

do it to stand off any mention of their own more greivous faults. A lady is a lady in a buggy or out of it, but when a gentleman gets into his carriage, he throws off the coat of gentility and becomes an arrogant and selfish king of the road. An instance happened the other evening on Government street, which made every gentleman who witnessed it take off his hat in admiration. Two ladies were driving in a buggy and were followed by two other ladies in the same kind of a vehicle. As the buggy behind attempted to pass the one in front the wheels became entangled and the front buggy was the sufferer, while the horse attached to the passing buggy became frightened and ran a couple of blocks before the lady driving could get him in hand. But, the horse once under control, the lady turned around and went back to the captain of the injured craft to see what damage was done and to offer assistance to reparation. Not one man in a hundred would have done the same thing, and as was said before, every man who saw the occurrence took off his hat and wondered, while he reflected that he had at other times been unfair in his strictures on the idiosyncrasies of the fair sex.

A thoughtful and charming young lady, who visits my office and whose fitful flashes of silences are but the rests in the music of her improving conversation, takes exception to my use of the expression, "behind his back," and when I think of it the expression does seem to be unmeaning and wrong. One does not speak "behind" another's back, but "before" it, and it is funny how such a peculiar use of the preposition ever originated. The thoughtful young lady suggests that we should say "behind one's face," because that is where the remarks are made, and I am inclined to think she is right. This is a good thing to remember

when you are speaking in your hasty colloquial manner, and you want to pause a bit and think that you are speaking "behind a fellow's face," and not "behind his back."

When Jack Sheppard and Claude Duval used to gallop around the country and levy on all travellers who looked as if they could stand the raise, highway robbery was a respectable calling, and the heroes of the many road experiences were shrouded in mysterious romance. The wonderfully planned and carefully executed escapes of Messrs. Sheppard and Duval from prisons was no doubt an important factor in enshrining them in the hearts of the romantic women of their day. And it is here that the ancient and respected knight of the road had an advantage over his more modern imitator. Sheppard and Duval occasionally enjoyed the hospitality of their sovereign's prison, but in Victoria highwaymen are permitted to pursue their peculiar methods of levying assessments without interference from the police. Quite true, Hawkshaw Smith arrested a citizen returning from the Charity Ball, and employs his leisure time in searching through the "Old Sleuth Series" in order to discover parallel cases; but police precautions have availed little in so far as the safety of our people are concerned.

It really seems to me that those of us who appreciate the rueful lack of romance in the modus operandi of the latter-day highwayman should do all in our power to induce him to return to old methods. Let us see if we cannot discover some way by which the profession may be endowed with its former chivalric spirit, and in this effort we will probably have the aid of our bright and intelligent police force. It is much pleasanter to have a well-dressed man with a black satin mask ap-

proach you in the evening and say, "My dear sir, I know that I have never had the pleasure of an introduction, but I trust that my earnest desire to see what I understand to be the finest specimen of horlogerie in the city, will stand in the stead of excessive and conventional formality." You, of course, hand over your watch with a bow, and feel pleased to have met the gentleman. Let us encourage this kind of highwaying, and it will soon become popular, instead of being accompanied with rude informality. Let us polish the highwayman, and a new era of romance will dawn which will be treasured in poetry and song. Probably not more than half of the knights of industry who are plying their trade in the city to-day, ever say "If you please," or "By your leave," and to take purses and watches without those euphemistic amenities is actually rude, and calculated to irritate a man of fine sensibilities. Teach the burglar to use the gloss of civilization in his business, and soon his name will appear in the columns of social gossip.

The increase in highway robberies has given an impetus to the trade in revolvers. One out of every three men you meet on the street confesses that he carries a weapon of sufficient calibre to drop a burglar at one hundred paces. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and of course it is quite natural to expect that if the pedestrian is not afforded adequate police protection he will take it upon himself to preserve his life and property. But it is quite possible that every man who is now carrying a revolver may not be able to distinguish a highwayman from a tax-collector, a member of the council board, or a peaceable and well-disposed policeman. A man of nervous temperament is just as likely to shoot his law-abiding neighbor as he is a foot-pad, and I am waiting in hourly expectation of hearing of a death from this cause. It might