

with such spring and joyousness of movement that had I not seen him like this many times before I would have been deluded into the belief that the real Peter had been locked up in the dismal vault with the dusty books and that an entirely different kind of Peter was skipping about outside.

But that was nothing to the air with which he swept his papers into the drawer of his desk, brushed away the crumpled sheets upon which he had figured his balance, and darted to the washstand behind the narrow partition. Nor could it be compared to the way in which he stripped off his black bombazine office-coat with its baggy pockets—quite a disreputable-looking coat I must say—taking it by the nape of the neck, as if it were some loathsome object to be got rid of, and hanging it upon a hook behind him; nor to the way in which he pulled up his shirt sleeves and plunged his white, long fingered, delicately modelled hands into the basin, as if cleanliness were a thing to be welcomed as a part of his life. These carefully dried, each finger by itself—not forgetting the small seal ring on the little one—he gave an extra polish to his glistening pate with the towel, patted his fresh, smooth-shaven cheeks with an unrumpled handkerchief which he had taken from his inside pocket, carefully adjusted his white neck-cloth, refastening the diamond pin—a tiny one, but clear as a baby's tear—put on his frock-coat with its high collar and flaring tails, took down his silk hat, gave it a flourish with his handkerchief, unhooked his overcoat from a peg behind the door (a gray surtout cut something like the first Napoleon's) and stepped out to where I sat.

You would never have put him down as being sixty years of age had you known him as well as I did—and it is a great pity you didn't. Really, now that I come to think of it, I never did put him down as being of any age at all. Peter Grayson and age never seemed to have anything to do with each other. Sometimes when I have looked in through the Receiver Teller's window and have passed in my book—I kept my account at the Exeter—and he has lifted his bushy shutters and gazed at me suddenly with his merry, Scotch-terrier eyes, I have caught, I must admit, a line of anxiety, or rather of concentrated cautiousness on his face, which for the moment made me think that perhaps he was looking a trifle older than when I last saw him; but all this was scattered to the winds when I met him an hour afterward swinging up Wall Street with that cheery lift of the heels so peculiarly his own, a lift that the occupants of every office window on both sides of the street knew to be Peter's even when they failed to recognize the surtout and straight-trimmed high hat. Had any doubting Thomas, however, walked beside him on his way up Broadway to his rooms on Fifteenth Street, and had the quick, almost boyish lift of Peter's heels not entirely convinced the unbeliever of Peter's youth, all questions would have been at once disposed of had the cheery bank teller invited him into his apartment up three flights of stairs over the tailor's shop—and he would have invited him had he been his friend—and then and there opened him into an easy chair near the open wood fire, with some such remark as: "Down, you rascal, and sit close up where I can get my hands on you!" No—there was no trace of old age about Peter.

He was ready now—battered, coated and gloved—not a hint of the ostrich egg or shaggy shutters visible, but a well-preserved bachelor of forty or forty-five; strictly in the mode and of the mode, looking more like some stray diplomat caught in the wiles of the Street, or some retired magnate, than a modest bank clerk on three thousand a year. The next instant he was tripping down the granite steps between the rusty iron railings—on his toes most of the way; the same cheery spring in his heels, slapping his thin, shapely legs with his tightly-rolled umbrella, adjusting his hat at the proper angle so that the well-trimmed side whiskers—the veriest little dabs of whiskers hardly an inch long—would show as well as the fringes of his grey hair.

Not that he was anxious to conceal these slight indications of advancing years, nor did he have a spark of cheap

personal vanity about him, but because it was his nature always to put his best foot foremost and keep it there; because, too, it behooved him in manner, dress and morals, to maintain the standards he had set for himself, he being a Grayson, with the best blood of the State in his veins, and with every table worth dining at open to him from fourteenth Street to Murray Hill, and beyond.

"Now, it's all behind me, my dear boy," he cried, as we reached the sidewalk and turned our faces up Wall Street toward Broadway. "Fifteen hours to live my own life! No care until ten o'clock to-morrow. Lovely life, my dear Major, when you think of it. Ah, old Micawber was right—income one pound, expense one pound ten shillings; result, misery; income one pound ten, expense one pound, outcome, happiness! What a curse this Street is to those who abuse its power for good; half of them trying to keep out of jail and the other half fighting to keep out of the poor-house! And most of them get so little out of it. Just as I can detect a counterfeit bill at sight, my boy, so can I put my finger on these money-getters when the poison of money-getting for money's sake begins to work in their veins. I don't mean the laying up of money for a rainy day, or the providing for one's family. Every man should lay up a six-months' doctor's bill, just as every man should lay up money enough to keep his body out of Potter's Field. It's laying up the surplus that hurts."

Peter had his arm firmly locked in mine now.

"Now that concern of Breen & Company, where I found my error, are no better than the others. They are new to this whirlpool, but they will soon get in over their heads. I think it is only the third or fourth year since they started business, but they are already floating all sorts of schemes, and some of them—if you will permit me in confidence, strictly in confidence, my dear boy—are rather shady, I think; at least I judge so from their deposits."

"What are they, bankers?" I ventured. "I had never heard of the firm; not an extraordinary thing in my case when bankers were concerned."

Peter laughed.

"Yes, BANKERS—all in capital letters—the imitation kind. Breen came from some place out of town and made a lucky hit in his first year—mines or something—I forget what. Oh, but you must know that it takes very little now-a-days to make a full-fledged banker. All you have to do is to hoist in a safe—through the window, generally, with the crowd looking on; rail off half the office; scatter some big ledgers over two or three newly-varnished desks; move in a dozen arm-chairs, get a ticker, a black-board and a boy with a piece of chalk; be pleasant to every fellow you meet with his own or somebody else's money in his pocket, and there you are. But we won't talk of these things—it isn't kind, and, really, I hardly know Breen, and I'm quite sure he wouldn't know me if he saw me, and he's a very decent gentleman in many ways, I hear. He never overdraws his account, any way—never tries—and that's more than I can say for some of his neighbors."

The fog, which earlier in the afternoon had been but a blue haze, softening the hard outlines of the street, had now settled down in earnest, choking up the doorways, wiping out the tops of the buildings, their facades started here and there with gas-jets, and making a smudged drawing of the columns of the Custom House opposite.

"Superb, are they not?" said Peter, as he wheeled and stood looking at the row of monoliths supporting the roof of the huge granite pile, each column in relief against the dark shadows of the portico. "And they are never so beautiful to me, my boy, as when the ugly parts of the old building are lost in the fog. Follow the lines of these watchmen of the temple! These grave, dignified, majestic columns standing out in the gloom keeping guard! But it is only a question of time—down they'll come! See if they don't!"

"They will never dare move them," I protested. "It would be too great a sacrilege." The best way to get Peter properly started is never to agree with him.

"Not move them! They will break them up for dock-filling before ten years are out. They're in the way, my boy; they shut out the light; can't hang signs on them; can't plaster them over with theatre bills; no earthly use. 'Wall Street isn't Rome or any other excavated ruin; it's the centre of the universe'—that's the way the fellows behind these glass windows talk." Here Peter pointed to the offices of some prominent bankers, where other belated clerks were still at work under shaded gas-jets. "These fellows don't want anything classic; they want something that'll earn four per cent."

We were now opposite the Sub-Treasury, its roof lost in the settling fogs, the bronze figure of the Father of His Country dominating the flight of marble steps and the adjacent streets.

Again Peter wheeled; this time he lifted his hat to the statue.

"Good evening, your Excellency," he said in a voice mellowed to the same respectful tone with which he would have addressed the original in the flesh.

Suddenly he loosened his arm from mine and squared himself so he could look into my face.

"I notice that you seldom salute him, Major, and it grieves me," he said with a grim smile.

I broke into a laugh. "Do you think he would feel hurt if I didn't?"

"Of course he would, and so should you. He wasn't put there for ornament, my boy, but to be kept in mind, and I want to tell you that there's no place in the world where his example is so much needed as right here in Wall Street. Want of reverence, my dear boy"—here he adjusted his umbrella to the hollow of his arm—"is our national sin. Nobody reveres anything now-a-days. Much as you can do to keep people from running railroads through your family vaults, and, as to one's character, all a man needs to get himself battered black and blue, is to try to be of some service to his country. Even our presidents have to be murdered before we stop abusing them. By Jove! Major, you've got to salute him! You're too fine a man to run to seed and lose your respect for things worth while. I won't have it, I tell you! Off with your hat!"

I at once uncovered my head (the fog helped to conceal my own identity, if it didn't Peter's) and stood for a brief instant in respectful attitude.

There was nothing new in the discussion. Sometimes I would laugh at him; sometimes I would only touch my hat in unison; sometimes I let him do the bowing alone, an act on his part which never attracted attention—looking more as if he had accosted some passing friend.

We had reached Broadway by this time and were crossing the street opposite Trinity Churchyard.

"Come over here with me," he cried, "and let us look in through the iron railings. The study of the dead is often more profitable than knowledge of the living. Ah, the gate is open! It is not often I am here at this time, and on a foggy afternoon. What a noble charity, my boy, is a fog—it hides such a multitude of sins—bad architecture for one," and he laughed softly.

I always let Peter run on—in fact I always encourage him to run on. No one I know talks quite in the same way, many with a larger experience of life are more profound, but none have the personal note which characterizes the old fellow's discussions.

"And how do you suppose these by-gones feel about what is going on around them?" he rattled on, tapping the wet slab of a tomb with the end of his umbrella. "And not only these sturdy patriots who lie here, but the queer old ghosts who live in the steeple?" he added, waving his hand upward to the slender spire, its cross lost in the fog. "Yes, ghosts and goblins, my boy. You don't believe it?—I do—or I persuade myself I do, which is better. Sometimes I can see them straddling the chimneys when they ring out the hours, or I catch them peeping out between the slats of the windows away up near the cross. Very often in the hot afternoons when you are stretching your lazy body under the tents of the mighty—" (Peter referred to some friends of mine who owned a villa down on Long Island, and were good enough to ask me down

for a week in August) "I come up here out of the rush and sit on these old tombstones and talk to these old fellows—both kinds—the steeple boys and the old cronies under the sod. You never come, I know. You will when you're my age."

I had it in my mind to tell him that the inside of a dry tent had some advantages over the outside of a damp tomb, so far as entertaining one's friends, even in hot weather, was concerned, but I was afraid it might stop the flow of his thoughts, and checked myself.

"It is not so much the rest and quiet that delights me, as the feeling that I am walled about for the moment and protected; jerked out of the whirlpool, as it were, and given a breathing spell. On these afternoons the old church becomes a church once more—not a gate to bar out the rush of commercialism. See where she stands—quite out to the very curb, her warning finger pointing upward. 'Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther,' she cries out to the Four Per cents. 'Hug up close to me, you old fellows asleep in your graves; get under my lee. Let us fight it out together, the living and the dead!' And now hear these abominable Four Per Cents behind their glass windows: 'No place for a church,' they say. 'No place for the dead! Property too valuable. Move it up town. Move it out in the country—move it any where so you get it out of our way. We are the Great Amalgamated Crunch Company. Into our maw goes respect for tradition, reverence for the dead, decency, love of religion, sentiment and beauty. These are back numbers. In their place, we give you something real and up-to-date from basement to flag-staff, with fifty applicants on the waiting list. If you don't believe it read our prospectus!'"

Peter had straightened and was standing with his hand lifted above his head, as if he were about to pronounce a benediction. Then he said slowly, and with a note of sadness in his voice:

"Do you wonder, now, my boy, why I touch my hat to His Excellency?"

(To be continued.)

The Beaver Circle

This Canada of Ours.

By James David Edgar.

Let other tongues in older lands,
Laud vaunt their claims to glory,
And chaunt in triumph of the past,
Content to live in story.
Though boasting no baronial halls,
Nor ivy-crested towers,
What past can match thy glorious youth,
Fair Canada of ours?
Fair Canada,
Dear Canada,
This Canada of ours!

We love those far-off ocean Isles
Where Britain's monarch reigns;
We'll ne'er forget the good old blood
That courses through our veins;
Proud Scotia's fame, old Erin's name,
And haughty Albion's powers,
Reflect their matchless lustre on
This Canada of ours.
Fair Canada,
Dear Canada,
This Canada of ours!

May our Dominion flourish then,
A goodly land and free,
Where Celt and Saxon, hand in hand,
Hold sway from sea to sea;
Strong arms shall guard our cherished homes
When darkest danger lowers,
And with our life-blood we'll defend
This Canada of ours.
Fair Canada,
Dear Canada,
This Canada of ours!

Here are some puzzles, Beavers, for you to sharpen your wits on. See how many of you will solve them correctly. The answers will appear next week.

Numerical Enigma.—My 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 is an animal you all know well. My 1, 5, 3, 6 is another well-known animal. My 1, 3, 6, 2 means denuded of clothing. My 1, 2, 5, 6 is a drink. My 2, 4, 5, 6 means always. My 6, 3, 4, 2