

IN A BOARDING HOUSE.

When I was approaching the end of my penultimate term at Oxford my tutor one day asked me to breakfast, saying he had something he wished especially to talk to me about. He was always rather a nervous man, and he hesitated a good deal before he came to the point on this occasion. However, when when we had finished our eggs and toast and were engaged on our cigarettes, he suddenly began:

"Massinger, you ought not to come up next term."

"I make a rule of never interrupting a man till he has said all he can on the subject, and so I simply continued smoking my cigarette."

"You are getting nervous," he said. "You are falling off, you know, and I don't think it is your fault. I know what these things are. My dear fellow, the last terms are horrible things always to a reading man. Every one is saying to you, 'Are you going to get a first?' and you hear nothing but books, books, books. Go away and don't come back till just before the examination. The master will give you permission to stay down—in fact, he will quite take my view of the situation." Long pause.

"Well, where shall I go to?" I said. "I grant you it's bad enough being asked all day long if one has read this or if one knows that; but it's better than loneliness."

"Go home." "I daren't. My people are in town, and I should not be able to resist balling and all the rest of it." "The devil!" says Sanderson. Another pause. "Look here," he begins again; "wait a minute. Charles, Charles, Charles!" (*fortissimo*).

"Yes sir."

"Charles, go to Mr. Denderley's rooms, and ask him if he'll be good enough to come in here for a minute."

Denderley appeared in that amazing homespun suit of his which was the admiration of all the Freshmen. Denderley was a delightful person, whom no one had ever seen out of temper or out of spirits.

"Good day, sir," says Denderley. "How do, Massinger? Will you go in a four to Illey this afternoon?"

"Denderley," says Sanderson, "what was that place called you went to last, Long?"

"What, at Havre?" says Denderley. "Oh, the Hotel de Pension Richeieu. Gorgeous lark it was! Old fellow who used to swear like a trooper if the eggs were too hard; straw widow who thought herself handsome, and would flirt her head off with you after you'd known her ten minutes; splendid brunette who used to touch me to sketch animals from nature. What was that girl's name? Annette, Juliette—something 'ette, I know."

Sanderson interrupted: "The very place for you, Massinger. No balls, and no one to talk to you about examinations."

Two weeks later I found myself at the Hotel de Pension Richeieu. When I arrived the company was just to commence breakfast (you leave Southampton at 12 and reach Havre about 9) and I was exceedingly inquisitive to contemplate the table d'hôte. It was made up of about equal numbers of French and English—only one brilliant face among the number. This was the face of a lively French schoolgirl. The waiter assigned me a place and I ate and gazed till I was aroused from my reverie by the voice of my neighbor, a fat, red-faced woman looking about forty, who asked whether I had made a good passage.

Our conversation was not interesting, and I was relieved when breakfast was over. In the *salon de lecture et de conversation* my fat friend was happily not to be found, and the schoolgirl and I began to talk.

"Monsieur has come to live here for a while. Oh, *mon Dieu!* monsieur will find it droll! There is the old Mr. Robinson, the English gentleman, says 'which way is the wind—ah, north-north-east'—and thinks we all care. There is the fat lady, who says she is a marquise, and who, I think, is a cook, who says, 'Ah, grand Dieu, cette det estable republique—'"

"And the fat English lady," I interrupted, whom I sat next to?"

"Good morning," says Mlle. Jeanne, as I found out my school-girl was called, mimicking my breakfast neighbor most admirably—good morning. Have you slept well, dear? "Gracious me, I never closed an eye."

I burst out laughing.

"Does she often say that?"

"Every morning."

"It must get dull in time."

"Je le pense bien."

"Has she been here long?"

"Oh, she is always here. They put strangers next to her when they come, because we all hate sitting by her except the tall English girl."

"A relation of hers?"

"Oh, no. Monsieur will see her and father-to-morrow. They have gone to-day. Monsieur will perhaps admire his countrywoman; but I do not. She is so tall and so triste. Ah, bah, ces Anglaises!"

The young lady, though only sixteen, had all the airs of a Parisienne of six and twenty.

The necessity of to-day is to be, however, not Mlle. Jeanne, nor the "tall English girl." My heroine is to be my breakfast neighbor, red-faced Mr. Manders.

Still, perhaps, the real heroine is the tall English girl. For it was to her that I owe my acquaintance with Mrs. Manders; it was on her account that Mrs. Manders first interested me; it is because of the tall English girl, whom I always called Amina—but of this latter, as newspapers say—that I want you to be interested in Mrs. Manders. How I hated and shunned the heavy-eyed, thick-lipped old fright the first week I was at the Pension Richeieu! How diligently I avoided her! But a week after I had been there I came by chance into the *salon* at five in the afternoon, when, as a rule, every one was out walking. When I was outside the door I heard a sound of crying, and I came in. I found Mrs. Manders sobbing, and Amina clasping her and saying:

"I am so sorry. I wish I could help you. Dear Mrs. Manders, always make me sit with you when you are lonely."

Mrs. Manders fled when I entered. Amina remained. I began to apologize and said I had come to find yesterday's *Gazette*. Amina was looking out of the window and made no remark. I was

just going out when Amina turned round, and one could see in her face that she wished to say something and was hesitating how to put it. I tried to save her from the difficulty.

"Can I do anything for you in the town?"

"No, thank you."

I was again going. Amina stopped me.

"Mr. Massinger, I wish to speak to you."

I was so taken aback that I could really make no answer at all. I merely looked in wonder.

"Mr. Massinger, you must do me a favor. Be kind to that poor woman who has just left the room."

"To Mrs. Manders? I don't know if she would care at all for my speaking to her even."

"Oh, yes, she would. She is very sad, she wants sympathy; she is very silly, but she has suffered terribly. Do try to listen to her gently; one makes her a little happier by doing it. Hers has been a hard lot. It makes it easier for her when she tells it, I think; she is so grateful to a kind listener. I think she knows how people shrink from me. Do try to, Mr. Massinger; try to like her."

"I will, certainly." I was going to add, "for your sake," or some such phrase; but a look in Amina's eyes stopped me.

"Promise!"

"I promise."

I found Amina was perfectly right—all that Mrs. Manders desired was that one should "listen to her gently." To any one who did this she was only too ready to pour forth her whole history. Old Mr. Robinson had occasionally forgotten his study of the direction in which the wind was blowing, or meant to blow, to listen to Mrs. Manders, and he had heard all the story. The father of my school-girl friend, Jeanne, had heard it all too; so had a grim, gray-headed Scotchman, who was kinder than one thought.

Mrs. Manders usually began by talking about her health and her continual suffering; then she would explain the cause and dilate on her cruel hardships. She was the elder of two daughters, and the uglier, or, in her words, "I was not pretty as Caroline was." The father was a well-to-do solicitor and gave each of his daughters £2000 when they married. The younger had married first, and her husband disliked his sister-in-law and would not allow the sisters to visit one another—no great loss to either, as they had never been very good friends.

A year after the pretty sister had married, a suitor appeared for the other. Her home was not happy, for her father was a gambler (there was no mother), and he was not very fond of the plain daughter, the mistake of the family, as he called her. So the suitor had an easy wooing.

He was an oldish man—that is to say about fifty. He died one year after the marriage. Four years after the second husband, Mr. Manders, appeared on the scene. He must be a very handsome fellow, we thought, when Mrs. Manders showed us his photograph, and we all admired his great brown moustache, his deep-set eyes, and his splendid broad chest. But we all remarked to one another how much younger he was than Mrs. Manders.

"We were so happy," Mrs. Manders used to say, "so happy for two years, and then he had brain fever."

She nursed him through the fever, and at the end of the nursing, when he was convalescent, she was very ill from fatigue. Her doctor recommended change of air and scene, and she went alone to the seaside. She had a letter from her husband the day after she arrived, then another letter a week later. Then none came for a fortnight. She wrote, imploring him to write again. Then the answer at length arrived. I think I shall never forget Mrs. Manders' face when she described her receipt of that answer. "I am well," the convalescent wrote; "I am much obliged to you for your inquiries; but stop where you are. Do not come back—I cannot bear the sight of you."

"That was his letter," said Mrs. Manders, "and as I read it a shot of pain went through me, and my left leg grew stiff, and I have never been able to walk well since." Curious details these. One could scarcely help laughing; and yet the story was sad enough.

The husband had in time come down to Southsea to see her. But he had said very little. He suggested that she should go to Havre, where an aunt of hers was then staying, and she—weak idiot that she was, consented. Having once settled her there, Mr. Manders thought he did his duty sufficiently by sending her £5 a week. I pointed out to Mrs. Manders that the law might mend matters for her.

"Yes, yes," Mr. Mackenzie had told her the same, she said. But she dared not go to law; she feared the publicity, though she had nothing to be ashamed of—and this we could not help believing; she had been hated and despised. A great and noble thing is the public nature of our English law; but it has its disadvantages, and they are very grave ones.

So Mrs. Manders seemed to be a permanent resident of the Pension Richeieu. Time after time we listened to her story, suggested the only possible way out of her difficulties, was not met by "I can't, I can't," and a flood of tears.

"What fools women are!" said old Mac Kenzie, who was very, very sorry for Mrs. Manders—all the same. "Why did this female jacksnaw not have a settlement?—settlement, settlement!" said old Mackenzie, shaking his fist in my face, as though I had prevented Mrs. Manders from having one.

That is the moral of her story—why has she no settlement? Poor Mrs. Manders did not know; she was vague as to what a settlement precisely meant. She had married for the second time as she did for the first, thinking that her husband would "look after her money"—which the scamp no doubt had done—and that she would always have the use of her own capital and possibly of his too (she had believed he was nearly a millionaire).

One listened to her and consoled with her partly.

I speak for myself—because Amina had wished it, partly out of sorrow for her. Yet once I could have strangled her for anger. That once was when Mlle. Marcere of the Anatole Theatre came down to the Pension for a day or two. Mlle. Marcere was dressed very quietly in a tight-fitting black dress and had a beautiful fan of gray feathers. She looked bright and intelligent; and were we not all glad to see a new face and hear

a fresh bright chatter that said everyday nothings as though they were holiday nothings. We knew no Paris scandal, and wanted to know none; and though Mlle. Marcere was an actress, and did play burlesque parts, and had created a furore last year by her performance of Phaeton, in "La Famille d'Apollon," why should she not be a very good creature notwithstanding? So we all lionized her, begged her to play on the arrangement in wood and ivory in the salon, which was called by courtesy a piano, and applauded her songs and laughed at her jokes. Why in the name of all the gods, must that wretch, Mrs. Manders suddenly sweep out of the room, and say to Amina in a tone that was sour enough to gall us all, and make poor Mlle. Marcere blush crimson, "I am going to my room, there is too much company for me here to-night!"

I never could quite forgive Mrs. Manders this, and I was not sorry when she went. Her departure came about most strangely. She had a favorite cat, and one day her pet fell ill. She declared the landlord of the pension had poisoned it to spite her. She had no proof whatever of it, but "I know it," she said, with the same look of supernatural wisdom that my cousin T. assumes when he wants me to believe that he is in the confidence of Her Majesty's government. The cat, shortly before its decease, vomited severely, and by so doing spoiled a carpet. This carpet Mrs. Manders was asked to pay for; and she had to do so, despite her protest that as she knew the cat had been poisoned, it was doubly wicked to make her pay for the results of the crime. She wrote a letter to her husband, saying she was miserable here and begging for a home. He replied that she could return to England, and "arrangements will be made for giving you a home as you so ardently desire."

So Mrs. Manders packed up her goods and departed.

"I wish I knew what has happened to her," Amina said a week after she had gone. But no news ever reached us. "She was ugly and uneducated," Amina said; "and yet how sad it all was! how sorry one was for her!" And whatever may later have befallen Mrs. Manders, she must surely have thought often of that compassion Amina showed her with such continual gentleness. Coming as it did from no feeling of duty, but simply from Amina's own good will, it touched us all in the Pension Richeieu. It made us feel that Amina was wiser than the rest of us, for every one can distinguish tragedy when the surroundings are ungainly.

Concerning the African Desert.

Although the name of this vast desert is familiar as a household word, a few of those who speak of it are aware how much of North Africa it covers. Its area is about three millions of square miles, and it extends east and west, from the valley of the Nile to the Atlantic, and north and south, from the Atlas mountains to the river Niger. On the edge of this sandy sea is situated the city of Timbuctoo, founded by the Berbers in A. D. 1176, on the Niger. It is well built and possesses several magnificent mosques. The largest has nine naves, a lofty tower and measures 285 feet by 212 feet. Its population is about 20,000, but in former times was much larger. It is the capital of Central Africa—the religion known by the name of Soudan, whose people number about forty millions. At present the foreign trade of this great city is about four millions sterling per annum, carried on by caravans which have to cross two thousand miles of the great desert, to the ports of Morocco, Algeria, Tunis and Tripoli. It is evident that commerce carried on by such medieval arrangements will not suit the genius of modern times; and Mr. Donald Mackenzie, a British engineer, has proposed to flood the Sahara from the Atlantic, and thus bring Liverpool within ten or twelve days' steam of Timbuctoo, and immensely develop the trade of the country. He finds that there is a great depression in the land, called El Juf, which approaches within 100 miles of Timbuctoo. This depression is about 500 miles long and 120 miles wide, and its surface 200 feet below the level of the Atlantic, from which it is separated only by an enormous sand bank. From the salt, the shells and other indications, it is clear that one time this district was covered by the sea.

The great mouth of this old inland sea, called Bocea Grande, lies between perpendicular rocks, which rise about 200 feet above the sea, and it is about 25 miles wide. It will only require a ship canal of 300 yards long through the sand bank, to let in the Atlantic, and reform this great tract of water; and a small cutting once cut across the bar, the rush of the sea-water would itself do the rest of the work. When the great inland basin has again been filled, there will, no doubt, be difficulties to overcome in preventing a fresh formation of the bar. But with the example of the Suez canal there can be no reason to think but that it may be kept open. It is believed that this tract of country has been fertilized by the cutting away of forests. In A. D. 681, the Arabs found it well wooded, and with extensive lakes and streams of water. The inhabitants, sheltered by the woods, kept the invaders at bay for a century. The Arabs then destroyed the timber, and by A. D. 1200 the lakes have become salt marshes, the streams only occasionally appeared and were swallowed up by the sterile sandy soil. Even in our time the same process and result have been taking place in some parts of the United States and Australia.—*Saturday Magazine*.

Mr. Sala, the English journalist, whom Senator Barnard entertained at dinner in Washington a few days ago, has been offered a seat in Parliament, but like his friend Charles Dickens, he does not care for politics.

Archibald Forbes, the war correspondent, was hooted and pelted on his way to the railway station at Newport, England, having refused to lecture as advertised, on account of a quarrel with the manager.

Mr. Thomas Hughes—"Tom Brown"—is quoted as saying to Mr. James Redpath: "Do you know there is nothing that astonishes us English so much as to see you Americans come over here for lectures. Why, Sir, I can name all the orators of England on the fingers of one hand; while you are a nation of orators."

An American Deer Park.

[From the Philadelphia Record.]

About two miles from New Hope, on the old York road, is situated what is known as the Salisbury Deer Park, a large inclosure of ground used for raising deer. The park, consisting of over eighty acres, is a part of what was at one time the old Logan farm. The park is the only one of the kind in this country, and at present contains forty-one full-grown deer, of which thirty-two are of the English fallow breed. This institution has been in existence for seven years.

During the war a gentleman in the South owned about 100 of these beauties, but with the advance of the Union army they were scattered in all directions, and but few were recovered. Those which were returned were sold to the Salisbury Association and the park was then formed. There was but one buck among the few received, and even he soon died. The American deer are slow to breed under any circumstances, and they will not mix with the English deer. In order to perpetuate the English deer in this country it was necessary to go to England and there procure a fallow buck. Lord Dunraven readily dispatched one to the park, and from that time the Association has been in a prosperous condition.

The park is in charge of a keeper, who resides on the grounds. The American deer are the nearest in form, and a few of them are so tame as to follow the keeper from place to place. A reporter tried to get within reach of the English stock, but they hid in the low undergrowth with which the park is almost completely covered. The keeper, George Hill, said that there was no difficulty in raising the deer. They were fed once a day on corn, and in the winter, corn and hay. Some few of the English breed will not appear upon the whistle of the keeper at feeding time, and he said that these fed upon the walnuts, which were upon the ground in abundance. Two deer are killed each week for the market. Yesterday the time for the weekly hunt, the reporter concluded to witness the chase. There might just as well have been but one beast in the park, so far as it facilitated the killing, as there was one particular deer to be slain and no other.

There were three men with double-barreled shotguns and three without guns, who, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, moved to the assault. After a half hour's skirmishing through thick undergrowth the English flock was spied. They had heard the approach of the hunters, and they were huddled close, with their heads erect. Suddenly there was a scattering, and the quick-footed animals were flying in all directions. Another search followed and in time a few deer were sighted. Among this number was the one desired. Dr. Johnson, of New Hope, stole in their direction, while the rest of the party watched the fretful creature's anxious movements. When the Doctor had reached a point about 100 yards distant the beasts again bounded away. The Doctor shot, however, breaking the animal's fore leg. This wound seemed to have no other effect upon the deer than to entirely separate it from the flock. Its running capacity seemed to be in no way impaired. A long while elapsed before they again came upon the unhappy animal, and only then to lose him again in the shrubbery.

Of course, dogs were not used in the chase, as the deer was for the market; and when dogs are used the carcass is more or less mutilated. Also, in shooting the deer the throat is aimed at, and, unless a good shot is presented at this part of the body, they are not killed. All the afternoon the six men chased the beast from place to place, until nature, in the fall of night, came to its rescue, and the hunt ceased.

Close by the park and on a part of the old farm there is located a brook-trout fishery which is springing into huge proportions. The fishery is now operated by the Thompson Brothers. The process of hatching the trout is interesting, and, although the work is not now under full headway, an idea of its extent can be gained. On an elevation of about ten feet above a rude one-story brick building there is a huge spring, the water of which is as clear as a crystal, and in rainy weather will not mix with the muddy water that runs down from the hills. From this spring comes the water which is used in the fishery. In the brick building the operation of hatching is begun. Three hatching boxes, each containing fifteen apartments, are filled with the eggs of the trout. The three boxes will hold in all three hundred thousand eggs. The apartments of the boxes are separated by light wire, and each contains a certain number of eggs.

For forty-five days the spring water is run constantly through these boxes, and at the end of this time the fish appear, and are removed and equally divided into twenty troughs fourteen feet in length by fifteen inches wide and nine deep. Here, in the constantly running water, the little germs remain forty-five more days. During this time they are not fed, but they subsist upon a little ball of matter, about the size of a pin head, which is attached to each one. From these troughs they are removed to large inclosed square boxes built in the ground, through which the water is also constantly running. Here they are fed upon beef liver chopped as fine as possible. As they grow they are passed from box to box until after about eighteen months, when they are ready for market.

Mrs. Cornelia Nutter, of Waterloo Iowa, has given \$30,000 to endow a chair of Practical Theology in the Garrett Biblical Institute of Albany.

Mr. Pentecost, the Evangelist, has recently lost two sons by pneumonia, and now he is compelled to abandon work on account of symptoms of typhoid fever.

Some ladies make a great bustle when they enter a theater. And it's getting, so we are told by a married composer, to be a feminine fashion to put one of that same kind of thing on before they start.

The "Nip and Tuck" theatrical company is traveling in the West. It has been nip and tuck with a great many other companies to get through without walking home.

Sam Ward has fairly captured London society. His time is completely taken up in attending dinners, suppers and other festivities in Belgravia. It is understood over there that Sam has recently come into possession of a large property through successful speculation.

Hostesses and Their W.ys.

A few of the salient points which distinguish the perfect or charming hostess are, perhaps, foremost, certain facility of putting each individual guest at his ease, conveying that the welcome she accords to him is a personal, if not an especial one. Simultaneously with these agreeable expressions is conveyed a sense of the hostesses' genial qualities; her charm of manner, her smiling serenity, her unruffled demeanor, her graciousness, and her courteous bearing, evincing so plainly that she is entirely mistress of the situation, which qualities insensibly react upon the guests, and evoke a corresponding desire on their part. Her tact, aplomb, and readiness of resource are such that she is equal to any emergency; while the most awkward of contretemps, which not unfrequently occur in society—such as the wrong people arriving at the wrong moment or the same moment—is carried off by her in so skillful and successful a manner that the awkwardness of the meeting is scarcely so much as perceived. The perfect hostess has another advantage, on which rests in a measure the groundwork of the foregoing charms—a readiness of speech, a faculty of saying the right thing at the right moment and to the right person, and of identifying herself, so to speak, with susceptibilities of each of her guests; never attempting to please one guest over the head of another, making the one feel small and neglected while she is never at a loss for a judicious remark to be addressed to even the most insignificant of her guests, but is a queen in the art of society small talk.

The good hostess is essentially what is known as a considerate hostess; she makes up in consideration for her guests for the brighter qualities of the "charming hostess," in which she, the "good hostess" is lacking. In the charming hostess this consideration is eclipsed by her more brilliant powers of pleasing; it permeates all she does; while in the good hostess it is her strongest point, and upon which is founded her claim to the name. The lady who bears the undesirable reputation of being "not a good hostess" is not "good," in a variety of ways; she means well, and does her utmost to succeed, but, by some contrariety of the laws which regulate domestic and social affairs, the results of her efforts are always the reverse of what she would have them be. The "not good hostesses" sometimes suffer from shyness and reserve, which renders them stiff in manner when they would be most cordial, silent when they would be most loquacious, and awkward when they would be most graceful. Others, again, have no method in their arrangements, and consequently everything that they superintend or attempt to manage, turns out a tort, a traverse. Fussiness and an over-anxiety to please is with many their great drawback and serious defect. These ladies bore guests far more than they are aware of; they hunt them about with mistaken zeal, teasing them with inquiries as to whether they are too warm or too cold, whether will do this or do that, go there or stay here, eat this or drink that, and are so desirous of seeing them enjoy themselves and be amused, that they destroy the element they would foster. Their friends do not speak unkindly of this type of hostess—on the contrary, they give them full credit for all their good intentions; but they say pitifully of one these ladies, "Mrs. A. is not a good hostess, certainly, but she is a good-natured woman, very." As there are many reasons why ladies prove to be good hostesses, so there are many reasons why they prove bad hostesses; selfishness and want of consideration for others contribute to these, as do procrastination and the having no idea of time.

Ladies with such weaknesses as these produce very much the same impression upon their guests, although perhaps one is a little less capable than the other. The selfish hostess is a bad hostess, because, provided she is herself amused, she is utterly indifferent as to how her guests may be faring, her own pleasure and gratification being of paramount importance with her. If she descends late to the drawing room to welcome her guests, instead of being in readiness to receive them, it is because she is indifferent as to whether there is any one to greet them or not in the empty drawing-room; to arrange the last curl of her *coiffure* in a coquetish manner, and stude the set of her train, is with her a matter of much more importance. This selfishness obtrudes itself at every turn of her self-imposed duties; she is inconsiderate, and there is nothing to be said for her. For the procrastinating hostess, although she is equally in fault, yet, as she hastens to excuse herself when lacking in politeness to, or consideration for her guests, her excuses are sometimes admitted; but the selfish hostess, if she deigns to excuse herself, does so with such a palpable show of indifference as to her guests' opinion of her actions, that the excuse is offensive rather than an aggravation of the offense.

Coming out of a war penniless and on one leg inclines a man to think that one may get too much glory and too little money in exchange for patriotism.

Col. Long, the first American officer to enter the service of the Khedive, is studying law in New York, expecting to return to Egypt to practice before international tribunals.

Adelina Patti is about to bring the choir of instruments at the Italian Opera, London, down to the *diapason normal*. The change will cost \$500 for new wood instruments.

The Empress of Russia, who is at Cannes, France, for the winter is suffering from anemia, a malady often caused by the hothouse atmosphere of Russian dwellings.

Mrs. Scott-Siddons paid \$50 for the release of her baggage at the Troy station last week, it having been attached on a claim for a broken engagement in Albany last winter.

The good Earl of Rosebery has taken 20 per cent. off the rents his tenants had to pay. The tenants will undoubtedly be able to throw off the other 80 per cent.

Among the converts made to temperance by a "blue ribbon" movement in Atlanta, Ga., is Maj. S. W. Small ("Old Sir") one of the funny writers of the *Atlanta Constitution*.

Relaxation of Our Statements.

"H. J. R." the Washington correspondent of the *Philadelphia Times* writes: "I believe the cabinet are all in town, called on Postmaster-General Key on another evening, and found him engaged in a hot game of cards with—himself. He is probably one of the most inveterate solitary players in the country. Well, didn't Napoleon play solitaire? Key says he likes the game, first, because he likes a skillful man for an opponent. After leaving the Judge in the Ebbitt House rotunda a cabinet sharp (that is, one who knows all the cabinet officers) and I asked how several gentlemen pass their evenings. 'Well,' said he, 'you have already seen how Key passes a weary hour; unless he is out spending the evening He never misses an invitation to do so, and he is very sociable. He has the fewest airs of any man in the cabinet. He will go and play seven up with anybody who is respectable, and will, in his share of the whisky and standing share of the cigars. A very good fellow is Key.'

"How do the other cabinet members pass their time?"

"Oh, well, Schurz generally relaxes when his eyes trouble him from court-work he goes to the piano, shuts his eyes, the room being somewhat dark, and improvises. He is the only one in the cabinet who knows anything of music. His style is somewhat weird and monotonous. And sometimes it is the most interesting. He and Henry Watterson together and sing and play a whole evening. The piano is Schurz's diversion, horses are Grant's."

"How about Sherman? How does he spend his evenings?"

"Well, Sherman is a great newspaper reader, and just now he is making himself amiable with the Southern politicians. He frequently has them at his house of evenings. Sherman is more of a social man than you would think. He is full of anecdotes, and his recollections are very entertaining. He is not only in official life. At home he is as pleasant. He is also fond of a good dinner and a glass of wine. The Secretary very often gets his shorthand writer at his house and spends the whole evening writing letters. His correspondence is very large."

"How about Uncle Dick Thompson? Does he work evenings?"

"No. He is very domestic and occasionally fond of young people, and has always a troop of children about him. Besides, the Secretary of the War has reached that age when he likes to go to bed early. He is an early riser, and then he pitches into the office work. There is not a man in the cabinet who devotes more hours to his office than he. He doesn't trust everything to his subordinates, and you will never find him piled high a foot thick with papers of the important character, as Robeson's used to be."

"How about Attorney-General Devens?"

"Well, he is another hard worker. He studies a good deal at night. He is particularly so he gets to bed at 12, 1 or 2 o'clock at night. He is a jollier fellow than he generally gets credit for, but also likes pleasant fellows about him and he can tell a good story. He likes, withal, the study of literature, and in this regard, a man of fine and correct tastes. He is not a man of strong character, for, like many Boston men, he cares too much for appearances. He is honest, and is a conscientious officer."

"Is Secretary McCary a great student?"

"I am afraid McCary is a little bookish and lazy. He is a great lover of the law, and likes to read cases. He is a slow, heavy man, who does not like to go out of evenings, but he is good-natured, and always treats people politely, though somewhat servilely. He is better fitted for a judge than jumping political fences. In the War Department he is little better than a clerk, but in the cabinet, whenever a big law question comes up, I had rather have his opinion than all the rest put together. He is old common sense. He is not Secretary of War. General Sherman runs the War Department, and in this respect the military power is above the civil. Belknap is the only man ever brought Sherman to terms. Belknap made Sherman subordinate, and drove him to St. Louis."

"Well, how does Evarts spend his evenings?"

"Oh, Evarts is so rarely here that can hardly tell. You had better ask some New York client of his. Evarts, however, is very fond of company, and the best story teller of the cabinet. He is also a big eater, although is one of the thinnest men I ever saw. I really don't know how he passes his evenings. The chances are that if he has company, he will talk to them as long as they stay. He gives fine dinner parties, and has the best house for entertainment in Washington. He does not by any means disgrace the standard established by Mr. Fish in his respect."

"How does the President spend his evenings?"

"Now, look here," said my friend, "you are going too fast and are getting me." I assured him I was not. "You must surely know, then," said he, "that the President is the jolliest man in the world in his home circle. He is in the private rooms of the White House every evening, where Mrs. Hayes receives all who call. He says pleasant things to everybody, and makes himself very agreeable. When it rains, or when from other causes nobody calls during the evening, he plays 'pussy wants a corner' with the young ladies, for there are always young ladies visiting at the White House."

"Now, honestly, does the President play 'pussy want a corner?'"

"Upon my word he does, for I have seen him do it, and he seemed to enjoy it."

"Well, it is human nature to unbecomingly careen to let the world see them. It is only the great men who can afford to play 'pussy want a corner' at the White House."

The Spanish Minister at Washington, Senor Zamacona, is building a skating rink in the rear of his residence.

Ex-Collector Simmons, of Boston, is inspecting mines in Arizona. He is President of the Empire Mining Company.