

he is to prevail upon the tribes to remain quiet, and re-commence their commercial relations with Suakim.

Eyraud, the murderer, to the intense satisfaction of everyone, has arrived from Cuba, safe and sound to Paris. He has astonished people by the horrible coarseness of his manners, and that without any provocation. Yet at one time he had his carriage and horses. The most remarkable curiosity about the renowned criminal is that the portraits published of him are the contrary of what he is. He was represented with a fair crop of hair—he is almost as bald as a billiard ball; his hair was described, too, as black—the samples visible prove that it was red coloured. There is not the slightest doubt as to his guilt or the punishment in store for him. But the motive of the crime is still somewhat foggy, and it is not yet as clear as noon-day that he was its sole plotter or sole executor. The face-to-face scenes between Eyraud and his mistress and co-murderess, Bompard, will be taken by the new instantaneous photographic apparatus, and the results placed before the jury. Eyraud's jaw-bones are abnormally immense, and so are his hands. The anthropologists—early birds—are already in the field to claim his brain. Z.

A MODERN MYSTIC—III.

McKNOM was proceeding, when four young men came and sat near. Two were smoking pipes and two chewing tobacco, and one of these squirted tobacco juice in front of where we sat. The day was bright, and a little bird, perched on a spray already laden with the delicate green of spring, was swinging himself and sang—a trochee, a trill and a spondee at the close.

"If I meet the —," said one of the young men frowning and striking his knee with the clenched fist of his right hand, "I'll knock the — head off him." "You couldn't do it, Bill," cried another. "I'll bet you ten to one I knock the — daylight out of him" was the confident reply, and he spat out, with a triumphant motion of the head, a volley of tobacco juice; the little bird still singing for all he was worth, as we say, and the Falls thundering and shining beneath the clear, blue, sun-lit sky; the lake-like spaces of the river gleaming beyond the bridges, against a back-ground of brown hills, and the delicate leafage of the trees and the tender grass, speaking of the mysterious vernal force.

Helpsam, anxious to hear the finish of our venerable friend's remarks, said: "Let us take a stroll."

We went down the steps leading to the Lover's Walk, McKnom, as we descended, saying: "How is it we have so few young creative minds to-day? Men run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. But, outside of physical science, where are the creative minds?"

"By Jove!" said Helpsam, "you are right. What is the cause?"

McKnom: "Our system of education is on a false basis. And in modern politics the politician has to give up so much time to managing King Democracy, he has no time for thought and reading, and without meditation no man can become great. We are told the Spirit of God 'brooded' before the drama of creation in six acts commenced."

Taking one of the seats (intended for vows and whispers), McKnom between Helpsam and the writer, said Helpsam: "Now tell us how the teaching of Plato should be brought to bear on Canadian politics."

McKnom: "That must be left for another time. I have not said all that should be said on the clue to the study of Plato. Have you observed that all the great—the immortal—books have arisen out of men's circumstances—have been inspired by their surroundings; have been forced into existence by facts pressing on a great, serious and creative mind?"

Helpsam: "You mean that the great writer does not say: 'I want to write a book, to make a hit, to get money'; but the book is wrung from him; as Lord Lytton says: 'Genius does what it must; talent does what it can.'"

McKnom: "You have expressed my view much better than I could have done it myself. Your writers who make a book as cabinet-makers a chair are fit for a community where every man knows a little, and few know anything thoroughly, and all despise what they do not know. There was a vein of sadness running through Plato which we see in his writings. It pained him to note how at Athens mental eminence, instead of being a passport to public confidence and to the highest positions, was a danger to its possessor; that public virtue, superiority to corruption, marked a man out for hatred; he witnessed the murder of the good, the brave, the wise; he saw scoundrels of low birth and low attainments prospering."

Helpsam: "I cannot recognize your Athens. Are you not thinking of that Rome which stung Tacitus, and inflamed the soul of Juvenal?"

"My dear friend," answered McKnom, "have you read Fabricius? He makes Plato say of the reforms of Pericles, that he bred spiders, and put them in corners in the Temple of Pallas, and then demanded the applause of the people for sweeping away the cobwebs. Under him Athens was a democracy tempered with despotism, and he had no successor; he took care of that. Self-government! is there such a thing in politics? It would only be possible where each individual in a community had perfect self-control and the power of thinking correctly. Still the many-headed nursing is king in a sense, and those who will control the beast have to consider what its many tongues and palates desire. Many and various are the caters and condiments the manager of the animal requires.

One head is hydrophobic; another loves only cold water, and—but why go on? When all the heads, some of which are religious, some the reverse, are satisfied, the master shakes the monster's chain, draws his bow across his fiddle, which has many strings, and like a bear which has been instructed on a hot griddle, it dances so as to delight gods and men."

His two listeners laughed, and Helpsam said: "What a fearful caricature of our free and independent citizens!"

"Well," replied McKnom, "I am not speaking of Canada now; I am speaking of Democracy, as up to the present it has shown itself in every country—in all history. Pericles beautified Athens—but look at the effect of his life, his association with Aspasia, his scepticism, on the youth whose profligacy made Plato's heart sore."

"It is a strange thing," said Helpsam "that the influence of women, which has been so inspiring to literature, has been disastrous in politics. I don't know an instance where a ruler of men has been influenced by a woman in which she has not led him into fatal errors."

"Do you know the reason of this?" asked McKnom.

"Well," answered Helpsam, "I think they want the political instinct."

McKnom: "That is not it. They think through their feelings. They act on their love or resentment. From Juno to Eugénie, they are all the same. In art, in literature there is room neither for love, hatred, whim, the antics of vanity, or the desire to display power. The woman who loves thinks the man who has inspired this misleading sentiment fit for any position, equal to any effort. Cleopatra was a woman of great ability, yet she seems to have loved that drunken gladiator, Anthony; Clytemnestra loved Ægysthus, and thought him fit to share the throne, though he was palpably a coward, and so down the course of history."

"But," replied Helpsam, "women have made excellent rulers. Take our Queen. Look at Elizabeth, of England; and the great Catherine of Russia, a great ruler, though not born under Dian's star."

McKnom threw back his head, looked as into the distance for a moment and, drawing a long breath, said: "*Varium et mutabile*—they have yet at times made good rulers. I was not speaking of them as rulers, but as influences in politics. But even as rulers, what shipwreck have they not made once their love or hatred has had leave to work! Virgil, who had a good knowledge of human nature, gives us a picture of it in Dido, and modern history exemplifies it in Isabella. I repeat, I was speaking of them as secret influences in politics, and while you can find good queens and empresses, you cannot find a case in history where this influence has not been pernicious. My dear friend, I know you place the ladies very high—I do too—no doubt Paul would do so, Phœbe, for instance; but he saw where the charming—here he laughed—"they call them 'kittle cattle' in Scotland—are weak. If we go to our great dramatist, we have Lady Macbeth the evil genius of her weaker lord, and what does English history tell us on this head? Look at the wife of Edward II., and her 'gentle Mortimer.'"

"O," said one of his listeners, "what a subject for a Tacitus! What a theme for a Juvenal! The pen which described the death of Messalina should have painted for us the ex-queen and her paramour seemingly secure in Nottingham Castle; her son, the crowned King, and his armed followers marching at midnight through a subterranean passage to the room of his middle-aged mother; the forcing of the chamber door, guarded by knights who are slain; the arrest of the Earl of March, while the tender-hearted old woman cries, 'Spare my gentle Mortimer!' and Drayton, in his poem of 'The Barons' Wars,' describes her, I doubt not with justice, as 'cherishing in prison the memory of Mortimer and leaving her curse to her son as her testament.'"

"You surely do not forget," broke in Helpsam, "the mother of George III., another middle-aged lady of strong predilections? Her influence over her son, whom she made what is best left undescribed, made him hate Pitt and every able man in Parliament, and raise her friend, Lord Bute, over the heads of everybody to the highest office of State—make the donkey even Prime Minister. On the day he became a politician, as Macaulay says, he became a cabinet minister, but when he found himself the scorn of politicians and the nation he had the good sense to resign, though he preserved his influence through the Princess mother; of whom, when everybody was asking how he rose; what was the secret of the booby's success; what did it mean, Lord Waldegrave said, 'You will find it in his memoirs.' The Princess discovered accomplishments in him of which the Prince, or her husband, or the King her son, or Parliament, or the public, may not have been the most competent judge."

McKnom grew impatient and cried with some warmth, "Where have we wandered? Into what by-ways of historical gossip, away from the groves of Academe? Time flies—*ultima forsam!* You should look into the Orphic theology and its hierarchy of gods and note the order; first the Ineffable, the Unknown, to whom probably Paul found an altar in Athens, and which led him to say that the Athenians were not a superstitious, but a very religious people. The main triad from the Ineffable is Intellect, Power, the Father—this last equals Jupiter, who is also denominated Pan. Endemus, indeed, begins the genealogy from Night, and Homer does the same. The greatness of Night in the Homeric theogony is evinced by this: that he tells us Jupiter feared lest he should act in a manner displeasing to swift Night."

"Ah," said Helpsam, "that gives a meaning to a passage in the first book of Homer, on which the notes of text books never satisfied me. It is where the angry Apollo is described going down from the summits of Olympus: *ho d'ēie nukti eoiōs*—and he moved along like the night," as it is usually translated. It should clearly be translated 'and he went like Night,' the swift and silent and terrible goddess, one of the eldest deities, of whom even the father of gods and men stood in awe."

"I think you are right," he said. "But we will not waste our time on verbal criticism. Antiphan, who, like yourself, was an admirer of Pericles, asked Plato, 'How did the Athenians bear all you accuse Pericles of at the hands of any man?' Plato smiled and answered, 'You must know Pericles had many friends and these would echo anything he uttered. One day he called the leading ones among them together (you will find the story in the "Bibliotheca Græca," of Fabricius), and took a rat he had tamed, and, placing it on the table before them, he cut short its ears and tail, and put a collar of gold round its neck, and said: "O friends, is not this a beautiful dog?" Some cried out "Beautiful!" Others, "Magnificent dog!" "Large for the breed, too." "Yes," says Pericles, "it is a noble dog. Some vile traducers say he has stolen my cheese. But this is slander. I intend he shall be a watchdog." The next day it was placed in a golden cage and the friends of Pericles went through Athens saying, "Pericles has got a splendid dog," and many went to see him; and there was Aspasia, with whom the joke originated, feeding him; and the people looked on mute with amazement and disgust; and as they left the vestibule, some were silent and grave; others were smiling; some laughed outright and said, "Why, it's a rat!" and that day there was much sly jocosity and some gravity over this matter, and it lost Pericles many hearts. But the man that would make war on Samos—on Greeks,—on men who had fought side by side with Athenians against the Persians, on an island sacred as the birth-place of Juno, to please a woman of the stripe of Aspasia, might not mind this. Æschylus went to see the "dog," now become famous, and the strong language that prophetic soul uttered was the real reason for his quitting Athens, which was no safe place for him, after he had scorned to stoop to the sycophancy of saying Pericles' rat was a dog. As he leaned against a pillar, he addressed Pericles in words which have a fearful meaning, whether so spoken or as we find them in his greatest play: "An unpresumptuous mind is God's greatest gift. Happy let him be called who has come prosperously to his end." Plato believed in the force of individuals—like Carlyle, in great men—but he required that they should be good also."

"Draw your ear near me."

We inclined our heads.

"I will tell you something," he whispered.

"Yes?"

"Well," he said, "there is no great soul worth anything who does not lay an egg."

"An egg!" we cried.

"Yes; an egg!"

"An egg!" Helpsam exclaimed.

"I say an egg was his answer—an Orphic egg."

"Oh!"

"Now mark me," he went on, "the first cause is the one, equalling the good. The highest of souls are intellects, and the first of beings are gods; for as Being is the highest of things after the first cause, its first subsistence must be super-essential. Now in the Orphic theology the intelligible gods, or the highest order of divinities, is Time, and immediately after come Ether and Chaos (which last Plato calls Bound and Infinity in the 'Philebus'), and these, when mixed, are represented under the symbol of an egg. This is the first triad of the intelligible gods. For the perfection of the second triad they establish a conceiving or conceived egg as a god, whence Intellect leaps into light. Now every truly creative mind has in it some divine power, and every truly great man lays an egg, containing within it a beautiful winged principle, which mayhap never chips the shell until after he is dead, but in due time it breaks out, and makes itself beautiful and a blessing to mankind."

"It is," Helpsam said with a smile, "many years since I looked into the Orphic mysteries. I remember that the hymns pray for holiness, blamelessness of life, and, if the divinity addressed were changed, might be sung in our churches. If my memory serves me, however, Water and Earth were the two first principles."

"Yes," he answered, "that is as it is delivered to us by Hieronymus and Hellanicus. But they are silent concerning the principle prior to these two as being ineffable. A third principle is generated from them—a dragon, with three heads, one of a bull, and one of a lion, and in the middle that of the god himself. The third procession of this triad is dark Erebus; its summit Ether; its middle infinite Chaos. Now what is the third intelligible triad? The answer is the egg; the egg is the paternal principle of the third triad, and the third god of this series is Jupiter, the disposer of all things, and on this account, as I have already said, called also Pan."

"The theology was a curious jumble, which made their supreme god derived," said Helpsam.

"Jumble! Sir," he replied, "it is a beautiful order; who can get at the first principle? This the wise Egyptians regarded as a thrice unknown darkness, and Plato tells us, in the Parmenides, that it can neither be named, nor spoken of, nor conceived by imagination, nor be known or perceived by any being."

"By the way, at the Eleusinian mysteries they used,