

VII.

'How,' said great Caesar, 'shall I lead my army across the Alps?' And there was not a flicker of intelligence to lighten the Vacant Stare. No clarion note from memory to cry: "By governing two accusatives." And great was the silence, and as great the wonder of Caesar as he gazed at these children of the Napoleonic era. Wondering still he went forth to ponder more deeply by the shores of the Styx.

IX.

But lo! as he went, there came forth from the banks of the Nile Euclid bearing Geometry which was potted by Wentworth, desiring greatly to give the same to the Ptolemy of our day. Verily and indeed it was a lean mess of lines and squares and cubes and 'cords' and 'arks' with a regular menagerie of letters and strange beasts called gnomens, and with so many 'likes' and unlikes, so many surds and absurés, that Ptolemy's heart failed at the veritable 'Pons asinorum' of its appearance.

X.

And when he asked is this 'The Only Way?' grave Euclid did reply: "There is no royal road to learning." But the Ptolemy of our day is not used to truths so hard, uncompromising and hoary-headed, and he looked for some one with more delicate reasoning and softer assertion, and lo! the shade of Socrates was before his gaze, and many other Ptolemies gathered round and each had the vacant stare, as they hung on the words of the Sage from the Aegean seas.

XI.

'I am,' he made bold to assert, 'you are' and from the eyes of the Vacant Stares there flashed a look of extraordinary venom, as politeness to the noblest of Greeks compelled them to reply: well, granted that 'I am' and 'you are,' what is 'It,' as he pointed with bony finger at the attentive Euclid. Also they knew not that he could be anything outside of potted Geometry. They forgot 'He is.'

XII.

And the Ghost of Socrates was filled with anger, but concealing it in the wisdom of a bitter-sweet smile, took a drink of hem-