to the enclosing of stamps and an intimation that the editors would not hold themselves responsible for any manuscript unaccompanied by the same.