

SINS OF THE FATHERS

By GEORGE A. PARKER.
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From an old manuscript:

I was born and reared on the coast of Norway. Until I was twenty years old I had never been in a town, and then only in a small village. My associates were untutored people, and I received but the elements of education. Nevertheless they seemed to look upon me as superior to themselves. Whether that was because I bore the marks of having been born of superior stock or that my name was English I did not know. My father died when I was ten years old, and I remembered him as always with a sad look on his face, which was reflected in my mother's. When I grew older I asked her why my father and she had always appeared sad. She could not bring herself to tell me the reason, and I remained in ignorance.

When I was twenty my mother died, and I resolved to leave the desolate place where I had been born and seek a more active field. Before going I made inquiries of a neighbor concerning my parents' sojourn in those parts and was told that they had come there several years before my birth and had for a time lived as gentle folk, but subsequently they dwelt as did their neighbors. My father had from his coming appeared to have a cloud on his mind. My mother had told me before her death that a sum of money had been put in a bank for me at the nearest town, and, going there, I claimed it and took passage for England.

On my arrival in London I went about looking for work. Going into the office of a merchant for the purpose, he asked me my name. When I told him he looked up at me in surprise.

"Where were you born?" he asked. I told him all I knew about myself. He regarded me with compassion and gave me employment.

At intervals when introduced to a person I was regarded with a certain interest or curiosity—I could not tell which. I noticed that such persons were always of superior education. No illiterate person even manifested any special interest in me. Sometimes these people who did would turn away from me with apparent disgust, while others regarded me compassionately. One day I asked my employer for an explanation of the mystery that hung over me. After thinking some time he told me that it would be better for me not to know it. He advised me to change my name.

I tried to be contented to remain in ignorance, but the secret weighed upon me, and I longed, yet dreaded, to know it. Finally I decided to try another country, thinking that whatever it was hung over me would not be known there. America seemed the most inviting ground, and I went to New York, reaching there shortly before the breaking out of the second war with England. Registering at a hotel, the clerk looked up from my name to me in astonishment.

"Well," I exclaimed, irritated, "what is it?"

"What is it? Why, nothing. Will you go to your room, sir?"

I found in America that more people showed that dreaded interest in my name than in England, and a different interest. On being introduced to me most persons showed a repulsion, though many strove to conceal it. I burned with a desire to know what it all meant; but, remembering the advice of my London employer, I refrained from asking, and no one offered to enlighten me. To occupy my mind I went to a library to read. There I stumbled on the secret.

The wisdom of the advice given me by my former employer was now apparent. Under an assumed name I enlisted in the American army to fight against England. I knew now that, though I had been born abroad, America was my native land. I burned to do some important work for her, to die for her on the field of battle.

There were no important engagements except that at New Orleans, which was fought after peace was declared. As I had entered the army, a private, I came out a private. Under my assumed name I went into business and prospered.

Then I fell in love. I had vowed that I would never bring a child into the world to suffer the blight under which I suffered, and I strove to crush the natural longing that had taken possession of me. My sufferings were tenfold what they had been before. Meanwhile it was evident that I had won the heart of the girl I loved. It was essential that I should explain my conduct toward her. I told her my secret.

She loved me all the more, from pity, that I suffered from another's fault. She reminded me that each successive decade would carry me and mine further from the original transgression and that my successors would feel it less than those of my own generation. Persuaded by this view, I asked her to marry me. I continued to live for a time under my assumed name,

but when I joined the tide of emigration settling westward I resumed my own.

This is my secret. In the Revolutionary war an officer of great merit and prominence on the patriot side turned traitor, attempted to deliver to the British an important strategic position and fled to the enemy. Living in England, where he was despised, he brought up a family. My father, one of his descendants, shrinking from the stain, went where he would be unknown. He must have been an especially sensitive man, and I doubtless have inherited his disposition.

Snuff Spoons.

All the world is familiar with snuff-boxes, but snuff spoons are pretty little refinements of which this generation has hardly heard. Very probably they came into use about two years after Sir George Rooke's expedition to Vigo bay in 1702, when he captured half a ton of tobacco and snuff from the Spanish galleons, and snuff thus became a common article in England.

One of the characters in a comedy published at Oxford in 1704, entitled "An Act at Oxford," by Thomas Baker, says, "But I carry sweet snuff for the ladies," to which Arabella replies: "A spoon too. That's very gallant, for to see some people run their fat fingers into a box is as nauseous as eating without a fork."

In the forties and fifties of the last century snuff spoons were still in use on the Scottish border. They were of bone and of a size to go into the snuff-box. People fed their noses, it was said, as naturally as they carried soup to their mouths. As late as 1877 a farmer at Northam-on-Tweed was seen using one.—London Saturday Review.

A Tramp of Resource.

Much experience of thifty tramps had caused the author of "An English Holiday," J. J. Hissey, to foreknow almost exactly what they would say to him. One day, when sending his motorcar slowly along a shady English road, he met one of this guild, who accosted him with the preliminary touch of his cap. Mr. Hissey anticipated him by exclaiming:

"I be mortal thirsty! Have you, good sir, the price of a glass of ale about you? I've driven nearly fifty miles to-day, and since the morning not a bite of food has passed my lips."

The look of astonishment that tramp gave me was a delight to observe. But this tramp was a man of ready resource, and, seeing I was a hopeless case, he rose to the occasion and promptly exclaimed, with what dignity he could command and with a comically serious expression:

"If there were a policeman in sight I would give you in charge for begging, that I would!"

Between Two Fires.

She was desperately gone on them both, and she couldn't think which one to choose. It was rather perplexing, no doubt, for one she was bound to refuse.

She gazed at them both in despair, quite puzzled to know what to do. As soon as she thought about one she cared for the other one too.

They still remained under her gaze, little recking the trouble they brought. It really was hard to decide. They were both so delightful, she thought.

She couldn't say which one she'd have; her efforts fell hopelessly flat. It's really exceedingly hard selecting a new autumn hat.

He Told Her.

Housekeeper—You promised that if I'd give you a good meal and a suit of old clothes you'd tell me how to keep the premises free from tramps.

Tramp—Yes, mum, an' I'm a man of my word, mum, an' I'll keep me promise, although that meal wasn't no great shakes an' this suit of clothes ain't much of a fit. But I'll tell ye.

"Well, what course am I to pursue?" "Never give 'em anything, mum. Good day, mum."

Good and Simple.

Let it not be in any man's power to say truly of thee that thou art not simple or that thou art not good, but let him be a liar whoever shall think anything of this kind about thee, and this is altogether in thy power, for who is he that shall hinder thee from being good and simple?—Marcus Antonius.

How He Raised It.

"How on earth did you ever cultivate such a beautiful black eye?" asked Brown's friend.

"Oh," replied Brown, who had unintentionally been illustrating the fall of man on roller skates, "I raised it from a slip"—Everybody's Magazine.

Shows No Improvement.

"I don't see that her college education has improved her much."

"No?" "No. She helps her mother with the housework just as if she hadn't been educated."—Detroit Free Press.

An Apt Simile.

Some men have a career like a golf ball. They are helped out of one hole only to get into another.—Lippincott's.

Dickens and Diet.

Dickens is the novelist of the meal. No other writer, pile he up never such lists of delicacies fit for Lucullus, has the gusto in describing humble feasts which gives the very reader an appetite. Thackeray, for all his "Ballad of Bouillabaise," never touched the hem of his garments in the recording of meals. Who that has read them can ever forget, for instance, Mrs. Gamp's directions to the chambermaid for her nocturnal repast, or the tea which awaited Joe Willett and Dolly on their return to the locksmith's dwelling on the occasion of Miss Migg's final rout, or the unassuming meals recorded in "David Copperfield," or the more pretentious feasts in "Pickwick," not forgetting the leg of mutton "swarry" to which Mr. Weller was invited by the elite of Bath footmen? And has not every reader of "Martin Chuzzlewit" allowed a tender smile to curl his lips over the evolution of that incomparable pudding in the preparation and consumption of which such damage was done to John Westlock's affections? So go and read—and acquire your appetite.—London Chronicle.

Above and Below Proof.

Before the means of determining the true quantity of alcohol in spirits were known dealers employed a very rude method to form a notion of the "strength." A given quantity of the spirit was poured upon gunpowder in a dish and set on fire. If the gunpowder continued dry enough it took fire and exploded, but if it had been dampened by the water in the spirits the flame of the alcohol went out without setting the powder on fire. This was called the "proof." Spirits which kindled gunpowder were said to be "above proof," those that did not set fire to it were said to be "below proof," but this did not fix the strength. Clark in his hydrometer, which was invented about the year 1730, fixed the strength of proof spirits on the stem, at the specific gravity of .920 at the temperature of 60 degrees. This is the strength at which proof spirit is fixed by act of parliament, and at this strength it is no more than a mixture of forty-nine pounds of pure alcohol with fifty-one pounds of pure water.—London Standard.

Case of Too Much Ham.

One morning not long ago there tripped up to a butcher stall in a Baltimore market a dainty little thing out for her first marketing.

"My husband bought a couple of nice hams from you not long ago," she announced.

"Yes'm," said the smiling butcher; "I remember well. Fine hams, weren't they?"

"They were delicious," said the young wife. "Have you any more like them?"

"Lots," responded the butcher, indicating a row of hams in the rear of the stall.

The young thing surveyed the hams thoughtfully. "Are you sure," she finally asked, "that they're from the same pig as that from which my husband bought?"

"Yes'm," answered the butcher without so much as a quiver of an eyelid.

"Then you may send me three more of them," she said.—Pittsburg Post.

The Caspian Sea.

The Caspian sea is, as Herodotus said 2,000 years ago, "a sea by itself, having no connection with any other." Every schoolboy knows that now, but it is remarkable to find Herodotus saying so, because centuries after his time such authorities as Strabo and Pliny believed that it was connected with the northern ocean by a long and narrow gulf. Geography seems to have had a setback in the interval through false information received at the time of Alexander's conquests. Herodotus says that the Caspian's length was fifteen days' voyage with a rowboat, its breadth eight days'. Since the actual figures are 750 miles and 400, this shows that a rowboat of the time did fifty miles a day.—London Graphic.

Shank's Mare.

"I haven't got a limousine or any aeroplane; I haven't got a coach an' six, not even a special train; I haven't got a bicycle nor yet a boss an' team. I git along all right, by jinks, 'thout gasertine or steam. I travel jest by shank's mare an' never hev no fear but what I'll reach my stoppin' place the same day in the year. No artificial rigs for me, no busted tires or bones, no landin' all up in a heap upon the highway stones. I may be slow a-gettin' round an' cause the world to stare, but I will git there by an' by all right side up with care."—Boston Herald.

Not Guilty!

The unable seaman referred to by the American Thrasherman probably thought he was being accused of "mussing up the bedclothes."

Enthusiastic Amateur Sailor—Let go that jib sheet!

Unenthusiastic Landlubber (who has been decoyed into acting as crew)—I'm not touching the thing!

Revenge is the sweetest pleasure of an abject mind.—Juvenal.

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Prayer Meeting Wednesday evening.

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W. A. WOOD, Pastor.

Morning Service at 11 a. m.

Evening Service at 7:00 p. m.

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"Clarence unintentionally offended the aspiring young poetess."

"In what way?"

"He sent her a gayly decorated wastebasket as a birthday present."—Philadelphia Record.

A High One.

Friend—Does the baron, your son-in-law, speak with much of an accent? Richpurse—He did when he discovered how I had fixed his wife's dower.—Puck.

He who wishes to secure the good of others has already secured his own.—Confucius.