

is a variety among them, though all are the most ordinary, everyday persons, such as one would be likely to meet across the table at a boarding house. There is the old gentleman opposite, who sleeps comfortably when the conversation is uninteresting, makes ejaculations of incredulity when the autocrat gives vent to extravagant notions and emits a tender pathos at the touch of the autocrat on such topics as old age and boyhood memories. The autocrat, in his asides to the reader, handles the old gentleman very tenderly, and always speaks of him in a tone of pity. The divinity student seems to have happened into the circle as a target for the autocrat's speculation on learned topics, and to fulfill the function of indicator of the soundness of those opinions. On one occasion when the lecturer had been propounding a theory of doubtful orthodoxy, he tells us the divinity student honored himself by the way he received it. He took it as a pickarel takes the bait, and went of with it to his hole (in the fourth story) to turn it over.

His finest clay, the creator of this little world reserved for "the school mistress." She is one of those patient, quietly suffering little women for whom the autocrat has a tenderness. She is also, like the old gentleman, treated very kindly by him, probably because she listens so attentively and is such an admirer. She is the occasion for some of his best remarks. When told that she was mourning for her recently deceased mother at whose side she had watched and wasted for a year, the autocrat sighs, "Well, souls grow white as well as cheeks in these holy duties: one that goes in a nurse may come out an angel,—God bless all good women!—to their soft hands and pitying hearts we must all come at last." The landlady's daughter is a contrast. She has a new dress on one morning and is in humor for conversation; asks if the verses just read were impromptu; autocrat takes a side glance at her which he crystallizes into words thus: "(Act 19, Tender-eyed blonde Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album. Autograph book. Accordeon. Reads Byron. Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, Junior, while her mother makes the

puddings. Says 'Yes?' when you tell her anything)." Another member of the board is designated as "the economically organized female in black bombazine." Some one was rash enough one day to pass a remark, though of no derogatory nature, on the buckwheat cakes. "Buckwheat is skerce and high," she remarked, and the autocrat makes the aside "[must be a poor relation sponging on our landlady—pays nothing,—so she must stand by the guns and be ready to repel boarders.]"

There is a conceited young fellow at the table whom they called John, who is the source of great annoyance to the monarch. A young man strongly addicted to "cheroots" and jokes, of limited education, and less good breeding is hardly apt to appreciate the fine moods and lofty sentiments of the lecturer, and is continually drawing wrong inferences and unwarranted conclusions from them. For instance, the autocrat was once explaining that when John and Thomas were talking together there were really six persons involved, thus:

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| "Three Johns" | 1. The real John: known only to his Maker. |
| | 2. John's ideal John: never the real one, and often very unlike him. |
| | 3. Thomas's ideal John: never the real John, nor John's John, but often very unlike either." |

And likewise three Thomases

"A very unphilosophical application of the above remarks was made by a young fellow answering to the name of John who sits near me at the table. A certain basket of peaches, a rare vegetable, little known to boarding houses, was on its way to me *via* this unlettered Johannes. He appropriated the three that remained in the basket, remarking that there was just one apiece for him. I convinced him that his practical inference was hasty and illogical, but in the meantime he had eaten the peaches."

Holmes has a peculiar facility for ferreting out and describing accurately those feelings, or rather shadows of feelings, that everyone has experienced